

# ADVANCEMENTS IN DESIGN RESEARCH

11 PhD theses on Design as we do in POLIMI



edited by Lucia Rampino and Ilaria Mariani



***Direction: Silvia Piardi***

***Scientific Board:***

**Alessandro Biamonti, Ezio Manzini, Carlo Martino,  
Francesca Tosi, Mario Piazza, Promil Pande**

Over the last few years the international design research network has become an important reality, which has facilitated the sharing of ideas and opinions, improved understanding of the subject and increased awareness of the potential of design in various socio-geographical contexts.

The current expansion of the educational network allows teachers, students, researchers and professionals to meet, both online and in person.

It would seem therefore that the time is now right to propose a new series of books on design, contributing the construction of the international design community, helping authors bring their work onto the world scene.

The Design International series is thus born as a cultural setting for the sharing of ideas and experiences from the different fields of design, a place in which you can discover the wealth and variety of design research, where different hypotheses and different answers present themselves, in an attempt to draw up a map of Italian design, though in a continuous comparison with the world scene.

Different areas of design will be investigated, such as for example: fashion, interior design, graphic design, communication design, product and industrial design, service and social innovation design, interaction design and emotional design.

Books published in this series are selected by the Scientific Board and submitted to two referees for peer-review.



Il presente volume è pubblicato in open access, ossia il file dell'intero lavoro è liberamente scaricabile dalla piattaforma **FrancoAngeli Open Access** (<http://bit.ly/francoangeli-oa>).

**FrancoAngeli Open Access** è la piattaforma per pubblicare articoli e monografie, rispettando gli standard etici e qualitativi e la messa a disposizione dei contenuti ad accesso aperto. Oltre a garantire il deposito nei maggiori archivi e repository internazionali OA, la sua integrazione con tutto il ricco catalogo di riviste e collane FrancoAngeli massimizza la visibilità, favorisce facilità di ricerca per l'utente e possibilità di impatto per l'autore.

Per saperne di più:

[http://www.francoangeli.it/come\\_publicare/publicare\\_19.asp](http://www.francoangeli.it/come_publicare/publicare_19.asp)

I lettori che desiderano informarsi sui libri e le riviste da noi pubblicati possono consultare il nostro sito Internet: [www.francoangeli.it](http://www.francoangeli.it) e iscriversi nella home page al servizio "Informatemi" per ricevere via e-mail le segnalazioni delle novità.

# ADVANCEMENTS IN DESIGN RESEARCH

11 PhD theses on Design as we do in POLIMI



edited by Lucia Rampino and Ilaria Mariani

D. | . **FRANCOANGELI** OPEN  ACCESS  
DESIGN INTERNATIONAL

*Cover by: Ilaria Mariani*

Copyright © 2019 by FrancoAngeli s.r.l., Milano, Italy.

This work, and each part thereof, is protected by copyright law and is published in this digital version under the license *Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International* (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

*By downloading this work, the User accepts all the conditions of the license agreement for the work as stated and set out on the website*

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

# Contents

## **The evolving boundaries of design research at Polimi: education, soft skills, creative companies and digital tech**

*Lucia Rampino and Ilaria Mariani*

pag. 9

## **We need new steps**

*Alessandro Biamonti*

» 19

## **Perspectives in Design Education**

### **Dialogues on the relationship between Spatial and Service Design**

*Annalinda De Rosa*

» 25

### **Internationalizing the Fashion Design Curriculum: Nurturing Internationalized Talents**

*Xiaozhu Lin*

» 39

### **Designing Knit Designers. Teaching tools and methods to train professionals for the knitwear industry**

*Martina Motta*

» 53

## Collaborative Processes Enabled by Design

### **Design as enabling agent.**

#### **Design culture and non-designers in the changing role of disciplines**

*Rūta Valušytė*

pag. 77

### **Designing the empathic experience.**

#### **Suggestions from art practices**

*Alice Devecchi*

» 89

### **Intermediate urban space.**

#### **Design and light art as catalysts for change: participation beyond fruition**

*Isa Helena Tibúrcio*

» 103

## Design for Cultural and Creative Companies

### **Handling the Complexity of Design Support Programmes. An interpretative framework for barriers and drivers to introducing design innovation into Brazilian MSMEs**

*Mariana Fonseca Braga and Francesco Zurlo*

» 125

### **FashionTech: Interaction Across Boundaries. Integration practices for design-enhanced user experiences**

*Susanna Testa*

» 141

## Design and Technology for Social Change

### **A taxonomy of data visualization projects for alternative narratives**

*María de los Angeles Briones R.* pag. 163

### **Studying digital images in groups: the folder of images**

*Gabriele Colombo* » 185

### **The Materials Generation**

*Camilo Ayala-Garcia and Valentina Rognoli* » 197



## We need new steps

*Alessandro Biamonti*

*Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano*

In Japan exists an extremely magic word: *ikigai*. The meaning of *ikigai*, as often happens with Japanese terms, is not so easy to explain and neither directly translatable. It's more a concept than a simple term. A concept that deals with different areas of existence.

First of all it has to do with “what we Love”, indeed probably the most not-rational portions of our life. A land where we could follow some intuitive, sometime instinctive, invisible path, toward an undefined final destination. A deeply emotional portion of our existence, in which we could experience the overlapping of Passion and Mission.

*Ikigai* has also to do with our skills, or with “what we are good at”. As the motto of the watchmaker Alain Silberstein was “*le vrai bonheur, est d'avoir sa passion pour métier*”, that means, for the luckiest people, to talk about the crossing between their Passion and their Profession.

We're use to perceive the professional dimension of our life connected with an economical dimension. So we're talking about “what we can be paid for”, the kind of activities we exchange with money. That means of course that somebody appreciate what we do, and pay for it. The best condition it would happen when the characteristic of our Profession meet the one of our Vocation.

But as we're not alone in our life, the fourth concept of *ikigai* deal with our contribution to “what the world needs”. We have a social dimension and each one of us could have a role in the world, especially if we could find a good balance between our Vocation and our Mission.

The term *ikigai* is explained with a circular diagram, in which we could see a magic balance between the most private and emotional dimensions and the pragmatic and social ones.

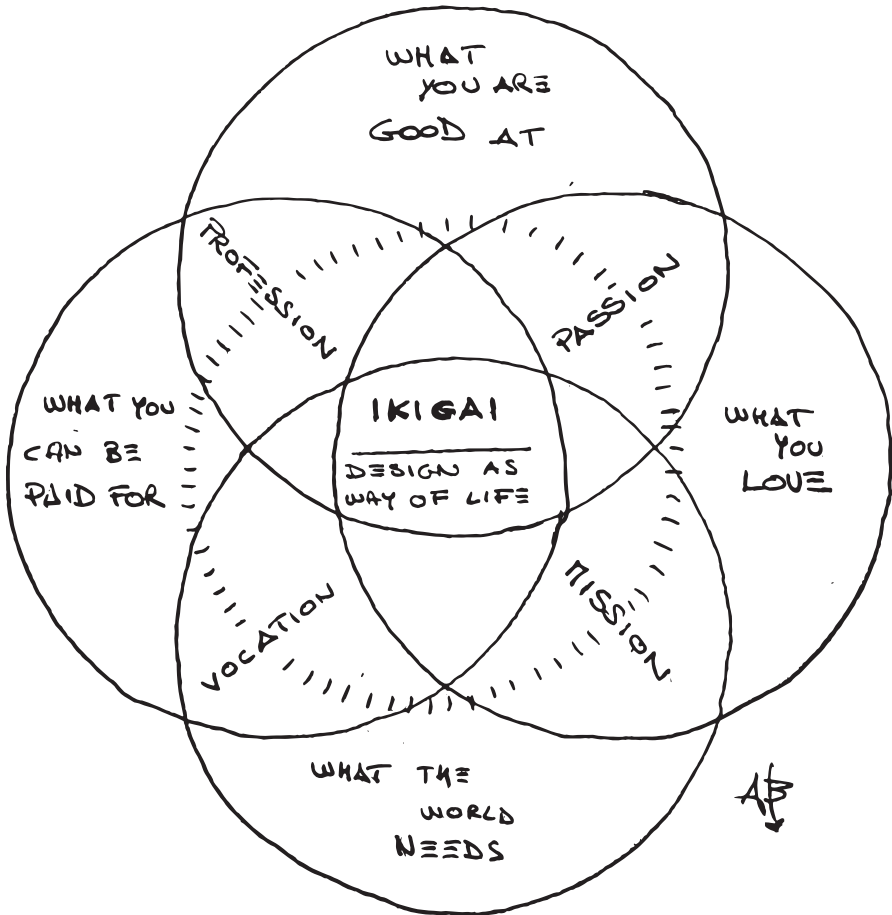


Fig. 1 – Relating Ikigai and design as a way of life.

Looking at the diagram, I could not stop to turn my eyes between the four central words – Passion, Mission, Vocation and Profession – and to put them in relation with what I think is the goal of Design: producing a new portion of experience, tangible or intangible, which contributes to make a better world.

Probably the *ikigai*'s diagram could be a good way to represent the Ettore Sottsass's thought "in Italy, design is not a profession, it's a way of life". In fact, it represents an extreme synthesis of a professional approach that involves emotional and professional aspect of our life, in a sort of mission for a better world, starting from small portion of everyday life, as object, colours, spaces. A professional approach for which technical skills and knowledge

are important, but not enough. Not enough to embrace such wider cultural, emotional, technical and professional dimension of life.

Design, as human activity, has very ancient roots, ancient as human history. The first cave's graffiti, the stone arrows, the wheel, the fire and how to use it... all are design actions, with the goal of improving the everyday life experience. Since the very beginning of the human production, in terms of signs and artefacts, we could appreciate how the technical dimension has not been the only one to take in consideration.

The relation between artefacts and human beings is indeed usually extremely more rich than the simple technical performance of what artefacts could "do". We need a technical performance, it's clear, but that should be a base on which we build a more intense relation, involving the emotional apparatus of human beings.

Nowadays we're living in an era in which intangible interaction and new form of production are deeply changing our everyday material and relational landscapes. A scenario in which design is everywhere, even if often it's hidden. Looking at that scenario using design parameters of last centuries is like trying to switch on an iPhone with a medieval iron key...

We probably need to do two kind of steps. First we need a step back. A step back to our ancient history, to explore the careful balance some very ancient artefacts transmit us through centuries. But that exploration of the past has to be just the run-up for a big jump. We need probably to jump in a new era in which we define new reading keys and parameters for a new mature cultural and anthropological dimensions of Design.