

## **Design aesthetics**

### **intersecting ordinary and special**

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DESIGNING EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE—objects—environments—habits

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jects—environments—habits—objects—environments

DESIGNING EVERYDAY EXPERIENCE—objects—environments—habits





# RECTOR'S ADDRESS

Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest was founded 143 years ago, in a period of time when design was born. Later on, thanks to Bauhaus and all the bright minded people around it, the need for a new attitude became clear. This attitude would combine art and science and define creativity as an active tool for shaping a better world. Since then this has gained even more importance. This is our basic attitude. And 25 years ago, when the Doctoral School was established, MOME unlocked new levels in terms of practicing this attitude.

The founding of this school was an important step, but not just because any university that wants to make itself attractive on the European scene needs one. It was a symbolic moment in Hungary, and it introduced a new mode of research, combining the classical approach with artistic and design principles.

It has been a long journey from the first steps to the excellence on offer today. The Doctoral School is a very important platform for MOME. It gives our students the right tools and leads them in their studies and research, giving them belief in their ability to help people understand that we need to change in order to save life on planet Earth. The MOME Doctoral School, which is now 25 years old, has the capacity to be a 21st century school following the basic values of the *universitas*: exploring authentic answers to challenges of our time and the future.

What Moholy-Nagy started creating and realising in his time has now become a reality. We believe that our fields of activity, namely design, art and innovation are the key subjects of our time. All the work and teaching at MOME happens in this vein, and we also encourage our Doctoral School to teach and lead research activities in the same way. We consider ourselves a kind of a modern engine of development. We need to serve as a link between the digitalised world and humanity. This is our motivation and mission.

I hope that in 25 years, on the 50th anniversary of our Doctoral School, the Rector's address will contain words of satisfaction saying that "we are lucky, because in a crucial period for humanity's development our predecessors recognized how they could make arts, design and theory contribute towards maintaining the human features of society."

I'm very proud of all of our colleagues and the Doctoral School students over the past 25 years, and would like to express my hope for a very successful future, and that this excellent institution will have a name it deserves.

# INTRODUCTION—INTRO

# DUCTION—INTRODUCTION—

In 1952, the Italian architect Ernesto Nathan Rogers coined the saying “from the spoon to the city” to express the pervasiveness of architectural and industrial design, spanning from the very small scale of everyday tools to the much larger scale of urban spaces and environments. Inspired by this famous motto and its symbolic value, the aim of the conference is to extend the notion of design to the whole realm of our everyday lives, encompassing the various objects, spaces, and practices we use day-to-day, and questioning how these can contribute to shaping our habits, tastes, behaviours and lifestyles. Just as we design the tools we use every day, so we design public and private places in cities to be used by locals and enjoyed by visitors alike. Similarly, contemporary artists design, set up, and install spaces so that they yield a certain aesthetic experience for visitors. In all these instances, design is more than just a profession with specific rules and know-how. In fact it should be understood as an act of planning and shaping that can apply to any object of our daily experience. This three-day conference highlights three crucial aspects in this context. The programme includes 23 talks by leading voices in aesthetics and design research, eminent scholars from around the world, and near-acclaimed and emerging researchers. The first day’s presentations focus on objecthood, functionality, and the interrelated aesthetic implications of our everyday (but not necessarily ordinary) set of objects. The presentations on the second day map various kinds of planned and designed environments that are aesthetically relevant to (and in some cases exert aesthetic poisoning [Mandoki 2007] on) our everyday lives. Talks on the third day will cover how our daily habits are shaped by aesthetically imbued material environments, and conversely, how we shape our participation in a ubiquitous design culture through our habits. Approaching these topics over the three days, participants will deep dive into critical analysis, reconstruct historical genealogies, uncover cultural ambiguities, and give illuminating examples. But they will also bear in mind endeavours that prompt corrective action for a better, fuller and more dignified life. After all, the interrelatedness objects like “the spoon and the city”, which differ so drastically in scale, should not be taken as the final guidance for a wide-angle, comprehensive understanding of our design culture. Rather it should be seen as a starting insight, which can lead towards discoveries of even more elaborate interrelatedness that includes aesthetics, ethics, the economy, technology and much more.

*The Steering Committee*



# 12 May / Day 2

## KEYNOTE LECTURE

10:00–11:00

**Ben Highmore** (University of Sussex)  
*Ludic Environments and the Aesthetics of Play*

11:00–11:30

COFFEE BREAK

## TERRAINS OF TRANSFORMATIONS

11:30–12:10

**Gioia Laura Iannilli** (University of Bologna)  
*Designing familiarity: a challenge for Everyday Aesthetics and Experience Design*

12:10–12:50

**Raquel Cascales; Javier Antón; Juan Luis Roquette and Javier Saez** (Universidad de Navarra)  
*Designing Spaces to Transform Workspaces. How the Influence of the Aesthetic in the Space Can Help the Flourishing of Every Person*

12:50–14:00

LUNCH BREAK

## SHADY DIMENSIONS IN DESIGN CULTURE

14:00–14:40

**Judith-Frederike Popp** (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)  
*The Haunting of our Habitat. Uncanny Dimensions of Designing Everyday Life*

14:40–15:20

**Manon Persoone and Jo(han) Liekens** (KU Leuven)  
*From Toileting to The Making of Worlds*

15:20–15:50

COFFEE BREAK

15:50–16:30

**Mami Aota** (Gunma Prefectural Women's University, Tanamura)  
*The Time of Urban Parks: Aesthetic Experience of Nature in the Life of Tokyo*

16:30–17:10

**Anders V. Munch** (University of Southern Denmark)  
*Total Design of Everyday Life: Historical Ideals and Dilemmas of the Gesamtkunstwerk*

17:10–17:50

**Sophie Fétro** (Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne)  
*Design and Sobriety in a Future of Lesser Abundance*

18:00

**Guided Tour in the Anniversary Exhibition of MOME Doctoral School**

6

19:00

**CONFERENCE DINNER + PARTY**

# 13 May / Day 3

## KEYNOTE LECTURE

10:00–11:00

**Yuriko Saito** (Rhode Island School of Design)  
*The Aesthetics of House Chores*

11:00–11:30

COFFEE BREAK

## THE AESTHETIC SELF

11:30–12:10

**Endre Szécsényi** (ELTE University, Budapest / University of Aberdeen)  
*"An Habitual Disposition of Mind": on the Roots of Everyday Aesthetics in the Early 18th Century*

12:10–12:50

**Alessandro Bertinetto** (University of Turin)  
*The Habitual Aesthetic Self: Material Engagement, Expressive Styles and Everyday Aesthetics*

12:50–13:30

**Tulip Sinha** (National Institute of Design, Bangalore)  
*Conversation As Capital*

13:30–14:40

LUNCH BREAK

## DESIGN, SUBORDINATION, AND DISOBEDIENCE

14:40–15:20

**Eszter Babarczy** (MOME)  
*Habits, Values and Design: Towards Sustainability*

15:20–16:00

**Szilvia Gyurkó** (MOME Doctoral School)  
*Responsible and Caring Design for a Better Childhood*

16:00–16:40

**Jacopo Frascaroli** (University of York)  
*Engineers of the Human Soul: The Moral Responsibility of Artists and Designers*

16:40–17:00

COFFEE BREAK

17:00–18:30

**Living Corpus : Performative activation opened to the public by Barbara Formis + Mélanie Perrier**  
*(Laboratoire du Geste / Institut ACTE / Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne)*

7

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## Gal, Michalle

### Design Objects and the Illusion of Function

Analyzing anew our everyday engagements with design objects is paradigmatic in proving human beings' visualist character, supporting externalist philosophy, and challenging rationalist and internalist theories. The encounters with design objects, which are omnipresent in the various intimate or public strata of our ontological sphere, are sensuous, diversified, and dynamic. They are based on our attachment to forms, the power of visuality, the affordance of the object's appearance, and its post-production emergent properties which often cannot be pre-conceived or conceptualized. Namely, the encounter of the user with the design object is not a linear track that consists of a rationality-oriented detection of an object's (alleged) stable function, which is intended by the designer and followed by the pre-intended corresponding use.

Claiming so, I oppose the prevalent rationality-oriented definitions of design and try to expose the functionalist illusion of design theories and demystify their teleological support. I will show that these definitions derive from the Western tendency to consider human-beings as reaching their best through rational thought. However, using a chair

as a clothes hanger or a ladder, a radio as a vintage cabinet, iPhone as a status marker, a door as a notes board or an expressive tool to be shut with anger, or a central traffic junction for the weekly demonstrations for democracy, is oftentimes stronger than the intended function. It constitutes the object's identity, and testifies to our visualist-externalist nature. Additionally, the function itself may possess properties such as expressivity and visibility that contribute to the affordance of the object. I, therefore, claim, that the design object's identity is not determined by its function, but mainly by its form and appearance, which is in charge of the discipline's progress and livelihood. This argument is part of a bigger project named visualism, whose framework is the current visual turn that, realizing yet again how influential visuality is on us, points to the visual sphere, rather than the rational mind, as the right sphere to focus a study of our essence, ontology, and culture. Using what I name "variety of forms" and "instability of function" propositions, I show that design objects are paradigmatic here and definitive in the rationalist-visualist or internalist-externalist debate.

**PROF. MICHALLE GAL**, is a professor of philosophy at the the Unit of History and Philosophy of Art and Design and the Interdisciplinary Design Graduate Program, Shenkar College. Gal is the author of *Visual Metaphors and Aesthetics: A Formalist Theory of Metaphor* (2022) *Aestheticism: Deep Formalism and the Emergence of Modernist Aesthetics* (2015), and the co-author of the forthcoming *Introduction to Design Theory*. (2023) She is the editor of the special issues *Art and Gesture* (2014, Paragrana, De Gruyter), *Visual Hybrids* (2023, Poetics Today) and *Design and its Relations* (2023, Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics), and the author of numerous of essays. Gal's current project is entitled "Visualism": a new externalist, broad version of Formalism in aesthetics, which endorses the evolving "visual turn" in philosophy. It emphasizes the visual sphere as the correct context for addressing human nature, praxis, and theories of reality, challenges the dominant conceptualist-cognitivist school in philosophy and aesthetics, cognitive studies, and linguistics, and introduces to aesthetics a visualist line of research on design, art, ontology and the mind.



## Highmore, Ben

### Ludic Environments and the Aesthetics of Play

In this talk I explore what socio-aesthetic design could mean in the field of young people's play environments. Standard playgrounds of slides, swings, and sandpits were established as part of many municipal parks in the nineteenth century and continue to dominate playground provision around the world. But the twentieth century also saw many innovations in playground design, from the radically non-designed space of Denmark's junk-playgrounds (which fed into the adventure playground movement across the world) to Aldo van Eyck's doorstep playgrounds in Amsterdam. What is at stake is not just how best

to design for children's play, but the very nature of play itself as well as the shaping of the environment. What does it mean to play? What forms of attention, aesthetics, affection, and physicality constitute play in all its diversity? In looking at other kinds of play spaces – the junk-playground, the adventure playground, the play park – I want to suggest that playgrounds are forms of social architecture that produce a range of moods, forms of attention, and modes of experience. I argue that today we need to increase the imaginative resources we have for thinking about children's play provision.

**PROF. BEN HIGHMORE**, is Professor of Cultural Studies in the School of Media, Arts, and Humanities at the University of Sussex. His most recent book is *Lifestyle revolution: How taste changed class in late twentieth century Britain* (2023). Previous books include *The art of brutalism: Rescuing hope from catastrophe in 1950s Britain* (2017) and *Cultural feelings: Mood, mediation, and cultural politics* (2017). He is currently finishing a book on the recent history of playgrounds for Reaktion.



## Saito, Yuriko

### The Aesthetics of House Chores

Doing house chores dominates our management of everyday life. We clean the floor, dust furniture, wash dishes, do laundry, put things away, and repair broken objects on a regular basis. Most of us would rather not perform these tasks because they are considered tedious, and sometimes backbreaking, drudgery and requiring no creativity or imagination. Thus, they have been traditionally relegated to women and marginalized populations whose work remains invisible and receives little accolade. Some art projects help shed light on the invisibility of housework and similar tasks, such as street cleaning, yard work, and garbage collecting. While they help raise consciousness and bestow more dignity to these detested works, most of us remain spectators of these art projects. We may develop an aesthetic appreciation of the artistic depiction of such tasks, but it is not clear whether these art works encourage an aesthetic experience of housework itself which we ourselves perform. Furthermore, the aesthetics of

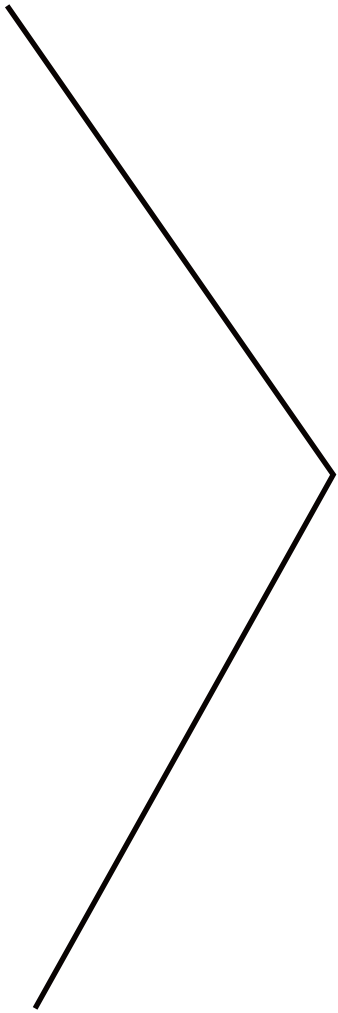
house chores sounds like an oxymoron. Their generally negative aesthetic associations, such as being dirty, messy, smelly, and imperfect, seem to compromise their place in the aesthetic domain, except to create unpleasant experiences. The results of cleaning, washing, straightening out, and repairing may provide a somewhat pleasant experience, but some may question its aesthetic value because it does not compare to the typical aesthetic experiences generated by art and nature. The discourse on housework is also dominated by first-person accounts of those who perform these tasks guided by some practical goal. As such, house chores do not fit comfortably into the quintessential model of aesthetics which is object-centered, judgment-oriented, and disinterested spectator-driven. This presentation argues against these presumed disqualifiers for according an aesthetic status to house chores and develops a proactive support for the aesthetics of house chores, without unduly romanticizing or glorifying them.

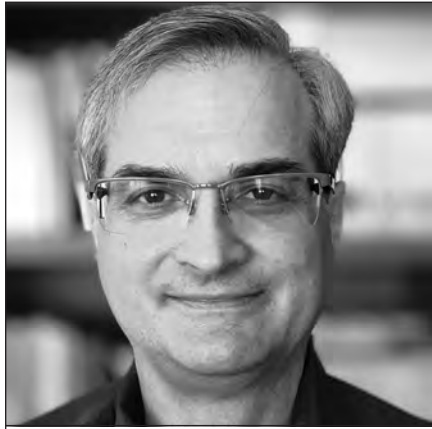
**PROF. YURIKO SAITO**, born and raised in Japan, is Professor Emerita of Philosophy at the Rhode Island School of Design, USA, where she received a teaching award (1999). Her research focuses on everyday aesthetics, Japanese aesthetics, and environmental aesthetics. Her three books integrate these interests: *Everyday Aesthetics* (Oxford University Press, hardback 2008, paperback 2010); *Aesthetics of the Familiar: Everyday Life and World-Making* (Oxford University Press, hardback 2017, paperback 2019), awarded the outstanding monograph prize by the American Society for Aesthetics (2018); and *Aesthetics of Care: Practice in Everyday Life* (Bloomsbury, 2022). She also published numerous journal articles, book chapters, and encyclopedia entries, as well as has given talks both in and outside of the USA. She is the current editor of *Contemporary Aesthetics*, the first online open-access peer-reviewed journal.

Specifically, although it is considered to be a tedious routine without much thought involved, performing house chores can offer opportunities for imaginative and creative engagement with the world around us. We exercise agency in creating the desired effect, whether it regards a cleaned room, laundered and ironed shirts, or mended socks. We handle tools and materials with specific body movements informed by embodied knowledge and skills, following various aesthetic judgments and decisions. Furthermore, performing house chores also helps cultivate sensibility, respect, and humility toward the material world with which we need to work and appreciation of the material world's service to us. Tools used in house chores, ranging from a knife and a mop to a vacuum cleaner and a clothesline, are generally taken for granted as the Heideggerian "ready-to-hand" and garner our attention only when they malfunction or break by asserting their "present-at-hand." However, there is another way of experiencing them as our faithful companions who help with our tasks which in turn requires our care and maintenance.

Finally, when the beneficiaries of house chores include not only oneself but also loved ones, such as family, housemates, and houseguests, performing those chores can be imbued with affections and memories, thereby enriching the experience. It can be a meaningful experience invested with love and commitments, instead of a mechanical tedium. If the technological advancement frees us completely from performing house chores, such as with self-cleaning and self-repairing materials or robots with artificial intelligence, it benefits the society by reducing the site of exploitation, in light of the fact that these tasks have traditionally been relegated to women of the household and the marginalized and oppressed populations. However, we also need to be cognizant of the loss incurred by depriving ourselves of the traction, and sometimes friction, felt when working with the world. It is because the aesthetics of performing house chores ultimately reminds us of our intimate connection to the world around us and the relational mode of being-in-the-world.

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## Rațiu, Dan Eugen

### Objects at Work: Examining the Uses and Roles of Objects in Everyday Organisational Life. Two Case Studies

Everyday Aesthetics (EA) has largely focused on the analysis of our world of objects and provided consistent contributions to understanding “the aesthetics of design” (Forsey 2013; Iannilli 2019), the “moral-aesthetic judgments of artefacts” and other key aspects of the everyday “aesthetic life” (Saito 2007, 2017). However, the EA’s research scope includes typically the private world – dwelling at home surrounded with artefacts –, while eluding another major area of our everyday life, the everyday world of work. Likewise, it often brings into play the notion of “object” – thing, tool or artefact – without taking into consideration a proper questioning of the ontological aspects it might raise. Such as, what mode of existence is that of an “object” and how does it co-respond to that of the “subject”? Are objects simply passive stuff or should we consider instead their capacity for action on human subjects?

This paper aims to open up new analytical perspectives on the uses and roles of artefacts and space design in everyday organisational life. First, by addressing the aesthetic dimensions of the everyday

world of work and examining it with the analytical-descriptive language established by philosophical aesthetics. Unlike EA’s mainstream approaches, Organisational Aesthetics (OA) takes into account the aesthetic as a characteristic of everyday organizational life and explores the work relations, objects and spaces through the lens of aesthetic principles. Second, by questioning the notion of “object” and drawing attention to the aesthetic agency of objects highlighted by various philosophical theories (Gadamer 1988; Latour 2005, 2012; Harman 2018, 2020). This topic is already at work in the “strong” version of OA (Strati 2000, 2008, 2014, 2016; Gagliardi 2006), which cultivates an increased methodological awareness of the specific and weight of concepts employed in the aesthetic study of organizations.

The first part addresses some theoretical-methodological issues drawing on specific contributions of Organisational Aesthetics (Strati 2000, 2014; Warren 2008; Ratiu 2017) to lay bare specific key principles and methods for analysing the aesthetic character of organizational life, space and

**DAN EUGEN RAȚIU**, is a Professor at the Department of Philosophy, Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, where he teaches aesthetics, philosophy of art and supervises PhD theses in philosophy. Main research fields are art theories and practices, arts policy, and practical aesthetics. Current research focuses on everyday aesthetics and the interaction between cultural policy and artistic creativity. He is the author of four books and many articles on these topics published in Romanian, English, and French (See <https://ubbcluj.academia.edu/DanEugenRatiu>). Memberships: The European Society for Aesthetics (ESA), co-editor of the ESA Proceedings (2012-2018); The European Sociological Association – Research Network Sociology of the Arts (ESA-RN2), member in the Directing Board (2011-2017), member in the Advisory Board (since 2018); International Association of Aesthetics; EVA Network.

actions. These are useful in answering the question of how do objects work aesthetically to “shape habits, behaviours and lifestyles” in organizations, and exploring the issue of “future challenges of design in everyday contexts”, particularly the world of work.

The second part provides two case studies: the new spaces of co-working Stables (2020) that repurposed recently the former Austro-Hungarian imperial stables in Cluj (Romania), and the new brand buildings of Bosch’s Engineering Centre campus in Cluj (2020) and Holzkirchen (2022). The paper argues that these are not mere cases of “practices of renovating and repurposing spaces” or “urban regeneration” of for-

mer industrial sites. Rather they exemplify blatantly the role that aesthetic elements play in mediating action, control and performance in organizations as well as the different “aesthetic imperative(s)” in post-modern organisations, including their “artification” when compared to modern ones. This paper adds to existing literature (Witkin 2009; Saito 2012) by providing in the first step a visual and discourse analysis of the above-mentioned spaces/organizations, followed by semi-structured biographical and photo-interviewing based on the “sensual methodology” outlined by Warren (2008).

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## Bokinić, Monika

### Private Aesthetics – Aestheticization of Everyday Life and Artification of Personal Functional Objects

The main purpose of my presentation is to reflect upon an everyday practice of bullet journaling and other practices of personalizing functional objects in the context of aestheticization and artification practices. The practice of bullet journaling serves here as an example of beautifying and artifying personal, functional objects for private use. In other words, private aesthetics would refer here to situations, in which people design and make some objects that have daily, functional use for them. Bullet journaling is a clear case of such practices. It is a regular, daily practice of making one's own calendars and planners, often (but not always) richly decorated, in order to combine aesthetic/artistic pleasure and functional enhancement of one's daily performance. I wish to approach this practice from the aesthetic point of view in order to show in this example how aesthetic/artistic practice can be combined with practical interest and thus contribute to the better functioning and well-being of its creator. There are two principal theoretical contexts for my analysis of bullet journaling. The first one is the contemporary everyday

aesthetics approach, the second one is the idea of emotional design. The first context – everyday aesthetics – is the source of the two notions I used in the title of this presentation: aestheticization and artification. The concept of aestheticization has a longer tradition in aesthetics and the most general formulation refers to adopting an aesthetic attitude or experiencing aesthetically something that is not typically an object of aesthetic appreciation. It can include activities and objects such as food, sports, natural and created environments etc. Sometimes it may be understood as the kind of focus that gives preference to aesthetics rather than functionality or practicality or at least caring for their aesthetic value along with practical or functional use.

Artification, on the other hand, is a practice that would overlap with aestheticization in some cases, but they are not identical. Ossi Naukkarinen described artification as referring to "situations and processes in which something that is not regarded as art in the traditional sense of the word is changed into something art-like or into

**MONIKA BOKINIĆ**, is a philosopher, a sociologist and a translator. She works at the University of Gdańsk (Poland) in the Institute of Philosophy. She specialises in philosophical aesthetics and her main areas of interest include: everyday aesthetics, experimental aesthetics, relationship between aesthetics and ethics, popular culture and philosophy of humour. She is a member of the editorial team of *Estetika: The European Journal of Aesthetics*. Her recent publications include: *Beauty and art in the lab: what empirical aesthetics can contribute to philosophical aesthetics and what it cannot* (in *Sztuka i Filozofia*, 2020, nr 56, pp.65-80), *"Kto się boi słoni?"*, *czyli dowcipy, humor i komiczne rozbowienie według Noëla Carrolla* (in *Sztuka i Filozofia*, 2019, nr 55, s.9-26. DOI:10.14394/szf.2019.0009).

something that takes influences from artistic ways of thinking and acting. It refers to processes where art becomes mixed with something else that adopts some features of art." (Naukkarinen 2012). Two things should be noted here: firstly, we can see from this formulation that artification is not identical to aestheticization, because it is not limited to aesthetic values or features. The way I understand artification, is more related to doing that experiencing. Secondly, artifying does not mean transforming something into art but rather using artistic ways of thinking and doing in domains other than art.

Both processes are clearly observable in everyday lives, especially in trends relating to dwellings, clothes, and food, but also in aestheticizing and artifying images. As Naukkarinen, Saito and others noted, these inclinations are present in the areas such as science, business, well-being and medicine or education.

The second theoretical context for my analysis comes from the idea of emotional design, proposed by Donald Norman. Norman pointed to three dimensions of design: visceral (its appearance), behavioural (the pleasure and functionality of its use) and reflective (related to identity, memory, and personal attachment) (Norman 2004, p. 5). As Norman observed, "we now have evidence that aesthetically pleasing objects enable you to work better" (Norman 2004, p. 10). I would also add that they contribute to a better life in general. If the affective system is crucial for making decisions and taking action, as Norman claims in the context of design, then this particular combination of aesthetics, enjoyment and functionality, which in the case I analyse here – bullet journaling –

is supplemented with satisfaction related to personal execution, would contribute to more effective performance. Even though we associate design with something beautiful or attractive, we are most attached to objects which evoke pleasant and intimate associations, and those which are most cherished to us are the ones we have made ourselves. They enhance our self-worth, they are the foundation for our disinterested, pleasurable activities and often they form the basis for communities. In this sense "we are all designers", as the title of his book's epilogue proclaims.

In the final part of the presentation, I want to dive deeper into how all these processes and phenomena described above manifest in the practice of bullet journaling and other forms of what I call "private aesthetics", such as personally created planners, scrapbooking, so called memory planning (e.g. project life), art journals, travel journals etc. Since these practices are private – created for personal use, personal satisfaction, pleasure and effectiveness, typically not meant to be presented publicly – they are more difficult to analyse than artworks typically meant for public display. Therefore, I decided to conduct some exploratory empirical research into the "bujo community" in order to penetrate the ways in which such practices manifest a particular nexus of artistic, aesthetic and functional activities. They are consistent with, on one hand, the tendencies to aestheticize and artify our everyday life as the main area of realising our aesthetic needs, and on the other hand, they follow the trend noticed by Norman of the return to making or modifying objects important to us ourselves and enable us to "work better".

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## Vidal, Felip

### Creating Value by Designing Authentic Experiences. An Approach from Cultural Theory

Today, consumers are not longing for mere experiences but for authentic ones. In this context, the aim of this communication is to introduce and contextualise a conceptual toolbox for analysing two concepts – experience and authenticity – as inseparable keywords intrinsically related in our post-industrial consumer society. The economic system has been expanding and has gone from producing goods to producing, for the most part, experiences that must be as authentic as possible. This has led to a greater prominence of design in our daily lives.

Experience is a long-standing concept in both philosophy and cultural theory. Throughout history, philosophers and thinkers have reflected on this concept from different perspectives. Whatever it may mean, since the first time this word was used by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), experience has been widely used, also for decades, in the economic field (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), brand management (Newbery, 2013), marketing (Schmitt, 1999) and design (Press and Cooper, 2016). In short, the word “experience” has been

used very extensively, which tells us that it is important to clarify it. In the industrial era, during the first half of the 20th century, the Fordist production system focused on the manufacture of products that people bought according to a specific demand. It was based on normalisation, the standardisation of products and the manufacture of large series. By these times, as Eva Illouz has pointed out (2006; 2019) the same thing happened with emotions. Throughout the 20th, and in the 21st century, a process of rationalisation of emotions has taken place, which has resulted in experiences being another commodity.

As we know, the former Fordist consumer society has given way to a post-Fordist manufacturing system, based on flexible specialisation and segmented markets with a differentiated offer. In this context, identities have become much more complex, and consumption has taken on a greater role in defining everyone’s identity (Williams, 2020; Hermanova, 2022). Thus, to a large extent, the aim of the production and consumption of goods today is to

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achieve a subjective experience of individual consumption that refers to a notion of the self as a creative and constructive project (Lipovetsky, 2013; 2021) that must be built through authentic experiences. In the framework of today’s consumer culture, in short, the consumer has become the main character in the construction of their own identity through “authentic experiences”, and design is in charge [oversees] of making all this possible. Design has become a fundamental agent as a mediator and supplier of the materials from which the self-construction of identity takes place. Following the distinction proposed by the German theorist Walter Benjamin (2015), experience can be understood whether as *Erfahrung* or as *Erlebnis*. From that point, we may ask if commodified authentic experiences that we buy today are really related with one or another (Sennet, 2009). In this regard, we will analyse how semiotic production involved in the creation of a brand image, in accordance with what we refer as shaping strategies, seek to achieve the densification of brands, which are becoming more and more virtualized and isolated from the product they represent,

through a simulation of the most possible authentic consumer experience. At the same time, these shaping strategies aim at keeping the nature of the brand’s semiotic production invisible or, at least, not evident to consumers.

The consumption of authentic experiences responds to an immaterial, disorganised, flexible mode of production that expands to all areas of the consumer’s life and in which the consumer becomes the main but, at the same time, isolated and narcissistic character (Han, 2020).

Finally, I will suggest that brands try to articulate a discourse about authentic consumer experiences that probably doesn’t satiate but colonises our everyday life. The emotional and experiential relationship with brands does not translate into an authentic experience with branded products, at least in the sense of *Erfahrung*. At last, with the commercialisation of experience and authenticity, design must face a fundamental difficulty in trying to discern what would be, and how to create the possibility, for proper consumer authentic experiences.

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## Godoy, María Jesús

### Memories Designers: How Everyday Objects evoke our Deceased

The objects we use every day speak of us and define us. We can say, with Heidegger, that they form part of our being-in-the-world, in the sense that they co-exist with us in their status as things, as beings whose being-in-itself is being-at-hand or render the best possible service in the practical function for which they are intended. In their being-there for us, things also live an intense and full life: by displaying all their employability, they write their biography interwoven with that of their users. But being-there-at-hand, objects are paradoxically less-there-than-ever, since, absorbed in their function, they completely disappear from our gaze. They fulfil their mission so diligently that it is not even easy for their owners to notice their presence. Only a change can rescue them from their invisibility, as it happens when they stop working, either because they break down or because they break; a circumstance that, in any case, makes them immediately visible by showing them as not-being-at-hand and, in this way, as being-there for the first time. But this also happens when the death of the person on whom their entire existence depended – their user and,

in general, their owner –, occurs. Damage, even breakage, gives the tool a transitory being-there, that of the defect that impatiently awaits to be repaired and so to stop being there again. On the contrary, the death of whoever made it work, gives it a definitive being-there, that of the useless that will no longer be-at-hand; not, at least, in the at-hand known to date.

This last assumption, that of the objects that, linked to the lives of our loved ones, lose their *raison d'être* when the latter die, will be explored here. We will do so within the theoretical framework of the aesthetics of everyday life, which, without having specifically focused on this type of object, is the field within aesthetics that focuses on common objects and experiences. It is known that this approach has been traditionally disregarded by modern aesthetics, more centred on artistic non-functional objects and their contemplative and one-of-a-kind experiences. The double variant –the ‘weak’ and ‘strong’– often employed in everyday aesthetics will be also considered here. In the first variant –the one represented, above all, by Thomas Leddy (2012)–, the utensil is approached

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as a work of art, therefore covered with an aura that offers an experience as out of the ordinary as the artistic one, since it is removed from the practical field where it was originally rooted and taken to the field of the extraordinary. In the second variant –the one suggested by Yuriko Saito (2007, 2017)–, the object is taken exactly for what it is, as an ordinary object, so it remains in its functional context and provides the service it usually provides.

Based on this distinction, the aim of this work is to present the memory of our deceased, activated and shaped by their belongings, as a genuinely aesthetic experience, but with particular features in each case. So, in the first –the ‘weak’–, the aesthetic experience will be addressed through the sense of touch recently claimed by Carolyn Korsmeyer (2019). Although allowing direct contact with the object, the sense of touch always involves a superficial contact, like the one we have with a relic –with a cult object like the artistic one, which we can rarely touch, however. For this reason, the resulting affection and memory do not go beyond a merely sympathetic connection with the deceased, because our role as simple spectators with a brief right to friction prevents this union from going beyond the natural tendency to

get along with a similar one of ours, with whom we maintained a close bond in life. Instead, in the second case – the ‘strong’–, the aesthetic experience, preserving the instrumental nature of the object, will be developed here from Richard Shusterman’s soma-aesthetics (2012). In this sense, the effective use of the object, its reactivation as a tool, entails a greater implication of the body that ultimately makes our memory of and emotional bond with the deceased increase. Our interaction with the object as new users allows then an empathic insight into the person who died –by taking her place–, whom we feel and rekindle in a particularly intense way. Thinner and more vaporous in the first case, denser and deeper in the second, the memory of our deceased through their possessions, designed by their possessions, will appear in both cases as a fully aesthetic experience. Starting from our sensitive perception of the object – only with our hands or with our entire body –, we leave the way open to our imagination which, transporting us nostalgically to the past, makes us feel, even revive the deceased, whose essence is somehow transferred to the utensil and made present throughout the experience.

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## Butsykina, Yevheniia

### Vernacular Design in Wartime: from Strange to Familiar through Care

Design, as an object within everyday aesthetics research, can offer unexpected scenarios for consideration. One of these is vernacular design objects in Ukrainian cities, which have a separate place in the urban landscape and require an aesthetic analysis for a complete study of urban transformations in a time of war.

In particular, it was the initial period of the full-scale invasion of Russia on Ukrainian territory and the bombing of Ukrainian cities that spurred the appearance of spontaneous elements in the public space. Among which I highlight the following: “corrections” of road signs, billboards with “messages” for enemies or compatriots, protective structures around monuments, window and stained-glass protection, camouflage nets on structures made of recycled fabric, fortifications on bridges, and Czech hedgehogs.

I label them as vernacular design objects, although they represent this category very differently. Some of these objects were individually and spontaneously carried out, such as “messages” on road signs which would be an act of vandalism during peacetime. Some, such as the fortification

of monuments, are the result of the united work of volunteers under the guidance of specialists, but in conditions of tactical emergency action. Nonetheless, all of them are objects of design because they involve effective and functional construction in the conditions of an unexpected full-scale invasion and the need to resist the aggressor. Accordingly, they were created and/or designed by non-professionals using raw materials and working tools (Finizola, Coutinho, Cavalcanti, 2012, p. 559). I appeal to the framework of the negative aesthetics approach, who talks about the condition of aesthetic deprivation, harm, and damage (Berleant, 2011, p. 9–13). The elements of vernacular design in a time of war are aesthetically destructive because they deprive the inhabitants of the city of the usual urban landscape. The following methods of intervention can be distinguished: distortion, smearing (e.g., messages on road signs), obscuring (e.g., protective structures around monuments), and restrictions or fences (e.g., sandbag structures on bridges and administrative buildings, Czech hedgehogs). In addition, negative aesthetics suggests

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the perception of the vernacular object as containing imperfection (Saito, 2017)—elements of the aesthetically ugly, which strike and signal an existing disease or problem in society (not to mention a full-scale war). Everyday aesthetics can respond to this challenge by juxtaposing the concepts of familiar and strange. Elements of military defence in the urban space are strange because they indicate a catastrophe, war, or danger. They distort the information on road signs and misinform or hide from view familiar monuments dedicated to outstanding Ukrainians, which have great cultural and social value. Arto Haapala, reflecting on familiarity, strangeness, and the meaning of place, turns to Martin Heidegger’s hermeneutic approach; his concept of “jemeinig”, one’s own, which characterises the sense of the word “place” and “placing” as “home building.” Instead, strangeness creates a threat to the sense of belonging and even destroys it (Haapala, 2005, p. 45–46).

My way to work through the park with the Taras Shevchenko monument and the view of the building of my university was a space, where I perceived every element as a tool, that is, a thing in which there is a complete combination of form and matter according to Heidegger (1993). With the monument being public art, the university building being an architectural landmark, these objects were instrumental in my everyday experience. However, when the war began, I was deprived of this experience.

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When I found myself in the park again, I could not see the monument because it was hidden behind a protective structure, and the windows in the university were blown out due to the explosion of a Russian rocket and covered with plywood shields. These elements reminded me of plaster on the body of urban landscape, a preventive or remedial measure is necessary to protect, preserve, or restore.

The elements of aesthetic deprivation, when perceived in the conditions of the new wartime everyday life, acquire a new aesthetic value according to the approach of Yuriko Saito’s aesthetics of care. Saito talks about the importance of the practice of mending, which entails “an aesthetic engagement because its process is imbued with respecting the singularity of the object in question and creating a satisfactory solution through collaboration with the object’s current condition, all performed with an affection for the object, its owner, or user” (2022, p. 167). I would like to apply this concept in the context of the aesthetic experience of the urban landscape in a time of war and, in particular, the specified objects.

Thus, the practice of care can be perceived in these vernacular design objects as interventions into familiar cityscape. Despite the reminders of war and danger, and the closing of valuable public art, these objects have a positive aesthetic impression because they transform the cityscape into a space full of care.

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## Folkmann, Mads Nygaard

### Design Aesthetics: Intersecting Ordinary and Special

The paper is a contribution to the conceptualization of the aesthetics of design. The ambition is to comprehend design as a medium of our time which is everywhere and ordinary and at the same time in many instances highlighted and appreciated as special.

This paradoxical doubleness of specialness and ordinariness is present in aesthetic discourse as well as in conceptions of design. First, in dealing with sensorial experience, aesthetic discourse facilitates this doubleness. On the one hand, the premise of aesthetic as a general theory of sensory appeal implies aesthetic aspects to be embedded in all kinds of everyday settings, as noted in phenomenological aesthetics (e.g., Böhme 2013) and the focus on the “familiar” in everyday aesthetics (Saito 2017). In this instance, aesthetics is an important part of a general phenomenological theory of experience. On the other hand, a tenet in aesthetic theory is that aesthetic perception has to do with perceiving something as special, as a “Sonderfall”

(Bubner 1989, 152), where the ordinary is the background for something special to happen or stand out. This aspect unfolds through a high awareness of the “play of appearances” (Seel 2007, 13, his italics), the ability to “have an experience” as a special experience (Dewey 2005, 37) or a focus on sensual perception in itself in an “auto-referential character of perception” (Reckwitz 2015, 26).

Next, design may appear for us in a double way – not only as omnipresent in the objects of everyday life but also as something with a special mark of being “design”. Design historian Penny Sparke (2013) calls this the Janus face of design: being a “silent quality of all mass-produced goods” while also being “a named concept within the mass media” (2, her italics). Design is, so to speak, born as ordinary and special at the same time. Accordingly, it is experienced habitually in proximity and perceived in reflective distance.

Likewise, the aesthetics of design balances between these two facets of design. On the

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one hand, it operates as a general feature of all design – that is, how it creates sensual appeal and is organized in “sensescapes” (Highmore 2009) setting the scene for human life in general. On the other hand, the aesthetics of design opens an appreciation of special qualities and appearances of design – for instance, when design objects are designed to call for attention though seductive surfaces, such as critically investigated in the 1970s as the aesthetics of the commodity (Haug 2009).

On this background, the paper will propose an approach to design aesthetics which encompasses the modes of design being ordinary and special. Building on the forthcoming book *Design Aesthetics* (Folkmann 2023), I propose the kind of aesthetics specifically related to design to be investigating the intersection of design-as-being-everywhere and “design” as a signal of something special. Instead of elevating design to be extra-ordinary qua proto-art in order to evaluate it aesthetically as has been a tendency in much aesthetic discourse on design, or privileging “function” as a marker of ordinariness which can stand out as proposed by Jane Forsey (2013b) when she positively values object which “perform their functions with an ease or grace that calls for our appreciation”, that is, where an object “stands out as exemplary because of its functional excellence”

(244), my proposal is at once more comprehensive and more specific in consideration of design: In differentiating between sensual, conceptual, and contextual aesthetic dimensions of design, and examining how these dimensions as part of an integrated framework contribute to framing experience, we can get a differentiated view upon different modalities of design in a range from silently confirming the ordinary to loudly standing out. An implication of this framework is also a reconceptualization of the aesthetic categories which facilitate aesthetic evaluation. On this point, the paper proposes a series of categories such as “formal simplicity”, “functional realism” or “semantic reference” to comprehend the kind of aesthetic appreciation related to objects of design.

In combining phenomenological reflection and cultural analysis, this approach to design aesthetics is more in concordance with cultural contexts of design than purely philosophical approaches to design aesthetics (e.g., Forsey 2013a; Feige 2018). As a conclusion of the paper, thus, I will discuss applications of my framework in, for instance, investigating how consumers testify to be double-sided in perceiving sensual and conceptual qualities of design objects and further, how external factors such as media, brands and actors are having aestheticizing effects on perception.

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## Franco, Abel B.

### Why Exposing or Not the Brick of the Kitchen Wall Might be a Reason for Divorce: How Everyday Objects Increase the Quality of Our Life by Adding Aesthetic Value to the Space They Also Create

As we furnish and decorate an empty apartment, we are continuing the task of the architect. And this, not because we are doing something fundamentally different, but precisely because we are still creating and modifying space. And we are not simply creating a place to live; we are simultaneously creating an aesthetically valuable space. Our decisions to live better include our aesthetic choices. Each object, each decorative touch, we freely choose to bring into the empty space contributes to this. I plan to address here how this occurs (i.e., how we create aesthetically preferable spaces) and why it matters so much for those who will occupy that space.

I will defend two main ideas in this talk: (1) that everyday objects increase the quality of our life by increasing the aesthetic value of the spaces they create and modify (and we use); and (2) that everyday objects do this by (a) increasing the possibilities for us to do significant activities and (b) by creating a surrounding meaning that enhances the quality of the experience of

doing significant activities in that space. Perceiving an architectonic structure qua (physical) object tout court and perceiving that structure qua space-creating or space-shaping object are different things. Although both can be considered manners of perceiving architecture, whereas the latter is distinctive of it, the former is not. The creation or formation of spaces to live (i.e., to realize activities that are significant for us) defines and distinguishes architecture from other creative activities. Similarly, our everyday aesthetic evaluations of architecture differ from the aesthetic evaluation of other objects and activities in that they are primarily evaluations of created spaces. How we evaluate spaces, and what we evaluate about them, explains both (1) what spaces are and (2) how we create them in everyday life. This, in turn, helps explain (3) how we can create aesthetically valuable spaces.

The argument to defend the first idea will be something like this:

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1. Our efforts to make an empty space livable include our efforts to make it aesthetically valuable (because the latter increases the quality of life)
2. Making a space aesthetically valuable for someone means making it so that:
  - a. Life can develop in it ("life" as the significant activities that express that person's unique ideal of life)
  - b. It feels better for that person to develop their life in it
3. Anything that can fill a space can contribute to 2). This includes:
  - a. That which creates significant possibilities for activities (esp., furnishing)
  - b. That which enhances the felt quality of the experience of realizing those possibilities (esp., decoration)

Conclusion: everyday objects increase the quality of our life by increasing the aesthetic value of the spaces they create (and we use)

#### II

The argument to defend the second idea would be something like this:

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1. The aesthetic value of a space increases when we perceive:
  - a. Possibilities to realize significant activities
  - b. A surrounding meaning that enhances the felt quality of the experience of realizing significant activities in that space
2. We perceive (a) possibilities by imagining what we can do as we occupy a space and (b) significant possibilities by imagining them in relation to (the realization of) our ideal of life.
3. We perceive the surrounding meaning as a result of the perception of the (a) qualities that fill the space, (b) the support or reinforcement some qualities lend to others, and (c) the overall meaning we see in the reinforced (mutually-supporting) qualities that fill the space.

Conclusion: everyday objects increase the aesthetic value of a space by (a) increasing the possibilities for us to do significant activities and (b) creating a surrounding meaning that enhances the quality of the experience of doing significant activities in that space.

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## Iannilli, Gioia Laura

### Designing Familiarity: a Challenge for Everyday Aesthetics and Experience Design

My presentation will revolve around a specific question, namely to what extent familiarity can be designed. In order to answer this question, I will first resort to the philosophical sub-discipline named Everyday Aesthetics, and characterize the crucial notion of everydayness, in a non-naïve manner, in terms of familiarity. I will compare this latter with two similar, but not identical concepts which are currently successful in aesthetic debates such as habit and niche with which, I claim, it shares the characters of contingent stability and control upon experience, but with different degrees of dynamicity. In particular, I will try and show how familiarity is connoted by a more exploratory, creative and less conventional feature than habits and niches, which makes it a difficult aspect to design.

To this end, I will draw from the contribution of John Dewey and, in particular, from his work before the publication of *Art as Experience*, namely the book in which he explicitly carried out an aesthetic investi-

gation. My contribution revolves around a very specific aspect that has been tackled by Dewey and that, as far as I am aware, hasn't been yet addressed explicitly by other scholars even though Dewey is considered to be one of the forerunners of Everyday Aesthetics: familiarization processes. Using this lens, I believe provides one, hopefully perspicuous, strategy to reconstruct Dewey's wider aesthetic theory of perception in terms of a passive-active nexus between perceiving-sensing-expressing.

In the framework of this presentation, I will mainly focus on a portion of this wider research project, namely on the 1930 paper *Qualitative Thought* (henceforth QT), for a number of reasons. First, 1930 is interestingly the year before Dewey gave his 1931-32 William James Lectures at Harvard, entitled "*Art and Esthetic Experience*", which notoriously constitute the basis for *Art as Experience*. In 1930 Dewey was, in all probability, already pondering the contents of and even actually drafting his future

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lectures, and this is quite clearly testified by the many hints at the immediate, qualitative or aesthetic experience he provides in QT; Second, it is worth focusing on QT because here Dewey carries out a study aimed at emphasizing the relevance of and at reconstructing the dynamics in which a specific ability, namely a qualitative thought unfolds, in relation with "the meaning of regulation by an underlying and pervasive quality" (Dewey 1930: 246). Dewey delves into the question of how to preserve and even to intensify the perceived, or sensed qualitateness of a situation while expressing it in a (non-necessarily) propositional form; Third: he describes the way a qualitative thought proceeds in terms of something that runs on what I call "the spectrum of familiarity", namely something – a horizon of meaningful practices – spanning "the familiar-family resemblance-problematicity". This spectrum and its management are particularly relevant because they epitomize the dynamics through which the organism-environment transactions described by Dewey can become meaningful.

QT[ For an analysis of the "psychological background" of Art as Experience in particular in connection with Qualitative Thought see Shusterman (2010).], while being one fruitful instance of Dewey's attention to aesthetic matters before Art as Experience,

is also just one step in the wider journey aimed at reconstructing and shedding a different light on Dewey's aesthetic theory of perception in terms of an aesthetics of familiarity. So, even though there is a larger, more intricate, intertwining of publications, preparatory studies and events that deserve being taken into consideration in this framework, in my presentation I will only pinpoint some crucial aspects, useful to their further correlation, while indicating future steps of my research.

Once having reconceptualized familiarity through a Deweyan lens, I will attempt to locate it on the spectrum along which various kinds of Experience Design (namely what can be described as the most recent characterization of design in its specifically experiential and non-object-oriented feature since the so-called "experiential turn" that took place in the 90s; see Iannilli 2020) run. In this way I will bring to the fore the role designers and experientors can take when "designing" their own or others' everydayness, by showing a tendentially antinomic feature of both familiarity and Experience Design. In particular, I will emphasize once again how such a feature makes the designer and the experientor's aim to attain familiarity not easy to be fulfilled directly, and how, at the same time, it can be productive, if it is managed processually and indirectly, namely, exploratorily.

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Cascales, Raquel

Antón, Javier

Roquette, Juan Luis

Saez, Javier

Designing Spaces to Transform Workspaces.  
How the Influence of the Aesthetic in the Space  
can help the Flourishing of Every Person

According to Saito, two reasons explain the neglect of everyday Aesthetics. First, Aesthetics have been, since the Renaissance, art-centered. Moreover, the art that takes the central role in Aesthetics corresponds to the Western paradigm, which is nowadays only understood by audiences familiar with this specific artworld. Yet, she argues, this approach neglects the rich and diverse content of everyday Aesthetics, naturally open to any background. The second reason for neglecting the day-to-day is that traditional Aesthetics tend to be oriented toward extraordinary experiences and are hence estranged from life as it is ordinarily lived. Saito thinks that in focusing on the extraordinary in the ordinary, we lose “the dimension of personal engagement that characterizes our dealing with everyday environment and objects.” (2007, 202). For this reason, she defends the opportunity to believe that the Aesthetics of everyday life can change our quotidian perception of our daily life and the more insignificant actions (2017). One of the main aspects she focuses on is everyday environments. Building upon her previous work, in her last book (2022), Saito argues how aesthetic experience embodies a caring relationship with the world and how the ethical relationship with others, environments, or artifacts, is guided by aesthetic sensibility and manifested through aesthetic means. We were driven by the question of the call for papers about how we can design spaces with the aim of triggering a specific

aesthetic experience? More specifically, can the design of space generate some specific emotions to contribute to better workspaces? We want to focus the reflection on everyday aesthetics in the everyday design of spaces. Specifically in workspaces oriented to the direct care of the person. This is not just a theoretical reflection but is based on an actual research project called MisiON, on which we have been working for more than a year. We applied a specific methodology implanted in the Degree in Design at the University of Navarra (Larripa, Antón, Acilu, 2021). MisiON is a Service Delivery Research Project from the School of Architecture to IGEA, which is an association of professionals related with care services in the residential field. This project aims to train these professionals in problem-solving through Design Thinking. We are undertaking the project through the discipline of Service Design. This field of knowledge provides tools that help the resolution of problems by analyzing the whole environment and prioritizing people and interactions on top of the processes. The person is placed at the center of the ecosystem. Some of the tools we used in developing the projects were “storyboards” as catalysts for the ‘pain points’ of the ecosystem and the stakeholder maps as an empathy tool. After that, we identified the main problems in order to develop human-centric services. Nevertheless, we were also

very concerned about the importance of space in every case, which is usually forgotten in design research. Through a profound analysis of the workspaces we broke down the sequence of each project through the Service Blueprint. In a service, both problems and opportunities can be addressed by implementing solutions through 'touch points' and especially 'touch spaces'. We had two lines to study:

First, we pointed out the influence that the configuration of spaces has on the generation of specific emotions and feelings: fear, confidence, joy, surprise, etc. (Plutchik, 1991; Canepa, 2022). This effect has been studied in the case of architecture from Wölfflin (1994) to Javier Sáez (2019). Both defend how "the psychology of architecture has the task of describing and explaining the emotional effects that this art is able to evoke with the means proper to it" (Wölfflin, 1994, 150). However, these emotions are not so much considered in aesthetics. In design, the study of emotions has focused on color rather than spaces. Therefore, it is essential to study the feelings generated by areas in the study of design. In this way, we ask ourselves how to create spaces that provide more safety and well-being for the workers and the people to whom the work is addressed (Anthes, 2020).

Second, could we solve some problems by fixing 'pain points' in the spaces? In this case, we asked the group to analyze the different spaces and visualize the issues. The result was very interesting because people recognized how the configuration of the space could ease some challenges by creating better environments to share problems and redesigning spaces as a better scenario.

Aligned with the conference's topic, we would like to share the result of these findings to improve the project. We would also like to draw attention to the risk of turning the space of everyday life into an astonishing succession of exalted emotions that do not respond to the essence of daily life or to the full development of the

person (Higuera, 2021) and rather focus on adequacy and dignity. Faced with this possible perversion aimed at provoking a series of experiences disconnected from reality (which is even more accentuated – if possible – in the era of the metaverse), we are interested in finding mechanisms for the design of space and environment departing from the experience of the person and not the other way round.

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## Popp, Judith-Frederike

### The Haunting of our Habitat. Uncanny Dimensions of Designing Everyday Life

When it comes to shaping the material world in accordance with our ideas of usability, comfort and happiness, there is usually not much place for intentional creations of uncanny experiences. The only exception seems to be the infamous case of hostile architecture, being part of city's strategies to chase people without home away from their territory. When taking a look at artistic interventions especially in the context of public and activist art, on the other hand, the integration of disturbing and uncanny elements is regularly used to draw attention to social and political grievances (see for example Holman 1993 and Horowitz 1996). Against this background, it appears to be the case that the intentional integration of uncanny elements in the public space of everyday life only makes sense when it follows either an inhuman political or an very specific artistic agenda. In contrast to this, the aim of my talk lies in exploring the possibility that uncanny dimensions can play a relevant and valuable role in our everyday experiences and there-

fore should be taken into account while designing everyday life especially in its spatial forms. My argumentation takes the route of showing that uncanny experiences are able to disturb and shake the routines and habits of daily life and thereby bring the recipients of this disturbing experience into contact with their own being in the world as fragile physical and psychological beings rooted in time and space.

By enabling such experiences, certain spaces and environments have a unique potential to evoke and combine aesthetic and ethical perspectives and values with regard to insights leading to resistance, change and transformation.

Working out the considerations leading to this conceptualization of everyday design as space of aesthetic-ethical events will take the following form in my talk. In the first part, I will introduce two phenomena of our everyday life that build on each other, where uncanny dimensions take command: On a fundamental level, I will present our modern built world as place

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where sudden encounters with seemingly harmless but nevertheless overwhelming sublime conditions is possible and regularly takes place. This is due to the capacity especially of architecture to confront human beings with an oscillation between volatile ideas and permanent material conditions (see Dewey 1980). Against this background, I will discuss the both analogue and digital phenomenon of liminal spaces as fragile meeting point between architecture's capacity to interrupt and the processuality as well as constant "in between" status of everyday life in general and the situation of human beings in particular (Smith 2001; Downey/Kinane/Parker 2016). In the second part, I will present some thoughts about the relevance of uncanny encounters in human agency and life practice referring to the work of philosopher and psychoanalyst Jonathan Lear and his conception of self-understanding through self-commotion and self-interruption (with reference to Lear 2011 and Lear 2017). In the third part, I will combine these considerations with the observations of the first part to develop an approach towards

uncanny experiences in spaces of everyday life as part of realizing oneself as human inhabitant of the world in an open-ended process (with reference to Turner 2017 and Tesar/Arndt 2020). A main focus here will lie on the relevance of the body and of its interaction with our designed and built world in its temporal and spatial capacities. When it comes to these capacities, the focus will lie on audio-visual rhythms and the mediation of endlessness. In the fourth and last part of my talk, I will discuss the ethical implications of combining the outer space of human interaction with the environments of everyday life and the inner space of human self-relations. With reference to the idea that architecture is a practice where aesthetic and ethical ideas and responsibilities cannot be separated (see Harries 2013 and Lagueux 2013), the question will be discussed how it is possible to include the aim to enable uncanny experiences in the task of designing everyday experience as part of opening up spaces of individual and collective transformative self-understanding.

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## Persoone, Manon & Liekens, Jo(han)

### From Toileting to The Making of Worlds

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This proposal draws on a research line in-the-making, that as a novel alphabet is titled *Twenty-six Toilets to Re-figure Inhabitation*. The idea of inhabitation refers here to an entry in and a rupture with the habitual. In this research line, conceived as fundamentally interwoven with the contemporary era of ecological emergency for which novel design strategies need to be developed and deployed, the everyday but pivotal architectural element serving as a research vehicle paradoxically is the toilet—and its acts and performances of toileting. As suggested in the AMO publication *Elements of Architecture* (1), this somewhat unrepresentable element, space, as well as configuration of everyday practices has in no architectural treatise figured as a primordial element for thinking on architecture and how this as an aesthetical practice assists in shaping our worlds and mindsets. Moreover, this element has been ongoingly enclosed and hidden away in our architecture as well as in our use of language. However, the toilet as an element of literal regenerative habits may be regarded to be the ultimate site for re-thinking architecture and our connections with world(s) on the level of the everyday. In our interpretation, it is this element's trump to be both habit and practice which shapes our relationship to the world, and which through affect helps refigure the customary sets of attitudes, habits, values, social forms, practices, and material traits which characterize our patterns of habitation.

The microlevel—the everyday element toilet—resonating with the macrolevel of ideas on worlds and world-making recall Till's observation who, drawing from Lefebvre, considers the everyday as 'the site that contains the extraordinary within the ordinary, if one is prepared to look' (2). In this preparing one to look, aesthetical practices such as architecture play a crucial role. Through a politics of aesthetics, they can make sensible and spatial what was habitually rendered out of scope. They can surface the extraordinary within or

through the ordinary, in this case using the element toilet to spawn ideas on future worlds. By doing so, and by working from the experiential level of the everyday they can assist in triggering shifts in our mindsets, moving these towards more ecological or regenerative futures. This level of mindsets associated with the cultural level of shared ideas that make up society has been identified by Ichioka and Pawlyn as the level ideal to engage with in search for long-term ecological change (3). Then the twenty-six architectural artefacts or toilets of our research line, working on the level of the everyday and cultural, project that such change is possible and that their users have an agency in that. Relating to Post-Anthropocentric and New-Materialist thinking (4), this agency is congregational in nature and consciously draws in non-human agents and agencies.

For this contribution we present two out of the twenty-six artefacts or toilet designs for re-figuring inhabitation. These are F for Factory of Regenerative Habits and S for Soil Times / S for Semois. Following a design-driven approach, both projects explore an off-grid situation—one urban and one rural—wherein human bodily waste is re-valued as a living matter to care for and co-habit with. At the same time, the act of taking care itself is seen as congregational since the revalued matter of waste itself engages in processes of caretaking. New forms of kinship emerge. The element toilet serves here as a tactile contact point between body and soil that holds us accountable for our waste. Both projects and the shared research line in which they are inscribed hypothesize that designing with and for this living matter would result in fundamentally different, more inclusive, qualitative, ecological, and regenerative spatial settings as well as futures, by highlighting the extraordinary in the everyday. As a case in the ongoing doctoral research of Manon Persoone, F for Factory of Regenerative Habits engages with a former factory site situated on heavily polluted soils.

Here, a community of creators is assembling a collective utopic workplace as an alternative form of (co-)habitation. As foregrounded centuries ago by Thomas More, 'any utopia worth its name must consider sanitation' (5). Taking this assumption as its challenge, the project ventures from the toilet as a key element in the search for an ecological shift in mindsets on waste and waste treatment when fundamentally altering its design. Following a design-driven methodology, and drawing in the community of creators on site, part of the project's output consists of toilet-proposals paired to sets of socio-ecological design strategies for changing our patterns of habitation. During the conference, analogue models on scale 1:33 of the toilet-artefacts will be presented which have served as discussion tools during participatory workshops. Along with the architectural models, first insights on how sustainable design can create awareness and generate a cultural uptake of ecological ideas will be surfaced. Situated in the post-doctoral research of Jo Liekens, S for Soil Times / S for Semois is an architectural toilet-artefact that, in its final destination will serve as a reforesting and composting tower. Herein human bodily waste will age, in co-habitation with human presence, producing new soil in

a material practice of care with which to resuscitate and nurture a dying landscape of Ash trees in the sharply cut streamlet valley the tower is harbored in. During the conference, the story of the tower will be unfolded, connecting also to the idea of it being an artefact that is assembled along a journey of inscribing it in different—research and public—venues, where it has served and will ongoingly serve as a conversation piece in New-Materialist, Post-Anthropocentric debates before arriving at its final destination.

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## Aota, Mami

### The Time of Urban Parks: Aesthetic Experience of Nature in the Life of Tokyo

This paper illuminates the significance of the aesthetic experience of nature in contemporary urban parks. It is not only the unshakeable fact that cities cannot exclude nature, but also, we humans have the (contradictory) desire for nature to be present in the city. We create cities by partly excluding nature, yet we invite it into the city by creating parks. Why do we need urban parks? And how should urban parks be designed to achieve the purpose? The number of previous studies on nature in urban parks is minimal within environmental aesthetics. Therefore, in section 1, I refer to Allen Carlson's analysis of the role of nature in gardens compared with art. Gardens and parks are created by humans artificially placing nature in them, but while we tend to regard gardens as art, we do not see parks as such. Urban parks, in particular, are located in towns. People can easily reach there by shortly stepping out of their daily lives. We may be looking for a temporary retreat from our daily lives in urban parks. If so, we see them as a part of our lives, not belonging to art. If this is the case, then when we think about aesthetic experiences of

nature in urban parks, it is not art but the everyday that should be brought up as a comparison point.

In Section 2, I explore the features of everydayness in cities. Arto Haapala discusses aesthetic experiences in our environment around two emotions: strangeness and familiarity. According to him, when we are, for example, traveling, we are attracted to visual features and fascinated by strangeness in unfamiliar environments. In contrast, in the environment in which we live, we feel a quiet pleasure. He calls this feeling familiarity. However, he also points out that in urban spaces, even if one lives there for a long time, familiarity and strangeness will always remain. In cities, new buildings are always under construction, and new things appear one after another. How we perceive time in cities is also considered a factor in creating this strangeness. Time moves so fast in cities that it is difficult for even those living there to adjust fully.

Haapala sees strangeness positively, but such negative strangeness is also inherent in urban life. Based on the arguments above, Section 3 examines the impact of

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urban dwellers' leisure time in parks and experiencing nature aesthetically on their lives. We desire leisure time, a time away from the flow of urban life. In this respect, nature in urban parks is valuable not only because it provides a mere pause from our life but also because it gives us a 'different time' distinct from our daily life. Using urban parks in Tokyo as a concrete example, this paper will identify three types of time given by nature.

(1) The experience of becoming one with the environment in the shade provided by trees. We feel the time of trees that transcends humans.

(2) The experience of walking along the water's edge, which changes its shape according to time and weather conditions. We can gain a sense of pause by watching the shimmering of the water.

(3) The experience of playing with children in urban parks. We, adults, are involved in the time of children. We can feel the different time scales by touching soil and stones nurtured in geological time.

We can have a great variety of experiences of the passage of time away from the scale of human life in parks. Although Amanda J. Meyer and Charles Taliaferro have identified green as a characteristic of the nature of modern urban parks, we come into con-

tact with natural things which have different colors, such as blue and earth colors. Each color has its own time.

Imagination underpins these experiences. Emily Brady describes the 'amplifying imagination' as the ability to perceive the flow of time when looking at an object. This amplified imagination is essential to feel the nature that lives in a different time from ours. Arnold Berleant's aesthetics of engagement is also helpful for analyzing aesthetic experiences in urban parks. To engage the environment, we must overcome the boundary between the environment and us. It is necessary for us to break out of the mode of everyday life to surrender ourselves to nature and experience another time.

As described above, nature in urban parks offers us the possibility of escaping the busyness embedded in urban life and recovering our human life because it has a different time scale from us. This is why, as Kiyohiko Kitamura points out, we must continue to devise ways of managing nature in parks as artificial environments. Though we must continue to control nature in urban parks, we should aim to design them so that their own time can remain in urban parks.

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## V. Munch, Anders

### Total Design of Everyday Life: Historical Ideals and Dilemmas of the Gesamtkunstwerk

The all-embracing ideal of designing the human environment throughout any scale was not only central to the high modernism of the 1950s, where Rogers spoke of 'from spoon to city' and Eero Saarinen mentioned the scales from city plan to ash tray in 1959 (Saarinen 1962), and where Walter Gropius unfolded the Scope of Total Architecture (1955) and László Moholy-Nagy had announced 'design-for-life' a bit earlier. This kind of motto goes further back to Hermann Muthesius describing the ambitions and scope of activities of the German Werkbund as ranging 'from sofa-cushions to city-building' in 1911. (Muthesius 1911) The Werkbund inherited this line of thinking from the more utopian tradition of the Gesamtkunstwerk going back to Gottfried Semper and Richard Wagner and the later attempt to merge art and life in Jugendstil interiors and avant-garde experiments. The mix of artistic scrutiny and all-embracing ideals sharpened the focus on minute details of everyday life, on spoons, ashtrays and sofa-cushions as part of overarching designs, plans and visions. This heritage, however, also displayed severe dilemmas, and there has been an

ongoing critique and challenging of the ideals through this tradition, e.g. Adolf Loos' caricatures of the daily life to be expected to unfold in Secessionist interiors designed as total works of art. I will discuss cases of very different artists and designers investigating the dilemmas of the all-embracing design of everyday life from Peter Behrens, Kurt Schwitters and László Moholy-Nagy to Constant. This line of thinking design in totalities developed very effective creative tools to embrace design, organization and communication of everyday life across the scales of modern society. Through this, art, design and architecture could enrich life – but they could also frame and program everyday life too tightly for the environments to be livable. The merging of art and life is a delicate balance. The ideal might be to serve and empower peoples, but it often turns the same people into fixed parts of a finished 'work' rather than independent participants of the ensemble.

All the way from the artist colony at Mathildehöhe in Darmstadt in 1901 and the corporate design of AEG, where Behrens unfolded and developed the means of interior and industrial design, through Bauhaus

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as well as several avant-garde groups to the models and texts on the playful life of New Babylon as urban utopia by Constant in the 1950s and '60s the Wagnerian ideas were a permanent reference. The ideas have since then spread everywhere without reference and are, of course, mixed with many other ideas and impulses. References to 'total design' and 'total work of art' are widespread, but with very loose and uncritical understandings of the ideas. Mark Wigley (1998) and Hal Foster (2003) have addressed how the ideas of the Gesamtkunstwerk have turned into more trivial and seducing means in contemporary, creative industries of 'starchitects' and big brands, in their critical essays. More recent research literature has looked thoroughly into the long tradition of the Gesamtkunstwerk from early romanticism to modern culture (Roberts 2011), but with primary focus on politics, literature and music, and less focus on design and architecture. (Koss 2010 being a valuable exception, but with special focus on theater buildings and stage design, and not on everyday life.) As both the all-embracing ideals and the creative means of total design seem to have been 'naturalized' into design and planning as well as the broader creative

industries of lifestyle media the challenge could be to trace and reactivate the critical reflections and experiments from inside the historical traditions. As modernist design and planning rolled out the 'Scope of Total Architecture' in organizing modern societies, which frame most of our everyday life, we must know the thinking behind them to address the consequences and change the negative impact. My proposal here is to discuss the possibility of a 'critical, total design' based on historical ideals and dilemmas addressed through the selected cases. The challenge would be to keep the all-embracing design of everyday life open to diversity, heterogeneity, temporality and plural worlds (Escobar), as there has also been a strong sensibility to cracks and fragments experienced through the many attempts of holism. (Finger & Follett 2011) This concept might be just as utopian, as the dream of the Gesamtkunstwerk has ever been. But it could frame an ongoing, critical discussion of all the good intentions and nice ideals of embracing design of everyday life that often turn into the opposite. (This rather wide historical scope of aesthetic and philosophical ideas is based on a recent monograph.)

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## Fétro, Sophie

### Design and Sobriety in a Future of Lesser Abundance

Let's start with a hypothesis and a projection of a future of lesser abundance. The idea of a permanent and unlimited renewal of resources comes up against the physical reality of the earth. The model of society based on the belief in a profusion of inexhaustible resources is today destabilized in the light of climate and environmental changes. A profound reconsideration seems inevitable. Certainly, calls to spend fewer resources will multiply in the future, leading the earth's inhabitants to preserve what Bruno Latour calls the "terrestrial" (Facing Gaya, Eight Lectures on the New Climate Regime, 2015). Faced with a humanity in the grip of its own contradictions, design can constitute a space of reflection and production conducive to finding alternatives to certain profoundly "geophagic" ways of life. This is the hypothesis that we will support. In the field of design, the work of projection is a fairly characteristic faculty of the designer, which places him in a good position to make proposals and define a less tragic horizon. The fear of lack is spreading to all spheres of society, even those who thought they were safe from

need until now. How then, in this context which enjoins us to consume less, can design creations be translated into admirable experiences? How can they still lead to everyday experiences that do not boil down to the sole question of survival? The designers will undoubtedly have to redouble their efforts and "tricks" (M. Detienne and J-P. Vernant, *Les ruses de l'intelligence. La mètis des Grecs*, 1974) to continue to propose experiences that are worth living. Walter Benjamin in *Experience and Poverty* (1933) envisaged the poverty of the experience as the occasion of a possible renewal. What if this perspective of "reduction" could be the opportunity to invent a more attentive relationship with the earth? This opportunity should definitively be seized in order to avoid perpetuating an unequalitarian and destructive model. Without falling into prophecy, we will develop an analysis based on five design proposals that question the relationship to everyday life, to resources and to limited means, while focusing on their aesthetic qualities.

We will emphasize on five examples that will serve as references:

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1/ Anni Albers' and Alexander Reed's jewelry made from washers and bobbypins; 2/ Jessie Howard's Transparent Tools family of devices; 3/ the I-cone clamps developed by Tout Simplement (<https://www.toutsimplement.com/collection>); 4/ Ariane Prin's Rust collection (<https://www.prin.in/about>) made from recycled metal dust; 5/ the jewelry made as part of the Plastic Gold Workshop project from recycled plastic bottles by Florie Salnot (<http://www.florie-salnot.com/PlasticGoldPart1.php>). Through these examples, we will highlight different relationships between limited means and the forms obtained. What we want to show is that the reduction and the limited material conditions do not necessarily reduce the aesthetic scope of the productions, sometimes even increasing it. We will also show some borderline cases and tipping points that can nevertheless lead to unsatisfactory answers that are difficult to sustain in terms of aesthetics and uses.

This capacity of the designer to transmute materials is not without problems. Giving a second life to waste (François Dagognet, *Des détrit, des déchets, de l'abject. An ecological philosophy*, 1998) could legitimize the overproduction of waste since designers or users manage to requalify it. This is the possible pitfall of such an approach. How then, to use Benjamin's words, to "make do with little", he who indicates in *Experience and Poverty* (1933): "But how to seize such an opportunity, how to transform into a resource the economic,

cultural, spiritual impoverishment caused by defeat? "

Today, defeat is the defeat of an economic, political, social and productive model in relation to the earth. The stakes are high. A crucial invitation is played there which consists in envisaging – in designing – other modalities of existence, of relationship to the things, to the beings and to the physical and material world, in order to operate, as Bruce Bégout suggests it (*The discovery of the everyday life*, 2005) of the spaces opened to the unusual. This attitude, as W. Benjamin, inevitably requires a particular effort: "it implies that one discards all acquired experiences".

The designer has a role to play in this matter, making it possible to envisage possible happy alternatives which it is advisable to detect and discover. It is perhaps in the shadow of deeply established models that possible paths can be found.

If there are approaches in design that are part of an unbridled consumption of resources, we propose instead to evoke the idea of a "happy sobriety" (Pierre Rabi, *Vers une sobriété heureuse*, 2010) in design, which consists in using resources with moderation while maintaining qualities of use, aesthetic and poetic properties. This approach of moderation in design consists in considering daily life, not as the place where comfort and aesthetic and poetic aspects are renounced, but on the contrary as a critical space open to dissonance, to changes and to otherness in a positive and creative perspective.

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## Szécsényi, Endre

### “An Habitual Disposition of Mind”: on the Roots of Everyday Aesthetics in the Early 18th Century

The central aim of this talk is to demonstrate that everyday aesthetics was invented along with modern aesthetics in the pivotal first decades of the 18th century. It is not the case that contemporary everyday aesthetics would be an extension of (philosophical) aesthetics or philosophy of art to a non-artistic scope; instead, “art-centered aesthetics”, as evolved by the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, has been a narrowing of the earlier (pre-Kantian or even pre-Baumgartenian) modern aesthetic in many respects. So everyday aesthetics of today should be understood in the framework of a regainment, rather than an expansion. Beyond the historical or antiquarian interest, this approach can give us lessons about (i) the potentials the new aesthetic look has discovered in everyday life already at the beginning of the formation of modern world, and (ii) the insights it found about the techniques or manners of how to shape – or, to design – an individual life in accordance with happiness and moral-spiritual improvement, how to connect this “aesthetic”

life to broader social-political issues. These observations and exercises, at least most of them, are far from being out-of-date, especially that the turn of 17th and 18th centuries was a groundbreakingly transient period in intellectual and cultural sense as the turn of our century.

In the early 18th century, systematic or philosophical aesthetics did not exist yet, even Hutcheson’s *Inquiry concerning beauty and virtue* (1725) could not be considered as a self-sufficient aesthetic theory. The texts I will discuss come mostly from journals like *The Tatler*, *The Spectator* and *The Guardian*. In these essays – available to a broad readership of mostly city-dwellers – written by Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Henry Grove and George Berkeley, we can find intriguing and influential examples of a new manner and conduct of life: the life of homo aestheticus. The eminent occasions for the modern aesthete to use or exercise their taste or imagination were mostly everyday and/or non-artistic situations in nature or in urban environment, and the

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encounters with Classical or highly evaluated modern artworks did not play a crucial role at all in this phase of the evolution of modern aesthetic.

Through the textual examples, I will show different attempts in which these authors strove to invent, to foster and to recommend to their readers a new type of experience which we may retrospectively call “aesthetic”. This experience was not an autonomous one, it connected to several facets of human life, and to several different languages (devotional and romance literature, physico-theology, epistemology, moral and political philosophy, medicine, etc.). It was usually conceived in a dynamic framework, that is, not as a kind of pure contemplation, but rather as an activity or a movement like walking, expatiation, flânerie or meditational exercise. Here, it is not the aesthetic of the everydayness as such that was discovered, instead they introduced the familiar world “in another light” to discover the extraordinary – the novelty or the uncommon as they called this aesthetic quality – in the ordinary. They never recommended an escape from the everyday reality; their efforts concerned its augmentation and enrichment. At the same time, novelty was not only a relative quality (as many categorized it in the theoretical aesthetics from E. Burke onwards), but it also had to do with the innocent state of mind of the first men, as Addison suggested, or with that of the blessed, as Grove put it clear. Eventually, novelty as an aesthetic category was grasped through the charm of a new creation (a full realization of a perfect design). Moreover, a morning or an evening “ordinary walk” in nature, and the spiritual-aesthetic experience – a shift from “transient gleams of joy” to “perpetual state of bliss and happiness” (as Addison wrote) – it could offer, was much closer to everyday activities and routines than nowadays: today

it requires a great – sometimes almost an extraordinary – effort of a city-dweller to go out into nature, while in the early 18th century the wilderness was still farer from the familiar, and these short excursions in nature were part of everyday life.

To live these everyday occasions aesthetically, a special attitude was needed: this new aesthetic consciousness was described as a certain “frame of mind” or “an habitual disposition of mind”: this disposition made the aesthetic experience possible. It was considered a necessary condition for a happier and fuller human life, for a life worth living. They also called it “cheerfulness” or “the pleasures of the imagination” or “the pleasures of a wise man” or “natural (vs. fantastick) pleasure” and like: “pleasure” has gained a (quasi-)ontological status in these essays. The special status of this new openness to the world (including everyday environment) was put between the sensual delights and the intellectual joys, being not so morally questionable as the former, and not so hard to attain as the latter. I will argue that, despite the devotional-spiritual overtones and interests in the emerging modern aesthetic, the existential insights and patterns they offered have remained valid and operational for a more secular or mundane world, too.

This early 18th aesthetic project focused on neither the philosophy of sensory perception (aesthesis), nor the work of art as a model for re-designing human life, it dealt with manners and techniques by means of which human life could be enhanced: not only in space, but – perhaps more importantly – in time: in the (everyday) aesthetic experience the prelapsarian harmony can be regained and/or the fore-taste of the heaven can be felt even in this world. The content of promise may have changed, but the desire to have a promise has remained unchanged.



# Bertinetto, Alessandro

## The Habitual Aesthetic Self: Material Engagement, Expressive Styles and Everyday Aesthetics

Artifacts may be seen (and felt) as extensions of the self: they scaffold the self through entanglement and material engagement, shaping our personality in terms of affective, expressive and also epistemic experience. Consequently, artifacts (and places) affording aesthetic experiences can be perceived and felt as aesthetic extensions of the self. Our “expressive style(s),” as well as our multifarious manifestations of creativity in daily life are shaped through objects that become part of our self: the expressiveness and creativity of our “aesthetic self” (Fingerhut et al. 2021) are distributed through objects with which we experience the world.

Artifacts become parts of our aesthetic self by virtue of the affective investment deriving from the gratification elicited by the aesthetic experiences made possible by “corresponding” with them (Ingold 2021). In other words, our aesthetic self is shaped (and extended) by the way we “resonate” with the objects and places that configure our “aesthetic niche” (Portera 2020). This correspondence, in turn, is elicited by the ways artifacts participate in our ways of agency, thereby becoming parts of

a distributed and extended personality and constituting our own forms of life. This is all the more true for those objects with which we have assiduous, daily, habitual frequentation or which accompany particular recurring events (e.g., festivals and celebrations) that give a “cultural” rhythm to our existence. The “affective incorporation” of artifacts in our extended self is indeed a form, or a part, of the broader process of “habit-incorporation” (Colombetti 2016): the aesthetic extension of the self through artifacts is an expression of the habits by which human beings organize their lives.

However, the question arises as to how habits, that scaffold the self, have an aesthetic dimension. This question calls for special reflection on a hot topic of contemporary philosophical debate.

Recent research has identified two different conceptions of habits:

(1) Habits as attitudes or dispositions resulting from repetition of routine behavioral patterns and constraining behavior.

(2) Habits as practical lifeforms that, as more or less rigid and repetitive or plastic and intelligent sources of actions, enable

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and organize the mutual correspondence between persons and the environment. These two notions operate differently in the trends of contemporary aesthetics. Some approaches move from (1) and see habits as obstacles or alternatives to aesthetic experience; others, relying on (2) see habits as enabling and organizing aesthetic experience.

I suggest that both notions of habit can affect aesthetic experience. The first notion concerns habits that, by fossilizing them into routines, block the possibility of positive aesthetic experience. The second notion, on the other hand, concerns habits, which, when involved in our aesthetic experiences, can be called “aesthetic habits,” or so I contend.

This notion allows the relationship between habits and aesthetic experience to be articulated in a way that reconciles “restrictionist” and “expansionist” approaches in everyday aesthetics. Restrictionist approaches emphasize the pleasure of ordinary habitual experiences; expansionist approaches defend instead that habitual practices become unusually intense and extraordinary due to aesthetic experience. These two conceptions can be reconciled precisely through the notion of “aesthetic habits,” meaning habits that regulate, enable and engage aesthetic experiences, forge expertise and sensibility for aesthetic issues, and regulate aesthetic expectations and attitudes. My proposal is that aesthetic habits, as patterns of behavior entangled and engaged with objects (as well as with places and people), provide the self with trust and confidence about its environment, thereby scaffolding its aesthetic style, and giving the self (as well as the cultural aesthetic practices to which it participates)

a stability capable of acquiring normative force; however, due to the plasticity of aesthetic habits, their practice in concrete situations retroactively impacts aesthetic routines, thereby possibly fostering, rather than counteracting, creativity, expressiveness, and the experience of the extraordinary in/of the ordinary.

In this sense, the dynamics of the aesthetic habits organizing our engagement and entanglement with artifacts (as well as with places and persons) can explain that processes of aesthetic habituation can be psychologically and culturally rewarding and ecologically favorable to human well-being, although aesthetic habits can also be manipulatively inculcated by “nudges,” e.g. through commercial advertisements and propaganda (Arielli 2016).

The notion of aesthetic habits is useful for understanding that the incorporation of objects into habitual practices that organize the aesthetic style of the self has an ambiguous impact on both the formation of individual and social taste (in that it shapes and organizes an aesthetic normativity) and the creative expressiveness of everyday practices. Clarifying this ambiguity is an important task of everyday aesthetics, indeed of aesthetics tout court. In this regard, my final thesis is that the antidote to the ossification of aesthetic habits (and norms) in order to nurture the gratifying character of habitual and ritual aesthetic experiences is to revive habitual dispositions to aesthetic experience and agency through the exercise of conscious improvisation (Bertinetto 2022), capable of reconciling the taste for the familiar with the surprise of the here and now.

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# Sinha, Tulip

## Conversation As Capital

*Conversation is the way in which people socialize and develop and sustain their relationships with each other. All human beings engage in conversational interaction and human society depends on conversation in order to function* – Anthony J. Liddicoat.

Two years of the global pandemic, and social isolation has sustained as the new normal. It demands that as a race, we rediscover the act and art of making connections through conversations and thereby shape a desired society through these conversations. Although, my enquiry into this subject predates the pandemic and the focus has been on understanding the role that conversations can play within learning environments. My classroom and outbound experiences with the students of art-design have revealed a visible discomfort in engaging in face-to-face communication, between the students and with the world outside, coupled with a steady decline in mindful listening and engagement, resulting in heavy reliance on secondary sources of information in the name of research practice. This disposition tends to disengage students from their immediate environment, affecting their practice not just as young designers or change-makers, but as citizens who are a part of a societal collective. This phenomenon, if seen in the light of the hyper-connected world of technological advancements in a predominantly a-lithic society such as India (which has a wealth of traditional knowledge-systems that have sustained through oral-transmission), demands a re-evaluation of the teaching-learning experience.

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Institutions as learning centres where classrooms are a locus of socialization, should therefore enable the learners to get re-acquainted to the art of communication through conversation; provide opportunities to cultivate it, practice it, leading up to regarding a fellow human-being as a potential repository of knowledge. These opportunities then become fertile ground for not just information but mental models to be shared, reflected upon and re-modelled, equally for teachers and learners. Could educators and therefore institutions operate with the premise that:

1. Conversations are a form of 'intellectual capital'; they can be used as a tool to build an ethos of investigation, for knowledge creation and sharing, thereby aiding the practice of design and life.
2. Critical questions can emerge from meaningful conversations because learning may not always take place from exchanging or eliciting the right answers alone. In this way, shared conceptual interpretations, departures and emergent thought patterns can all be made visible and available for consumption by the cohort.

This can be further explained by the social constructivist theory, where the fellow participant may be regarded as the 'more knowledgeable other' by virtue of the learners being from different experiential settings, which informs the diversity of their orientations, individual stances and how they choose to express these through words and corresponding actions in varying ways. However, the above can happen when the conversations occur within a carefully crafted unobtrusive fencing that steers and funnels the inter-

action in a more specialized direction, without being normative or restrictive. As a response to the above challenge, I developed the *Conversation Toolkit* (2018), which takes a gamified approach to foster active communication, socio-cultural connections, and helps harvest the knowledge born out of social interactions. The content of the toolkit is anchored on understanding and responding creatively to the nebulous concept of 'culture', since as change-makers, designers need to be able to place their offerings within socio-cultural realities and sensitivities. It has been used by facilitators at the level of high school and higher-education to not only start conversations as a collective on a topic as expansive as culture, but to also recalibrate the 'classroom culture' with the inclusion of meaningful conversations. The design of the toolkit as an artefact sits within the larger context of 'designing for learning'. The approach has been to amalgamate principles and practices from 3 domains, namely game-design, design-research and conversation analysis to be able to design the game-flow, question/provocation framing and turn-design.

The salient features of the toolkit are:

- Minimising asymmetries in interaction using an overarching turn-taking framework that allow for tacit level negotiations to take place and lets new or deviant information to be shared freely.
- Allowing for divergence and digressions to make interactions enjoyable and can be incorporated within the redefined institutional conversations
- Establishing situatedness of interactions in a physical-conceptual context to engage in publicly, to express one's orientation and understanding of the context, followed by extrapolation of each other's contributions/actions.
- Aiding unfolding of the known and the unknown contexts, where the participants may begin to first share the facts as they are or as they understand.
- Re-imagining the context after sharing and interpreting/making sense the knowns. This collective re-imagination of thought-patterns can be explored in any medium of choice.

Some findings from using the toolkit with various students are as follows:

- Following the introduction, the game was co-managed by students allowing the facilitator to listen more (and participate as well) and create a non-hierarchical, unthreatening space for communication.

- Forgetting the mobile phones, the students enjoyed 'listening to each other' and wanted to finish the game. The classroom had been 'slowed' at last.
- What started with a lighter, more subjective 'familiar-world-of-the-self', moved to the objective 'unfamiliar-outside-world' and hence the responses needed more deliberation.
- The conversations often steered away to very interesting and unanticipated directions.
- The newly designed cultures were very well-folded with solid reasons for their existence.

This form of institutional usage of conversations as a mode of inquiry would not only facilitate critical questioning and thinking but would also necessitate a shift in the roles of both the students and the facilitators. Using the toolkit would create a space for co-investigation and a collaborative creation of knowledge on a given topic, instead of a unidirectional instructional format of enquiring about it.

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## Babarczy, Eszter

### Habits, Values and Design: Towards Sustainability

One extremely important challenge for the design professions is how to steer design consumers towards sustainable habits. I propose to build a theory of habits and values on the insights of enactivism and pragmatism, and argue that because habits are values that steer life, designers face classical philosophical questions concerning the good life.

As William James famously said, we are bundles of habits, and these habits are in some cases designed. Our designed habits organize our life without us becoming conscious of them, therefore we often do not choose our habits. In enactivist theory habits become partly detached from individuals, they have their own space and generate their own values. Enactivism claims that organisms strive to maintain their identity and this is what generates values, but so do habits: habits can be seen as self-sustaining, they are organizations that organize the organism's behaviour, that is, they exist at a level of culture above self-generated actions

but below cultural institutions. If there is indeed a layer of quasi-autonomous habits that are associated with elements (affordances) of the environment, and these have a certain inertia in the organization of behaviour, it means that designers usually, perhaps always deal with habits and these habits can, perhaps with some flexibility, steer human behaviour. So by designing affordances, designers also design behaviour.

Interaction designers and architects design habits, and so do engineers when deciding on the reparability of a technical tool or a mobile phone, and obviously service design relies on habits and creates new ones. Therefore we can perhaps suggest that all design activity is a designing of habits. If habits "want" to maintain themselves and become quasi-autonomous, it is an important ethical task for the designer to find a balance between technical and economic imperatives and the classical philosophical questions of the good (and sustainable) life. This has consequences

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not only for design practice but also for the place of design in culture: through designing habits, design helps values materialize in everyday life. These values may not be overtly stated in a design brief or may even escape the awareness of the designer, therefore it is very important for a reflexive design practice to learn to think in terms of values, as embodied in habits.

In my contribution I wish to start with the philosophical notion of habits and explore how they embody values that may override or circumvent conscious decisions. We are ruled by habits, although as pragmatism alerts us, these habits are not necessarily completely blind and binding action processes. The mild paternalism of "Nudge"-theory (Cass Sunstein - Richard Thaler) suggests that decision makers should manufacture choice situations where the agent is influenced to choose the option decision makers find useful or ethical. I argue that almost all design deci-

sions are such decisions: by manufacturing affordances, designers also manufacture choices and suggest values. These suggested values may not become salient or conscious but through influencing habits they influence the fabric of social reality. Beyond choice manufacturing, designers may create new meanings, as habits are seen as microworlds that depend on a meaningful situation. If we can manufacture new meanings for situations, consumer behaviour might change. I want to present two ways of changing meanings: creating personalities for products that go beyond their immediate usefulness. One such technique is mass personalization, where consumers take part in the design process and therefore grow more attached to products. The other technique is adding narratives, stories to design products that change their meaning.



## Gyurkó, Szilvia

### Responsible and Caring Design for a Better Childhood

We all were children. We know from research that our experiences of the first 18 years are the most significant. Childhood traumas as well as our trusted, loving relationships with adults and other children can shape our lives, relationships, attachments and wellbeing since they are shaping our brain and neurological system. (Perry, 2005)

One can say that childhood is one of the most important 'designers' of our identity and life. This 'design' is mostly intuitive, unconscious and rooted in parental patterns, emotions, memories, understandings experienced by children through everyday activities. Until recently, the factors, elements and consequences of childhood were interesting for psychologists, neurologists and sociologists. Since we believed that childhood designs our life but missed the point that it works vice versa. We (as individuals and as society members) can also design (re-design) childhood. There has been a growing trend in recent years towards raising awareness of childhood and targeting adults (not just parents but professionals) to be more conscious when they contact, work with or for children.

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(Global Child Forum, 2020) This trend led us to 'safeguarding policies', 'child participation approach', 'child rights in business principles' and 'child-centered design approach'.

Child rights approach and child participation may enable designers to improve any product development process that concerns communities, families and children under the age of 18. Design approach acknowledges that children are not just the next generation or our future. They live with us, they are targeted by different products and they have to be seen as a diverse audience of competent individuals holding human rights and having capacity to make real decisions. (Castella, 2018) Empowering children and taking care of their rights can catalyze both processes (new ways of care in design thinking) and outcomes (objects, interiors, buildings that fit better to children).

Child participation in design processes is not about empathy - it is a more complex phenomenon. It is a way of care. Designers have to learn ways of meaningful child par-

ticipation (p.e.: Lundy Model). In addition, we have to change the ways designers are thinking about children and we also have to raise awareness on children's rights and how care/inclusivity in design can play a significant role in child safeguarding as well as in ESG. Childhood is a process in which everyone and everything is influential. The more children experience care by adults, the better they will understand themselves and the world. There are promising practices concerning this approach, like involving children into environment projects (building a playground, other spaces, routes of public transportation) or co-design with children in digital platform development (p.e. to avoid dark design). In addition, toolkits are available to help designers to reflect on children's needs in a better way. (Kalliomeri et al., 2022) But this issue is still far from mainstreaming and we are still missing real inclusivity. From my point of view, because children are often handled either as 'vulnerable' or as 'mini adults'.

Being a child is not just an age issue. Designing small objects for small children is not enough. It is not real care. It is just a practical approach. Despite this, children need real attention from designers based on deep knowledge about their needs, interests and rights in relation to their age, social-economic status, mental and physical health, and relationships. Children also need partnership, real involvement and meaningful ways of participation.

There is no 'one fits for all' solution here. What designers need is a catalog of potential models, techniques, good practices and 'no go zones'. But first and foremost we need platforms to discuss this issue; to raise awareness and present designers that child participation and respecting children's rights is not an 'extra'. It is fundamental.

Children are not vulnerable per se and the obligation to respect their rights is not a burden or obstacle but an advantage.

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## Frascaroli, Jacopo

### Engineers of the Human Soul: The Moral Responsibility of Artists and Designers

The last few decades of debate in cognitive science have accustomed us to the idea that the human mind might be as much the product of human-made environments as it is their cause. The environments we build alter our minds, leading to new environmental modifications that spur further mental development, in repeated swells of reciprocal influence (Dennett, 1991; Clark, 1997; Knappett, 2005; Malafouris, 2013). The intuition that there is a relationship of codetermination between agents and environments is however far from being new or confined to cognitive science. Philosophers like Hegel (2018/1807) and Marx (2007/1844) had already examined the progressive self-realisation of humankind through world-transforming activities under the headings of “objectification” and “alienation”. In biology, similar intuitions underlie the notion of Umwelt (von Uexküll, 1934/1957) and, more recently, the increasing importance attributed to niche construction in evolutionary dynamics. As a result of all these traditions, there is by now widespread and growing recognition that in determining and changing the shape of their environments, humans

determine and change themselves, both on a phylogenetic and ontogenetic scale. If this is true, however, it should have profound consequences for our understanding of the role and responsibilities of those, like artists, architects, urbanists, and designers, who are chiefly responsible for shaping our built environment. If “we shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us” (Culkin, 1967), then those responsible for the design of the objects and spaces we use and inhabit are effectively shaping and controlling our developmental trajectories. They are, as Stalin used to say, “engineers of the human soul”, and their role in this sense deserves the highest critical scrutiny.

In this talk, I will examine this work of human engineering carried out by creators of objects and spaces and point to its moral implications. I will do so through several examples ranging from ordinary objects to monuments and buildings, landscapes, audio-visual products and virtual spaces, in order to show how pervasive the human-shaping action of objects and spaces is. In each case, I will endeavour to show how different objects and spaces coerce

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and constrain our possibilities for thought and action, limiting in different degrees the spectrum of possible interactions we can have with them (and thus our possibilities for self-realisation). This will allow us to see that designers face in their work a complex moral dilemma. If they build objects and spaces that constrain our thought and action in definite ways, they exert on us a coercive power that limits our possibilities of autonomous self-realisation. If on the other hand they build objects and spaces that do not constrain our thought and action in any definite way, they renounce to exert their coercive power on us but they do not allow us to adapt and develop either.

Somewhat in the middle of these two extremes (univocal use and un-usability), there is, however, a third option: building objects and spaces that do not constrain us in any definite way but at the same time allow us to establish new patterns of thought and action in the process of frui-

tion. This latter attitude, I will argue, is the one that a long tradition of thought sees as most proper to the artist. Artists, we are told, are people that establish the rules of their productive activity in the process of creation, thus encouraging a similar creative attitude in their public. This latter way of approaching the creation and fruition of objects and spaces is, I will argue, the only truly ethical one, as it is the only one that considers both the producer and the user as agents acting freely and crafting their own developmental parable. In other words, we can see in artistic creation one of the clearest realisations of the Kantian moral imperative to treat everyone as an end in themselves. This goes a long way, I will argue, in clarifying the relationship between aesthetic and ethical values. The upshot is a picture that rehabilitates the image of artists and designers as “engineers of the human soul” and sheds new light on the complex relationships between aesthetic and ethical imperatives.

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## Kvokačka, Adrián

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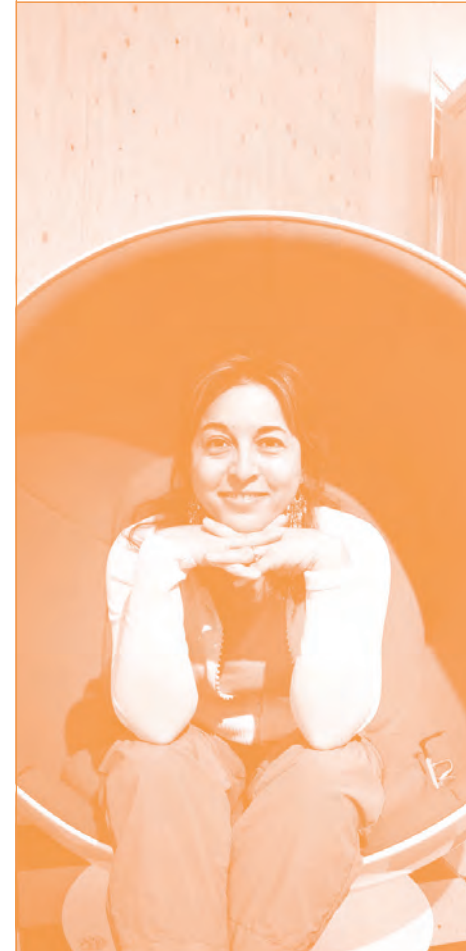
## Veres, Bálint

Bálint Veres is a tenured Associate Professor of Art and Design Philosophy at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, Budapest (MOME), and holder of a prestigious stately teaching award (Apáczai Csere János-Award). Specializing in music, media, architecture, and design, he is the head of a PhD-in-practice Program at MOME Doctoral School. Formerly acted as a regular music critic and curator of contemporary music festivals. His book *Somaesthetics and Design Culture*, co-edited with Richard Shusterman, has been out in March 2023.



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Elisabetta Di Stefano (Ph.D. in Aesthetics and Theory of Arts) is an associate professor of Aesthetics at the University of Palermo (Italy). She took her first degree in Classical Literature and the second in Philosophy. Her research focuses on three fields: the theory of the arts in the Renaissance; the ornament theory; the aesthetics of everyday life with special reference to architecture and design. She is the promoter and coordinator of a network that is developing everyday aesthetics in Europe (Evanetwork). Last publications: *Che cos'è l'estetica quotidiana*, Roma, Carocci, 2017; *Decorum. An ancient idea of everyday aesthetics*, in "*ESPES. The Slovak Journal of Aesthetics*", Vol. 10/2, 2021, pp. 25–38; *Carceral Aesthetics. Art and Everyday Life in Prison*, in "*Popular Inquiry. The Journal of the Aesthetics of Kitsch, Camp and Mass Culture*", vol. 2, 2021, pp. 67–77; *Care as Key to Political Aesthetics in Aesthetic Perspectives on Culture, Politics, and Landscape. Appearances of the "Political"*, (eds.) Elisabetta Di Stefano, Carsten Friberg, Max Ryyänen, SPRINGER 2022, pp. 27–40.





## Living Corpus: Performative activation opened to the *public* Barbara Formis + Mélanie Perrier

Laboratoire du Geste / Institut ACTE / Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne

Formis, Barbara

&

Perrier, Mélanie

→ **BARBARA FORMIS**, PhD in philosophy, is Senior Lecturer in Aesthetics and Philosophy of Art in the Department of Fine Arts and Art Sciences at the Pantheon-Sorbonne University in Paris, France.

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*The Laboratory of Gesture* proposes a performative session in order to bodily activate a research archive. The theme of this LIVING Corpus will be "THE EVERYDAY".

This device consists of linking various materials from a predefined corpus of a commun archive made up by the participants: artworks, shows, performances, portraits, scores, quotations, short texts, specific to the artistic and theoretical environment of art and the performing arts), all having a relationship with the theme of the « everyday » through bodily gesture (aesthetic, artistic, practical, etc.), in order to create a live diagram (horizontally).

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