

House and Studio Museums between Art and Design

RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN STRATEGIES

Edited by
Anna Mazzanti

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RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN STRATEGIES

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PART 2

Stories

6. The Creative and Artistic Legacy Between Identity and Project: Casa & Atelier Fornasetti and AtelierFORTE

Barbara Di Prete, Alessandra Spagnoli

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6.1 Casa & Atelier Fornasetti and AtelierFORTE: Between Home and Studio

Milanese cultural landscape started to consolidate itself since mid-20th century, among co-existence and hybridisation of industry and creativity, design and art within which productive, residential and expositive dimensions saw vanishing their boundaries in favour of a contamination of spaces and times. An example of this is the concentration of dwellings and atelier/laboratories by *faber* (Bergson, 1907) which, within such local context, experienced new modes of living; private living and workspaces come together, penetrate and contaminate each other going to build (micro)worlds by which the artist/designer/architect identifies and represents him/herself with. *Mise-en-scène* spaces, then, as in the case of Casa & Atelier Fornasetti and AtelierFORTE, two paradigmatic examples of artists/artisans who, even though very distant in terms of sensitivity, poetics and languages, assigned their own living environments to a full-fledged cultural design.

We are actually dealing with creative personalities who put into action a project of relocation to living and working environments, of their own poetic, thought and language *through the way in which this space is being lived*, through a specific living attitude. *Collecting* and *aesthetics*, meant as “cultural figures, outlining a specific behaviour with regard to things and their disposal within the sphere of living” (Vitta, 2008, p. 274) which leverage over sense of ownership and contemplation, intertwine with a latent or expressed vocation to dramatization. Dramatization as representation of their own identity, their own person, in a process of private to public extroversion. Even though the domestic environment represented “the place in which the [...] public dimension has often been revised and filtered through a personal time and small actions which establish effective distance” (Molinari, 2016), such distance tends here to get thinner or, even to vanish.

Casa Fornasetti, villa dating from the late 19th century belonged to Piero Fornasetti's family and located in the heart of *Città-Studi* district in Milan, is currently home to the Atelier as well, of which Barnaba, the son, is the creative director. Here are located the graphic studio, the communications and marketing department as well as the historical archive in close connection and synergy with the private residence.

The space, as a whole, is conceived as an actual House Atelier in which environments, whilst keeping a clear separation in terms of functional plant, take over multiple vocations: public blends with private, domestic with expositive dimension, usage with exhibition in a continuous overlapping between the moment of creative and artistic creation and the moment of its own result contemplation. The House Ateliers also the place within the flow of time makes it a proper *Fornasetti's diving* experience: objects settling (Piero Fornasetti was a refined collector indeed), in production and custom pieces, unique items and prototypes, volumes, prints and fabrics, made it a liveable Wunderkammer. Fornasetti, artist and artisan/decorator capable of occupying and turning any area into visual storytelling, he pervaded the family dwelling by his own visual imagery and language, making it manifesto-space of his own poetic.

Duilio Forte, all-round artist, as he defines himself, has been the owner of AtelierFORTE for twenty years, even though the museum has

officially been inaugurated only in 2018, to provide institutional form to a situation that has been in place for years.

A postmodern metaphor takes its shape now: “in the age of access, [priority is to] build scenarios, tell stories” (Rifkin, 2000, p. 261), and actually in this museum-laboratory-house, Duilio Forte enjoys taking visitors to a dream world, through layered with years visions, which from time to time are *personified* in mythical animals and legendary depictions. Such representations availed themselves of Duilio Forte’s utmost technical expertise, a truly modern artist/artisan; not surprisingly in the exhibition *Stanze. Altre filosofie dell’abitare* (*Rooms. Other philosophies of living*, Triennale di Milano, 2016) his room-installation – *Ursus* art work, meant to “give the opportunity to try a minimal living experience inside of a zoomorphic shape” (Duilio Forte in Finessi, 2016, p. 332) – has been introduced with reference to the famous essay by Richard Sennett, *The craftsman* (Sennett, 2009), precisely to emphasize, in Forte’s approach, the “concreteness of making” value (Francesco M. Cataluccio in Finessi, 2016, p. 342) which joins his research deep narrative contribute.

6.2 The Two Atelier among Domestic, Creative and Expositive Dimension

Downstream from analytical reading carried out on the two Atelier, appeared interesting to bring out differences and similarities observable in both paradigmatic cases within the Milanese house-ateliers system. The following reflections, clustered in macro-topics of survey, highlight their divergences and convergences from a critical and projectual point of view, geared to investigate approaches taken, in terms of design, exhibition and meaning of spaces.

6.2.1 Towards a Total Space

AtelierFORTE and Atelier Fornasetti, in their diversity, share a living attitude deeply infused with their personal sensitivity and artistic and cultural vision. Both house-ateliers reflect a systematic impulse towards the search for a total space: a space, or better a place (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1977), capable of including the artistic and cultural project

of their *forgers*, in all his dimensions. Spatial dimension – domestic and working environments, objectual dimension – in the dual nature of objects for daily use and works of art and design, as well as temporal dimension – which instils moments and occasions of private, public, intimate and shared life – create synergy, connection and merging. The notion of *total work of art*, by which individual types of art converge into a unique and superior holistic artistic design, is “materialised” by the two artists-artisans even before than in artistic production, in the manner by means of which their artistic and designing *doing* and *thinking*, looks at creating and reassemble a *put into shape* and experienced universe.

It is acknowledged *Fornasetti's space* powerful detectability, in terms of stylistic features and subjects, chromatic and compositional codes, a space that multiplies, with exquisite overbearance, in every aspect of via Bazzini's residence. Each and every room, wall, furniture, fabric or complement, over the years, has been subject of selection, intervention, decoration – in brief of design. Each vertical and horizontal surface, in some cases even floors, has undergone a chromatic or decorative operation such as, for instance, in the case of kitchen-veranda: table, seats, coverings, floors, furniture and accessories have been coated with the well-known composition – pages of newspapers and butterflies – which, in the subsequent years of domestic experimentation, went into production. Also and above all, daily use objects, furnishings or complements, contribute to environment signification, *they are devices that modify the space that contains them* (Fornasetti, 2013). Piero Fornasetti, voracious collector, has always been welcoming in his own environments, to collections of objects, prints, books, sources of nourishment for his imagination, nearby pieces designed or customised by himself. It consists of rigorous and various collections which, approaching and facing each other, create a constant play of semantic references maintaining a dual nature, “a simple, practical rigorous nature on the one hand, and a cultural, fantastic and poetic one on the other” (Fornasetti, 2013, p. 178). Interpenetration and overlapping themes, are also to be found in different environment's purpose nature. Currently, domestic space and the space devoted to the atelier, appear separated but communicating, lived by inhabitants having variable line-up – Barnaba Fornasetti and the whole

atelier's team –, share entrances, passageways, labyrinthine spaces connecting private and professional in nearly total merger.

Even the concept underlying AtelierFORTE design is pronounced interpenetration of spaces and activities: Duilio Forte works everywhere, with no preferences for a dedicated area (unless there is need for more complex and invasive processes, which must be carried out in the laboratory only); likewise all art works scattered throughout the entire space, equip it, decorate it, are dislocated in an unusual way – hung, camouflaged, highlighted – and only occasionally are placed on regular easels. Works of art intertwine with daily life, pander to it, escaping pure contemplation; the passage through various *places* in the house is set up as an *excursus* (non-linear) between the different artist's poetic phases, not only as crossing through functional environments. Each piece of art takes part in the definition of space and space comes to life in the relation between the works; all differences among them disappear, both being variants on different scales of the same thought.

6.2.2 Hybridisation as Design Category

Hybridisation concept constantly returns in both analysed cases, on the one hand because it is able to describe the complex, multidimensional and interdisciplinary approach of both authors (both led to escape from conventional design codes and to breach disciplinary fences), on the other hand because it is a semantic feature typical of contemporary, increasingly chasing fluid spaces, *transgender* categorisations and cross-media representations. When Bauman back in 2000 described fluidity as “main metaphor of current phase of modern age, [given that fluids] do not set space nor bind time” (Bauman, 2005, p. VI), has been able to capture features that firmly characterise contemporary society: indefiniteness, contingency, expandability and “rejection of any territorial confinement” (Bauman, 2005, p. XVIII).

Piero Fornasetti, multifaceted and complex personality, artist, printer, bibliophile, artisan-decorator, gallerist, used to replicate, in an era of stylistic and disciplinary purity which misread his ability to cross every field of material culture, that “no aspect of cultural planning is barred to those who have the analytical and cultural tools to create worlds, and that from this point of view there is no difference between an

exhibition, an engine, the body of car, a chair, a picture or an ashtray..." (Fornasetti, 2013, p. 100). Such an approach to hybridisation and syncretism has been moved inside his studio-dwelling too. Private dimension of several lounges and sitting rooms that take certain portions of the house become real sets within which new pieces of the collection can be inserted and shaped. The presence of the private archive filled with valuable cuttings, images and volumes by Piero Fornasetti, engages in harmonic dialogue with drawings and slides archive, stored at the atelier. The atelier gives back a domestic impression and the private area is bathed in an aura of theatricality and scenic appeal, that brings it closer to public dimension.

Even more extreme is the design choice pursued by AtelierFORTE, that even after a meticulous visit, eludes a synthetic description: in the memory remain layering of activities and functions simultaneity, yet both archaic nomenclature of the single rooms, and complex spatial layout, does not help giving back a sharp mind map of space. Here indeed "order is considered a restriction, a form of imprisonment" (Rifkin, 2000, p. 259) not only studio, house and archive interpenetrate, but the productive, expositive, business and living world of the artist influence each other (contaminating us too).

6.2.3 Living Exhibition between Public and Private Vocation

The notion of hybridisation, applied to domestic and creative environments, crossed by a firm expositive vocation, necessarily implies a reflection on traditional design categories of exhibit and interior design as well. Seems to be crucial now, the overcoming of public-private dichotomy, which is challenged wherever, as in the case of Atelier Fornasetti, curatorial and expositive tension marks and materialises in every aspect of private dimension or wherever the extroversion of private to public becomes matrix for exhibit, as in AtelierFORTE. We're dealing with yet another upheaval of the rituals regarding domestic living, it's a sort of "secularisation of it, with the consequent effect of [...] polysemous multiplication of the idea of house" (Crespi, 2016, p. 17). *Living exhibition*, which is differently redefined in the various house-ateliers and museum-houses, in both analysed cases is solved through a variety of ways.

On the one side Barnaba Fornasetti, who occasionally turns his dwelling into a set for private events or parties, maintains, by means of contiguity of domestic and atelier areas, a seamless flow between life and work times and spaces. On the other side Duilio Forte, chose instead to open his own museum-house by appointment, handling first-hand guided tours, though showing his visitors an ever-changing space, depending on previous hosted activities, that left traces over there.

Experimentations in such sense are multiple and sometimes rather provocative; think about Guggenheim museum in New York which already in 2008 opened to hospitality and thanks to Carsten Holler hosts in its spaces an installation-room (from museum-house to *museum-room*), *Revolving Hotel Room*, a one night rentable bedroom (Maritato, 2008); think of Edward Hopper's painting made three dimensional at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, which in 2019 realised in full-scale the painting's *Western Motel*, so that one can literally get in it and sleep, by purchasing *Hopper Hotel Experience* packets (Penna, august 2019); and lastly think of the museum-house of Zelda and Francis Scott Fitzgerald in Montgomery, that allows you to stay in two rooms purposely turned into suites (Penna, march 2019), just as the hazard tested in Concetto Pozzati's historic dwelling in Bologna, which adopts Airbnb platform possibly to develop a new economic prospect but, meanwhile, to bring into play new modes of use (Nastro, 2019). We're dealing with, even with profoundly different connotations, new types of *inhabited museums*, a paradigm whereon precisely house-ateliers should more closely wondering about.

6.2.4 Expositive Dimension between Contemplation and Use

In both Ateliers, although with independent inflexions, the display element of the space is of great importance, and both spaces are designed so that each element within them – be it functional, decorative or structural – works together to create a unified and engaging experience, blurring the boundaries between different forms of art, design and utility to contribute to the overall aesthetics and atmosphere. Piero and Barnaba Fornasetti's approach they apply to the definition of environments is, as has been mentioned, that of *total space*. Draft of representation space and *mise-en-scène* of a specific imagery and visual language implemented through a full-immersion involving

furnishing and surfaces: complements, appliances and even facilities, floors, tapestries and textiles, all converge to determine and materialising Fornasetti's poetic, with no distinction between objects of use, pieces of art or design, between collections of inspiration and semi-finished products.

Giò Ponti himself, who cooperated with Piero since the 1940s, recognizes in his colleague and friend such tension towards self-representation – by means of works of art, spaces and collections – and multiplication – not by accident, one of the most beaten stylistic features will be the one of the series. "Perhaps Fornasetti, setting up exhibition rooms in his house, full of 'fornasettis', must have been taken by this obsession to compose 'fornasettis' using 'fornasettis'. Printing is a dangerous game: much like a game of mirror, it never ends" (Ponti, 1950, pp. 37 *et seq.*). And it is precisely this game of mirrors, which is a play of references and relations, that perfectly represents the exhibit matrix permeating the entire via Bazzini's dwelling. Whether the *Red room* is furnished by the use of a single monochrome filter, strictly bound to the colour palette of the artist, the *Clouds room*, wrapped in a wallpaper realised in partnership with Cole & Son, exhibits on the walls a picture that has been direct and noticeable inspiration for the design of the pattern itself. Each environment, every detail contributes to the private exhibition design: items are selected and inhabit spaces as conveying "metaphors and symbolic relations, material and immaterial relations" (Branzi, 2007) creating a short circuit between objects in use and *on exhibit*.

In the case of Duilio Forte's dwelling, the distinction between exhibition and use is quite nuanced so that in the reading of space, there could be found an analogy with Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau: not just because AtelierFORTE is the result of a lifetime of *relics* or *assemblages* collections (Nigro, 2007, p. 99), but rather because it is physically the outcome of twenty years spent building the space, by adding parts in a still ongoing work-in-progress, which literally made it expression of the visionary art world of its owner. The result, as in the most popular work by Schwitters, literally is an *autobiographic environment*. In such ideally endless construction, just two pieces of furniture by Ikea, a chest and a coffee maker (gift by Mendini), are pieces not designed by the artist: every single detail custom made and based on his own

design. Precisely this coincidence of exhibition and usage posed a problem of readability: works of art's descriptions needed to be understandable without affecting the use of space. Within a context in which everything is becoming increasingly intangible, interactive and multimedia, even the museum-house has been converted to a technological reading: punctual explanation and captions are missing (except for concise introductory panels to single rooms), access to information is allowed by QR Codes and everything refers to the website, which enables a virtual tour of the spaces, offering insights on single pieces of art.

6.2.5 A Space as a Set: The Scenic Component in Narrative Environments

Both analysed case studies have strong scenic connotation, the first being a Fornasetti's language set-up, scenic and theatrical by definition, and the second, the AtelierFORTE, being explicitly born with a vocation for the set, a set suitable to host fashion photo shoots, advertising videos, short films and typically events.

With regard to Casa & Atelier Fornasetti, the constitutive consistency of languages and codes translates to an utmost recognisability of features, shapes, icons and chromatism, was immediately the dominant character for all interventions. Both, as we saw, in household environment and within the entire commercial and expositive dimension which revolves around the Atelier's universe itself. For instance, if on the one hand, the showroom in its set-up, retrieves certain private dwelling's stylistic cues, on the other hand the residence itself becomes in some cases photographic set for new pieces or re-editions. Spaces contribute to the tale of a story, turning into the scenery flat within which objects interact as actors on the stage: "His pieces of furniture are never just pieces of furniture: they are a backdrop, decoration or set design. Objects that evoke a story and provide the story with its setting" (Silvana Annichiarico in Fornasetti, 2013, p. 12). Theatricality of Fornasetti's work, which across decoration tells stories, worlds and entire imageries, blurs figure and background, reality and imagination in a tangle of infinite possible plots.

Similarly, AtelierFORTE stands out as a space in which everything is set design and in which – regardless of whether they are envi-

ronmental installations, small sculptures or land art works – steady prevails a story telling, dream and mythological dimension:

here is the laboratory, with the long sword suspended in the air, the cinema-bear *Ursus* having a mini screen under the belly (realised for the exposition "Le stanze" in Triennale) and the stage machinery of the 1700s for thunder rumbles and hiss of the rain, faithfully rebuilt by Forte himself. Two footsteps, a mighty roar and you will enter the Bear Room. [...] Then a number of ravens "always by Odin" and the room "dedicated to Munch's Scream". (Ghezzi, 2018)

All this contributes to a scenic, immersive and fairy-tale setting, in an atmosphere at times Gothic and at times science fiction. The artist thus shows an *archaic* sensitivity, yet in a highly contemporary perspective, proving himself to be capable of masterfully play among those *conceptual materials* that Augé already recognised as belonging to our society: "individual imagery (dream), collective imagery (myths, rituals, symbols) and narrative fiction" (Augé, 1998, back cover). Nowadays, almost to point out the initial vocation of the space, the artist believes it is time to shoot an actual movie in it, a film with Duilio Forte as director, noir genre.

6.2.6 A Look Back and a Look Forward: The Act of Creation, Production Horizon and Archival Contribution

The dimension of creative and artistic coexistence concerns AtelierFORTE only, where the artist keeps processing, developing and making his design, since conversely, for obvious needs, Atelier Fornasetti production department is no longer hosted at the headquarters, which remains the creative and communication centre. In both instances you can rather find the archival dimension, although the interpretation of the archive notion is utterly different.

Fornasetti, as meticulous collector, has always expressed great interest and sensitivity towards setting – understood in museographic sense – and cataloguing. His various collections, which included old-fashioned spectacles, decks of cards, Bohemian glasses... full-fledged belong to the residence's *private exhibition* and became, over time, genuine deposits for creative inspiration. Likewise, Piero applied

himself with archival accuracy, to tight cataloguing cut-outs of imagery taken from magazines, books and antique prints. Cataloguing that, in the '50s and '60s, enriched a library with perfectly organised folders divided by themes (leaves, fish, fruits and vegetables but even architectural prospectus and anatomical parts...) that made up an archive of remarkable size, to draw on ideas and motifs to reprocess. Archival dimension cannot be reduced to creative dimension *only*, yet it multiplies in the technical productive one too. The Atelier indeed hosts, a few rooms from the folders library, a slides and drawings archive which go over the entire Fornasetti's production and which nowadays are source for both entry in production of historical pieces and redrafting or design of new products and representations.

Portrayed as *domestic warehouse* or *inhabited museum*, AtelierFORTE keeps playing with binomials, apparently conflicting, so that it could also be defined as *archive in progress*. *Historization of the present* moreover, opens up to multiple ontological reflections, and in the case of Duilio Forte's production, we are faced with an ever-changing collection, subject to sales, loans, new projects, but also to daily use that makes any kind of static representation more complex. It in fact consists of a not yet *frozen* space (as other even distinguished museum-houses, from Salvador Dalí's museum-house in Portlligat, to Gaudí House Museum in Barcelona). Despite this, many pieces of art have already been listed in the inventory, and in the choice of a method of classifying and organising, emerges the creative side of the artist, who decided to use sequential numbers merely including prime numbers, "as evidence of works claiming their exclusiveness", adds ironically Duilio Forte.¹

6.3 Conclusion

Atelier Fornasetti and AtelierFORTE represent meaningful case studies for the focus on new strategies of enhancement and exhibition models: precisely for peculiarities here illustrated, these could be interpreted as pilot-projects helpful for the definition of a new hybrid scenario: household and museum, aesthetic and frutivae, capable of attracting and producing culture.

Atelier Fornasetti, that in the sixties and seventies had to face the coldness of a climate influenced by rationalism of forms, functions and industrial requirements, knew a difficult period. Starting from the eighties, with the acknowledgement received on the opening of the *Themes & Variations* London gallery by Liliane Fawcett e Giuliana Medda and mainly after 2013, year of the major retrospective *Piero Fornasetti. Cento anni di follia pratica* (*Piero Fornasetti. One Hundred Years of Practical Madness*) hosted by Milan Triennale and curated by the son, Barnaba, Fornasetti's work has been newly discovered and recognised, as design of extremely high creative and cultural value. The Atelier expands, multiplying its departments, and is recreated such mixture between domestic and creative space that featured the early years of its establishment, the doors open to such *wonderland* that is Casa Fornasetti. The Atelier has developed a range of initiatives for enhancement and communication, designed to make Fornasetti's eclectic spirit, artisanal and creative work, archival documentation, and selected aspects of the domestic display accessible to the public.

Whether Barnaba Fornasetti, in his prospects and future targets for the valorisation, imagines developing a section devoted to teaching with local education institutions and to make room for a museum (Sarica, 2019), alongside AtelierFORTE is oriented to implementation of the museum dimension, to improvement of the communication impacts, to reinforcement of sales capacities and above all, to the creation of a local network. Duilio Forte is already founder of *inter-ars* start-up, a network of Milanese artists' studios pursuing the logic of *diffused museum*, by promoting to system, single studios to increase their visibility and access. Aware of the relevance of such collective dimension, he considers strategic the organisation/implementation of more effective urban networks of museum-houses even in the rich, yet in this regard little explored, Milanese environment; within this framework the Italian-Swedish artist wishes to build a common platform capable of promoting guided tours managed by external actors, as contemporary Virgilio, whom could take people on a tour among the network's diverse realities. Such stages would be an opportunity for a closer encounter with the artist's creative world, but also to live experiential times (create a portrait, take custom pictures) that would make users more and more like active players in the tour and no longer

mere spectators. Such as in the Airbnb model, it would be a way to get *into the intimacy* of studios as well as to discover the city following less travelled trajectories.

As shown Atelier Fornasetti and AtelierFORTE stand out as *unicum* in the Italian panorama, nonetheless research and experimentations initiated here, can undoubtedly trace a direction for codification of new models of house-ateliers and museum-houses, dislodged from styling cues of the past and able to interpret with flexibility and uniqueness demands of the contemporary.

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Notes

Note 1.

Interview with Duilio Forte conducted by Barbara di Prete within the D.E.SY research project – Designing Enhancement Strategies and Exhibit Systems – FARB Funding, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano – Scientific coordinator Anna Mazzanti. Milan, 22 April 2018.

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Her research focuses on environmental and site-specific art, sculpture parks and public art, alongside broader investigations on Italian and international art between the nineteenth and twenty-first centuries, with particular attention to the transition between the *fin de siècle* and the early twentieth century, the history of criticism and the exhibition system (especially Symbolism and the Venice Biennale).

She coordinates and participates in research projects on the relationship between contemporary art, design and cultural heritage, including the D.E.SY research project on house and studio museums, and she teaches courses on contemporary art and spaces, art and landscape, and the relationships between art, design and museology within bachelor's, master's and PhD programmes.

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He has written and edited about twenty books and published more than 300 articles for numerous international journals. In 1997 he designed the *Museum of Design* exhibition for the Triennale di Milano, creating the Triennale di Milano Design Museum Collection. He has curated numerous exhibitions: *Il Modo Italiano – Italian Design and Avant-Garde in 20th Century*, Montréal Fine Arts Museum and MART of Rovereto (2006), *Made in Cassina* (2009), *Tecno. The Discreet Elegance of Technology* (2011), *Osvaldo Borsani, architect, designer, entrepreneur* (2018) at the Triennale di Milano. From 2018 to 2021 he was president of the Italian Association of Design Historians (AIS/design) and since 2022 he has been co-director of the AIS/design Journal. Since 2008 member of the scientific committee of the Franco Albini Foundation and since 2021 member of the Gianfranco Ferré Research Center of Politecnico di Milano. Since 2023 member of the Board of Directors of the CASVA Foundation (Centro Alti Studi sulle Arti Visive) in Milan.

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Her doctoral research explored the concept of *atmosphere* applied to temporary exhibition spaces from a historical perspective. She edited, with Giampiero Bosoni, the book *Design Culture Matters* (FrancoAngeli, 2023). She worked at the Triennale Design Museum and ADI Design Museum in Milan as a museum and archive research assistant. She is currently a lecturer in the History of Design and Design & Contemporary Arts and an Adjunct Professor in Interior Design

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Since 2015 she has coordinated the Master in Design for Public Space organised by POLI.design and is scientific director of the Design for Social Impact course, for a sustainable territorial regeneration.

As a member of the research groups Desire – DDesign Strategies of Spatial Innovation and REgeneration and Place +, she investigates the role of spatial design, in particular with a view to energy and social sustainability. As a member of the inter-university research center Control Junk Laboratory and the NSBVN – Sustainable Exhibit Cluster, promoted by IUAV, she investigates the issues of circular economy and environmental sustainability in exhibition design. On these topics she is currently following the research De.Sign. The role of design in the energy transition process (ENEA), CAPitoli Urbani (CAP) and Greenway dei due parchi (Regione Lombardia).

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Her research has interspersed, in a parallel and often intertwined manner, between the field of interiors and exhibit design history and interior and spatial design. Author of several essays and articles about design history and interior and spatial design research, most notably the monograph *The Smart Home. An exploration of how Media Technologies have influenced Interior Design visions from the last century till today* (2020, FrancoAngeli, Milan).

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She explores the intersections among digital innovation, spatial design, cultural heritage, and user experience, with a primary interest in ensuring a human-centered approach. Her latest research interest focuses on translating Machine Learning (ML) for a broad understanding and as a design material to be integrated into Design education and beyond, through a multidisciplinary lens. Her aim is to provide methods and tools to leverage this technology responsibly and effectively for meaningful real-world impact in different contexts.

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House and studio museums of artists, architects, and designers – the spaces of the faber – constitute the core subject of this volume, which examines how these dwellings and workspaces, already configured as museums or envisaged as such after the disappearance of their owners, may be systematically studied, classified, and enhanced through the disciplinary lenses of art history, museology, and design. Originating in the D.E.SY research project (Designing Enhancement Strategies and Exhibit Systems for Italian House and Studio Museums), the book advances a typological framework for the spaces of the faber in Lombardy, with particular attention to Milan, and investigates their narrative, experiential, and curatorial potential in relation to contemporary design and curatorial strategies. The contributions address house museums, house ateliers, studios, and studio-archives, engaging with issues such as the aura and genius loci of these places, processes of musealisation and reconstruction, and analog and digital storytelling devices for their valorisation. By integrating historical, museological, and design-based approaches, the volume proposes a polysemous reading of the faber's spaces as vital microcosms and three-dimensional self-portraits, offering a shared methodological ground and operative tools for researchers, curators, designers, and cultural institutions.