

School of Architecture(s)

Architecture as a discipline entangles multiple interactions between the physical world, technology, and the organisation of the cultural and social environment of the profession, but its multidisciplinary character is not the only multi-dimension to be investigated. In the era of post-architecture, moving towards an autonomous subjectivity, opening up the field, and questioning the plurality of the discipline is crucial: not just Architecture but Architecture(s). Furthermore, European Schools of Architecture offer a wide variety of meanings of the term Architecture in their curricula. For all these reasons, it is urgent to discuss a broadening of the term itself to understand the positioning of architectural education in the contemporary global world.

The conference is an invitation to think differently, reflecting upon the context of the discipline to understand the knowledge of the future, focusing on the question: what is Architecture in the age often described as post-architecture?

Considering how antagonist characters polarise human knowledge and that architectural practice is moving towards an autonomous subjectivity, architecture can be understood as a tension between dichotomies leading to a new paradigm: architecture(s).

In this frame, the conference attempts to reason around a contemporary, wider and inclusive definition of architecture by discussing six pairs of antinomian concepts articulated in three parallel sessions: architecture as a method and/or as a discipline; architecture of the Masters and/or of the topics; architecture for architects and/or for the community; architecture as avant-garde and/or market-oriented; architecture inside and/or outside the wall; architecture disciplinary and/or extra-disciplinary.

The six dichotomies are grouped into three main sessions:

Seeds of architecture(s): Ways of Teaching,

Roots of architecture(s): Ways of Research,

Branches of architecture(s): Ways of Practice.

Session1. Seeds of architecture: Ways of Teaching

Architecture as a method and/or as a discipline. Nowadays, there can be a shift in teaching architecture from defining a specific knowledge inside the discipline or a series of methods that can be generalised and exploited for practice.

Architecture of the Masters and/or of the Topics. The masters overlooked the teaching systems before the 20th century; from the Modern Movement onward, the transmission of knowledge is more and more focused on topics related to social and human-centered issues.

In a changing world where global challenges such as climate change, digital innovation or social inequalities are crossing architecture, it is crucial to discuss the possible impact of architectural education in this frame. Different teaching practices question the dichotomies between architecture as a method and/or discipline and between architecture of the Masters and/or of the Topics. The first session explores this issue by referring to one or more of the following possible topics:

Is architecture a discipline characterised by a scientific status that can define the borders of practising and teaching architecture? Or is architecture more of a *modus operandi* that can apply to other fields?

Is architecture a mindset, a set of soft skills, or a technical discipline in which hard skills are the core of transmissible knowledge?

What is the meaning of Masters in architecture nowadays? Can they

have a role in architectural education, and if so, to which extent? How to identify new topics with a pedagogical value for architectural education? Which role can architectural education have in tackling contemporary global challenges? Should architectural education experimentation have a role in identifying new burning issues?

Session 2. Roots of Architecture: Ways of Research

Architecture for architects and/or for the community. Who is the final architecture user, and how is this reflected in practice? Is Architecture a discipline or a service? Both points of view lead to a different definition of Architecture that needs to be translated into teaching. Architecture as avant-garde and/or market-oriented. What is the result? Architecture can be for the market, or architectural schools can open new visions that the market must look at.

The goals and the targets of architectural action are crucial topics for architectural research. While the social and political dimension of architecture is given, architecture is often asked to comply with market requests and economic issues. The multiplicity of meanings of the term architecture leads to several ways of setting up and conducting architectural research.

The second session aims to investigate the dichotomies between architecture 'for architects' and/or for the community and between architecture as avant-garde and/or market-oriented, referring to one or more of the following possible topics:

How can architectural research contribute to orienting the continued expansion of the discipline's knowledge base while structuring interrelationships with other disciplines? How can architecture improve its inherent interdisciplinary dimension while safeguarding its specific identity?

How can architectural research have a tangible social impact, and how can it be made substantial for communities?

What is the role of communities outside academia in architectural research? Are they merely a field of experimentation, or can they be involved in conceiving and structuring the research process?

Should architectural research be focused on contemporary burning issues, or should architecture aim at identifying future topics and challenges crucial for societies?

What are the possible roles of design-based research in fostering theoretical findings and ways of thought?

Session 3. Branches of Architecture: Ways of Practice

Architecture inside and/or outside the wall. Where is the place for the practice? Architecture can be inside the wall or outside of it; it can build the wall itself or be seen as a theoretical application.

Architecture disciplinary and/or extra-disciplinary. What does

architecture have to face? Architecture can look at itself in the realm of the discipline or look at other knowledge: sociology, economics, ethnography are just examples. Which are the potential of both approaches?

Architecture has long ceased to be the expression of a prince's will to become, whether the archi-stars' gesture or the result of a complex process involving many stakeholders and disciplines. In this frame, architecture can seek to define and broaden its specific identity or work to overcome disciplinary boundaries to strengthen collaboration with other professional fields. Besides, contemporary and innovative ways of architecture practice also question the necessary relationship between architecture and constructive matters.

The third session aims to investigate the dichotomies between architecture inside and/or outside the wall and between disciplinary and/or extra-disciplinary approaches to architecture referring to one or more of the following possible topics:

Can we only claim for architecture when artefacts - walls - are the final goal of the design process, or can architecture exist "outside the wall" dealing with processes and outputs unrelated to the built environment?

Should architecture deal with the construction of artefacts and walls, or should architecture deal with non-tangible applications?

Which is the role of academia and design-based research in the panorama of professional practice?

How to set fruitful collaboration between theoretical enquiry on architecture and professional practice routine?

When we speak about multiple ways of practising architecture nowadays, are we broadening the borders of architecture, or are we dealing with other disciplines "outside" architecture?

Oya Atalay Franck

Paolo Mellano

Carla Bartolozzi

Michela Barosio