



**DOTTORATO  
DI RICERCA  
IN DESIGN**

POLITECNICO DI MILANO  
DIPARTIMENTO DI DESIGN

## **DESIGN PHD 2020 SUMMER SCHOOL**

### **Organized by :**

Design PhD Politecnico di Milano

### **With the support of:**

PhD School of Politecnico di Milano

PhD in Design Network of Excellence

Polifactory - the Makerspace and Fablab of Politecnico di Milano

*DESIGN RESEARCH PROTOTYPING COURSE*

# **DESIGNING IN TRANSITIONAL TIMES**

**Experiments for future(s) imagination**

## **THE DESIGN PHD PROGRAMME - POLITECNICO DI MILANO**

Established in 1990, the current PhD programme in Design aims to develop competences and skills to carry out high quality research in design as a specific field of enquiry. The Politecnico di Milano was one of the first universities in Italy to establish a School of Doctoral Programmes in 2001 with a view to coordinating, assessing and monitoring the single doctorate programmes. The Design Programme is the only one - among 19 Polimi doctoral programmes - entirely devoted to the design discipline with 60 candidates in design in a 3-year programme.

The Programme aims at educating researcher who will contribute original knowledge to the field of design by tackling the problems and identifying the potential of contemporary society.

Their contribution may be brought to bear in:

- creating designs, visions, and proposals (research through design);
- developing tools and methods for putting these into practice (research for design);
- developing critical analysis of design and its application domain (research on design).

The Programme proposes different methodologies of research, promotes the attitude to collaborate, and offers opportunities in universities and research centres, enterprises and public corporate bodies.

Other fields partially covered are Science and Philosophy, Language Theory, Sociology of Cultural Processes and Communication, History of Art, Science and Technology of

Materials, Industrial Engineering, Operations Research, Computer Science.

The Programme is going through a structural transformation in the last years, due to the profound changes in the context and status of the discipline, and to the increasingly heterogeneous pool of candidates with a growing international component. This transformation is concerning recruitment processes, highly qualified teaching, investment in research infrastructures and resources (for doctoral or post-doctoral scholarships, research grants, visiting professors, student assignments, etc.), and in strengthening national and international networks.

In the framework of the 2020 SUMMER SCHOOL, the PhD programme in Design is exploring opportunities and challenges of the recently established PhD in Design Network of Excellence, an informal network of 6 PhD programmes in Design, spanning Northern and Southern Europe and the USA with the aim of sharing experiences, reflections and ideas for future developments.

## PROGRAM & GOALS

The Summer School wants to explore what might be defined as the Post-Covid Condition-Scenario, i.e. the emerging systemic transition which is radically transforming both our everyday experience and our societal, economic, cognitive deep structure. This world pandemic has struck our usual way to think the future and this may be an occasion theoretical and pragmatic to understand better the ontological scaffolding structure of our late capitalistic society and to think it as a possible interdisciplinary exploration of the *Post Pandemic Future Cone (PPFC)* (Voros, 2003).

It might be an inquiry based on Research through design (RtD) and especially on the speculative and critical practices which could explore the future transformations through the lenses of the theory and the practice given also the contributions coming from other disciplines. In particular, the aim is to discuss an idea of design research that moves away from an exclusive positivist vision that tends to assimilate it *stricto sensu* to a conventional scientific approach. The School proposes an exploration of new epistemologies and praxis as inspirational methodological opportunities to develop an innovative RtD inquiry. In fact, it aims to explore the potentialities of an inquiry which could be meaningful for an inclusive design practice which can produce original, tacit/explicit, future-oriented knowledge in complex forms, languages, assemblages that are not exclusively textual. Therefore, the School embraces the (digital and collaborative) studio format within the doctoral didactic path and it wants to sustain, doctoral students capabilities in applying their competences and expertise (and the research tools typical of their disciplinary context) to foster the investigation of how the possible PPFC scenario might cross their own research theme and process considered as an assemblage of epistemological, experimental and cognitive models and a codification of non-textual knowledge and practices (defining their accountability and comparability with other disciplinary approaches characterized by Research through Design processes).

The School includes stimulating lectures and (digital) collaborative activities where students, organized in small groups, will have the opportunity to integrate, through a peer-to-peer exploration and discussion, the insight provided by the Keynotes and Guest Speakers and a collective+individual exercise.

## APPROACH & PROCESS

From a methodological point of view, the School will propose a virtual classroom educational approach. This approach aims to enable open knowledge dynamics, through practices of peer-to-peer exchange and sharing. Part of the goal is to rethink the educator's role, which should not be intended anymore as a *master* (in the classical sense), but rather as a *mentor*, a guide into the intricate art of heuristics. This approach is particularly relevant today, as the quantity of knowledge exceeds the individual capability of mastering it and therefore a critical attitude becomes a necessary tool to address complexity.

The School will deal with:

1. Imagining the *Post Covid transition*: which epistemologies and ontologies might open new perspectives?
2. A collective reimagination of systems, as always dynamic and transitional, rather than static and fixed, as is often assumed;
3. An intellectual exploration which discusses through experiences, protagonists, ideas (eg. using Gigamaps /SOD), the connections between the emergency challenges and the contribution of the disciplinary perspective;
4. Peer-to-peer dialogues on what might be defined as *future oriented transition*;
5. A *Future Cone exercise* applied to some chosen areas of transformation (human responsibility on the world ecosystems, future of work, transformation of welfare, future of urban development);
6. What if it was my research? How to apply the exercise and the group learning outcome to each individual research;
7. A final delayed presentation with the sum up of the group exploration and personal focus and possible directions for further exploration and development.

## FACULTY

Stefano Maffei, PhD, Full Professor, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

Chiara Colombi, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano

Jonathan Chapman, PhD, Full Professor, Director of Doctoral Studies, Carnegie Mellon

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Arturo Escobar, Distinguished Professor of Anthropology Emeritus, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill [USA]

Betti Marenko, Reader in Design and Techno-Digital Futures, University of the Arts London [UK] - Contextual Studies Programme Leader, BA (Hons.) Product Design. Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London [UK] - WRHI Specially Appointed Professor, Tokyo Institute of Technology [Japan]

Laura Forlano, Associate Professor of Design, Institute of Design - Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago [USA]

Juha Leppänen, Chief Executive, Demos Helsinki, Helsinki [Finland]

Chiara Saraceno, Former Professor of Sociology - Emerita at the Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung - Member of the "Carlo F. Dondena" Centre for Research on Social Dynamics, Milan [Italy] - Honorary fellow at The Collegio Carlo Alberto, Turin [Italy]

## CONTRIBUTORS

Annalinda De Rosa, Research Fellow, Department of Design - Politecnico di Milano

Laura Galluzzo, Assistant Professor, Department of Design - Politecnico di Milano

Andrew Morrison, Director, Centre for Design Research - Professor of Interdisciplinary Design, Institute of Design - AHO, The Oslo School of Architecture and Design

Silvia Maria Gramegna, Research Fellow, Department of Design - Politecnico di Milano

Carla Sedini, Research Fellow, Department of Design - Politecnico di Milano

## CLASSWORK

The workshop features four vertical and one horizontal working platforms. The verticals platforms comprise a series of half-day groupworks engaging the Summer School's specific topics. These sessions will be intense; featuring prominent guest speakers, creative activities, reflections on critical readings, and lively group debates. The horizontal platform comprises a team exercise spanning the four days of the workshop. This will be developed in collaboration with the faculty, in response to a series of provocative, creative prompts. Results of this will be shared and critiques on the final day.

In addition to the development of the group and individual work, participants are encouraged to use the workshop - and its rich, diverse community - as occasions for dialogue and revision of progressing work. It will provide a unique opportunity for exchanging thoughts and point of views among members of different groups.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### GENERAL BIBLIOGRAPHY (BOOKS)

Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press.

Bostrom, N. (2016). *Superintelligence: Paths, Dangers, Strategies*, Reprint ed.

Braidotti, R. (2013). *Posthuman*. Polity Press.

Braidotti, R., Hanafin, P., & Blaagaard, B. (2013). *After Cosmopolitanism*. Routledge.

Cole, D., & Frost, S. (2010). *New materialisms: ontology, agency, and politics* Duke University Press. Durham NC.

de la Bellacasa, M. P. (2017). *Matters of care: Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds* (Vol. 41). University of Minnesota Press.

Domingos, P. (2015). *The master algorithm: How the quest for the ultimate learning machine will remake our world*. Basic Books

Dunne, A., & Raby, F. (2013). *Speculative everything: design, fiction, and social dreaming*. MIT press.

Ehn, P., Nilsson, E. M., & Topgaard, R. (2014). *Making futures. Marginal Notes on Innovation, Design, and Democracy*. The MIT Press

Fox, N. J., & Alldred, P. (2016). *Sociology and the new materialism: Theory, research, action*. Sage.

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Haraway, D. J. (2016). *Staying with the trouble: Making kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.

- Harman, G. (2018). *Object-oriented ontology: a new theory of everything*. Penguin UK.
- Ingold, T. (2002). *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on livelihood, dwelling and skill*. Routledge.
- Koskinen, I., Zimmerman, J., Binder, T., Redstrom, J., & Wensveen, S. (2011). *Design research through practice: From the lab, field, and showroom*. Elsevier.
- Kries, M., Klein, A., Clarke, A. J. (Eds.) (2018). *Victor Papanek: The Politics of Design*. Vitra Design Museum.
- Latour, B. (2004). *Politics of Nature*. Harvard University Press.
- Latour, B. (2017). *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Latour, B. (2018). *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Malpass, M. (2017). *Critical design in context: History, theory, and practices*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Morton, T. (2018). *Being ecological*. The MIT Press.
- Rosner, D. K. (2018). *Critical fabulations: Reworking the methods and margins of design*. MIT Press.
- Tharp, B. M., & Tharp, S. M. (2019). *Discursive design: Critical, speculative, and alternative things*. MIT Press.
- Vaughan, L. (Ed.). (2017). *Practice-based design research*. Bloomsbury Publishing.

## SUGGESTED READINGS

### *About the Future Cone:*

- Voros, J. (2003). A generic foresight process framework. *Foresight*, vol.5, no.3, pp.10-21

### *From the faculty:*

- Chapman, J. (2015). *Emotionally durable design: objects, experiences and empathy*. Routledge
- Maffei, S., Leoni, F. and Villari, B. (2020). Data-driven anticipatory governance. *Emerging scenarios in data for policy practices*. *Policy Design and Practice*, Volume 3.

### *From the Keynote Speakers:*

#### *From Arturo Escobar*

- Escobar, A. (2020). *Designing as a futural praxis for the healing of the web of life* (in print)
- Escobar, A. (2020). *El pensamiento en tiempos de pos/pandemia* (in print)
- Escobar, A. (2020). *Potencialidad y retos de las transiciones pos-pandemia en clave civilizatoria* (in print)
- Escobar, A. (2019). *Habitability and Design: Radical Interdependence and the Re-earthing of Cities*. *Geoforum*, Vol. 101, May 2019. 132-140.
- Escobar, A. (2018). *Designs for the Pluriverse: Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds*. Duke University Press.
- Escobar, A. (2016). *Thinking-feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies of the South*. *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* [www.aibr.org](http://www.aibr.org), Vol. 11, Issue 1. 11-32.

*From Betti Marenko:*

Braidotti Rosi (2019b). A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36(6), pp. 31–61

Savransky, Martin and Stengers, Isabelle (2018). Relearning the art of paying attention: a conversation. *SubStance*, 47(1), pp. 130-145

Marenko, Betti (2018). The Un-Designability of the Virtual. *Design from Problem-Solving to Problem-Finding*. In Sade, G., Coombs, G. and McNamara, A. (eds) *UnDesign: Critical Practices at the Intersection of Art and Design*. London: Routledge, pp. 38-53

*From Laura Forlano:*

Forlano, L. (2019). Stabilizing/Destabilizing the Driverless City: Speculative Futures and Autonomous Vehicles. *International Journal of Communication*.

Forlano, Laura, & Smith, Stephanie. (2018). Critique as Collaboration in Design Anthropology. *Journal of Business Anthropology*, 7(2).

Forlano, L. (2017). Posthumanism and design. *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation* 3, 1 (2017), 16–29.

Forlano, L. (2016). Decentering the Human in the Design of Collaborative Cities. *Design Issues* 32(3).

*From Chiara Saraceno:*

Saraceno, C. (2019). Retrenching, recalibrating, pre-distributing. The welfare state facing old and new inequalities. *Structural Change and Economic Dynamics*, 51, 35-41.

*From Juha Leppänen:*

Demos Helsinki & Demos Effect (2017). Work 2040. Scenarios for the future of work. <https://www.demoshelsinki.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/work2040-scenarios.pdf>

Demos Helsinki (2019). 100 million new jobs. New promise of freedom for a successful EU. <https://www.demoshelsinki.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/demos-helsinki-100-million-new-jobs.pdf>

## LOCATION & FURTHER INFO

### Location

POLIFACTORY - THE MAKERSPACE AND FABLAB OF POLITECNICO DI MILANO  
Candiani Campus - Via Candiani 72, 20158 - Milano

### Date

June 22-26, 2020

### More information

Tutor and School management: Annalinda De Rosa, Research Fellow | Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano | [annalinda.derosa@polimi.it](mailto:annalinda.derosa@polimi.it)

### Websites

Politecnico di Milano | [www.polimi.it/en](http://www.polimi.it/en)  
PhD programme in Design | [www.phd.design.polimi.it](http://www.phd.design.polimi.it)  
Polifactory | [www.polifactory.polimi.it/en](http://www.polifactory.polimi.it/en)

### Students

PhD candidates from the PhD programme in Design of Politecnico di Milano + design PhD candidates from institutions part of the PhD in Design Network of Excellence:

Aalto University, Helsinki – Finland

PhD in Transition Design, School of Design - Carnegie Mellon, Pittsburgh - USA

PhD in Design, Institute of Design - IIT Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago - USA

PhD in Design Engineering, Dyson School of Design Engineering - Imperial College, London - UK

TU Delft Graduate School, Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering, TU Delft, Delft University of Technology, Delft - The Netherlands