

Circular economy opens a new domain for architectural design, where architecture is focused on its production and disposal cycles, and the process is intended as the final outcome of the project. The circular paradigm is the product of the political discourse and critical attitude which are globally questioning the use of natural resources and the origins of goods. As a model of production and consumption which aims to recover the retained value in waste and optimize resource utilization, the circular framework is one of the most radical thinking patterns of contemporary age, developing specific cultural and social attitudes.

Francesca Zanotto

Circular Architecture

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A Design Ideology

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A U I D series

Politecnico di Milano
Department of Architecture
and Urban Studies



Francesca Zanotto (1987) is an architect and researcher based in Milan. Her work explores the spatial dimension of waste and the implications of consumption patterns for architectural design. She holds a Ph.D. *cum laude* in architectural design, received at Department of Architecture and Urban Studies of Politecnico di Milano (2018), where she currently works as postdoctoral researcher and adjunct professor.



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AUID series

These agile booklets document the research carried out within our doctoral program. We decided not to publish the entire doctoral works, which are extensive and articulated, but to, instead, select and extract, from those scientific concentrates of sophisticated knowledge, the most comprehensible studies that are obviously associated with themes of the current debate on architectural design. These texts have, therefore, been forcibly stripped of their premises, of the state of the art and apparatus overview. They have, at times, even been disconnected from the broader rationale they belonged to. Hence, it is an arbitrary and, sometimes, unjust process, if we consider the scientific coherence of the original constructs. However, dear reader, we assure you that it was done with the best of intentions, an effort aimed at building a small, solid and well-designed bridge between the elite world of academic research and the fluid, open and permeable to discussion, updates of the critical evolution of contemporary architectural design.

Alessandro Rocca

This book presents an elaboration of selected chapters from author's doctoral thesis: *Devoid of Any Style. Problems and Perspectives of Architecture in the Age of Post-Consumption*, supervised by professor Alessandro Rocca. The thesis was successfully defended on December the 3rd, 2018, at the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano.

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Foreword

Alessandro Rocca

We pretend that architecture raises biopolitical awareness, that it is a technical apparatus adapted to the ecological challenge, a non-naive relationship with nature. Circularity has always been evident and substantial in the absolute discipline of architecture, a field where ideas, both right and wrong ones, circulate for millennia, superimposing epochs, technologies, cultures, and mastering various needs and wishes. Architecture is always partially alienated from its own time, maintaining a critical distance from the present, strong relations with the past, often also with the forgotten past, and an inevitable, intrinsic drive towards the future. Then, architecture is timeless, less by ambition than by necessity, projected with its millennial knowledge into the contingency of a collapsing Anthropocene, struggling with an environment that, as Timothy Morton wrote, “is more or less a way of considering groups and humans – surrounded by nature, or in continuity with other beings such as animals and plants. It is about being-with”. This being-with is, therefore, the challenge. Perhaps we can believe that the answer, the solution, is circular architecture, though we are inclined to think that, in any closed circuit, the point of interest and of crisis is the flaw, the defective seal, the break that transforms the circularity of virtue, or of neurosis, into a creative energy that produces changes, invents new ideas of comfort and beauty, and pushes the ancient art of architecture into the threatening and cloudy history of the near future.