

# Design as Common Good / Framing Design through Pluralism and Social Values

Swiss Design Network  
Symposium 2021  
Conference Proceedings

Edited by  
Massimo Botta  
Sabine Junginger

University of Applied Sciences and Arts  
of Southern Switzerland

**SUPSI**

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# Editorial Introduction

Massimo Botta  
and Sabine Junginger

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"Give design back to society and it will be an ability sought after in the soon to be realised post-mining economy with numerous regulations that will make the everyday task complex and challenging. From material to dematerial [sic] is a direction that design will increasingly focus on as business models and regulatory principles will determine what we may be permitted to do rather than what we can do with technology at hand. Design is about what you can and would do with technology and materials as well as about the spirit that drives such use. People matter and designing with people and for people is the way forward which we will need to once again integrate into our everyday lives." (MP Ranjan, 2006).

The 2021 Swiss Design Network Conference was held under the constraints and challenges of a global human crisis. Today, design is an ability sought after in private business and industry, though increasingly in the public sector. In both sectors, design has the potential to contribute to the common good: by way of making services accessible, business models social and sustainable, by way of opening new paths for outcomes that benefit individual people, producers, the public and the planet. Waheed Hussein (2018) defined the 'Common Good' to be that which "benefits society as a whole – in contrast to the private good of individuals and sections of society." This definition, published in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (ed. Zalta et al., 2018) can be interpreted as a call to design for the many, not for the one. Does this call for a shift from, say, user-centered design which concerns itself with one-to-one relationships to human-centered design, which understands the one to be part of a wider community or society (Winnograd and Wood, 1997; Buchanan, 2001; Krippendorff, 2006)? What does it mean then for design to act, intervene and engage with often highly fragmented and politicized communities – be that at a local, national or global level? How, in what way and for what purpose do we find design to make valuable contributions to policies, the economies, and societies? And how might design be part of a public strategy to mobilize power and knowledge for the common good (Mulgan, 2009)? More puzzling, if we do think of design itself as a common good, is this a call for caring about design in different ways than we do currently?

The late MP Ranjan prepared his remarks for the 2006 conference of the Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA) but we find many elements that are part of our contemporary debates about 'design as common good'. In fact, the concern for consequences and impact of our design thinking and design doing is a theme throughout design history. Long before the virus disrupted every part and corner of our lives, in communities around the globe, design researchers and design practitioners concerned themselves with questions of the social and the common good. This includes Päivi Tahkokallio's and Susan Vihma's edited book *Design – Pleasure or Responsibility?* (1995) as well as Bruce Mau's and J. Leonard's 2004 compilation on *Massive Change that was* based on the exhibit with the same title in the same year.

The focus has moved though, from scrutinizing design products and things for their value to the real world (Papanek, 1972) to closing the chasm between designing for the (consumer) market and the nonprofit, public sector (Margolin and Margolin, 2002). Margolin and Margolin's proposed 'Social Model' outlines the shared interests in the social and the market that resonate with contemporary concepts of social business and social entrepreneurship, or as Csikszentmihalyi (2004) writes, with "good business." New design professions have emerged that are explicit in their concern for societal and social impact. These include Service Design and Social De-

sign with new specializations now forming around Design in Government, Legal Design and even Policy Design. The uproar caused by the UK Design Council just fifteen years ago when it awarded its own in-house designer Hilary Codham, a designer who 'explored new solutions to social and economic problems through design' but was "no shaper of 'things'", is unthinkable today[1].

Instead, we find design central to a number of governmental frameworks. Among them, for example, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) by the UN and the Quadruple Helix by the OECD (Carayannis & Campbell, 2009)[2]. The SDG calls for new approaches of design to address 17 areas identified by the UN as elements of a sustainable world concerned with human well-being. In this framework, design refers and is understood as transcending the verb to design meaning creation of products, services, buildings or communication and so on, rather looking at design as "diverse forms of life, and often, contrasting notions of sociability and the world" (Escobar, 2018). Each of the 17 boxes point to the need of a new approach to an old lingering problem. It is not for lack of experts that each of these boxes have struggled to arrive at satisfying solutions, it is for lack of getting people motivated and encouraged enough to work together in new ways and to experiment together, co-developing and co-designing new possibilities. The second example, the Quadruple Helix, emphasizes the need for co-creation and co-design among governments, industries, academia and civil society in order to achieve socially desirable innovations. It is here where design as common good encounters pluralism and social values. A recently published report part of the EU initiative "We against the Virus" (WirvsVirus) underlines the fundamental need for co-creation, and codesign to achieve viable social innovation. Does this point to design being a common good?

In light of these promising but also fundamental shifts in business, society and government, the contributions of design to the common good remain under explored. This conference aims to reflect[3] critically on the implications, approaches, practices and challenges involved for design researchers, design professionals and other design practitioners participating when they engage in the creation of 'a' or 'the' common good. When everybody designs (Manzini, 2015) and design is recognized for its ubiquitousness, does this make design a common good? And if so, what are the consequences?

[1] Source: Jinman, Richard, 'Design Award Winner no shaper of 'things'', The Guardian Online, June 10th 2005. Last accessed March 2021: [www.theguardian.com/society/2005/jun/10/urbandesign.architecture](http://www.theguardian.com/society/2005/jun/10/urbandesign.architecture).

[2] Source: [www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org](http://www.sustainabledevelopment.un.org).

[3] Source: Open Social Innovation: Gemeinsam Lernen aus #WirvsVirus, A Learning Report DOI: <https://doi.org/10.48462/OPUS4-3782>. The Hertie School

Temporality presents a key aspect for designers today (Anceschi and Botta, 2019) with a focus on processes over time. We witness this in the contemporary design language that now shapes the field of design. New terminological compounds around design topics, approaches, and processes have emerged, such as strategic design, transition design, transformative design, experience design; and co-design participatory design, Human-Centered Design; and again, collaborative thinking, iterative processes, and product life cycle. These terminological compounds identify theories, methods, and practices formulated and established in other contexts of knowledge, and are now part of the design discipline. With an openness to change and the adoption of theories, methods, and practices from other sciences, defining one's intellectual, cultural, social, and political dimension became increasingly relevant for the discipline of design and the designer role.

This last viewpoint is of fundamental importance when considered with the topic of the common good. Aristotle refers to "politics" as the administration of the "polis" for the good of all, as the determination of a public space in which all citizens participate. And politics implies the term *téchnē*, which is the art and technique of the government of society. In other words, today's design should present itself as the technical-scientific discipline which, increasingly, contributes to defining the rules and principles that designate the directions that public life should take.

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Critique about design conferences has been lingering for years, if not decades. Too expensive, too stoic, too weak in terms of papers, too colonized in terms of those driving the program and the conference structure. The analogue world witnessed a rise in "unconferences". These seem to have potential but so far they have shown to have at least two issues: one concern is that they seem to work for small groups only – and here, too the question of who is in and who is out remains. Another concern is their integration into the field and discipline, that is to ensure the knowledge and insights produced are accessible to the field. For now at least, unconferences have not proven to be a sufficient answer. The shift to the digital realm has challenged us to rethink the purpose of a design research conference. It also raises the specific question of how we might mobilize power and knowledge for the common good through a conference. We have approached this question with an experimental working conference we hoped would provide opportunities for real - human - exchange and engagement while encouraging critical reviews of ideas and concepts that have the potential to lead to new collaborations and new networks within the research community that can be pursued after the conference.

## 1 A Working Conference: About the Pre-Conference Working Groups

### 1.1 A Working Conference

The moment we began to discuss if we wanted to accept the invitation to co-chair the Swiss Design Network Conference 2021, we wondered what a design research conference could add in

times of upheaval, anxiety and for most of us, double and triple workloads. We discussed expectations, minimum requirements (conference proceedings!) and before we knew it we were asking ourselves what is the greater good here? What is the added value? Why should we or anyone else invest time in this? It was at that point when we realized that the conference itself needed to take the form of a work in progress following a co-design process. Figure 1 shows the concept drawn on the back of an envelope: following a double blind abstract review, authors worked on their paper. They then were assigned into working groups by the conference chairs according to areas of interests we saw emerging. The pre-conference began in the middle of December but work really picked up in mid-January. What happened in this working conference is that the actual conference taking place on March 25th and 26th turned out to be the byproduct of a much longer and more intense process.

## 1.2 Co-Developing the Conference Program

Following the acceptance of abstracts, authors were asked to finish their papers. Next we opened slack working groups around the themes and topics we saw emerging and brought together authors who looked at a similar or related topic from different perspectives. In a next step, we asked each group to envision and develop their conference session. By that time most authors had their paper close to being final and were ready to present and discuss this within their group. We gave each group the task to find out what was common about their papers and to build a panel session of 90 minutes around this. We encouraged groups to go beyond classic paper presentations. In the end, we asked every panel (and workshop) group to come up with a title and description for their panel. The conference program for both days is the result of this work. Sadly, the incredible amount of work accomplished on Slack will not be visible to attendees of the culmination of this conference that is open to the public. At the height of the activity, 168 people were working together on slack, crossing all time zones from Australia to Austria, Brazil to Bath, India to Istanbul. They started on December 15th and worked together through the end of March.

What we found is that many co-authors were engaging fully in these working groups. For us as conference chairs, for the conference coordinators for the Swiss Design Network Mayar el Hawayan and for SUPSI, Vanessa De Luca, this meant a much more direct engagement with individual conference contributors. Together with our authors and workshop hosts, we embraced different kinds of human experiences and different kinds of human interactions with the design research community.

## 1.3 Pushing the Envelope or Succumbing to Norms?

As designers, one would think that we are eager to push boundaries and experiment with new ways to engage with each other to advance knowledge and insights. Alas, we find that we are human, too. The reality is that when it comes to conferences, we

## 1.4 Digital Tools for Ongoing Communication

prefer the convenience of unwritten scripts and formulae. Tell me what the topic is I shall write about, tell me when to show up for my paper presentation, and please provide the ISBN of the proceedings so I can add this to my CV is an understandable position given the workload most of us face. A workload that has come under additional strains during the Corona pandemic. It is all but impressive therefore what every author for this conference and every single person involved in any of the conference workshops has accomplished.

To make matters worse for many involved, a digital conference requires working with digital tools not everyone likes or is familiar with. We found that a good number of our authors and hosts were fairly new to slack and encountered a first learning curve. Most managed marvelously, others simply turned to email as their preferred means of communication. Zoom and other video conferencing tools were also heavily relied on throughout the pre-conference work. What we learned was that people want to work together and that the digital realm offers many different paths and avenues to locate a usable and useful workspace. Figure 1 shows a screenshot of the *Slack* channels shortly before the start of the conference.

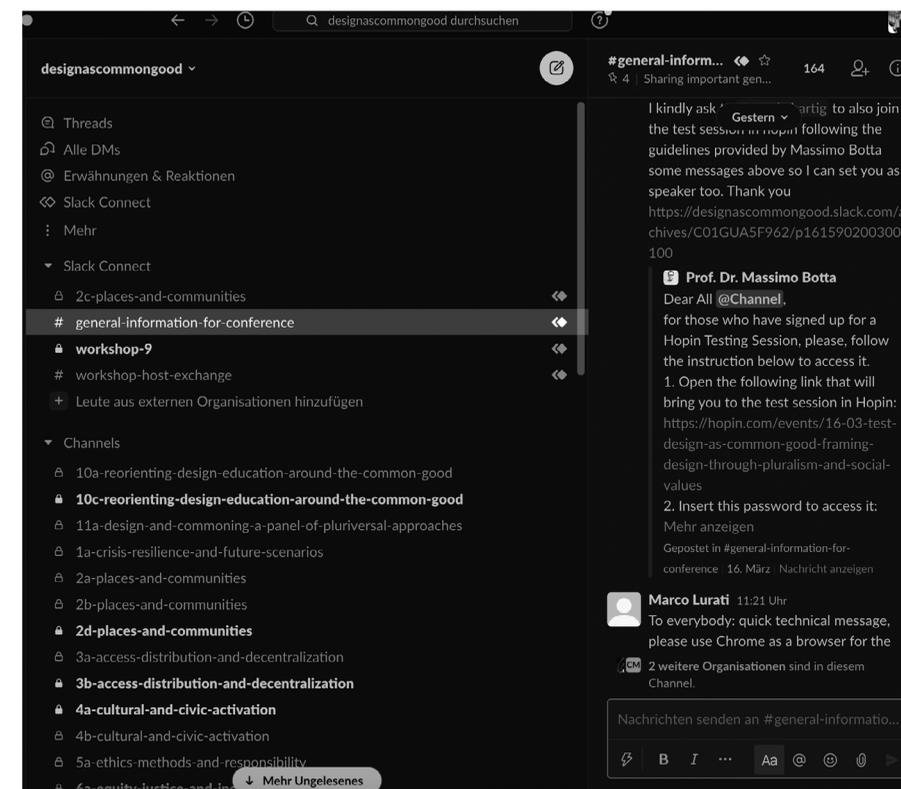


Fig. 1: Screenshot Slack Communication March 18th 2021 (Junginger).

## 1.5 Technical Support Sessions

Much thought was given to the conference platform. We eventually decided on *Hopin*, knowing full well that this would impose yet another learning curve on our contributors. Many had requested we stay on Zoom, a tool they were by now veerey familiar with and knew their way around. For the conference, we needed a place in cyberspace where everyone could check in at any point in time and move around freely between sessions. After much exploration, we zoomed in (pun intended!) on Hopin. We organized tech support sessions for all interested contributors to familiarize them and to enable them to run their own *Hopin* event. We are fully conscious that a platform like Hopin has its limitations and will disappoint some while delighting others. A judgement on the appropriateness of the platform for our conference will be possible only after the event has run its course, which will be only after the finalization of these proceedings.

## 1.6 Time Zones & Cultural Diversity

An analogue conference brings together people, many of whom show signs of jetlag as they have traveled through different time zones to meet in the assigned location. For a digital working conference, time differences pose new challenges over a prolonged period of time. In our case, contributors dealt with these complications from mid-December through the end of March. Fewer than five contributors 'were lost' in this process, which is an encouraging sign. Being aware of this added complication, each panel and workshop group was asked to identify a time window that would work for them. The resulting three time slots reflect these wishes but there are still individual contributors for whom the conference means a 5 am start in the day or a 9 pm session.

There was a notable rise in awareness of power dynamics ranging from concepts of decolonialization, queer literature and gender perspectives. As we have been able to witness in other conferences, there is a broader concern about eurocentricity and western cultural norms [4]. This inspired us to think of the digital conference hang out places in terms of different cultures. We invite you to meet in a middle-eastern Shisha lounge, or relax in an Asian tea house, perhaps move to the beer garden or visit the juice bar before settling down in the wine cellar.

[4] A conversation and debate reignited also by the current developments around a New European Bauhaus.

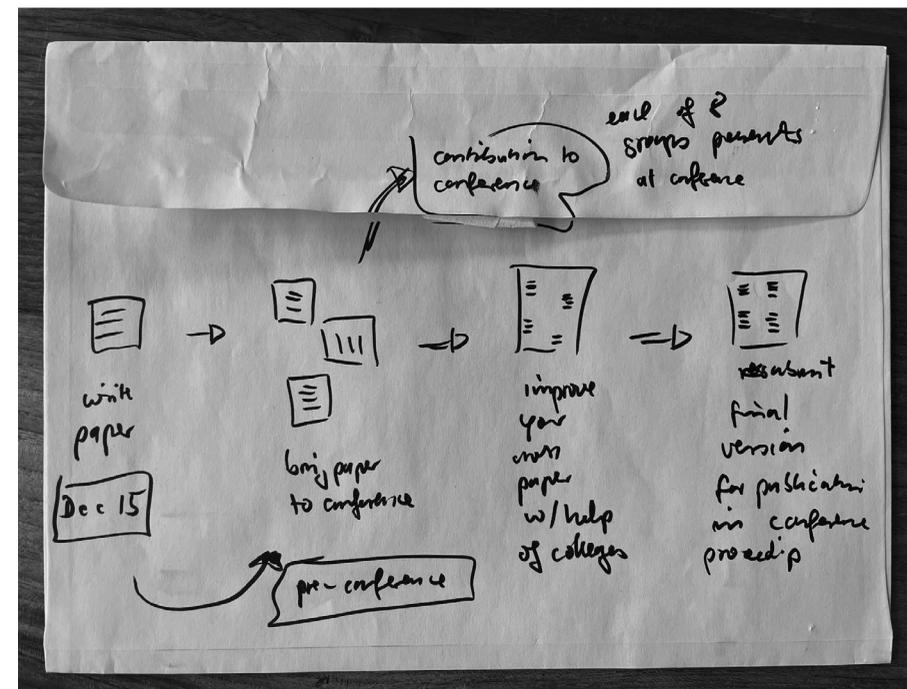


Fig. 2: Conference Sketch November 2020 (Junginger).

## 2 About the Structure of the Proceedings

For the conference proceedings, we identified yet another set of themes that emerged from the panels and workshops. Though one might argue that there are alternative ways to go about this, we found four themes of particular salience. These include papers that offer 1) reflections on the Common Good, 2) papers that focus on how we get to the common good (Striving for the Common Good), 3) papers for how to advance design education about and for the common good (Educating for the Common Good) and finally, 4) the workshops provide examples of Designing for the Common Good.

### 2.1 Reflections on the Common Good

There are a wide range of efforts underway to engage with the questions this conference has pointedly asked but few look outside of design, perhaps missing opportunities to understand the role of (human-centered?) design in a pluralistic democratic society. This has already led to a number of publications by scholars in public management (McGann et al, 2018; Lewis et al, 2020) where authors often give short shrift to design literature and design research, conveniently reducing design to either a method (design thinking) or a profession (service design). We rarely find fundamental discussions of what it is that constitutes a specific design approach relevant to their field. This gap is significant as it is difficult to change the way one is going about designing when one is either not prepared or not willing to reflect on practices in play. Little to no systemic impact can be anticipated here.

## 2.2 Striving for the Common Good

The conference participants represent a self selection of actors who were attracted by the conference theme. This makes any comment on the theme "striving for the common good" a biased undertaking. Nonetheless the papers part of this section of the conference proceedings illustrate the breadth and the depths these efforts are now covering. The challenge for design has always been to retain a critical distance and not simply to be proud of its accomplishments - or to complain about others when things do not turn out the way we like it. What this section shows is that there is plenty of material for design researchers to develop new theoretical constructs that could inform the work going on in other disciplines and other domains.

## 2.3 Educating for the Common Good

The theme of Educating for the Common Good demonstrates that a reorientation of design education is underway. This includes the revision of the curricula structure towards more systemic thinking, the adoption of participatory methodologies and more holistic approaches to support specific interest groups and communities. At the same time, we are witnessing the introduction of educational models, theories, and practices that place design in the context of social, gender, and race inequalities that still exist in society and institutions with a broader discussion challenging the contribution and the role of the designer according to the topic of the common good.

## 2.4 Designing for the Common Good

Finally, the conference workshops have provided some inspiring examples but also have shown us the limits of organizing a conference online with a bare minimum of staff. One particularly interesting workshop we would have liked to see required us to be able to provide access to participants weeks in advance. In this case, our ambition met with the reality of how people sign up for a conference (last minute) and that despite our very personal engagement with all contributors throughout the planning, there were some things we just could not deliver on.

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This conference stands out for the demands it has put on those selected to present their papers and run their workshops. We have asked you to make this your conference, to participate actively in the development of individual panels and the overall conference program. We are so grateful to all of you, across the globe who have supported this exploratory and experimental approach to how an online conference could bring together people, lead to new connections and new insights not only about how we think of a conference but also of designing together. Even now we find the slack channels still being used actively. This indicates that we all have created something of value together. We hope you can cherish this accomplishment with us and extend a big and heartfelt

Thank you!

**Striving Towards a Common Good / Social Design in Emerging Economies / Places, Communities and Collaboration / Methodologies and Research Approaches / Structuring Interaction: Four Viewpoints on Design Methods in Communities / Equity, Justice and Inclusion / Design for Agency / Diverse, Open, Collaborative: Innovative Approaches to Design / Reflections on Designing Agency under Socio-Technical Conditions / Design, Toys and Commoning. A Panel of Pluriversal Approaches / Activating Processes in the Cultural and Civic Space / Making the Design Commons – Methods, Tactics and Processes / Negotiating Ethics, Methods and Responsibility / Future Scenarios for Crisis and Resilience / As Strong as the Weakest Link: A Global Blueprint for Sustainable Practice**

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# Designing New Solutions During Covid-19 through Creativity

## 1 Introduction

Keywords: Creativity, Design practices, COVID-19, Social Innovation.

Gianluca Carella<sup>a\*</sup>,  
Mattia Italia<sup>a</sup>,  
Silvia D'Ambrosio<sup>a</sup>,  
Francesco Zurlo<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Design,  
Politecnico di Milano  
\*gianluca.carella@polimi.it

The COVID-19 represented what Murray (2009) defines as intractable social problems: problems where reactions of government structures and markets often seem to be inadequate. Within this shattering scenario, people rediscovered the power of collaboration as triggers for creating new artefacts and solutions (Manzini, 2015).

The research tried to focus on the role of design as a driver to create new initiatives and activities in response to the crisis. 130 case studies circa were collected, obtaining later a final set of 22 most exemplary initiatives, demonstrating how creative actions contributed to social innovation.

The paper aims to discuss how individuals were the activators and protagonists of bottom-up processes, which have produced solutions that can be identified as common goods, where society benefits as a whole (Hussain, 2018). Collaboration allowed both people and enterprises to develop ecosystems where creatives find space for action and which have a sense of existing only if shared with other people.

The outbreak and rapid spread of the coronavirus between the end of 2019 and the beginning of 2020 caught the whole world off guard. Economies, societies and governments faced a whole new threat, often strictly related to a difficult situation. The consequences observed till now have shown to be severely critical. The European economy alone lost about 7.7% of its GDP in the first quarter of 2020. This is linked to the social difficulties, such as the increase in unemployment, the necessity to stay at home to avoid the spread of the virus, and the worries and sacrifices of the families (ISTAT, 2020). This strong negative impact on society at different levels, from local to global, makes it possible to classify the COVID-19 as a social problem. In fact, following the classification carried out by the University of California, the consequences of what has already been described make the pandemic fall within the social issues and business and economic categories. Despite these globally widespread problems, society has had an unexpected response, showing itself to be cohesive and responsible. The sense of belonging and common destiny (Drury et al, 2009) has allowed the creation of communities more aware of their own needs and what is good for the individuals and the society itself. It is precisely these groups of individuals, with their common goals and relationships, that have represented the means to achieve the common good, making communities and relationships themselves part of the shared good (Hollenbach, 2002; Melé, 2009). Therefore, it is possible to see how individuals, communities and their relationships were the cornerstones of the first part of the pandemic. They were able to propose solutions and initiatives to the unexpected social problem. Each one of them contained a collective dimension within itself, going to alleviate or raise the conditions of the communities (Hussain, 2018). Although even unconsciously, social innovation actions were born, able to act where governments and markets were not able to intervene (Mulgan et al, 2010).

In this panorama design and designers have played a fundamental role, proposing themselves in different positions and in different moments among community initiatives, but always being the figures and the method that "make things happen" (Manzini, 2014).

This research wants to examine some emblematic cases of initiatives that emerged during the Phase 1 of the Italian lockdown born from creative stimuli. An initial collection of about 130 case studies was made. Subsequently, the various cases were skimmed, selecting the 22 most effective and representative of both the contribution of design and the social driver behind them. Their analysis has highlighted the role of design as a driver of social innovation, ending up with different forms of common goods from which the whole of society can benefit.

The article is divided into four main parts. First, the theoretical background will give an overview of the main themes covered: COVID-19, common good, social problem and social innovation. Then, the methodology will follow, by expressing how the research has been conceived. Subsequently, the different emerged emblematic macro themes will be presented, by taking in consideration their relationship with social innovation and their role as common goods. Finally, conclusions at the end will show final considerations on the contribution of design.

## 2 Theoretical Background

### 2.1 COVID-19 and New Normalities

Since December 2019, Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei Province, has been declared as the epicentre of a new pneumonia, later identified as a strain of SARS-CoV, named COVID-19 (Zhou et al, 2020). During the first three months the virus began to spread globally and reached Italy, creating the first outbreak in the town of Codogno, in the north of the country. Immediately afterwards, with 118,000 infected and 4,291 dead in 114 countries, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus a pandemic (Guzzonato, 2020).

To fight the spread of the virus and to prevent the collapse of health structures, the Italian Government, like many others, was forced to adopt containment measures through a national lockdown. In addition to personal anti-accounting measures such as physical distancing, washing hands often, not touching face and wearing face masks (Bavel et al, 2020), further restrictions have been approved to prevent the circulation of individuals and the opening of commercial activities. The restrictions have affected the vast majority of production activities, leaving only those related to essential goods and services, including the food chain and the production of sanitary materials and equipment.

Despite these difficulties, Italian society showed strong cohesion during the first lockdown, manifested through the adoption of careful and responsible attitudes (ISTAT, 2020).

The new containment measures have led to a number of changes in people's daily life. New needs have emerged, including the need for new forms of social relationship and/or collaboration. These have produced new bases for social innovation solutions that led to the creation of a large number of common goods.

### 2.2 The Acceleration of Common Goods During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Although it is a common opinion that in a dangerous situation people act panicked and selfishly (Clarke, 2002), COVID-19 has shown us the opposite. Help groups and initiatives of all sorts and nature arose during the first wave of contagion to rescue people and companies, in contrast to the common belief. A factor capable of explaining what happened is the sense of belonging and com-

mon destiny that has spread initially (Drury et al, 2009). This has created a natural push towards the community, to act for the common good and not the individual (Bavel et al., 2020).

COVID-19 has allowed people to be aware of what this good can be, to pursue it, and so to have unity and be closer to the perfect state (Etzioni, 2014). The result is a more aware society, made up of individuals who, in a whole new condition, are pursuing well-being. This condition, or rather society, represents what is summarised by Hollenbach (1989) as an "interactive community" social model and used by him and several other authors as a prerequisite for an ethical-social vision of communitarian/common-good. Common good it is also identified as the good of being in a community, because (the common good) is only realised in relation to others and it is through relationships that people can achieve well-being (Hollenbach & Hollenbach, 2002). This because individuals are not isolated from all others but rather are immersed in a network of relationships that constitute the common good (O'Brian, 2008; Melé, 2009). This concept is widely rooted and was already mentioned inside the Aristotelian vision where the good of the individual was subordinate to that of the community. Although for Cahill (2004) and O'Brien (2008) it is in fact reductive to think common goods only as the sum of the individualistic good of singles.

Among the different kind of communities who can contribute to the creation of common goods, Solomon (1992) identify also firms. They, too, must contribute to the common good through their goals and objectives, always bearing in mind their relationships with other entities (Bower, 1988; Melé, 2009). There are different ways in which a company can contribute, ranging from services to the creation of economic added value (Melé, 2002). Given the different situations that companies and individuals experience, the contribution to the common good is never the same and differs according to circumstances (Melé, 2009). Since conditions can worsen rapidly the community become very important, sharing the burden of the problem. The struggle, therefore, becomes a common aspect that everyone takes on and contributes to the good of society (Hussain, 2018).

### 2.3 Answering to Social Problems

The pandemic situation has highlighted a number of social problems that have emerged with greater strength and characterization. The community response was manifested through the development of a series of initiatives, products that can be characterized as common goods. The importance of social problems, their relevance and the need for their resolution is at the center of the debate in recent years, even before the advent of COVID-19.

In recent years many theorists and experts from all over the world, and most importantly from very different backgrounds, have started framing, evaluating and addressing social problems within both profit and not-for profit institutions and businesses. Worth mentioning from its etymology, 'social problems or issues' assess to a condition or circumstance that has a negative impact on a large number of individuals at local, national, international and even global level. Encounter and address social problems, means involving individuals of a community, an organisation or the entire society itself: sociologists, economics, urban planners, policy makers and managers are changing their objectives in serving the society and improving social conditions. Lots of theorists and experts have tried to differ and cluster social issues by merging their perspectives with the fields of study related to the most relevant social sciences: Anthropology, Communication Studies, Education, Economics, Geography, History, Law, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology.

The social problems are those complexes, including wicked, problems of collective action (Marshall, 2013) that are also named as those complex public and/or shared problems that imply new public arenas, agenda and goods. Within this scenario, design plays its fundamental role in supporting and enabling a 'powerful global conversation', between companies and the people they serve. According to Design Council, public sector organisations, charities and foundations are recognising the potential of design to solve social and environmental challenges, thanks to its mindset and multiple assets that are based on human-centred methods, design thinking tools and systemic visions.

Lots has been explored and published about the methodologies and abilities taken from the design field that aim at beneficial outcomes for individuals, groups, communities and societies. Design is a collaborative creative process and, therefore a social activity (Warr et al., 2005) because it allows high-impact solutions to social problems through a bottom-up approach rather than imposed from the top. T. Brown and J. Wyatt (2010) affirmed that design addresses the many social and environmental needs of people by crossing the traditional boundaries between public, profit and not-for profit sectors because of its being optimistic, constructive and experiential.

The pandemic, as previously pointed out, has revealed a number of social problems. The resolution of these, has in most cases been possible thanks to the production of common goods as result of social innovation actions. Several individuals, parts of communities, have been activated through different ways to develop solutions useful for the common good. Among the different things performed, people also started to collaborate, mixing their own resources in order to produce something for the community.

Manzini (2015) stated that social innovation initiatives emerge from "the creative recombination of existing assets (from social capital to historical heritage, from traditional craftsmanship to accessible advanced technology), which aim to achieve socially recognized goals in a new way" (Manzini, 2015).

In this vision, social innovation represented a very fundamental approach to face part of the new conditions emerged from the pandemic situation and offer adequate solutions. In fact, it is largely recognized that social innovation can act as problems solver for those situations that can be considered very difficult, if not intractable. Intractable social problems are for Mulgan and his colleagues (2010) problems where both government policy and market solutions are proved as grossly inadequate. In this sense, social innovation solutions can break traditional economic models representing solutions shared with different actors and sustained by their motivation. It is important to underline that results of social innovation initiatives should lead a social change (Howaldt and Schwarz, 2010).

Social innovations are produced thanks to a mix of behaviourist approach through actions taken by individuals and stimulus coming from the external context (Cajaiba-Santana, 2014). It is fundamental to start from yourself, without waiting for the change to come from institutions.

Both the strong impact and impact of social innovation is nowadays widely recognised and also for-profit organisations seek to create social value through a range of CSR programs. (Dees&Anderson, 2006) This is just an example that represents the massive multiplication that social innovation initiatives are having. In addition to the multiplication of cases, many of them have become so important that they are considered mainstream examples. (Mulgan, 2006)

In this panorama design and designer can have two main roles, both extremely important to reach final solutions: designing with communities and designing for communities (Manzini, 2014). The former refers to a participation where it is necessary to facilitate both collaboration and convergence, acting as peers with the different involved actors; the latter refers to a proactive action of designers who have to implement new solutions for specific collaborative services.

Designers can play a variety of roles within the process, acting as facilitators, triggers, members of co-design teams and design activist. To summarize all these different functions, Manzini (2014) stated that designers inside the social innovation processes are those that "make things happen".

## 2.4 Social Innovation as Driver to Produce New Solutions Starting from Social Problems

### 3 Methodology

During the unexpected COVID-19 emergency situation in Italy, researchers and collaborators from CI.Lab - Creative Industries Lab of the Department of Design at the Politecnico di Milano, started to collect case studies focused on cultural and creative industries, small and medium-sized enterprises that were forced to think and act in new 'creative' ways.

During the lockdown period, professional and personal spheres collided and combined, by forming new ecosystems to explore, understand and most importantly to protect. Therefore, from across Italy some 'best practices' were selected and analysed from a design point of view in order to provide a valuable reflection on the scenarios that professionals and non-professionals alike, both creative and otherwise, will have to face in the near future.

The result of the research is stated in a digital booklet entitled *"From COVID to Creativity"* spread through media channels in collaboration with *Symbola - Fondazione per le qualità italiane*, and licensed with Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

As above mentioned, the research work analysed how CCIs and SMEs have responded to this emergency, by making use of their resources and bring creative ideas and innovation into play. The research questions at the basis were thus the following ones: *"What responses did cultural and creative businesses, small and medium-sized, give to the COVID-19 emergency?"* and *"What were the contributions dictated by creative impulses and stimuli?"*.

The investigation and its related actions of selection and analysis involved tools and methodologies from the design field, with the aim of collecting and processing both qualitative and quantitative data. As such, the investigation was structured upon precise objectives, including:

- Understanding and visualising the Italian panorama during the first lockdown period, with a focus on the contributions of creative and cultural companies.
- Analysing and summarising the various interpretations or themes underlying the possible levers for innovation.
- Mapping and sharing significant case studies that provide qualitative aspects of the phenomenon.

Therefore, through a collaborative process over the period between March and May 2020, CI.Lab collected 130 case studies circa from a range of sources (magazines, social networks, online videos, direct contacts) based on potential creative actions for innovation by companies, small agencies and creative individuals. An in-depth examination of these case studies made it possible to identify, by affinity and response to the various research hypotheses, certain

### 4 Design as a Creative Mean in Response to COVID-19

#### 4.1 Generosity and Solidarity (Macro Theme 1)

#### 4.2 Enabling Widespread Creativity (Macro Theme 2)

#### 4.3 Entertainment / Education (Macro Theme 3)

#### 4.4 Channel Innovation (Macro Theme 4)

recurring interpretations and themes, which were later analysed in detail with a selection of 44 case studies. Finally, the researchers selected 22 exemplary initiatives which demonstrate how creative energies manifested, spread and transformed themselves as a result of the different moods that the pandemic brought in each individual. These initiatives were clustered in 6 macro themes.

The conducted research allowed the identification of 6 macro themes, that are further illustrated. Moreover, a selection of three best practices will be presented as a convergence among the valuable topics of social innovation and common good. The idea is to give a real perception not only about the different macro themes among which the different initiatives arise, but to have also an overview about some of the concrete actions that were realized.

Confronted with adversity, the world's population has come together to form something greater, something that is often forgotten or taken for granted: a common sense and awareness. As a result, people came up with all kinds of creative solutions to provide what they had to their neighbours, making their time and skills available, resulting in an incredibly wide and diverse range of solidarity. Here, the various digital tools have allowed everyone to remain close to one another: sharing platforms, video tools, creative and digital products and services created and donated to others out of pure altruism.

Facing the difficulties of the past few months, everybody rediscovered their designer side, creating new solutions to the problems related to the everyday life. Tutorials, webinars, websites and platforms have unlocked and spread skills, allowing for new experiences, new "first times". In this case the new role and usage of creative synergies were emphasised.

During the months of lockdown, homes across Italy became "micro-worlds" to re-explore, observe, accept and respect with particular care and attention: streamlining spaces and resources, learning to measure out our living spaces, and discovering details and potential gaps that we had never before noticed (Molinari, 2020). Individuals found themselves with more free time than usual, and new needs for quality emerged both in terms of family and individual time. Therefore, new entertainment contents started to be shared, readily provided and easily accessible thanks to new uses for communication channels.

The pandemic has highlighted how important the relationships are, at any level. Friendships, working, romantic, and customer-business relationships have been profoundly rearranged by social distancing measures. Physical contact points, which previously provided a primary channel of communication for consumers, were suddenly closed. As a result, the virtual world came in response, by

forcing even the smallest businesses to make their first forays into it in order to continue communicating with their loyal customer base.

#### 4.5 Partnership (Macro Theme 5)

COVID-19 was the first global pandemic of the new millennium. This new condition of danger and isolation created new needs and requests in people which big companies and SMEs have done their best to meet. But the pandemic itself has made people much more aware of their own limits and abilities, bringing emotions and behaviours to the surface. Therefore, the ability to band together and work towards a common goal thus became a priority once more. Companies, organisations, associations and small local businesses, despite coming from the most disparate of fields, came together to help one another survive, sometimes managing to satisfy their customers' needs where individually they would have been unable. This was not just a matter of mere economic value, but also of initiatives promoting moral and ethical values which, at such a crucial time, do a great deal to launch strong messages to customers, messages of openness.

#### 4.6 Revision of the Value System (Macro Theme 6)

Through the last centuries, the various civilisations of the world have increasingly differentiated their value systems, which even today form the basis for the lifestyles that we all care about. During the first lockdown, the commonly accepted behaviours and habits have been affected by deep reflections promoted by major companies, such as the fashion giants. These reflections are shifts towards transformation, or innovations, aimed at becoming systemic and capable of changing both the promoting brand, along with its image, and the various companies that exist in its orbit.

#### 4.7 Three Best Practices Coming from the Creative Drive

Within this overwhelming context, the research projects tried therefore to empathise the way in which companies, especially the smallest ones, have rediscovered the value and the mutual benefit of collaboration, based on the use and sharing of common good. The 3 case studies that are worth to note are initiatives that were developed in response to the COVID-19 emergency by highlighting the three pillars that balance the synopsis among common good, social problems and social innovation in terms of valuable collaboration and sharing of an open and widespread awareness.

*STEAM da Casa* by La Tata Robotica, a project started in response to the lockdown by Tata Robotica, a firm created by a young researcher to make technological dissemination for educational purposes. Enrica Amplo created and shared videos and activities dedicated to STEAM and more. This case study demonstrates how, during the lockdown, new forms of gift emerged and that involved new types of virtuous relationships and interactions that occur, without fear, between the digital and the physical. The "new forms of a gift" offered by creative experts who, as in the case of La Tata

Robotica, promoted new digital interactions related to physical actions.

*Covidash* is a platform developed by Sheldon studio, a communication studio that has made available its skills to create a tool that would improve the visualization, and therefore the monitoring, of Coronavirus related data. Understanding data, especially those relating to infection, has become of primary importance during the emergency. Data such as the epidemiological curve, however, can be difficult to understand if not displayed or explained clearly. What differentiates this project from others of the same type is that they used infographics to deliver complete, clarity and simple information (data from each region are compared). What has been created is a special website that works as an alternative communication tool between who provides the data (civil protection) and who must use it (citizens).

*Le Finestre sul Cortile* is a new program by RadioShare to support people during the quarantine. Once a week 4/5 inhabitants of social housing were interviewed, talking about their daily lives and meeting with guests who deal with solidarity initiatives. RadioShare is a web radio aimed to promote social cohesion that, since its first signal in 1901 thanks to Guglielmo Marconi, has always been one of the most popular tools for mass communication, still today. Through the transmission of sound contents, that are accessible in real-time from different geographical areas, the radio instantly creates connections between people by implying opportunities for reflection and comparison. *Le Finestre sul Cortile* aimed to give voice to the Milanese people who were most affected by the quarantine, by supporting and involving them by sharing their daily life stories. Thanks to both positive and negative emotions that were at the basis of the many stories collected, this communication channels allowed a reduction of the physical distance supported by virtual interactions between users and solidarity entities.

## 5 Conclusions

The Pandemic situation represented a crucial moment for the creation of innovations arising from people. The different initiatives resulted in a clear example of social innovation solutions. These initiatives are always characterized from people who start from their own problems but also by the suffering of their friends, their family or other people with which they empathise (Mulgan, 2006). Some of the main drivers were represented by both empathy and personal motivations that have assumed a crucial role. In this panorama, to offer an adequate answer and to contribute more effectively to society, and thus to address significant positive change, it is therefore necessary to study and apply crisscross relationships and discourses between different subsystems. In this intertwining of spheres, design had the occasion to play an important role. A new social agenda for designers is becoming more widespread, by facing unique challenges, including long time horizons and issues

(Sterman, 2002). According to O'Neill (2005), the way individuals look at problems affects how they study and try to solve them. Therefore, a systemic design thinking perspective demands a further and in-depth investigation based on the exploration and application of mixed method, by integrating social science and design inquiry, co-creation, and cross-sectors collaborations. Through discourse, groups of people construct a shared story, a collective knowledge that deepen the capacity to take action (Sutton & Kemp, 2006). Design should therefore be taken into account as one of the most important levers in situation as the one we are facing, being able to give appropriate answers that led to common goods for the whole of society.

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## A

*Aïcha Abbadi* graduated from an interdisciplinary MA Design course following a BA Fashion Design, both at the University of the Arts Berlin. Her research interests, explored through theory and practice, include participatory design processes, niche fashion practices and critical pedagogy.

*Lisa M. Abendroth* is a design educator, practitioner, researcher, and author. Her work investigates community-led design practices that embolden access and equity. Abendroth is a SEED Network (www.seednetwork.org) co-founder and the SEED Education Director. She is an AIGA Fellow.

*Joni Adamson* is President's Professor of Environmental Humanities in the Department of English and Director of the Environmental Humanities Initiative (EHI) at the Wrigley Global Institute of Sustainability at Arizona State University. In 2019, she was the Benjamin N. Duke Fellow at the National Humanities Center.

*Marius Aeberli* is an interaction designer with experience in strategic design for digital innovation (Siemens, Nagra, Novetur) and social innovation (WWF, Red Cross, Unleash). Currently Head of Education at EPFL+ECAL Lab, lecturer and design researcher at the College of Humanities, EPFL.

*Haider Akmal* is a PhD Candidate and Research Associate at Lancaster University, UK. His PhD thesis discusses the use of Play and Philosophy within Design Research for imagining More-than Human Centred Design approaches through Speculative and Ludic Design.

*Jane Anderson* is an architect and Professor at Oxford Brookes University. She is a National Teaching Fellow and Higher Education Academy Principal Fellow. She is a co-founder of the Live Projects Network. Her research is focused on the pedagogy of live project education.

*Rendy Anoh* an Eco-Social Designer, Graphic Visionary and Concept Visualizer. My interests are in conceptualizing processes and ideas. I am interested in the social role of a space and in the relations which it can trigger in the community.

*Giovanny Arbelaez Garcés*, Ph.D. is Research Associate at ERPI laboratory of the Université de Lorraine and part of the Lorraine Fab Living Lab where he advises companies and territories in the development of innovation and research projects related to smart-city development and healthcare.

*Safouan Azouzi* research interests focus on the relationships between design and socio-political issues, in particular the theory of the commons and its relationship with the territory and the resilience of communities to climate change.

## B

*Valentina Barrera* is an architect whose work focuses on participatory approaches to urban planning and development.

*Giovanni Baule* is Ordinary Professor, Design Department, Politecnico di Milano. In 2016-2017, he was co-editor with Elena Caratti of the book 'Design is Translation' that received an honourable mention at the XXV edition of the ADI Compasso d'Oro award.

*Alyson Beaton* is an interdisciplinary designer living and working in Austin, Texas. Her research and practice are focused on sustainability in cities and urban living.

*Viktor Bedö* is a researcher at Critical Media Lab Basel and visiting research fellow at the Centre for Urban and Community Research at Goldsmiths, University of London. His practice is one of writing and creating playful and speculative urban experiences to critically engage with techno-optimist imaginaries of urban life that allow for commoning-based, feisty and resilient smart city alternatives.

*Juan Sebastian Bedoya* is an architect and community facilitator. His current work focuses in community empowerment, public infrastructure and participatory methods.

*Bryan Bell* is a public interest designer and writer. In 1991 he founded the non-profit organization Design Corps (www.design-corps.org). His current work includes the SEED Network which Bell co-founded. He has co-published four books and organized nineteen Structures for Inclusion international conferences.

*Eric Benson* is an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Illinois. He researches design utopias (systems thinking) and dystopias (climate fiction hopepunk). Two of his most prolific works are the Fresh Press Agri-Fiber Paper Making Lab and Re-nourish.

*Anne H. Berry's* research focuses on race/representation in the field of design and educational pedagogy. Her co-authored article *The Intersection of Electoral Politics and Design Education* was recently published by the international design research journal *Message*.

*Pedro Bessa*, PhD in Design studies (University of Aveiro, 2005). Director of B.A. Design course at Univ. Aveiro (2007-2010), currently Director of M.A. Artistic Creation course at the same university; areas of interest: critical theory, design studies, gender studies.

*Tina Braun* studied Visual Communication at the University of the Arts in Bern and at the University of Art and Design in Basel. She worked several years for international design agencies, among others in Berlin, Copenhagen and Zurich. Since 2020 she is a PhD student in the research project "Settings of Dying" (SNSF project, 2020-2023).

## C

*Elena Caratti* is Associate Professor, Design Department, Politecnico di Milano. In 2016-2017, she was co-editor with Giovanni Baule of the book 'Design is Translation' that received an honourable mention at the XXV edition of the ADI Compasso d'Oro award.

*Stephanie Carleklev* is a senior lecturer in Design. Her research interests cover design research, visual communication theory and practice, and how design education can support students to become inspiring and caring design practitioners.

*Serena Cangiano* Ph.D In design sciences at IUAV University of Venice, she is researcher and head of SUPSI FabLab, the digital fabrication and open innovation lab of the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Southern Switzerland.

*Gianluca Carella* is PhD candidate at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano. His research is focusing on how design thinking can be implemented inside organizations to foster innovation. His research topics deal also with strategic design, design management and entrepreneurship.

*Hillary Carey* is a Ph.D. candidate in the Transition Design program. She explores design methods for understanding and contributing to racial justice.

*Kate Catterall* is a designer and educator. Born in Belfast, N. Ireland, she studied at the Glasgow School of Art and currently lives in Austin, Texas. She teaches design at the University of Texas at Austin and her research is positioned in the interstitial area between design intervention and the social practice of public art. Her research explores the ontological potential and broader cultural impacts of design on contemporary society.

*Ellen Christensen* is an Assistant Professor of Visual Communication Design at San Francisco State University. She holds a BA in American Studies from UC Berkeley and an MFA in Graphic Design from the Rhode Island School of Design.

*Dr. Simon Colwill* is a teacher and researcher of Landscape Architecture at the Technical University Berlin and Brandenburg University of Technology. His designbuild work combines teaching, research and practice in an interdisciplinary context. He is a member of Co-Coon Studio and co-founder of the designbuildXchange network.

*Paul Coulton* is the Chair of Speculative and Game Design in the open and exploratory design-led research studio Imagination Lancaster. He uses a research through design approach to create fictional representations of future worlds in which emerging technologies have become mundane.

*Benedetta Crippa* is a graphic designer and communication advisor based in Stockholm, Sweden. Her practice is a focused investigation on how graphic design can expand beyond current boundaries of methodology and aesthetics. As guest teacher at Konstfack University she is the initiator of the first course of its kind on sustainability through visuality.

*Lilian Crum* is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at Lawrence Technological University, USA. She is interested in design practice, brand design, and design for public good.

*Iva Čukić* is an activist and a researcher in the fields of urban commons, urban transformation and self-organisation. She is co-founder of the collective Ministry of Space formed in 2011, with the aim to pursue spatial justice.

## D

*Heather Daam-Rossi* is an Innovation Designer at The Moment, and teaches at the Institute without Boundaries in Toronto, Canada. She holds a Master of Design from the Design Academy Eindhoven. Heather's passion is engaging non-designers in the design process and has spent her career working as a social service designer and design researcher around the world.

*Silvia D'Ambrosio* is a Research Fellow at Ci.Lab - Creative Industries Lab at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano. She works in several national and international projects focused on the empowerment of design thinking and human centered design tools and methods.

*Juan de la Rosa* is a design researcher and associate professor at Universidad Nacional de Colombia. PhD.C. at UIUC with a research interest in participatory methods for future mapping and design research tools, especially the use of prototypes as co-created future systemic probes.

*Dhriti Dhaundiyal* Product Designer by education with research interests in automobile design, participatory research and behaviour change.

*Marie Dietze* has a background in industrial design (University of the Arts Berlin, Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design Jerusalem) and graduated the master's program at the interface design department of University of Applied Sciences Potsdam. As a PhD candidate at the Weizenbaum Institute for the Networked Society, she researches the issues of accessibility, creative and socio-cultural potential of open source technologies.

*Laurent Dupont*, Ph.D. is Senior researcher at ERPI and co-founder and scientific manager of the Lorraine Fab Living Lab where he designs, implements and evaluates new processes, based on collaborative innovation involving users, companies and territories, generating smart and sustainable Cities.

## E

*Dr. Jonathan Antonio Edelman* is an Adjunct Professor and Head of the Digital Health Design Lab at the Hasso Plattner Institute's Digital Health Center. His research and teaching at the HPI focus on Human-Centered Design in Digital Health, specializing in Human-Centered Machine Learning, Digital Transformation, and Design Team Dynamics. He also serves as a Visiting Professor in Design at Politecnico di Milano. Dr. Edelman is the founder of the Center for Advanced Design Studies.

*Jérôme Elissalde* is a strategic learning officer. Through training, collaborative workshops, diagnostics and support, he addresses the circulation and strategic use of knowledge as powerful lever for continuous adjustment. He founded *Perspectiv.dev* in 2019.

*Meret Ernst* is a lecturer in design history and design theory at the Institute of Industrial Design and the Institute of Aesthetic Practice and Theory at the Academy of Arts and Design in Basel and the Academy of the Arts in Bern, MA Design. As a writer, she combines scholarly work with design criticism, promoting both her field and a critical debate climate. In 2016 she initiated 'Design History Network' to promote the awareness, research and mediation of design history in Switzerland. Currently, she is preparing a research project on the history of Industrial Design Education.

## F

*Raffaella Fagnoni*, full professor in design at Luav University of Venice since December 2019. Previously, at the University of Genoa, she directed the master's degree course in Product and Event Design and the PhD in Design. Her research activity concerns social and environmental issues, social innovation.

*Michelle Fehler* is a Clinical Assistant Professor and Biomimicry Professional who focuses on defining a life-centered design methodology by infusing biomimicry into the design process. She develops various tools that make the biomimetic approach more accessible to designers from various disciplines.

*Martina Fineder* is professor for design theory and design research at the University of Wuppertal (DE). Her main research interests are socially and ecologically responsive design and consumer cultures, experimental methods for empirical design research, visual and material culture analyses.

*Griselda Flesler* Doctoral Candidate at the School of Social Sciences (University of Buenos Aires, UBA). Magister in Communication Design and Graphic Designer (UBA). Full Professor of Design and Gender Studies (UBA). Head of the Gender Office at FADU-UBA. Researcher in Gender, Space-attachment and Design. Director of PublicVoices, feminist-activist sound recording group. Visiting Professor and Lecturer at the UAM, Mexico, and FHNW, Switzerland.

*Wendy Fountain* is a designer, researcher and educator for resilience making - that is, adaptive practices of living with ecological insight, traditional know-how and creative exploration in place with a particular focus on everyday practices at the scale of the home and community, particularly food and shelter.

*Athina Fousteri* has an academic background both in Architecture and Early Childhood Education. She is a PhD candidate in the field of toy design, as a fellow of the Onassis Foundation, seeking to explore children's participation in the post-industrial context.

*Judy Frater* 30-year Kutch resident, Ashoka Fellow Frater founded Kala Raksha Trust /Museum, and Kala Raksha Vidhyalaya/ Somaiya Kala Vidya, design schools for artisans. Textile Museum Associate Curator, author of *Threads of Identity*, Frater received the 2009 Sir Misha Black Medal.

## G

*Paul Bryan Gamboa* is a popular knowledge advocate and researcher in the La Vaca community. He is currently developing various educational projects with young population of La Vaca and community empowerment.

*Carlos Andrés Garzón* is an architect and a community facilitator. He focuses his work in public infrastructure and community-based project for urban spaces.

*Silvia Gasparotto* Assistant Professor at the University of the Republic of San Marino. She was awarded a Ph.D. in Design Science from IUAV University of Venice in 2016 and has published essays in national and international journals.

*Cheryl C. Giraudy*, B.Arch., MSc. OAA MRAIC Associate Professor, OCAD University is an architect engaging inclusive design research and advocacy practice for equitable built environments and public space. She held position of Associate Dean, Faculty of Design from 2008–2013.

*Adrian Gradinar* is a Lecturer in Smart Home Futures focusing on speculative practice-based approaches to exploring ideas around interactivity, personalisation, artificial intelligence, data privacy and transparency, immersion, more-than-human design approaches and better design of Internet of Things objects and spaces.

*Moritz Greiner-Petter* is designer and junior researcher at IXDM, FHNW Academy of Art and Design Basel, Switzerland. His research interests are focussed on critical interface theories and the design of epistemic tools and formats.

## H

*Lynn Harles* is a research fellow at Fraunhofer Center for Responsible Research and Innovation (“Design-based Strategies” team). She is currently doing her doctorate at Bauhaus-University Weimar on the potentials of speculative design practices for engaging science communication (focusing on biotechnologies).

*Ursula Hartig* is an architect focusing on academic designbuild . She held the Chair of Planning and Building in a Global Context at the University of Applied Sciences München (2016-20). She co-directed the research-consortium European DesignBuild Knowledge Network, developing the dbXchange.eu web-platform. She is co-founder of cocoon-studio.

*Dr. Marie Heidingsfelder* is head of the team “Design-based Strategies” at Fraunhofer Center for Responsible Research and Innovation. Current projects focus on science-communication, design fiction and design methods in innovation. She holds a PhD from the University of the Arts Berlin.

*Laura C. Heym* uses research-based service design, creative participative methods and graphical tools to foster the equality of opportunities in the eco-social transformation. She works in small design agencies, public institutions and a think-and-do tank for rural development.

*Sherin Helmy* B.Sc. in Product Design, Faculty of Applied Sciences and Arts at the GUC. Currently is a Clinical Innovation Fellow with RISE Institute Passionate about all forms of art and design. I have a big passion for design, research and Critical Thinking.

*Lorenz Herfurth* is a design researcher who recently moved across the Atlantic from Scotland to Quebec. He is a member of CRITS, the research centre at Saint Paul University's School of Social Innovation (Ottawa). Lorenz holds a PhD from Lancaster University (UK) and is advisory board member of the Arts, Design and Communication in Higher Education (ADCHE) journal.

*Richard Herriott*, Associate Professor, Industrial Design, Design School Kolding. Works teaching BA, MA and PhD levels, with design theory, aesthetics, co-design, accessibility and research design.

*Luisa Hilmer* is a designer and design historian based in Hamburg, Germany. She graduated from the MA History of Design programme at the Royal College of Art and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London. Her research focuses on contemporary and historical participatory design processes, the formation of space and museology.

*Elise Hodson* is a Post-doctoral Researcher in Design Economies in the Department of Design at Aalto University. Research areas include the social value and impacts of design, and distributed authorship in global design practice. She is formerly Chair, School of Design, George Brown College.

*Michel Hohendanner* MA (Advanced Design, UAS Munich) www.michelhohendanner.com; Returning from Kyoto Institute of Technology (visiting researcher), Michel currently works at the Institute of Digital Ethics at HdM Stuttgart. Research interests: design linking technology and social/political value systems, focusing on digital public environments.

*Michael Hohl* is a designer, design researcher and educator. As a professor for design theory & design research he also supervises Ph.D. students from art, design and architecture, organises international conferences around design research and also is an editor for publications. He is a member of the American Society for Cybernetics and the Werkbund. He lives in Dessau, Germany.

*Youngbok Hong* is a professor of Visual Communication Design and graduate program director at Herron School of Art and Design, Indiana University. Her research interests include: processes of reasoning and action involved in designing, visual sense making in qualitative research, and visual communication in collaborative problem solving.

*Dr. Jeffrey Hou* is Professor and Director of the Urban Commons Lab at the University of Washington, Seattle. His work focuses on design activism, civic engagement, and public space. He is a co-founder of the Pacific Rim Community Design Network.

*Stephan Hruza* is a professional furniture designer and cabinet-maker. He teaches practice- and material-oriented courses both at BA and MA level at Linnaeus University. His research interests lie in practice-based knowledge with a focus on sustainability, materials and reuse.

*Daniel Hug* (Dr. phil.) works, researches and teaches in the areas of sound studies, sound and interaction design and music education. He is the Co- director of the Sound Design Master at ZHdK, founder of “Hear Me Interact!”, and member of “Audio Mostly - Conference on Interaction with Sound”.

## I

*Merle Ibach* is junior researcher at IIG / CML, FHNW Academy of Art and Design Basel, Switzerland and a PhD candidate in the doctoral research group “Digital Media / Knowledge Cultures” at Leuphana University, Germany. Her research focus is on design cultures.

*Geoff Isaac* is a doctoral candidate at the University of Technology Sydney. His doctoral project on the history of the plastic chair focuses on how designers are responding to the environmental crisis by experimenting with renewable carbon-based plastics.

*Mattia Italia* is PhD candidate at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano. His research focuses on how sustainable materials can be introduced into a packaging company and influence its strategy. Other research topics are footwear sustainability, strategic design and CCI.

*Andrea Iten*, artist, MA in Transdisciplinarity in the Arts. She works in the fields of drawing, installation art and new media, and was an assistant to Professor P. Jenny, Dept. of Arts and Architecture at ETH Zurich. Since 2000 she has worked as a guest lecturer and is scientific associate at Institut HyperWerk, Basel.

## J

*Michael Janzer* is a doctoral student in the field of design theory and design research at the University of Wuppertal. He graduated in design engineering, with distinction, from Niederrhein University, worked internationally as a sportswear designer and taught at Reutlingen University.

*Dustin Jessen* is a lecturer at Folkwang University of the Arts and a guest researcher at Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy. He graduated from the RCA in 2014. The German Environment Agency is currently funding his doctoral research on sustainability.

## K

*Patrycja Kaszynska* is Senior Research Fellow at Social Design Institute, UAL and Research Associate at Culture, King's College London. She is also Research Affiliate at New College of the Humanities at NorthEastern where she was Head of the Art History Faculty before joining UAL. Dr Kaszynska turned to explore the notion of cultural value, first as Project Researcher for the AHRC Cultural Value Project and then Project Manager for the Cultural Value Scoping Project. Patrycja is now leading the valuation work for UAL Social Design Institute. Her interests are at the cross section of critical theory, pragmatic philosophy, cultural studies and design with the key focus on the theory of value and valuation studies.

*Jonas Kellermeier* is a cultural critic and a junior researcher at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures. He is currently pursuing his PhD within the SNSF-funded project *Paradigms of Ubi-Comp*. His research interests lie in the field of translation between different socio- and techno-logics.

*Dr Lucy Kimbell* is Director, Social Design Institute, and Professor of Contemporary Design Practices at University of the Arts London. Her research looks at the use of design expertise to address organisational, social and public policy issues.

*Felix Kosok*, born in 1988, is a research fellow at the University of Art and Design (HfG) in Offenbach am Main and at the Leibniz Peace Research Institute (PRIF), and is also a graphic designer. He completed his doctorate at the HfG Offenbach under Prof. Dr. Juliane Rebentisch and Prof. Klaus Hesse. His research focuses on design aesthetics as well as political graphic design. In addition to research, he is himself involved in practical design work with studio069, which he founded in Frankfurt in 2015.

*Gwendolyn Kulick* is a design researcher, interested in well intended but often dysfunctional and absurd cultural, political and economical encounters in the context of development and social innovation. Since 2004 she has been reaching design in Lahore, Berlin and Cairo.

*Lucas Kuster* works at the intersection between transformation design, social sciences and arts. He is currently a doctoral candidate at the Europa-Universität Flensburg, Germany. His research is guided by practice-led approaches which he uses to explore design-roles in the context of social challenges.

## L

*Marc Laperrouza* is a scientist and lecturer at EPFL. His research looks at innovation in emerging markets and at specific aspects of China's innovation landscape. He is also passionate about pedagogy and, in particular, interdisciplinary and experiential learning.

*Joana Lessa* is a Senior Lecturer (tenured) at University of Algarve (UALg) and researcher at the Research Centre for Architecture, Urbanism and Design of the University of Lisbon. Her research interests include: Design Experience; Digital Media; Emotional Design; Speculative and Critical Design. As a means to contribute to environmental sustainable initiatives she integrates the UNESCO chair in Ecohydrology of UALg and the Advisory Committee of Global Network of Water Museums (a UNESCO-IHP Priority Initiative).

*George Liamadis* is an Assistant Professor, Head of the Lab of Industrial Design (AUTH) and founder of Design Lab for Kids. He is also a visiting professor in the School of Architecture (AUTH) and in the postgraduate programme MSc in Strategic Product Design (IHU).

*Joseph Lindley* is a Research Fellow interested in how Design Research can contribute towards radical-yet-responsible applications of contemporary technologies including Artificial Intelligence and the Internet of Things.

*Ruth Little* is a Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Sheffield. She is interested in agricultural and food-related issues, including animal and plant health management, policy evaluation, and innovative new approaches to stakeholder and public engagement in decision-making on agricultural and environmental policies.

## M

*Shiri Mahler* an Eco-Social Designer, Writer and Creative strategist. My primary interest is understanding things, places and people. On my journey for knowledge I enjoy re-thinking paradigms through communication, experimenting with ideas and forms, to purify a coherent message.

*Alice Martin* is a PhD student in design in the PROJEKT laboratory at the University of Nîmes. Her research concerns design applied on public policies. She observes public servants involved in project design, and questions design tools conceived to support collaboration.

*Sarah Edmands Martin* is an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at Indiana University. She is a 2020 Design Incubation Fellow published by Bloomsbury Academic, with design awards from Graphis, Creative Communication Awards, and London International Creative Competition.

*Alvise Mattozzi* Assistant Professor in Sociology of Culture and Communication at the Faculty of Design and Art of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, works at the crossroad of Science and Technology Studies and Design Studies, using semiotics as descriptive-analytical methodology.

*Daniela Maurer* Research Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Politecnico di Milano, freelance designer in product design and innovation strategies fields. Her research interests are mainly focus on the domestic and working environments.

*Celeste McKenzie* Since 2015 working on social documentary projects in the Kalahari. Actively involved in visual ethnographic research in the Kalahari among the #Khomani San Bushmen. Lecturing and conducting workshops in my academic field. I have produced professional social documentaries in Southern Africa on poverty, recycling and living on a landfill site. I want to apply my knowledge and skill set to NGO's that work with relief aid, indigenous and minority groups or humanitarian aid.

*Simon Meienberg* is a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Ethnology, University of Cologne and KISD, researching at the intersections of migration, decolonisation and social interactions. He graduated from KISD and studied at Politecnico di Milano & ENSCI – Les Ateliers in Paris.

*G. Mauricio Mejía* is Associate Professor of Design at Arizona State University. He explores design approaches to change behaviors, transform systems, and envision desirable futures in diverse areas of application including health, sustainability, and business innovation.

*Ana Melo* Communication designer and PhD candidate at the Lisbon School of Architecture, University of Lisbon. Her research focuses on design for social innovation and how communication and strategic design can help to shape future scenarios for communities in inland territories.

*Manon Ménard* is a PhD student in design in the PROJEKT laboratory at the University of Nîmes. She works on educational themes from socio-cultural perspectives. Her thesis focuses on the valuation of the culture of singularities at the university with a specific focus on autism.

*Massimo Menichinelli*, Doctor of Arts in New Media at Aalto University – Aalto Media Lab, has researched and developed open, collaborative, and co- design projects and the systems that enable them since 2005.

*Shintaro Miyazaki* is a Berlin-born, Basel-raised, Swiss-Japanese senior researcher and principal investigator at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures. He is directing the SNSF-project "Thinking Toys for Commoning" (2018-2021). Shintaro is at the same time a Juniorprofessor in "Digital Media and Computation" at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Musicology and Media Studies, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

*Daijiro Mizuno* PhD RCA [www.daijirom.com](http://www.daijirom.com); After studying MA and PhD at Royal College of Art (Fashion Design), Daijiro currently works at Kyoto Institute of Technology/Keio University on Transdisciplinary Design. His recent work includes Transition, a documentary film shortlisted for IDFA 2019.

*Ana Rita Morais* is a Toronto-based academic, educator, and administrator. She is the Chair of the School of Design at George Brown College, and holds a doctorate from the Communication and Culture Program at Ryerson University. She has devoted much of her academic career to investigating mobile media.

*Andre Mürnieks* is Senior Lecturer and Researcher at Massey University, New Zealand focusing on motion and interaction design. He hosts the biennial conference MODE and authored the chapter *Navigating VOX/UI: The Integration of Motion in a Voice-Controlled Information System*.

## N

*Marco Neves* Assistant Professor at the Lisbon School of Architecture, University of Lisbon. He coordinates the Interaction Design Master degree and the Design, Interaction and Visualization research group. His research focuses on the relationship between visual and print design with interaction and user experience.

*William Nickley* is Assistant Professor in the Department of Design at The Ohio State University. He researches social design practice as a member of the Ohio State DESIS Lab and teaches courses in the industrial design major. William's research lies at the intersection of social design, design methods, and community-engaged design.

*Dília Nunes* graduated in Tourism at the Instituto Politécnico de Viana do Castelo (IPVC) and is currently a master student at the Master in Communication Design for Tourism and Culture, at the University of Algarve (UALg). Her current research interests are: Design, Tourism and Circular Economy. Her professional goal is to continue her research and share her knowledge so that she can positively contribute for a more sustainable planet.

## O

*Maya Ober* is a designer, researcher, educator, writer, and activist based in Basel, Switzerland. She holds a B.Des. in industrial design from Holon Institute of Technology and is currently finishing her MA in Design Research at the Berne University of the Arts. Maya is the founding editor of depatriarchise design. She works as a research associate at the Institute of Industrial Design and as a lecturer at the Institute of Aesthetic Practice and Theory at the Academy of Arts and Design in Basel. There, together with Laura Pregger she has developed an educational programme "Imagining Otherwise".

*Ferney Osorio* is co founder of the ViveLab Bogotá where he managed the execution of multiple citizen driven innovation projects supported by the national and local government. He is currently pursuing a PhD research on the design and management of innovation labs under joint supervision at the Université de Lorraine and Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

*Babajide Alamu Owoyale* is a PhD Candidate at the Deep Data Lab at the Hasso Plattner Institute, exploring data driven approaches to sustainability Transition Research and Design. He has (co) authored papers presented at the Global TechMining Conference, International Conference on Information Systems, Americas Conference on Information Systems, and the SpringerLink Understanding Innovation on Design Thinking.

## P

*Sergio Palleroni* is a Professor and Director of the Center for Public Interest Design at Portland State University ([www.centerforpublicinterestdesign.org](http://www.centerforpublicinterestdesign.org)). As a professional and educator he has been pursuing an understanding of public interest design and its application globally since the 1980's. He is a SEED Network co-founder.

*Christopher Pandolfi* is the Co-founder and Creative Director of Department of Unusual Certainties (DoUC). A designer and educator, Christopher has worked on variety of projects ranging from community engagement to the creation of AR worlds. Christopher believes the process is the product.

*Richa Pant* Design Management expert with research interests in research methods, social design and social entrepreneurship.

*Yann Patrick Martins* is a PhD candidate at ECAM, and currently working as research coder at the Critical Media Lab, developing agent-based models for the project "Thinking Games for Commoning", and Self Organizing Maps for the "Architectonic Studies of Radio" project. Despite his practice rooted in programming, his personal research looks at the ways in which capitalist mode of production and machine learning are re-enacting forms of inequality and discrimination. He also has pioneered a teaching programme at the Critical Media Lab Basel that links technological education and cooking practices since 2018.

*Maria Patsarika* Ph.D. in the sociology of education and design participation. Research in learning, participation and place making, co-design and community engagement. Articles in *Children's Geographies*, *Discourse: Studies in Cultural Politics of Education*, *Co-Design*, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*.

*Dr. Nina Pawlicki* is an architect based at the Natural Building Lab, TU Berlin and co-founder of the designbuildXchange network. With-in her teaching, research and practice she is facilitating intercultural, hands-on and community-based projects on the interface between academia and non-academia.

*Xue Pei* PhD in Design, Post-doc research fellow on design thinking for business and entrepreneurship at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano. Her current research focuses on applying design (thinking) approach, methods and tools to fostering innovation in organisations.

*Maitreyi Phansalkar* was born and raised in Mumbai, India. She completed her Bachelor in Architecture degree in 2016 and worked in India for 3 years. Her work includes teaching and research at the Academy of Architecture, Mumbai, Head Designer at an NGO working for rural artisanal development, and more. She moved to Austin in 2019 to pursue her master's in Urban Design and is expected to graduate in May 2021.

*Franziska Pilling* is a PhD Design Candidate, funded by the PETRAS IoT hub, researching design's role in making algorithmic intelligence and its associated systems, processes and misconceptions, more legible to users and designers through alternative practices such as Speculative Design with Philosophy.

*Sérgio Pires* is taking a master's degree in Design and is interested on researching how can design help the others, in order to bring awareness to important social issues and also improving human behaviour and conscience when approaching such issues.

*Alison Place* is a design educator, researcher and practitioner. Her research examines the intersection of feminism and design as a space for critical making, radical speculation and the redistribution of power through the built environment. She is an assistant professor of graphic design at the University of Arkansas School of Art, where she also currently serves as interim director of the graphic design program. She serves on the AIGA Design Educators Community National Steering Committee. Previously, she worked for more than ten years as a creative director and designer for nonprofit and higher education institutions. She earned an M.F.A. in experience design from Miami University of Ohio, and a B.S. in graphic design and journalism from the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art and Planning.

*Colin Priest* is a Senior Lecturer in Interior and Spatial Design at Camberwell College of Arts, University of the Arts London. Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Co-founder of Live Projects Network. His research practice encompasses urban health, conscious heritage, empathetic wayfinding and live-project pedagogy.

*Isabel Prochner*, PhD, is an assistant professor of industrial and interaction design at Syracuse University (USA). Her research and practice focus on socially and community-oriented industrial design, with an emphasis on critical and feminist work.

*Pierre-Xavier Puissant* is a design researcher based in Lausanne. Previously involved in the mentoring of art-science residencies for innovation at a European scale (STARTS), now focusing on the facilitation and scaling of design-driven pedagogical experiences at the College of Humanities, EPFL.

## R

*Ulla Ræbild*, Assistant Professor, fashion, Design School Kolding. Works with research and teaching in fashion, sustainability, design methods.

*Luise Reitstätter* works as Head of the Laboratory for Cognitive Research in Art History at the University of Vienna. Her main research interests are practices of contemporary art, museum and exhibition studies as well as qualitative methods in social research.

*David Rose* is Elizabeth Creak Associate Professor of Agricultural Innovation and Extension at the University of Reading. He is interested in agricultural technology adoption, user-centred design, behaviour change, and knowledge exchange, currently focusing on agri-tech futures using a responsible innovation lens to explore ethical considerations of new technology.

*Lisa Rotzinger* is a design researcher and design strategist based in San Francisco, US. She graduated from the Royal College of Art and Victoria & Albert Museum with an MA in History of Design. Her research focus is on design methodology and the history of design research.

*Stan Ruecker* is the Anthony J. Petullo Professor in Design at the University of Illinois. He is currently exploring how design research helps us to understand our preferred futures, how it may necessitate a change to prototyping, and how it can lead us to create physical interfaces for tasks such as analyzing text, modeling time, and designing experience. More at [\*publish.illinois.edu/designconcepts\*](https://publish.illinois.edu/designconcepts/).

**S** *Shalini Sahoo* is a designer and a PhD candidate at the Royal College of Art, London. Her work involves investigating human-material-interaction within transit spaces. Shalini's main area of interests involves cybernetics second order, design ethics and material culture.

*Alejandro Salas Prada* is UX researcher and designer at Medible, he is also a student in the master's program in science and technology studies at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia. His research interests are around ethical aspects in the planning and construction of digital technologies.

*Selena Savić* is a researcher and trained architect. Her research interests revolve around computational processes, information technologies and their entanglements with the built environment. She is currently Head of Study of the Make/Sense graduate school and a researcher at the IXDM, HGK, FHNW Basel.

*Mathilde Scholz* is a designer, art historian and cultural scientist with a degree from the University of Leipzig. In 2019 she researched "Learning and teaching between needs, challenges and potentials" as part of her Bachelor of Arts in Integrated Design at Anhalt University in Dessau. Here she also founded the project [cloud], which contributed to a transformation of the institutional culture. She also initiated the project 'perMA: "Prototype of a new learning culture". Goal of this project was to develop a new learner-centred Master program, using a participatory approach involving both teachers and students. Mathilde lives in Leipzig, Germany.

*Jennifer L. Schubert* is researcher and lecturer in the field of Social Interaction Design. Her research interest spans from digital inclusion, glocalised networks to policy design. She worked in bottom-up and municipal research projects, in rural and urban space, locally based with a global perspective.

*Carla Sedini* PhD in Sociology. Since 2012, she has been collaborating with Politecnico di Milano as a researcher and an adjunct Professor. She has been working on national and international projects on Social Innovation, RRI, Cultural and Creative Industries.

*Hina Shahid* is a multidisciplinary design practitioner, educator & entrepreneur. Her design toolbox borrows heavily from anthropology, psychology, business management, and behavioral economics. Throughout her 15-year career she has worn my hats - researcher, strategist, designer, entrepreneur and educator, building practices and leading research and design teams in design consultancies, Fortune 500 corporations, start-ups and most recently founded a social impact initiative. She frequently speaks at international and national conferences.

*Ricardo Sosa* is Associate Professor at Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa and Monash University, Australia. He is originally from Michoacán, Mexico. He teaches and conducts research in design and creative technologies with an emphasis on creativity for social justice.

*Max Spielmann* (Prof.) studied medicine and has worked in the audiovisual sector since 1984. He then shifted to the areas of interactive media and exhibitions and in 1998 co-founded the Institute HyperWerk. His main areas of research are participatory media and art/design in transformation.

*Viviane Stappmanns* is a Curator at the Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, where she has curated exhibitions with and about a number of contemporary designers and is currently working on an international survey on women in design. Prior to her current role, she worked as a writer, researcher and publisher on the subjects and architecture and design. She has taught at the School of Architecture and Urban Design at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, where she previously graduated with degrees in Interior Design and Journalism. Ongoing research interests pertain to curatorial practice in design and architecture, as well as transdisciplinary approaches to consider issues around housing and the design of living environments. Viviane currently holds a Guest Professorship at the University of the Arts and Design in Karlsruhe, Germany.

*Bitten Stetter* is a designer, professor (ZHdK) and leads the master and the research area Trends & Identity. She is doing her dissertation in the Sinta program, is a researcher (HKB) in the project *sterbe-settings.ch* (SNSF 2020-2023) and the founder of *finalstudio.design*.

*Iria Suárez* is a designer and design historian based in London, UK. She graduated from the Royal College of Art and Victoria & Albert Museum with an MA in History of Design. She works within the field of architecture and her research focuses on design and wellbeing.

**T** *Jovana Timotijevic* is an activist and a researcher in the field of critical urban studies and feminist theory, with the focus on emancipatory spatial practices and housing justice. She is a member of the collective Ministry of Space.

*Jan Torpus* is a senior researcher at the Institute of Experimental Design and Media Cultures and a media artist. He develops interdisciplinary research projects in the fields of affective interaction, immersive augmented reality, biofeedback interfaces and ubiquitous computing.

*Scott Townsend* Professor. Research interests in interaction design, visual language and motion. Exhibitions, projects and presentations, etc. in over 190 national and international venues. Articles in *Zed*, *Statements*, *Brujula*, *Art Papers*, *Visual Communication*, *Design and Culture*, *Design Issues*, *The Education Forum*.

*Judith Tsouvalis* is a Human Geographer working as Research Fellow at the University of Sheffield. She is interested in society-nature relations, which she has researched in the context of catchment management, farming, forestry, plant biosecurity, and science advice to government using interdisciplinary, qualitative, and participatory research methodologies.

**U** *Chiara Ullstein* BSc, BA (LMU Munich); Chiara was a visiting researcher at Kyoto Institute of Technology and is currently graduating in MSc Politics & Technology at TU Munich. Her research interests include deliberative and participatory methods to shape AI governance approaches.

**V** *Saskia van Kampen* (MDES, RGD, AIGA) Assistant Visual Communication, San Francisco State University, School of Design. Her research focuses on disrupting digital design practices and design studio pedagogy. She was Vice President, Education with Registered Graphic Designers.

*Beatriz Vergara Aller* was born in Spain. She completed her Architecture studies and worked between Spain and France. The different urban contexts of the cities she lived in brought up concerns on how the city and architecture relate inherently to each other and led her to expand her knowledge in the urbanism field and pursue a master's in Urban Design.

*Zachary Vernon* is an award-winning designer whose research interests include applying and studying the use of empathy, engagement, and collaboration within design and design pedagogy.

*Dora Villalobos* is a community and environmental leader in Bogotá in the community of La Vaca. She has led the restoration process of the wetland for the past twenty years.

**W** *Catherine Walthard* (Prof.) is a Professor at Institute HyperWerk, HGK FHNW, which she joined as a founding member in 1999. She has over 30 years of teaching and directing experience in art education and lectures/workshops in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. She co-edited *Cultural Spaces and Design*.

*Cynthia Wang's* research focuses on the social and cultural impacts of digital media. Her work is found in journals like *Social Media + Society* and *Time & Society*. She is co-editor of the book, *Indie Games in the Digital Age* (Bloomsbury).

*Lisa Winstanley* is an Assistant Professor of visual communication at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Lisa's current research explores the intersection between design and trust, focusing on two concomitant areas: ethical design practices and collaborative design practices.

**Z** *Jorge Zapata* was born in Florida and raised in Medellín, Colombia. He later moved to Buenos Aires, Argentina to study architecture, both vibrant Latin American cities with a complex history of social and urban challenges that inspired him to pursue graduate studies in community planning and urban design with a focus on public spaces.

*Francesco Zurlo* PhD, full professor, Deputy Dean of the School of Design of Politecnico di Milano, Chairman of POLI.design. His research interests concentrate in strategic, systematic and creative research-through-design, focusing on the ecological impact of business innovations and human flourishing.

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