

RESEARCH THEME

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Title of the doctoral research Exploring new ways to combine the potential of Design with Craft

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Abstract

In the last decades, designers' and consumers' interest in craft, self-production, and the maker culture has grown in Europe, USA, Asia, and Arab Countries as well, for many different reasons, showing different expressions (from didactic to professionalism). In post-industrial economies a re-evaluation of crafts is functional with the rise of the creative economy. Craft practices are valuable agents in rethinking of the contribution of design to our society. In other contexts, losing artisan knowledge threatens the legacy that goes beyond the boundaries of the economy of a country: it builds its cultural identity.

In a globalized environment a craft attitude can focus on a particular relationship between craft-based methodologies and the capability of digital design and rapid manufacturing, overcoming the historical incompatibility of craft with the economic constraints imposed by the mass manufacturing of 20th century industrial production, thanks to information communication technologies.

This line of research will explore ways to build new relationships between design and craft with promising combinations in economic terms as well as social innovation and sustainability. It implies the case studies of cultural institutions working on the preservation of traditional know-how, and research on methods to exploit the potential for innovative digital craft production and develop economically viable small- or large-scale production methods in relation to market needs.

Keywords Craft re-evaluation, maker culture & creative economy, rapid manufacturing