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11th Forum
Architectural Science

TRANS- FORMATION: REBUILDING & RETHINKING THE BUILT FABRIC

ADVOCATING FOR NEW COMMON GOOD(S)

4th of December 2025

Architekturzentrum Wien - Az W

5th of December 2025

TU Wien

6th of December

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

Sutor-Stiftung
Förderung der Architektur und Technik

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A...kademie der
bildenden Künste Wien
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Az W

The 11th Forum Architectural Science aims to synthesise the recent debates on the transformation of the existing, the 'built fabric'. At the same time, it poses the question of which new advocacies need to be formulated in order to negotiate the issues of social, ecological and aesthetic common good(s) in the context of transformation.

An event organised by Network Architectural Science e.V. in cooperation with the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, the TU Wien and the Architekturzentrum Wien - Az W.

The event is financed with funds from the Sutor Foundation (Foundation for the Promotion of Architecture and Technology), Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and TU Wien.

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Concept and Organisation

Anamarija Batista

Waltraud P. Indrist

Lorenzo De Chiffre

Anamarija Batista completed her PhD on the relationship between architecture and sound, investigating how artistic and spatial practices engage with auditory space and the potential intersections between them. She has initiated and co-led several research projects, including Artist as Urban Planner (Austrian Academy of Sciences), Obsolete City (Robert Bosch Foundation), Collective Utopias of Post-War Modernism: The Adriatic Coast as a Leisure and Defence Paradise (FWF), and Work and Coercion (COST Action).

She has edited numerous volumes, including Rethinking Density: Art, Culture, and Urban Practices (Sternberg Press), Notions of Temporalities in Artistic Practice (De Gruyter), and Coercion and Wage Labour: Exploring Labour Relations through History and Art (UCL Press).

In July of this year, her monograph Rethinking Obsolete Typologies: Transformation Potentials and Scenarios, co-authored with Julia Siedle, was published by Birkhäuser.

Waltraud P. Indrist is an architectural theorist and artistic researcher. Currently she is Professor for Architectural Theory and Architectural Design at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna, Institute for Art and Architecture.

She has been researching the 'Ambivalences of Modernity. The Architect and City Planner Roland Rainer between Dictatorship and Democracy', a stand-alone research project granted by the Austrian Science Fund – FWF (P34938), together with Angelika Schnell (project leader), Ingrid Holzschuh, Monika Platzer and Susanne Rick.

In her PhD she elaborated on the 'Performative Architectural Photographies – The Relationship between Architecture, Media and Politics in the Work of Hans Scharoun between 1933 and 1939'.

Her current fields of interest are modern architecture, urbanism and spatial planning, phenomenology, cultural studies and artistic research. A central focus of her work is the analysis of the socio-spatial contexts and the media-specific dimensions of artefacts, in which ideologies, forms of governmentality and biopolitics—in the broadest sense of their meaning—are inscribed and therefore call for critical identification.

Lorenzo De Chiffre is an architect and senior scientist at TU Wien, Institute of Architectural Design, where he heads the platform for Construction and Transformation of the Research Unit Building Construction and Design 1. He studied at the Royal Danish Academy and the University of East London. In 2016, he earned his doctorate with a thesis on Viennese stepped-section housing at TU Wien, and in 2017, he curated the exhibition 'Das Terrassenhaus: Ein Wiener Fetisch?' at the Architekturzentrum Wien. In 2023, he co-edited and co-curated the book and exhibition project 'Hollein Calling. Architectural Dialogues', also at the Architekturzentrum Wien. His teaching and research focus on adaptive reuse and the revitalisation of rural communities. In 2025, he published 'Reuse in Teaching: The Future of the Architectural Design Studio' and co-edited the publication 'Transformation des Bestandes'.

TRANS-
FORMATION:
REBUILDING
& RETHINKING
THE
'BUILT FABRIC'

ADVOCATING FOR NEW COMMON GOOD(S)

BOOK OF
ABSTRACTS
& PROGRAM

FORUM11

The 11th Forum Architectural Science aims to synthesise the recent debates on the transformation of the existing, the 'built fabric'. At the same time, it poses the question of which new advocacies need to be formulated in order to negotiate the issues of social, ecological and aesthetic common good(s) in the context of transformation.

Various actors are currently intensively discussing the issue of transforming the 'built fabric'. In light of ecological challenges and socio-economic changes, the handling of existing buildings is to be researched in order to initiate a further paradigm shift. Initiatives and research projects such as Cure a Place of Care (Krvavica), HouseEurope, future.lab, Obsolete Stadt, Denkstatt, AKS Gemeinwohl and Haus der Statistik are investigating the tools, potentials and challenges of transformation. In collaboration with various participants and taking into account different scales, they reflect on the relationship between urban design, spatial, regional and landscape planning, architectural, economic, political and legal requirements as well as future scenarios.

On the one hand, the practical projects and debates on land policy instruments pursue the goal of enabling the material building stock to be reused. On the other hand, they focus on the question of how the common good(s) and better living conditions can be conceptualised in the context of a successful transformation between urban and rural areas.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the question of the social contribution of today's property transformation is a particularly challenging one. Due to the high wave of privatisation since the 1990s, the increasing importance of the property market as an investment target since 2008 and social

diversification, the management of the current transformation is dependent on the consensus of numerous players. More room for negotiation and experimentation and, above all, longer negotiation processes are needed. The potential for planning policy action that was available to modernity in order to fulfil its mission—providing as many people as possible with ‘good’, aesthetically appealing living space, sustainably integrated into a social and urban infrastructure (keyword: education)—no longer exists to this extent today. We are also faced with the existential question of how to harmonise aspects of social justice with the climate crisis that needs to be overcome.

This leads us to the central questions: What contribution does the transformation make to society, who benefits from it, in what form and in what way? Who is involved in these transformation processes, with what mandate and with what goal? And last but not least: What political, economic and legal framework conditions are shaping or are needed for the current transformation of the ‘built fabric’?

With the eleventh Forum Architectural Science, we would like to draw an ambitious, because synthesised, interim conclusion in times of obvious upheaval. We are explicitly interested in the debates and potentials that scrutinise the transformational focal point between urban and rural space described here. What new advocacy is needed to negotiate the issues of social, ecological and aesthetic common good(s) in the context of transformation in an entangled way? Where should this process start in concrete terms? We want to (re)read current and future alternative spaces, scenarios and processes as well as historical approaches and projects in order to finally discuss them critically as sources of ideas.

PROGRAM

THURSDAY, 04.DECEMBER | LECTURE AND DISCUSSION

Architekturzentrum Wien
Museumplatz 1, 1070 Vienna
PODIUM

18:00-20:00 RETHINKING AND TRANSFORMING
EXISTING STRUCTURES
RENEWED DEMANDS FOR THE
PROMOTION OF PUBLIC WELFARE

Introduction:

Anamarija Batista, Waltraud P. Indrist,
Lorenzo De Chiffre

Keynote:

Ana Miljački, MIT, Boston

Discussion:

Anamarija Batista (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)
Waltraud P. Indrist (Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)
Klara Jörg & Julian Raffetseder (Future Problems
Architecture Studio)
Georg Kaser (University of Innsbruck)
Thomas Madreiter (Director of Urban Planning of
the City of Vienna)
Rudolf Scheuvsen (TU Wien)
Sigrid Stagl (Vienna University of Economics and
Business)

PODIUM

TU Wien

Karlsplatz 13, 1040 Vienna
SCHÜTTE-LIHOTZKY HÖRSAAL &
AUFBAULABOR

SCHÜTTE-LIHOTZKY HÖRSAAL

09:00-11:00 CONTEMPORARY TENDENCIES IN THE DISCOURSE

Moderation: Anamarija Batista

Ana Hernandez-Ferre

»How to Not Be Consumed:
Architectural Ruin and other Forms of Refusal«

David Maria d'Olimpio

»Coastal Commons: Future City-Building through
a Rights of Nature Framework«

Isabel Glogar

»Collaborative Activation and Re-Use: Actors of
a Non-Profit Housing Transformation«

09:00-11:00 MEMORY AND COMMUNITY

Moderation: Lorenzo De Chiffre

Laura Frediani

»FRAU* SCHAFFT RAUM: A place marked by violence
transformed into a space of remembrance,
solidarity, and prevention«

Ella Felber and Konstantin Felber

»Transformation as Therapy:
Case Study Therapiestation Carina 1997-2025«

Christina Schraml

»Transforming the Invisible:
Intangible Potentials of the *Built Fabric* -
The Case of Vienna's ›Alte-Leute-Siedlungen‹«

AUFBAULABOR

11:00-11:30 BREAK

11:30-13:30 SCALE UP/SCALE DOWN

Moderation: Margaret Haderer

Barbara Steinbrunner and Arthur Kanonier

»Between zoning and reality – dealing with undeveloped building land as a contribution to transformation«

(DE)

Hannelore Martine Rung

»Co-productive Transformation Processes in (Potential) Large-scale Heritage Sites: Evaluation, Preservation, and Reuse of Large Buildings in German-speaking Countries in the Context of the Paris Agreement« (DE)

Jonna M. Krarup

»Scaling Up, Out & Deep in Danish Landscape Transformation Processes«

11:30-13:30 QUESTIONING PROCESSES

Moderation: Waltraud P. Indrist

Tina Kresse and Tom Macht

»Commitment to Transformation: Potentials and Challenges of Voluntary Initiatives« (DE)

Paola De Martin

»Migration, human rights violations, and the architecture of transformative justice«

Luciana Varkulja

»Re-Sourcing the Built Fabric: Forests, Material Flows, and Territorial Justice«

13:30-15:00 BREAK

15:00-17:00 HOUSING RELATIONSHIPS

Moderation: Julia Nuler

Viktória Éva Lélek

»Adaptive. Organised. Complex.

Searching for a new urban identity by learning
from the historic city«

Theresa Lattermann

»The Next Transformation: Reclaiming housing through
decommodification, dealienation, and democratisation«

Antje Lehn

»Mapping urban transformation with young adults«

15:00-17:00 SOCIAL INNOVATION & PARTICIPATION PROCESSES

Moderation: Nicole Sabella

Valentina Sansone

»Confiscated Properties:

Architecture, Ideology and Performance«

Paola Alfaro-d'Alençon and Stefan Staehle

»The Frankfurt Culture Campus as a Laboratory
for Cooperative Urban Development« (DE)

Projektbüro

»»Dasein« as a Process of Understanding: Grasping and
Shaping Transformations in Living and Working« (DE)**17:00-17:30 BREAK****17:30-18:45 POSTER SESSION 1**Moderation: Patricia Grzonka,
Madlyn Miessgang

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
Schillerplatz 3, 1010 Vienna
M13a & R211a

09:00-11:00 DIS-CONTINUITIES

Moderation: Lorenzo De Chiffre

Constantin Alexander

»Communities of Resilience in Europe (CORE)

Three case studies on public-interest transformations
and urban crisis mitigation«

Mara Haas and Lena Schartmüller

»Renewing cities sufficiently: activating vacant
ground floor space as a lever«

Sofía Frassetto Dreyer and Tomás Pérez Amenta

»Modernism's Global Travels and Local Improvisations
in Buenos Aires' Microcentro«

09:00-11:00 SOCIETAL REPAIR

Moderation: Heike Oevermann

Nikola Beim

»Architecture as Care«

Yana Tsarynnyk

»Spatial Reactions to War: Urban Insights from Rear
and Front«

Johannes Warda

»Commons, not context. Towards a new vocabulary
for architectural transformation«

11:00-11:30 BREAK

M13a

R211a

11:30-13:30 SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES

Moderation: Anamarija Batista

Najia Fatima

»Sanitation workers and Katchi Abadis: Unplanned Settlements for a planned workforce in Urban Pakistan«

Benjamín Brádňanský, Vít Halada and Igor Machata

»From Viollet-le-Duc to Adaptive Reuse: The Transformative Potential of Intentional Continuity«

Mari Paz Agundez and Lorenza Manfredi

»A Decade of Co-Production: Achievements and Setbacks at the Rathausblock, Kreuzberg-Berlin«

11:30-13:30 RETHINKING TYPOLOGIES

Moderation: Lisa Schmidt-Colinet

Carina Sacher and Lukas Veinik

»Building(s) for encounter? Spaces for Adult Education in Vienna«

Alexander Marksches

»Transformation without End: The Museum«

Uta Graff

»Resource Research Reset: Transformations of Sacred Spaces as an Architectural and Social Task«

13:30-15:00 BREAK

15:00-17:00 FORMS OF THOUGHT

Moderation: Waltraud P. Indrist

Maya Christodoulaki

»Between Luxury and Shelter: The measure of comfort as the galvanization of property«

Niels-Christian Fritsche

»Shocking the mediocre city thoroughfare with beauty and criticizing luxury mobility: Look what is possible here – analogue and digital, including art bridges, street acrobatics, and bus stop wonders«

Eva Mair

»Drawing Transformation: The architectural drawing as object of knowledge representing multiperspectivity and conveying dialectical contemporaneity«

15:00-17:00 CLIMATE TRANSITION

Moderation: Astrid Stauffer

Laura Foxman and Keif Schleifer

»Translational Spatial Practices«

Leonhard Panzenböck

»Typology of Intermediate Spaces: Strategies of Climatic Mediation in Architectural Transformation« (DE)

Markus Jeschaunig

»Architecture in the planetary cycle: Synergies, resource cycles and agency in building transformation«

17:00-17:30 BREAK

17:30-18:45 POSTER SESSION 2

Moderation: Ines Nizic, Angelika Schnell

19:00 PARTY!

ABSTRACTS & BIOGRAPHIES

Understanding the Rathausblock ‘model’ project as a common good in whose development citizens have taken an essential role, this paper examines the power structures that dominate the space and manipulate citizens’ access to the Rathausblock. This 4.7-hectare mixed-use area, located in the heart of Berlin-Kreuzberg, is a key urban regeneration site that draws considerable attention from activists, politicians, city officials, real estate developers, and investors — each with distinct agendas on how to develop the site.

After at least two decades of privatizations and exploitation of public real estate assets to attract investment to the city, the governing coalition cautiously began to explore alternative approaches to urban space management. Starting in the 2010s, not only did protest movements advocating for the *right to the city* and tenants’ rights gain traction and a powerful voice, but public policy also began to open up to new kinds of experimentation. Two “model” projects embody this shift: Rathausblock and Haus der Statistik. Rathausblock reflects both the directions of this trend. On the one hand, it is the concrete and successful outcome of a bottom-up protest — led, among others, by the initiative *Stadt von Unten* — in which civil society organized to oppose the privatization of the site. This movement successfully prevented the sale of the land to private investors on two separate occasions and ultimately secured the transfer of ownership from the state of Berlin to the district of Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg, keeping it in public hands.

On the other hand, Rathausblock also illustrates a shift in institutional engagement, particularly within the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district. Thanks to the presence of key individuals within the administration — people with personal biographies tied to grassroots movements — the district aligned itself early on with civil society’s demands, becoming both an advocate and a co-designer of their shared goals. In managing the development of the now publicly owned site, the district initiated a cooperation agreement and continues to support a complex collaborative process. This includes the use of new tools, mediating and advocating platforms, and formats to co-produce the transformation of this urban area.

Now, after more than a decade, the process is reaching a pivotal moment, with the first new constructions about to begin. Observing the long-term experience of the Rathausblock reveals both the successes and challenges of urban co-production, highlighting its vast potential and the necessity of continuing to pursue such approaches in today's urban context.

Within the frame of *Fairville* European-funded research project and thanks to an ethnographic approach, including interviews, participant observation and discussion groups and an extensive use of mapping, this paper examines the difficulties citizens find in navigating the intricate web of institutional, half-institutional and civil associations actors and questions the block's alleged open accessibility.

Mari Paz Agundez is an architect based in Berlin, a researcher at the University of Regensburg and Technische Universität Berlin, and a lecturer at Berlin International University.

Her Ph.D. (TU Berlin/Polytechnic University of Madrid) investigates the impact of borders on the development of urban life. Under a multiscalar approach, she examines power negotiations across transcalar agents, revealing migrants' everyday spatial dynamics as political acts to build belonging. Since September 2023, through the European-funded project *Fairville*, she has researched how co-production can reduce inequalities.

Lorenza Manfredi is Assistant to the Chair of Sociological Dimensions of Space at the University of Regensburg, and a lecturer at the Technical University of Berlin and the University of Biberach.

She is the lead researcher for *Fairville*, a Horizon Europe project that brings together eight laboratories experimenting with urban co-production across diverse locations in Europe and Africa, with a focus on Rathausblock.

Lorenza's theoretical and practical work gravitates around conflict and productive interaction across diverse actors in urban space. Her PhD (TU Berlin / IUAV Venice, 2022) investigated the disruptions produced by autonomous spaces in contemporary neoliberal Berlin.

Constantin Alexander

Communities of Resilience in Europe (CORE)

Three case studies on public-interest transformations and urban crisis mitigation

The only constant is change. Current discussions about a supposed polycrisis ignore historical facts: Natural and human-made systems are in a state of continuous transition. Settlements and cities, in particular, have always been places where disruptions and megatrends manifest themselves. The consequences can be divided into three categories, based on systems theory and spatial context:

- 1. Obsolescence:** Affected properties, organizations, objects, etc., lose their function, productivity, and integration into larger contexts, systems, or processes. The consequences can be severe – economic, social, ecological, and cultural.
- 2. Persistence:** Despite the crisis, entities continue to retain their functionality, their intended use, and their integration. Aspects relevant to the common good, such as cultural heritage or resonance, play a special role here.
- 3. Resilience:** Stakeholders mitigate negative impacts or, in the spirit of the panarchy approach, develop new functions, productivity, or integration. This is where the greatest potential lies for fruitful and constructive, common-good-oriented cooperation and the formation of so-called resilience communities or communities of resilience.

These three phenomena – obsolescence, persistence, and resilience – often do not represent polarities, but rather a continuum.

Under these circumstances, stakeholders in urban planning and development face challenges – not only due to the crises themselves, but also due to conflicting goals, different vocabulary, and formalities. However, there are benchmarks to guide them: cities and regions that have experienced crises and used them as positive impulses for more resilient, antifragile, and salutogenic action.

In my dissertation, 'Obsolescence, Persistence, Resilience: Creativity and Sustainability as a Basis for Innovative Mitigation Strategies after Urban Crises,' I analyzed these three phenomena and how institutions and stakeholders deal with their impacts. To empirically confirm or refute these find-

ings, I analyzed three case study cities using a mixed-method approach:

1. Donostia/San Sebastián, which experienced structural change and a crisis of Basque identity in the 20th century due to political persecution. Today, it is an important gastronomic center.

2. Antwerpen, whose port and textile industry became largely obsolete due to structural change in the 1970s. It is now one of Europe's most important design hubs.

3. Torino, where the automotive industry dominated economic and social life until the 1980s, when almost all factories were closed. Today, the city is considered Italy's creative laboratory.

Based on this, I developed the Obsolescence-Persistence-Resilience Continuum (OPR) approach as a concrete analytical tool as well as strategic principles and measures for a sustainable and creative approach to crises and the formation of Communities of Resilience in Europe (CORE).

Constantin Alexander is a PhD student and lecturer in sustainable and creative spatial and urban development at the Institute of Sociology and Cultural Organization at Leuphana University Lüneburg. His research focuses on crises, transformation, and sustainability. He is one of the co-founders of the research project 'The Obsolete City' with Anamarija Batista, among others.

With the political agreement between the State of Hesse and the City of Frankfurt am Main in spring 2025, a decisive step was taken toward developing the Frankfurt Culture Campus on the former Bockenheimer campus of Goethe University. The project typifies a new approach to urban transformation that integrates climate adaptation, social participation, and cultural production.

Our paper accompanies this process and reconstructs the Culture Campus as a complex assemblage of institutional, civic, and spatial negotiations. Empirically, we combine process tracing of key decisions, document analysis (plans, contracts, position papers), qualitative fieldwork and stakeholder interviews, cartographic and morphological mapping, and observation of temporary uses. Analytically, we mobilize concepts of co-production, commoning, and stewardship to examine how public ownership, cultural programming, and local initiatives intersect.

We propose to read the Culture Campus as an urban laboratory: across roughly 16 hectares, an experimental space is being created in which diverse actors—from the municipal administration and cultural practitioners to local initiatives—test new forms of collaboration, use, and governance. The specific constellation of public ownership opens room for non-market development models and supports exploratory approaches to cooperative planning and cultural space production.

At the same time, the project crystallizes key conflicts of current urban development. Debates on the treatment of existing buildings, originally slated for demolition and now increasingly recognized as resources in terms of embodied carbon and cultural identity, highlight the challenges of a paradigmatic shift in planning. In this setting, temporary and interim uses gain strategic importance as mediating instruments between planning frameworks and civic practice.

We examine these dynamics with a focus on the institutional and procedural conditions under which substantive co-shaping by heterogeneous stakeholders becomes possible. We further investigate how transdis-

ciplinary knowledge is generated, circulated, and operationalized over the course of planning, and the extent to which resulting insights can travel to other policy and project contexts.

Against this backdrop, we explore which new forms of advocacy and brokerage are required to weave social, ecological, and aesthetic concerns together. Where should negotiation processes begin? Which discursive and spatial alternatives, historical references, and experimental approaches can serve as productive friction and impetus? Through critical engagement with current development trajectories of the Culture Campus, we outline perspectives for future projects and contribute to an action-oriented understanding of urban transformation.

Paola Alfaro-d'Alençon is Professor of Urban Design and Planning in International Context at Frankfurt UAS. Her research addresses urban transformation, urban commons, and the Leipzig Charter's implementation, focusing on innovative instruments, co-production, and commoning. At the Postwar Modernist Housing Research Lab she leads the DFG project KOPRO Int. on co-productive practices and the Vision 31 initiative on the Frankfurt Culture Campus within the New European Bauhaus

Stefan Staehle is a postdoctoral researcher at the Postwar Modernist Housing Research Lab at Frankfurt UAS. In 2022 he served as Interim Professor of Urban Design and Open Space Planning at University of Applied Sciences Kaiserslautern. His work examines the socio-political and socioeconomic conditions of planning and mobilizes historical perspectives for future urban development. He supported the activation of Mannheim's Multihalle as cultural urban development and is part of the Vision 31 initiative.

<https://www.vision31.info>

This paper critically examines architecture as care through historical and contemporary lenses, exploring how care in architecture transmits legacies of the past and integrates them with current societal needs and values. The notion of *architecture as care* significantly influences contemporary strategies toward buildings embedded in the urban fabric, making a historical reassessment of preservation methods essential.

Central to this investigation is the seminal work of Austrian art historian and preservationist Alois Riegl, whose theory has profoundly impacted the modern understanding and practice of monument preservation throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. According to Riegl, monuments are not assigned fixed values, and instead, their significance fluctuates, reflecting evolving societal values and demands. Consequently, the meaning, function, and care received by monuments continually transform. Monuments may experience neglect and decay when community appreciation wanes, whereas those reflecting widely celebrated historical or artistic values typically receive sustained care.

Architecture as care marks a significant shift from the traditional practice of constructing anew on *tabula rasa* sites. Instead, it promotes the integration and reuse of existing structures, embracing Riegl's concept of age value, where the passage of time adds inherent significance. This paradigm shift leads to innovative pedagogical approaches within architectural education, increasingly focusing on working with existing built environments, *tabula plena*, rather than starting from scratch.

Addressing the questions posed by the forum, this paper explores how preservation methodologies have historically developed and how their evolution impacts current architectural strategies. Specifically, it asks: How have changing societal values influenced the approaches to architectural preservation and care? In what ways can historical preservation methodologies inform contemporary design practices? Furthermore, what roles do community-engaged research methods play in effectively addressing the transformation of historical sites within the built environment?

The paper argues that contemporary architectural practice and education must prioritize community involvement and dialogue. Approaches such as repair, reconstruction, preservation, and adaptive reuse become operational frameworks for architects dealing with historical contexts. These strategies collectively facilitate the responsible transformation of built heritage, integrating past significance with present-day relevance and utility.

Ultimately, architecture as care necessitates understanding historical layers, leading to critical, informed, and sustainable design solutions rooted in continuity and cultural resonance.

Nikola Beim is an architect and postdoctoral researcher based in Vienna, Austria. She holds a Ph.D. in architecture from the University of Applied Arts Vienna (supervisor Mario Carpo). Her research focuses on the study of monuments, memory, and experimental preservation methodologies. Nikola also recently received the Fulbright Visiting Fellowship at Columbia University, New York.

<https://linktr.ee/NikolaBeim>

Benjamín Brádňanský, Vít Halada and Igor Machata
From Viollet-le-Duc to Adaptive Reuse:
The Transformative Potential of Intentional Continuity

Considering growing ecological urgency, socio-political fragmentation, and the increasing contestation of architectural value systems, a re-examination of historical approaches to transformation offers critical tools for future-oriented planning. This contribution responds to the Forum's call to re-examine historical concepts and to rethink transformation beyond material adaptation – as a site of negotiation between past intentions and future needs.

By revisiting Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's theory of restoration as an interpretive and evolutionary act, this contribution proposes a conceptual and methodological link to contemporary approaches in adaptive reuse that focus on the intentional (further) development of existing structures.

The contribution traces this view's intellectual lineage through historical voices (Alexander Pope – genius loci, Quatremère de Quincy – imitation), culminating in Viollet-le-Duc's position: that the best way to protect a building in need of transformation is to imagine how its original author would act today – a pivot point where the boundaries between preservation and new design become fluid. This reinterpretation frames preservation not as a regressive or freezing process, but as a generative act of architectural co-authorship rooted in the logic of the existing. Such approaches are then in dialogue with contemporary interpretations of adaptive reuse methods that emphasize continuity and interpretation. (Plevoets and Van Cleempoel – Aemulatio).

Building on this, the contribution introduces Radical Preservation as an experimental methodology developed at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. It focuses on buildings of the late 20th century – particularly socialist modernism – which are often ideologically marginalized and materially fragile. Radical Preservation treats architecture as a temporal process, in which any built state represents only one phase of an evolving project. By identifying a structure's inherent logic and design mechanisms, new phases can be articulated as intentional, context-sensitive evolutions rather than contrasting interventions.

Contemporary iterations of Viollet-le-Duc's interpretive approach should, however, diverge in a crucial way: they should not seek stylistic completeness or finality. Instead, they should understand buildings as open-ended processes, prioritizing continuity over closure and allowing for future transformation as part of a sustainable and evolving architectural practice.

Ultimately, this method supports a broader cultural shift – one that prioritizes continuity over rupture and promotes transformation as a meaningful response to ecological, social, and cultural challenges. By engaging the past as an active resource, approaches centered on the intentional development of existing structures offer viable alternatives in a context where demolition is no longer an ethically or ecologically acceptable option.

Benjamín Brádňanský, Vít Halada are architects. They founded an architectural office n/a in 2005 and together they also share an academic career, currently leading Studio of Architecture II at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava. Their teaching strategy is ongoing research of methods of architectural design and one of their long-term fascinations (among others) is late modern 'socialist' architecture and specifically the work of Vladimír Dedecek. These 'Iconic ruins' are tested by the 'Radical preservation' for the possibility of reinterpretation that goes beyond its current, dilapidated but protected, physical state.

Igor Machata comes from a family background in monument restoration. He studied architecture at the Faculty of Architecture of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava, Sint Lucas Architectuur in Ghent, and the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. He has worked in architectural offices in Bratislava, Prague, and Berlin. He earned his doctorate at the Department of Architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, focusing on the preservation and adaptation of late modernist architecture.

Maya Christodoulaki

Between Luxury and Shelter:

The measure of comfort as the galvanization of property

‘Dwelling, in the proper sense, is now impossible,’ writes Theodor Adorno in *Refuge for the Homeless*. ‘The traditional residences we grew up in have grown intolerable; each trait of comfort in them is paid for with a betrayal of knowledge, each vestige of shelter with the musty pact of family interest’.

Adorno reminds us that *dwelling* is not merely a relic of tradition or a status symbol. Rather, it persists as a problematic form—one that foregrounds comfort as both a structuring principle and a limiting condition, as desire and orientation. Comfort, in this sense, organizes life around its own logic. While dwelling may appear as *Hausverstand*, its common sense measures the spectrum between luxury and shelter, forgetting its role as *Haushalt*, a functional household. Within it lies a sense of betrayal: a quiet estrangement that emerges through comfort’s promise of stability. The contribution studies how common-sense analytics—the rhetorics of shelter and luxury, minimum and maximum standards, or the rural–urban divide, shape ownership, markets, and spatial imaginaries.

Departing from the utopian ambitions of modernism, the discussion turns toward a more situated understanding of dwelling. Adorno’s claim that our *possessions* could inform *property* extends the terms of the housing discourse. Dwelling could respond to present-day uncertainties, informed by philosophical currents that emphasize transformation (vitalism, mechanism, organicism). Posthumanist thought has attempted to naturalize contingency through metaphors of hybridity and ecology, framing the household at an environmental scale. This approach resonates with Emanuele Coccia’s notion of *metamorphoses*, in which all forms of life—and by extension, dwelling—share a private process of transformation through environmental entanglement. Drawing on the ethics of care, embodiment and the *undercommons*, dwelling becomes not a discrete building but an ongoing act of domestication—of self and space.

Yet a deeper ecological reading suggests not a return to neither home nor nature, but an engagement with *technicity*. As Eurostat data

(2018) shows, nearly 40% of European land is agricultural: not wild, but infrastructural, forming with the urban a seamless technical continuum.

In this context, the transformation of dwelling must be rethought as a negotiation between privacy and shared technical reality. Attending to the private becomes a way to rethink the common—not as abstract or formal identity, but as lived proximity, prioritizing continuity, care, and autonomy.

The contribution juxtaposes architectural propositions grounded in two interlinked concepts: the *property* of the bare *minimum standard* (as a matter of collective justice), and the possessions that *facilitate private life* (as a site of relational autonomy). In doing so, it asks how distancing architectural discourse from comfort, and coupling *property* with *possessions* can reframe priorities in an age shaped not by utopia, but by technical ecology.

Maya Christodoulaki is an architect, researcher and doctoral candidate at the Research Unit of Architecture Theory and Philosophy of Technics (ATTP) at TU Vienna. She teaches at TU Vienna and the University of Innsbruck, has co-curated the exhibition Radical Austria - Everything is Architecture for the Design Museum Den Bosch, and worked for architecture offices in Austria and the Netherlands. She holds degrees in Architecture and Computer Science and explores transversal expressions of stochastic thinking.

David Maria d'Olimpio

Coastal Commons: Future City-Building through a Rights of Nature Framework

Cities produce, contain, and are essential components of various ecologies; yet are continuously developed through antiquated urban design frameworks that flatten, minimize, or actively damage these relationships. This is most evident in urban climate change resilience efforts, where nature-based solutions are often discounted in favor of maladaptive and carbon-intensive infrastructure. The result is a self-enforcing and unsustainable model of climate resilience that limits not only flexibility in a projected volatile climate, but also the ability to imagine alternative urban futures.

What if cities, faced with the transformative challenges brought on by climate change, embraced a collaborative framework between urban and natural systems?

This paper proposes a new urban theory for resilient city-building in the Anthropocene through the recognition of 'rights of nature'. Focusing on New York City, the paper examines past and current urban development through a lens of ecological systems and inherited cultural and design frameworks. The paper then analyzes case studies of the recognition of the rights of nature as climate resilience strategies, arguing that these same principles can motivate ecologically collaborative design in urban landscapes.

A new urban design framework developed through this analysis is presented as a reimagining of New York's at-risk urban coastline, titled *The Coastal Commons*. A rights of nature framework is implemented through urban scale drawings, renderings, and accompanying descriptions of interventions across the NYC shoreline. Each site is selected to confront a different projected coastal challenge faced across New York City:

- *The Daylit Harlem Creek and Reimagined East Harlem Coastline* address degrowing dense residential areas and altering existing infrastructure for the benefit of all entities within the Coastal Commons.
- *The Remediated Gowanus Bay* (A New York City coastal super-

fund site) addresses the potential of ecological remediation as a universally beneficial 'industry'.

The paper concludes with its thesis: the urban ecology that emerges from the recognition of the needs of all entities involved in 'city-making' is uniquely suited to the challenges presented by the volatile climates emerging as a consequence of past and present maladaptive human settlement. Imagining such a future provides a hopeful path towards mending the cultural rift between human and natural systems through thoughtful, generative design for all entities; a unique and utopian goal only made possible in the age of the Anthropocene.

David Maria d'Olimpio is professor at the undergraduate and graduate level at Parsons School of Design, as well as a practicing architectural designer in Brooklyn, New York. He holds a Master of Architecture from Parsons School of Design, where he was awarded the AIA Medal for Academic Excellence as well as a Michael Kalil Memorial Grant. His academic and professional work focuses on urban-landscape relationships and projected climate futures.

Paola De Martin

Migration, human rights violations, and the architecture of transformative justice

In the name of the Swiss Federal Act on the Residence and Settlement of Foreign Nationals (ANAG for short), between 1934 and 2002, migrant workers from the poorest and most remote provinces throughout southern Europe were recruited for seasonal work in construction, care, and agriculture. The seasonal workers had to leave Switzerland after nine months, only to return to the border a few months later. In the name of the law, they were denied the fundamental human right to live together as spouses and as a family. They built and maintained dams, roads, tunnels, schools, hospitals, villas, municipal housing estates, housing cooperatives, airports, theaters, and shopping centers in Switzerland. They created a space in which they were not allowed to exist.

Depression, suicidal tendencies, addiction – the effects of this paradox are devastating for those affected, even several generations later. The latest research, in which I am significantly involved, sheds light on the hitherto largely suppressed eugenic and racist origins of the ANAG. This law caused a historical trauma of enormous dimensions. According to the latest estimates, at least half a million migrant families were systematically illegalized and torn apart. I was born into one of these families. In 2021, I founded the TESORO association, which calls for a comprehensive process of transformation and reappraisal.

Terms that are used to describe this incomprehensible reality are ‘structural violence’ and ‘segregation’ – linguistic indicators of a spatial dimension of injustice that is as violent as it is invisible.

I am interested in how this invisible dimension relates to the visible, built environment on two different levels. On the one hand, at the level of conceptual, theoretical reflection – such as the question of how to derive good arguments for placing dilapidated former barracks under monument protection. On the other hand, at the level of agency – such as the question of how we collectively remember important buildings that trigger our experiences of powerlessness. How can we negotiate these questions publicly and productively? What form could an architecture of transformative justice take in theory and practice?

At the 11th Forum Architekturwissenschaft, I would like to discuss these questions starting with a few concrete examples in which I am involved both as a postdoc at the InsAtute for History and Theory of Architecture and as an activist. Examples could include: an exhibition on the topic hold in Zurich in 2024, which spatially addresses repression; a former squaWed barracks for seasonal workers in Biel, which is to be transformed into a memorial site; an empty border medical building in Brig, whose ghostly presence haunts us in our dreams; a migration museum project in the drawer that just won't get off the ground.

Paola De Martin is Postdoc at the Gta Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich. Her dissertation *Give us a break! Arbeitermilieu und Designszene im Aufbruch* was published in 2022. In 2024 she received the Swiss Grand Prix Design by the Federal Office of Culture and the International Diaspora Prize of the Associazione Bel-lunesi nel Mondo. She is board member of the Swiss working group for the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2025 and president of the association TESORO

This work gathers a set of buildings constructed between the 1940s and 1980s in Buenos Aires' historic financial district. These structures, conceived during Argentina's period of developmentalist optimism, now exhibit profound transformations in the form of altered facades, improvised infrastructures, and fragmented patterns of occupation—often under systems of *autogestión* (self-management). Their current conditions reveal them as a fragile legacy of modernism in the Global South shaped by historical contingency, economic drift, and collective improvisation.

This inquiry focuses on three examples: the Mercado del Plata (1948–1961) by Oscar Crivelli and Jorge Heinzmann; the former Bank of America (1963–1965) by Mario Roberto Álvarez, José Aslan, Héctor Ezcurra, Alfredo Joselevich, and Alberto Víctor Ricur; and Galería Jardín (1974–1984) by Mario Roberto Álvarez. Once monumental symbols, these remnants of the mid-twentieth-century modernization efforts now face uncertain futures marked by speculative redevelopment or slow processes of decay.

By foregrounding the invisible labor sustaining these buildings and considering its users—janitors, technicians, administrative staff, and maintenance workers—as central agents in the ongoing negotiation between materiality, use, and preservation. We change our perception of buildings from static objects to active social processes continually reshaped through daily practices of care and step into the discussion of what is worth keeping rather than the narratives that privilege erasure as the primary driver of urban change.

In a context of real estate volatility, infrastructural neglect, and shifting labor regimes, reuse emerges as a situated practice of survival. Through informal and collective efforts, a different notion of heritage in the twenty-first century begins to take shape, grounded in maintenance as a form of creativity, where the social lives of buildings persist beyond their original intentions. Initially supported by the Argentine National Fund for the Arts (FNA), this ongoing research constructs a counter-archive of modernism from surveys and interviews.

Sofía Frassetto Dreyer is an architect from the Universidad de Buenos Aires whose work focuses on buildings, systems, and reuse under shifting contexts, with current research examining the transformation of structures in the financial and coastal areas of New York and Buenos Aires.

Tomás Pérez Amenta is an architect from the Universidad de Buenos Aires and the Technische Universität Berlin. He is a faculty member at the School of Architecture and Urban Studies at Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, where he leads Project Thesis I and II.

The sewer is the conscience of the city. All things converge and confront one another there ...[it's] where the immense social slippage ends up' (Reid, 1991:21).

In his 19th-century writings, Victor Hugo characterizes the sewer as a space of social slippage, where ungovernable populations converge (Hugo, 1887). His reflection of the space is emblematic of the historic attitude towards the sewers (Reid, 1991). Meanwhile, the sewer's pivotal role in the day-to-day operations of the city is undeniable. Being both central and marginal to society means that efficient waste management systems must be implemented to regulate the flow of materials as well as the circulation of people within the city, particularly the waste workers.

Within the urban fabric of Pakistan, this system is built upon the labour of lower-caste workers, most of whom belong to Christian communities. Their constant handling of discarded materials reinforces long-standing caste-based divisions that stigmatize them as the "untouchables" (Aqeel, 2018). When these social dynamics are mapped onto urban waste infrastructure, they produce spatial and architectural inequalities.

This paper takes a deeper dive into the architectural inequalities embedded in the living conditions of sanitation workers. Their housing, as a form of common good, raises questions of agency or its lack thereof. It highlights how spaces are negotiated within the wider urban landscape through notions of ethnicity, caste, religion, and employment. A vast majority of sanitation workers reside in Katchi Abadis, or unplanned settlements within the city (Butt, 2020, 240).

The term is commonly used to describe temporary structures built with vernacular architectural knowledge, often relying on improvised or make-shift materials such as mud, bricks, stones, pieces of plastic, and fabric (Butt, 2020, 239). Their construction generates a circular flow of materials within which the role of sanitation workers is crucial. They remove waste from affluent neighborhoods including discarded materials, which are in turn implemented in the construction of these settlements.

Katchi Abadi has therefore come to represent a charged term that divides Pakistan's urban built environment (Cowell, 2016). The question of exclusion and decision-making is central to understanding the position of these settlements in the urban context. Although these settlements house some of the city's most vital sectors, they are frequently excluded from urban planning discourse, often ending up on floodplains where formal construction is prohibited (Dawn E-paper, 2013). The architecture of these settlements embodies long-standing historical inequalities that continue to shape the lives of the workers who inhabit them, highlighting the social condition upon which Pakistan's urbanism stands.

Najia Fatima is a writer, editor, and artist whose work engages with contemporary South Asia and the historic Indian subcontinent. She holds an M.S. in Critical, Curatorial, and Conceptual Practices in Architecture from Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning, and Preservation. Her independent art practice explores themes of occupation, displacement, and geopolitical tension in South Asia. Her writing; considering how the built environment manifests structural inequality, has been published in various magazines. She earned her B.A. in Architecture and Visual Studies from the University of Toronto.

At the therapeutic centre Carina in Feldkirch (Austria), the transformation of the building is a part of therapy. For almost 30 years, the treatment center Carina has been redesigned and transformed. A country estate built by the Jesuits in 1864, with its strictly hierarchical architecture, was to become a place for a contemporary therapeutic centre. In a process ongoing since 1997, a formerly rigid building is being examined, appropriated, and carefully transformed by a large number of collaborating actors. The resulting architecture not only adequately houses a new function but itself appears as an actor in the therapeutic process.

Johannes Rauch's therapeutic concept informs the architectural master plan of Robert Felber, our father. Step by step the building, used as a therapeutic centre since 1984 with minimal adaptations, has been transformed to meet new requirements. In addition to legal regulations, there were four key design aspects: making the old building fabric visible, affording each space a distinctive character, enabling appropriation through niches and retreats, and spatially initiating incidental social interactions.

The building stages are carried out partly by construction companies, partly by the patients themselves, and therapists trained in crafts. Details, which can be implemented by the patients, are developed in cooperation with craftsmen. At the therapeutic center Carina, people with addictions and personality disorders, or trauma-related illnesses, lay tiles. They cover the roof, build staircases, and open up doorways. Actively participating in the construction is intended to change the patients' view of themselves and their role in society. Not passive and on the margins, but right in the middle of a visible transformative process. People with addictions are confronted with materials, space, ideas, building and safety regulations, as well as frustration and success. They are allowed to make their own decisions, and gain agency. After six to twelve months, the typical length of a stay at the therapeutic center, the patients are able to see tangible results of their work. They learn craft skills and, simultaneously, that they themselves, through planning and long-term considerations, can influence and form their environment, built and unbuilt.

We present the therapeutic centre Carina as a case study. In addition to archive materials and drawings in various scales, we show diverse impressions through interviews with people involved in the development process. The examples of specific construction measures, such as the uncovered doorways and stairwells, are used to illustrate the unique process of transforming a Jesuit summerhouse to a contemporary therapeutic center. In particular, how planning has to be adapted so that construction can be carried out for and with stigmatized, ill people. Here, care for existing buildings and their inhabitants is given a concrete application.

Ella Felber, M.Arch., writes, researches, curates, speaks and educates in the wide field of architecture. To develop 'Mourning Spaces' through narrative design methods, she received a Margarete-Schütte-Lihotzky grant in 2024. She is the initiator of the collectively developed exhibition zkmb: 'Back and Forth Cost Estimates, Breastfeeding and Turnaround Strategies', advocating for fair architecture work. She studied architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna.

Konstantin Felber, B.Sc., plans at Felber-Architekten in the narrow field of architecture. He works on small- and medium-scale projects, with a focus on housing, building in existing contexts and the transformation of existing structures. He studies architecture at the Technical University Vienna.

We are public realm architects creatively engaged in discourses and policies related to the climate crisis. In recent years, we have transformed our practices, teaching, and commitments related to the environment, because of the climate emergencies we face—and which will continue to escalate. We believe in an expanded approach to protecting the health and safety of the communities and the people we serve, who are geographically connected to specific climate threats and opportunities for climate care. In 2021, we launched a collaborative project called *Design by Fire* to forward our climate commitments in Clackamas County, Oregon outside of Portland, which experienced unprecedented drought and fire-related evacuations in the summer of 2020. *Design by Fire* was developed in response to this event as well as to fire emergencies in urban areas, particularly in wildland-urban interface zones. These zones are where housing interfaces with wildlands. The project served as a case study for *Translational Spatial Practices*, which promotes creative multidisciplinary design thinking and project-based work to address extreme fire conditions and other emergent ecological climate-based issues. *Translational Spatial Practices* allows us to explore new ways forward. It sheds light on the obstacles, gaps, and pathways toward greater care of the natural environment as part of building practice—which includes critical engagement with institutional environmental practices and land policy agendas—territories of engagement well beyond typical architectural practice. *Translational Spatial Practices* conceptualizes four expanded frameworks for better land stewardship related to building practices: (1) the very term we developed reflects the need for new ways of translating—for more robust cross-disciplinary approaches to communicating and problem-solving across spatial practices, scales, and concerns; (2) the need for new design models and strategies for building (or not building) architectures in high-risk zones; (3) the need for new public-facing tools for greater civic participation and creativity in climate stewardship; and (4) the need for new interdisciplinary spatial pedagogies that address the complexities of site through multidisciplinary understanding and real world problem-solving to prepare students and inspire new forms of practice. Frameworks for better land stewardship require expanded discourses in professional practice and in communities, classrooms, and legislative bodies. Designers can help advance and

frame these discourses, which require a radical rethinking of values. The humanistic procedures embedded in indigenous land practices, public interest design, and value-driven economics offer ways of building and caring for each other and the earth. They serve as reference points in our work and will be further discussed in relationship to our *Translational Spatial Practices* project and its many frameworks.

Laura Foxman is an architect and principal of the Detroit-based spatial practice We Are All Collage. She researches and designs civic and cultural infrastructures—ranging from objects to archives and urban environments—as sites of collective experience, memory, and stewardship. Her current work includes playscapes, ecological sculptures, and an interactive history of modern architecture visualized as vast networks of creative exchange and mobility. She teaches design at Wayne State University.

Keif Schleifer is a multidisciplinary educator, artist, designer, and principal at KSDesign, which straddles architecture, public art, and community-based design. Her teaching and creative practice are grounded in cultural history and a deep understanding of site and place. At Kennesaw State University, Keif is dedicated to educating the next generation of practitioners and scholars—preparing them to be adaptable, critically engaged, environmental stewards and conscientious designers.

Laura Frediani

FRAU* SCHAFFT RAUM: A place marked by violence transformed into a space of remembrance, solidarity, and prevention

FRAU* schafft Raum traces the transformation of a small former tobacconist shop at Nussdorfer Straße 4 in Vienna into the city's first feminist art space and urban memorial addressing gender-based violence. The intervention was conceived in response to the femicide that occurred here in 2021, turning a site of trauma into one of activism, reflection, and solidarity. The project reimagines a space charged with memory and trauma, transforming it into a site of cultural and social meaning.

The architectural transformation unfolds as a multilayered narrative, intertwining historical, social, symbolic, and technical dimensions. The 19th-century masonry façade was carefully restored to preserve the building's urban identity, while new interventions of glass, steel, and textiles enter into deliberate dialogue with the massive structure, creating a quiet tension between past, present, and future. Inside, minimal and open volumes form a symbolic void, a blank canvas that invites artistic production, civic dialogue, and collective introspection. The reuse of the original door handle, a modest yet evocative detail, encapsulates the project's approach: memories are not erased but carried forward, reinterpreted, and transformed.

This transformation is not limited to material renovation but extends to social function. By remaining open to the public daily, the space ensures accessibility in a dense urban setting and positions itself as a forum for art, feminist practice, and community encounter. Exhibitions and events address systemic violence, gender inequality, and the visibility of marginalized voices, weaving together commemoration and active engagement. Transformation here means not only adaptive reuse but an ongoing process of civic negotiation, between memory and change, mourning and action, vulnerability and empowerment.

At the intersection of architectural preservation and political space-making, **FRAU* schafft Raum** exemplifies how design can act as a mediator, reminder, and activator. It demonstrates that architecture is never neutral: it can resist, commemorate, and mobilize. By converting a site of violence into a dynamic platform for discourse and solidarity, the project challenges

conventional notions of monuments and memorials. Instead of freezing memory in static form, it embraces transformation as a cultural and political practice, an architecture that both remembers and provokes, preserves and reimagines, shelters and activates.

Laura Frediani is an architectural designer, author, and lecturer working between Austria and Italy. Through FREDIANA.studio, she explores socially and culturally relevant themes in architecture. She has co-curated exhibitions at Architektur Zentrum Wien, Architektur Haus Kärnten, and FREDIANE.space, delivered lectures at institutions such as TU Wien and Kunstuniversität Linz, and led workshops at international summer schools including EASA and VASS. She contributes regularly to Austrian and Italian architecture magazines. Her work combines architecture, research, and public engagement with a multidisciplinary perspective.

www.frediana.studio

Niels-Christian Fritsche

Shocking the mediocre city thoroughfare with beauty and criticizing luxury mobility: Look what is possible here – analogue and digital, including art bridges, street acrobatics, and bus stop wonders

1. Suffering and Observing: Critique of Luxury Mobility

I am standing on the sidewalk in front of the four-lane thoroughfare that separates me from the faculty building. Heavy traffic in one direction and then, viewed from the center strip, traffic in the opposite direction. I feel like it's *fair game*. Who is threatening me? Do I see opportunistic (unnecessary) mobility? Is it the pressure of commuting to work?

2. Threads related to knowledge and immersion, as well as human rights and responsibilities

Can we use the transparent part of the 'nudge' concept (Thaler, Sunstein) to selectively highlight the mediocrity of car traffic in cities? Here, symbolic diagnosis ('Virus Auto' [Knoflacher] and 'Autohasserbuch' [Gietinger]) – there, symbolic therapy (roll lawns against traffic [Grub] and 'liquid trees' [University of Belgrade]). Are we in the global North aware of how much our everyday behavior needs to change in a global comparison?

Can we consider the perspectives of pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists in parallel? Human rights come with human responsibilities. How do we connect our external and internal worlds (Rilke, Metzinger)? The mediocrity of the modern city meets *entertainment imperatives*: no boredom allowed! Curate yourselves (Reckwitz)! *Urban gardening* encourages us to experiment with plants on, above, and beyond the street.

3. Wow effects: Drawing scenarios using cutting techniques and 'diversity in one'

Modern cities were planned from the *top down*. Let's design beautiful streets *bottom up*, with 'God in the details' (Warburg, Mies van der Rohe). I combine the Japanese cutting technique 'Kire' (Ohashi) with the aesthetics of the Japanese 'lunchbox' (Ekuan). 'Kire' combines the beauty of art and the beauty of nature in one work of art. *Lunchbox thinking* allows

for metaphorical design. I draw mobile road surface experiments, street art bridges, and bus stop equivalents. Let's socialize the unhealthy, ugly city thoroughfares with wandering wow effects: How beautiful it is here, so sudden and unexpected! Why isn't it like this everywhere?

4. Discussion: Beauty spots on the cityscape

Can we use ultimate landscape/architectural beauty on and off the road to demonstrate how beautiful and healthy urban street environments should always have been? – The *approvable* beauty should be productive on-site, as well as transferable and scalable. Goal: To leverage the good and bad conscience of contemporary urban traffic and resocialise traffic patterns.

Niels-Christian Fritsche is an architect, artist, curator and publicist with focus on intellectual wiggle room, art and aesthetics in relation to neurophysiology and landscape-/architecture as sign systems. At TUD Dresden University of Technology, Germany, he chairs the department of architectural delineation as switchyard between intent, knowledge, ethics and aesthetic fundamentals. In his research, he discusses 'beauty as a moving target', the dialectic of pixels and vectors, art and ambiguity, private property, belonging, social cohesion and artificial intelligence.

Isabel Glogar

Collaborative Activation and Re-Use: Actors of a Non-Profit Housing Transformation

The paper discusses the relations of 'collaborative transformation' of existing buildings and areas and the development of non-profit housing and sustainable common good oriented urban development. It focuses on the questions: 'Who benefits from the transformation of existing buildings, properties and land?' and 'Who is involved in these processes and with what aims?'. Moreover, the paper presents transformations of various building typologies and how architecture and urban design have been central to these questions. The author draws on the first results of two research projects that the author carried out in Germany and Switzerland: the first completed part of the interdisciplinary research project 'BegeFa - Using Existing Buildings Communally - Perspectives for Families' and the current ongoing research 'BegeCH', which focuses on perspectives of actors and stakeholders involved in current collaborative re-use and transformations in Switzerland.

The paper presents observations from a spatial research perspective and results from the analysis of collaborative re-use of various typologies of buildings, such as farmhouses and estates, industrial buildings, office buildings and schools. These buildings were converted into living and working spaces that follow the principles of collaborative and sustainable living. The first results of our 'BegeFa' research discuss the transformation of existing buildings and areas through collaborative self-organized housing and living and working models towards the common good. Currently the subsequent 'BegeCH' project, explores this research questions further with a focus on architecture and urban design as well as actors and stakeholders involved in the activation processes in the swiss context. Here, an in-depth focus includes and exchange with actors from the field of re-use of materials and resources and sustainable neighbourhood and urban development. Particular attention is paid to the role of municipal actors and non-profit foundation, which are stakeholders in these transformation processes towards the common good. Expert interviews with the actors involved and exchanges with various interest groups enable an initial analysis of which alliances and collaborations play a role in the collaborative transformation of existing buildings and areas.

Acknowledgement:

Collaborative Use of the Existing Building Stock - Perspectives for Families (BegeFa) is an interdisciplinary research project and cooperation between the Professorship for Urban Design (TUM) and the German Youth Institute (DJI) and is funded by the BBSR (Federal Office for Building and Regional Planning), the foundation 'Stiftung Trias' and the foundation 'Öko Sozial (GLS Treuhand)'.

Isabel Glogar is a postdoctoral researcher and architect working in the fields of housing and urban studies with a focus on collaboration, housing and urban transformations and (climate) just cities. She teaches and researches as Senior Researcher at the Professorship of Urban Design at Technical University of Munich (TUM) and is Head of the Research Group Cooperative Planning, Collaborative Housing and Neighbourhoods. She taught at the TU Wien and the Hochschule Campus Wien. Currently, she is a Laura Bassi fellow at TUM and researches collaborative transformation and reuse.

Resource Research Reset: Transformations of Sacred Spaces as an Architectural and Social Task

As part of the two-part project series 'Resource Research Reset', architectural transformations of vacant church spaces were addressed at the Chair of Architectural Design and Conception at the Technical University of Munich. The aim of the master's projects was to rethink the potential of existing post-war modernist sacred buildings – often threatened by vacancy and demolition – in the context of spatial integrity, cultural heritage and contemporary use.

The series understands transformation as a multi-layered task: as the resource-saving further development of material and social assets (resource), as contextual analysis and poetic interpretation of circumstances (research), and as creative and programmatic revision (reset). The subject of the discussion was two Brutalist sacred buildings: St. John's Church in Ingolstadt (1964, Theo Steinhauser) and the St. Mauritius Church Centre in Munich- Moosach (1967, Herbert Groethuysen).

The design strategies range from infrastructural conversions, such as a water treatment facility or a social laundry church, to new forms of communal living, such as an open women's shelter or a centre for contemplative retreat. The church space is not interpreted as a neutral shell, but as a spatial structure whose sacred quality is transformed and at the same time made accessible to a new public, both sensually and physically.

The didactically structured process encompasses a perception-based and analytical exploration of the location and the spatial structure, an examination of the existing building, and a conceptual transformation from a social, functional, and urban planning perspective. The designs developed productively explore the tension between preservation and change.

In collaboration with DG Kunstraum München, the resulting design projects were presented to the public in an exhibition (04-06/2025) and brought into public discourse through a supporting programme. An exhibition catalogue was produced to accompany the exhibition. The projects are intended as contributions to the culture of transformation in the sense

of sustainable architectural practice that focuses on the common good and understands beauty as an essential quality. Through responsible, critical and aesthetically ambitious transformations of the sacred in an urban context, possibilities for a new accessibility of these buildings beyond the Christian context are explored and presented in the form of architectural designs.

With their clear focus on the transformation of existing sacred spaces, the projects make a direct contribution to the discussion on public welfare-oriented transformation culture. They combine perspectives from teaching, research and public communication and open up new areas of action at the interface between architecture, society and sustainability.

Prof. Uta Graff is architect and head of the *Chair of Architectural Design and Conception* at the Technical University of Munich. She focuses on conceptual design processes, the transformation of existing architecture and design research. As a publisher she is co-initiator and lead editor of the scientific publication *Dimensions. Journal of Architectural Knowledge* and has published numerous books. Her teaching and research addresses methodological approaches to knowledge creation in architectural design.

www.arc.ed.tum.de/eundg

www.dimensions-journal.eu

Although numerous spaces are vacant in many cities, including Vienna, and would therefore – in theory – be available, the demand for affordable and usable spaces remains largely unmet. Different forms of vacancy in combination with a lack of affordability of available space are signs of a capitalist and growth-oriented approach to spatial resources. This situation conflicts with sustainable urban renewal and highlights the need for sufficiency-oriented measures that strive for a modest and socially just use of (spatial) resources and enable suitable uses of space.

The imbalance between unmet spatial needs and simultaneous vacancy is particularly visible in the urban ground floor zone. As a place of everyday life, a social meeting point and a place of everyday economy, the ground floor zone is enormously relevant for future-oriented and vibrant neighbourhoods. While in some new neighbourhoods efforts are being made to develop active, mixed-use ground floor zones and actively manage them, in existing neighbourhoods there are only limited opportunities to influence usability.

This article focuses on the potentials and barriers to urban renewal in Vienna to intensify the use of vacant ground floor spaces in existing neighbourhoods and increase accessibility for disadvantaged users. The results of a qualitative analysis of strategic planning documents and expert interviews reveal instrumental and legal barriers to tackling the sometimes significant amount of different forms of ground floor vacancy. Particular potential is identified in the funding scheme *Grätzlinitiative 20+2 Call*, which was implemented as part of the current urban renewal programme *WieNeu+ 2024/2025*. Based on empirical evidence from the process monitoring, this case study highlights challenges and options for action for sufficient urban renewal.

The article provides new perspectives in the discourse on sufficient urban development in the viewpoint of vacancy activation and specifies conceptual approaches with empirical results from a current case study analysis from Vienna.

Mara Haas is a research assistant at the future.lab at TU Wien, where she focuses on social innovation and transformation processes as part of sustainable urban development. In her applied research, she examines post-growth and sufficiency as conceptual contributions to the common good-oriented transformation of existing neighbourhoods.

Lena Schartmüller is a university assistant at the Research Unit of Local Planning at TU Wien, where she conducts research on the potential of cooperatively used spaces for urban neighbourhoods . Since 2017, she has also been involved in setting up the platforms WeLocally.at and imGrätzl.at (especially space sharing and local crowdfunding).

Amid the urgency to transform the built environment in response to ecological and social crisis, architectural discourse is increasingly dominated by technocratic, efficiency-driven models of reuse and adaptation. This paper proposes an alternative lens: the architectural ruin as a space of refusal and negative capability—a concept drawn from Romantic philosophy and rearticulated through critical theory. Rather than viewing ruins as symbols of decline or as candidates for heritage preservation and reuse, this research reads them as interruptions in the built fabric that destabilize linear narratives of development and progress. Drawing on Theodor W. Adorno's negative dialectics and aesthetic theory, the paper frames architectural remnants as active sites of critique. These structures, by virtue of their incompleteness, resist incorporation into functionalist regimes of value and disrupt dominant epistemologies of space. This argument is developed through a series of historical and spatial investigations across the European context. In post-war Berlin, the voids left by the wall served as material memory, refusing both erasure and reconstruction, and became charged terrains of political and aesthetic contestation. Drawing on two cases—Rome's *centri sociali* and Berlin's voids—I show how these sites rehearse forms of collective life that exceed market rationality: practices of direct democracy, improvised programming, self-management, and communal care. These sites, while divergent in origin, share a condition of non-resolution. They mark places where the built fabric becomes porous, ambiguous, and resistant to closure. The ruin, in this sense, is not merely a material remainder but a conceptual and political proposition: a space where the city no longer performs its assigned function, where use is suspended, and where possibilities not yet actualized may linger. The paper argues that such negative spaces are essential for rethinking the transformation of the built environment today. Rather than enclosing them within new schemes of utility, they should be approached as zones of ontological hesitation—sites where architecture withdraws from the imperative to serve, perform, or signify. In a climate of accelerating crisis and instrumental remediation, these refusals open space for alternative temporalities, more-than-human ecologies, speculative collective practices and modes of governance. Ultimately, the ruin is positioned not as a problem to be solved but as a condition to be attended to—a rupture in the

spatial logic of neoliberal modernity that invites reflection, care, and radical imagination. It sits embedded within systems which transverse it and can materialize only through collective negotiation.

Ana Hernandez-Ferre is a Cuban-born researcher and designer based in Boston, United States. She holds a B.Arch from the university of Florida and a Master's degree from Wentworth Institute of Technology. Her academic research has largely focused on the relationship between urban form, the infrastructure of extractive economies, and spatial politics in Latin America.

Architecture in the planetary cycle: Synergies, resource cycles and agency in building transformation

The basic insight of contemporary transition research reveals, 'that its now clear that the post-industrial economic model is approaching the end of lifecycle as we are transgressing the planetary boundaries.' (Lorbach, 2024)¹ (Steffen 2015)²

Responding to the ecological crises, this research is interested in how modernity branded 'anthropocentric' thinking patterns can be transformed into 'ecocentric' approaches, where cities are understood as productive lifeforms in the dynamics of bio-regional ecosystems.

The theory of 'agency loss' by Italian philosopher Marcello Di Paola serves as a framework, describing the paradox that our individual direct actions always have a 'second life', meaning they have often far-reaching and damaging consequences on a planetary scale that we are unaware of. (Di Paola, 2018)³ Following the complexity of problems of our time poses two ethical challenges to individuals: agency loss and responsibility dissolution agency loss and responsibility dissolution. (Di Paola, 2017)⁴

The hypothesis of this paper is how experimental architectural approaches, including participatory formats and involvement in making, can embody system complexity in a way, to impact and stimulate transformative change. 'Art is giving context and meaning that helps the general public to relate to the information provided by science' the director of *Ocean Space* in Venice (tb21) stated.⁵ Methodological the paper investigates and discusses one case study project by Arts-Based-Research and 'Reallabor' (real-life laboratory) terminology.

The exemplary project 'Oasis No. 8' (2015/2016)⁶, a collectively driven waste-heat using urban green house with tropical plants in side, real built in Graz, served as a prototype for synergetic urbanism, and brought practically a micro action with a multi-sensual experience into a macro scale with embedment in planetary processes. This demonstrator showed, how circularity.

This project will be discussed with the research method of a 'Reallabor' (real-world experiment)⁷, where knowledge application and knowledge generation pursue two interweaving goals: firstly, to actively promote the

transformation towards greater sustainability and, secondly, to generate knowledge about how the transformation works.

Current research in system transformation, tipping points, forces of transition in sustainability shows, when current systems are coming to their edges, that alternative ways of thinking from 'niches' can impact current systems and foster transformative innovation and function as an initialization of an alternative (Lorbach, 2024)⁸. Oasis No 8 shows in its various visitor feedback, that complex understanding of the holistic impact of single action got into mind. It visualizes complexity, and show circular processes, that are not only technical and economic issues, but also open up social, cultural and aesthetic dimensions. Architecture thus becomes a catalyst for alliances between humans and the biosphere, for synergistic thinking and for the common good in context of planetary interconnectedness in the Anthropocene. Immersive spaces can defuse the problem of agency loss.

Footnotes

1 Lorbach, D, ITS ABOUT TIME - The Architecture of Climate Change, nai010 publishers, 2024.

2 Steffen, W, Planetary Boundaries: Guiding Human Development on a changing Planet, Science, 347/6223, 2015.

3 Di Paola, M, Urban Oasis - Markus Jeschaunig, Kerber Verlag, Bielefeld/Berlin, 2018.

4 Ethics and politics of the built environment gardens of the anthropocene Marcello Di Paola, Cham, Springer International Publishing, 2018.

5 Habsburg, Francesca, tb21, in an Instagram interview, Summer 2024 (tba21 - ocean space, Venice).

6 Oase No. 8, Markus Jeschaunig in framework of Institut for Art in Public Space Styria, <https://agencyinbiosphere.com/archives/project/oasis-no-8>.

7 Defila, R, Di Giulio, A, Transdisziplinär und transformativ forschen - Eine Methodensammlung, Springer VS, 2018.

8 Lorbach, ibid., p. 187.

Markus Jeschaunig, visual artist, architect and researcher based in Graz. He studied architecture at the University of Arts Linz, University of Technology Vienna and Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University Istanbul. Founder of 'Agency in Biosphere' in 2012. Jeschaunig is co-author of 'Breathe.Austria' - Austrian Pavilion at the Expo 2015 in Milan and co-founder of the transdisciplinary think- & do-tank 'Breathe Earth Collective'. Since 2025 he his teaching and researching as PhD Candidate at Graz University of Technology.

Not since the Danish agricultural and forestry reforms of the late 18th century have we witnessed a transformation of the open landscapes on the scale now being proposed through the green transition and the Danish Green Tripartite Agreement. These reforms call for taking wetland soils out of agricultural production, planting hundreds of hectares of new forest, expanding solar and other renewable energy installations, and implementing a range of climate adaptation measures.

The landscapes set to undergo change today are themselves products of a profound spatial, social, technological, and economic transformation that once aimed to modernize Denmark. The reforms of the 18th century were inspired by Enlightenment ideals—reason, progress, and equality—and sought to impose rational planning on nature and the economy. They were also driven by necessity: the state needed revenue and aimed to dismantle feudal agricultural structures and communal landholding systems.

The reforms then manifested in:

- Increased productivity, but also a shift from collective benefit to individual gain—an individualization of what had previously been common goods, including shared landscapes.
- Spatial and social redistribution—villages were dissolved as farms were relocated into open fields, shaping the rural spatial and social structures that persist today.
- Improved living conditions for many—farmers gained land ownership, and opportunities for social mobility expanded - which laid the foundation for later industrialization and urbanization.
- Introduction of new agricultural and forestry technologies, enhancing efficiency and rational land use.
- Growth in agricultural exports, strengthening the national economy.
- Forest regeneration, reestablishing woodlands as vital natural resources.
- Zoning and restricted landscape access, marking the privatization of the open countryside.

Concepts such as scaling up, efficiency, and rationalization became central to the planning of Danish open landscapes—principles that still largely define their management today.

However, the Green Transition and the Green Tripartite Agreement bring new perspectives and new questions:

How to understand the common good—and for whom? According to which values and criteria is it defined? Should monetary valuation continue to dominate the debate around public access to the countryside?

Can we simultaneously promote cultural heritage and biodiversity?

Is ‘scaling up’ the only viable approach to systemic change?

This paper explores how the notion of the common good(s) can be redefined in the context of contemporary landscape transformation, referring to the concepts of ‘scaling out’ and ‘scaling deep.’ These concepts, drawn from both social science and nature conservation, offer alternative pathways to lasting change. *Scaling out* refers to replicating and disseminating innovations to reach more people and places. *Scaling deep* focuses on transforming cultural values, beliefs, practices, and relationships to create enduring societal shifts.

Jonna M. Krarup is Professor in Landscape Architecture Her research currently focusses on landscape transformation.

Commitment to Transformation: Potentials and Challenges of Voluntary Initiatives

Since the surge of attention sparked by the Fridays for Future movement, numerous voluntary and non-profit initiatives have emerged across Germany, dedicated to advancing sustainability and climate protection across diverse sectors of society.

In this context, Team Zirkuläres Bauen (Team Circular Construction) was founded in Dresden in 2020 by a group of young architects, civil engineers, and urban planners. The collective advocates for a culture of transformation in the building sector and a Bauwende — a fundamental shift towards circular and sustainable construction practices in Saxony.

From the outset, the group's mission has been to locally embed the principles of circular economy in construction through accessible formats, to raise awareness of the complex interrelations behind them, to inspire climate-positive practices, and above all, to connect citizens, professionals, and practitioners in dialogue and exchange.

As active members of Team Zirkuläres Bauen, we aim to zoom out from our practical work and reflect on the broader role of voluntary organizations within the transformation of the construction industry. Undoubtedly, voluntary engagement remains an essential pillar of social progress. Yet we ask: what potentials and challenges accompany this form of engagement — for those who volunteer, for the work they carry out, and for the societal context in which they operate? Each of these three dimensions reveals its own ambivalences, which merit closer examination and discussion.

Dimension 1: The Volunteers

+ Voluntary work fosters a sense of self-efficacy, strengthens social relationships, and enables active engagement with meaningful topics beyond professional or institutional constraints.

– Increasingly, however, burnout cases linked to voluntary engagement highlight the difficulties of balancing volunteer work with professional and

private responsibilities, often preventing sustained long-term commitment.

Dimension 2: The Voluntary Work

- + Local initiatives and their tangible, hands-on approaches make topics of transformation more accessible and relatable to a wider public.
- At the same time, questions arise about the overall effectiveness and reach of these small-scale, localized actions.

Dimension 3: The Societal Added Value

- + Non-profit initiatives can experiment freely and explore alternative practices without being constrained by immediate profit interests.
- Yet there is a risk that crucial transformation processes are increasingly delegated to the voluntary sector, thereby delaying necessary political decisions and institutional responsibilities.

Tina Kresse studied Architecture at TU Dresden and currently works as a research associate at the Chair of Architectural History and Theory (TU Dresden). Since 2023, she has been actively engaged with Team Zirkulæres Bauen, contributing to the planning and realization of projects and events.

Tom Macht studied Architecture at TU Dresden and IUAV Venice. He currently works as a research associate at the Chair of Heritage Conservation and Design (TU Dresden) and as a freelance architect. Since 2024, he has been a member of Team Zirkulæres Bauen, contributing to the conception and implementation of projects and events.

<https://teamzirkulaeresbauen.de>

Theresa Lattermann

The Next Transformation:

Reclaiming housing through decommodification, dealienation, and democratisation

The transformation of the built environment cannot begin with aesthetic gestures or technical fixes alone. It must confront the structural forces that shape how housing is produced, owned, and governed. Contemporary housing systems are not failing. They are functioning as designed within a capitalist logic that treats land and dwelling as assets. Scarcity, exclusion, and ecological degradation are not anomalies but structural outcomes of commodification.

This paper argues that genuine transformation requires a redefinition of housing itself: from a site of accumulation to an infrastructure of solidarity, care, and democratic control. Drawing on the triad of decommodification, dealienation, and democratisation proposed by David Madden and Peter Marcuse, the paper presents these concepts not as abstract ideals but as interdependent strategies for systemic change. Decommodification challenges speculation and profit-driven land regimes; dealienation addresses the social and spatial fragmentation produced by market individualism; democratisation reclaims power over housing from capital and returns it to collectives, communities, and public institutions.

Each principle is examined through theoretical framing and real-world models, revealing both the potential and limits of resistance within market-based structures. Architecture emerges not as a neutral tool, but as an active force within these dynamics. It can either reinforce inequality or articulate alternative forms of value, ownership, and coexistence.

Transformation, in this context, is not about building more or better, but about reorganising the foundations of the housing system itself. It means reclaiming housing as a commons, sustained not by profit but by collective responsibility and ecological limits.

Theresa Lattermann is a Berlin-based architect whose practice focuses primarily on social housing. In her academic research, she explores collective housing models, urban justice, and solidarity-driven approaches to city-making. With a background in architecture, real estate management, and urban studies, she works at the intersection of spatial design and political-economic critique. She is currently co-developing a Berlin-based housing cooperative as part of her broader engagement with collective ownership and non-speculative housing provision.

Transformation of the built fabric as a common good requires a lot of resources, some of them have still to be practiced, like communication skills and including local knowledge. Children and young adults travel to school every weekday and spend a lot of time in public space. Even if they don't live in the school neighborhood, they know the area well. In my research I explore the didactic power of mappings in the context of spatial education for young adults and examine how cognitive maps and cooperative mappings can foster interpersonal communication about space. In my contribution will give insights into the process how I developed my own analytical tools based on the empirical material of three case studies – with a focus on transformation processes in Viennese school environments.

The interpersonal exchange of experienced spatial realities is a prerequisite for social interaction and political participation. Children and young adults experience fragmented and delimited spaces as they grow up with digital communication media in a globalized world. In science multilayered and relational spatial models are already common sense. Nevertheless the complex spatial constructions of cityscapes have so far received little attention in the educational program of schools and the spatial competences of children and young adults are not addressed sufficiently. This gap could be bridged by the exploration of mapping as a multidisciplinary tool for education.

In my research I provide insights to mapping as a multi-perspective didactic concept for spatial learning and pursue the goal to show that children and young adults have a lot of unappreciated spatial competences. Building up on methods of cognitive mapping I develop special mapping protocols which can be used as media and tool for spatial education as a part of Built Environment Education (BEE).

Two research-settings were realized as case studies in different Viennese schools. In the first setting pupils were asked to produce a sketch map describing their daily path to school. In the second setting they were undertaking exploratory walks in the school environment to collect data for

thematic maps. The former makes implicit knowledge explicit and the latter produces a sort of collective ethnographic rendering of the school environment. In order to find out how children communicate and reflect implicit spatial knowledge these hand drawn maps are analyzed.

To understand the visual language of the given material ethnographic and visual methods are combined with insights from children's drawing research. The visual language of and the production processes behind the individual and collective mappings are examined with the qualitative method of documentary image analysis.

Antje Lehn teaches at the Academy of fine Arts Vienna (Art and Architecture and Education in the Arts). Her research interests are mapping, school environments and environmental education for young people (BEE). She developed and built several exhibitions and worked in architectural offices in Vienna, London, Munich and Milan. Adding to her architectural education at the University of Stuttgart and the University of Applied Arts Vienna she has recently finished a dissertation at the TU Berlin.

In recent years, the historic city has become a place for new experiments. As economic, social as well as ecological benefits of adaptive reuse have come to the forefront, the focus on urban construction has shifted to urban rehabilitation and retrofit in many European metropolises. This has not only happened in the large-scale transformation of former industrial areas for new mixed-use projects, but also on a smaller scale, as residential areas from the industrialisation period are being reconsidered. The building stock that was designed for the bourgeois and the working classes has been constantly transformed according to changing ideologies. The historic city that was first adapted to motorised individual transportation and altered to provide more cost-efficient housing, is now gaining new significance in facilitating more socially and environmentally sustainable solutions. The regular grid street structure facilitated the Superblock concept of Barcelona as one of the pioneer examples for public-space redesign, whereas the historic tenement housing typology provided many possibilities for retrofitting in many European cities. In Vienna, changes in the housing stock happened on three levels as ground floor premises and rent-regulated existing floors facilitated the *arrival city* and new rooftop extensions and a more upper-class living environment. In other places like Budapest, whole buildings have been transformed to serve the hotel, gastronomy or nightlife industry. All of these many small interventions that can be tracked in the cities prove the high adaptability and complexity of historic housing that are often lacking in new, mono-functional residential areas. Therefore, many new housing projects – although very well-organised – show a certain uniformity that feels artificial and also lacks the human scale and feels unfamiliar. Is there a way to recreate the – as Jane Jacobs called it – organised complexity of the historic city in new areas? Is it the materiality, or the proportions or other features of the architectural design that give a certain identity to a place? Besides using existing elements, is it possible to use new elements to create a new urban identity that both inhabitants and visitors can recognise? This study is part of an ongoing dissertation research. It compares new development areas of the 10th district of Vienna and 8th district of Budapest with the neighbouring existing areas from the Founder's period in both districts. It will show

which built and non-built, old and new features play a role in creating the urban identity of neighbourhoods. The urban- and architectural analysis is further complemented by an ongoing mapping survey filled out by inhabitants and regular visitors of the areas.

Viktória Éva Lélek holds a degree in architecture from TU Vienna, where she specialised in urban studies. She graduated with her thesis *Urban Parterre Budapest*, a comparative study of the historic housing stocks of Vienna and Budapest. After several years of professional experience in architecture, she began her dissertation at TU Vienna and joined the Institute for Urban and Regional Research (ÖAW) in 2024, where she contributes to the *TransHerit* project on the transformation of historic urban areas.

Eva Mair

Drawing Transformation: The architectural drawing as object of knowledge representing multiperspectivity and conveying dialectical contemporaneity

Drawing Transformation explores the architectural drawing as ‘object of knowledge’. Architects do not build; they draw. Beyond serving as tools for design and construction, drawings articulate multiple layers of meaning, offering insights into how (building) culture is perceived, understood, and envisioned.

Working with existing spatial and material resources requires fundamentally different forms of representation than designing for new construction. Before visions of care or transformation can emerge, the existing fabric must first be drawn. But what actually constitutes the ‘existing’? From which perspectives can we approach it, and how might different kinds of ‘embodied knowledge’ (Donna Haraway) be integrated into this view? What changes if we understand buildings, in Roland Barthes’s sense, as processes whose shifting meanings are shaped not by authors but by readers? Which tangible or intangible elements of a site or landscape lend themselves to depiction as layered narratives of both past and future?

This contribution examines selected drawings through the lenses of multiperspectivity and dialectical contemporaneity. It argues that these concepts illuminate crucial questions for the representation and transformation of existing conditions—both in terms of technical execution and the narratives embedded within. Positioned as a practice-oriented inquiry, the paper addresses contemporary approaches to adaptive reuse and transformation, aiming, in Dalibor Vesely’s words, ‘to reconcile the abstract language of conceptual constructions with the metaphorical language of the visible world.’

Eva Mair is an architect based in Vienna, active in practice, teaching, and research. Her work spans international and interdisciplinary collaborations, focusing on the design and construction of existing structures. In 2019, she co-founded the architecture office Mair-Paar. Most recently, Eva Mair co-edited *Reuse in Teaching: The Future of the Architectural Design Studio* (Triest Verlag), a publication developed in collaboration with colleagues from TU Wien.

The history of museum architecture is often told as a heroic narrative, illustrated through outstanding buildings: with fortunate beginnings, periods of boom, and culminating—at least provisionally—in the present. In doing so, there is a tendency to reduce heterogeneities to homogeneities in order to highlight typological insights and functional aspects. The definition of the museum also marks the starting point of this narrative, whether through the classical notions of preserving/caring/processing/organizing/exhibiting—which inevitably leads back to the 18th century—or through the seemingly straightforward idea of the museum as a semiophor, which allows for earlier and more universal beginnings.

The stories of reconstruction are also heroic tales—from the Tribuna in the Uffizi to the Louvre and on to the Rijksmuseum as a widely influential model, or the Swiss National Museum and the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, the latter according to the architect's self-understanding being an 'invisible renovation'—even though such a thing is, from a communication-theoretical perspective, impossible. These stories of renovation are told less frequently, yet they follow the same pattern of universal history. They include extensions, expansions, reductions—or the re-staging of permanent exhibitions.

After a deconstruction of these heroic narratives—which perhaps aim to respond to the pressure for change that shapes the museum as an institution in its engagement with different levels of publicness—I find myself asking what lies behind the different waves of museum-building, which I would like to briefly outline. What role have manifestos or the changing definitions of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) since 1946 played? And: can museum architectures themselves be read as agents, while labels such as the museum as a 'third place' are perhaps merely attributions?

The central focus, in line with the theme of this conference, should be the question of the museum's future viability, and which approaches have already been pursued in this regard—be it in the 1960s, the 1980s, or even earlier. One could point, for example, to Philip Youtz and his trans-

formation of the Brooklyn Museum, which he aimed to future-proof—strikingly modern in his application of shrinking concepts—when he wrote in 1936 that ‘a museum must be considered not as an example of art for art’s sake but as the material form of a social institution.’ This would be a fruitful point of departure—otherwise, we are left only with further museum ruins.

Alexander Marksches is Professor of Art and Architectural History at the Faculty of Architecture, RWTH Aachen University. His research focuses on the history and theory of architecture, with a particular interest in the floor plan as an abstract image form. In both his academic and public work, he is committed to a politically engaged understanding of the university and scholarship. Recent publications and conference contributions have addressed the contemporary relevance of the term ‘architecture school’, questions of authorship in architecture, the role of art and architectural history within faculties of architecture, and the politics of institutional memory, most notably in relation to the Haus der Kunst in Munich.

Typology of Intermediate Spaces: Strategies of Climatic Mediation in Architectural Transformation

In processes of architectural transformation, spaces are increasingly emerging that are neither heated, fully enclosed, nor technically conditioned—yet consciously designed. This contribution investigates such ‘climate spaces’ as a distinct typology within the existing built environment. Defined by their openness, material articulation, and position within the building, they contribute to thermal, atmospheric, and social transformation while challenging conventional notions of spatial conditioning.

Historically, thermal gradation within buildings was an integral part of design. Differently tempered zones—from cool anterooms to heated living rooms—enabled finely tuned indoor climates. The advent of cheap fossil energy in the 20th century established the paradigm of comprehensive conditioning, in which comfort was defined by standardized interior climates. The oil crisis of the 1970s marked a shift toward insulation as a technical response, culminating in the ‘Minergie House’ ideal of the 1990s. In the current context of climate change, resource scarcity, and the necessity to transform existing buildings, the limits of this technocratic understanding of sustainability are increasingly evident.

Against this backdrop, a renewed interest arises in spaces that are not technically sealed but climatically mediating. Intermediate spaces—such as courtyards, loggias, unheated rooms, or atria—operate as climate-active zones. They buffer heat, allow air circulation, and expand conditions of inhabitation beyond the logic of the ‘standard climate.’ Instead of addressing the human being merely as a measurable parameter of thermal comfort, these spaces reintroduce the subject as a sensory, embodied presence within architecture. Their qualities lie in the use of authentic materials, natural light, transitional zones, and seasonal adaptability. What may appear as frugality or reduction is reframed here as a new architectural luxury: less reliance on technical infrastructure, more emphasis on spatial and atmospheric richness.

The research presented is part of an ongoing dissertation project at TU Vienna. It asks how this emergent category of climate-active interme-

mediate spaces can be systematically identified and typologically described. Which historical and contemporary cases demonstrate their spatial, social, and climatic effectiveness? How can these spaces be integrated into contemporary transformation processes to support openness, de-densification, and sensory reactivation of the built environment? Methodologically, the study employs systematic reference analyses of selected projects to trace architectural strategies of design, materiality, and use. In light of the ongoing Mediterraneanization of central European climates and the broader challenges of climate adaptation, the research situates intermediate spaces as a typology that extends architectural transformation beyond technical performance, toward strategies of climatic mediation and spatial adaptation.

Leonhard Panzenböck (1988) is an architectural researcher and designer, lecturer, and PhD candidate at the Research Unit for Building Theory by Design, TU Vienna. His work, supported by the DETAIL, Tische, and Start scholarships, addresses architecture as a process of continuous transformation, including curatorial and research activities at Museum Insel Hombroich. He runs a Vienna-based practice focusing on the relationship between architecture and open space.

‘Dasein’ as a Process of Understanding: Grasping and Shaping Transformations in Living and Working

The current challenges in dealing with the existing housing stock call for new planning-cultural approaches that interlink social and economic justice, climate responsibility, and the common good. The provision of housing — once a key planning and policy instrument of modernity — is becoming increasingly untenable in a socially differentiated society. This raises the question of how new forms of responsibility can emerge and be redistributed under these shifting conditions.

This contribution advocates for a planning practice that brings together the diverse perspectives of those involved in the production of space, especially in the field of housing. We understand housing in an expanded sense, and above all as transformation of the existing, etymologically rooted in the meanings of ‘to stay, remain, dwell, endure, care for’ (Pfeifer 2005).

Referring to Eva von Redecker’s concept of ‘Bleibefreiheit’ (the freedom to remain), the focus is on supporting people in and with their existing living environments, while adapting these environments to changing life realities. This requires a rethinking of responsibilities: landlords must relinquish control to enable tenants to assume responsibility themselves — not as a formal delegation of duties, but as a participatory act of co-creation in the sense of social and spatial justice.

Cooperative housing models already demonstrate how such shared responsibilities can succeed. They develop and organize living environments in line with social, ecological, and economic needs — yet remain systemically marginal. In contrast, cooperative and municipal housing sectors hold substantial portions of the housing stock and therefore constitute the true field for common-good-oriented transformation. What is urgently needed here are more spaces for negotiation and experimentation, to overcome structural inertia and open up new scopes for action.

Within these contexts, projektbüro operates through a research-based and participatory approach, framed by the concept of

‘Dasein’. This concept carries a double meaning: it refers both to working on site, within people’s lived realities, and to a situational research method grounded in the use of space. In practice, ‘Dasein’ manifests through a wide range of formats — such as situational analyses, housing and spatial reports, and 1:1 experiments — always developed in response to the concrete conditions on site.

The goal is to precisely capture, understand, and unlock the knowledge embedded within the existing built environment, to make it accessible and testable — thereby forming a foundation for planning and construction processes that build upon it.

In this contribution, projektbüro reflects on the genealogy of the ‘Dasein’ approach and discusses its own projects, asking: How can Dasein, as a method, contribute to understanding transformation as a collectively negotiated process in the spirit of the common good?

Footnotes

Pfeifer, Wolfgang. Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Deutschen, ‘Wohnen’, p. 1577ff. Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 2005.

Redecker, Eva von. Bleibefreiheit. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Verlag, 2023.

projektbüro is dedicated to exploring social questions across different spatial scales, aiming to improve the environments we inhabit. Drawing on knowledge from the existing, everyday life, and use, the collective designs processes and architectures.

Their practice integrates skills, methods, and theories from architecture, urban and spatial planning, urban design, and experimental design approaches.

projektbüro consists of Marieke Behne, Dominique Peck, Marius Töpfer, Renée Tribble, and Lisa Zander.

Hannelore Martine Rung

Co-productive Transformation Processes in (Potential) Large-scale Heritage Sites: Evaluation, Preservation, and Reuse of Large Buildings in German-speaking Countries in the Context of the Paris Agreement

Amid the urgent challenges of the building transition (Bauwende), the focus has shifted toward treating the existing built environment as a valuable resource. The transformation of large-scale buildings poses a particular challenge, as their size and complexity demand iterative planning processes. This calls for new, flexible, and participatory planning tools that incorporate the needs of all stakeholders to sustainably reactivate obsolete sites. In this way, a renewed appreciation emerges for use, design, transformation, and preservation.

Pioneering projects in the German-speaking context that have been transformed through co-productive planning processes reveal new and sustainable approaches to working with existing structures. Confronted with the challenges of climate protection targets, these projects seek innovative strategies — under diverse conditions — to address complex problems. By activating the potential of early planning phases (Phase 0) and the specific qualities of site and existing structures, new forms of value can emerge. From these, best practices can be derived, evaluated, and transferred to other contexts.

This dissertation explores how co-productive processes function in the transformation of large-scale buildings and how they influence the ongoing debate on value in heritage conservation. The focus lies on the analysis of 'invisible architecture'¹: the forms and procedures of co-production, their influence on planning and design, and their role in defining new qualities of preservation and transformation.

Footnotes

¹ Michaelis, T., Pohl, B., Buser, B., Honegger, E., Müller, K., & Mocka, T. (2024). Unsichtbare Architektur. In: N. Kuhnert & A.-L. Ngo (Eds.), Arch+ Umbau - Ansätze der Transformation. Arch+ Verlag GmbH.

Hannelore Martine Rung studied Architecture and Urban Planning in Stuttgart and Porto, graduating as Dipl.-Ing. in 2004. Until 2011 active in various fields of architectural communication; from 2011-2020, academic associate and lecturer for architectural communication at TU Munich. Since 2016, registered urban planner (BYAK), freelance curator e.g. IBA Heidelberg, and exhibition designer. From 2020-2023, conducted research on post-war modernism at TU Munich. Since 2023, doctoral researcher at the Department of Heritage Conservation and Building in Existing Contexts, TU Wien, focusing on co-productive transformation processes of (potential) large-scale heritage sites.

Viennese adult education began to spatially shape the city's educational landscape in the early 20th century with institutions such as the Volksheim Ottakring, the Wiener Urania, and the Volksbildungshaus Margareten, as well as numerous branches in working-class districts. Reaching broad audiences with scientific topics was at the heart of this new social infrastructure, which was intended to gradually spread across the city like a network. After the Second World War, the City of Vienna built community centres, adult education schools, and houses of encounter for the newly founded district adult education centres – some as integral parts of settlements and housing complexes of municipal housing. The small-scale neighbourhood centres of the 1950s and the large-volume district cultural centres of the 1960s and 1970s were understood by those responsible in planning, politics, and adult education as spatial instruments of democratic coexistence and dialogue. The self-managed knowledge spaces of the interwar period became top-down planned structures with a broad range of offerings after 1945.

Several locations, including the Haus der Begegnung in the Großfeldsiedlung and the Volksheim Ottakring, have been extensively renovated in recent years. The well-known Polycollege Stöbergasse in Margareten from the 1970s, which itself replaced the original headquarters of the Viennese Adult Education Association (Wiener Volksbildungsverein) from 1911, was demolished and replaced by a new building. The district centre Donaustadt (Bezirkszentrum Donaustadt), opened in 1974 and housing the adult education centre, a municipal library, youth centre, the district's administration, and retail is soon to be replaced by a new urban development. Newly established adult education locations have meanwhile moved into ground-floor premises of residential buildings, thus not only fragmenting the formerly spatially united public bodies but also reducing their urban presence as a space of public good.

The conference contribution builds on our recent publication project 'Centres of Intellectual Urban Expansion: The Architecture of the Viennese Adult Education Centre' (Zentren geistiger Stadterweiterung: Die Architektur der Wiener Volkshochschule – Album Verlag, November 2025). By revisiting historical concepts, international references, and current

debates on low-threshold, community-oriented public educational spaces, the presentation explores the potential of these existing community facilities. It also examines possibilities for future transformation in light of current socio-ecological changes.

Carina Sacher combines architecture and research with a particular focus on socio-political issues in housing and public infrastructure. In her dissertation at the ETH Wohnforum, she investigates how parental separation and housing are interrelated – and what this reveals about social inequality, care relationships, and everyday housing realities.

Lukas Vejnik is a research assistant at the Forschungslabor Nachkriegsmoderne at the Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences. Through exhibitions, research projects, and written contributions, he engages with the reception and transformation of post-war modernist architecture.

Valentina Sansone

Confiscated Properties: Architecture, Ideology and Performance

My research advances the role of the curatorial as key within processes of development and implementation of cultural policies with a social impact. Since 2018, I have been investigating curatorial engagement within processes of reconversion of real estate assets confiscated from organized crime. This focus on legal and bureaucratic frameworks stems from Italian law 106 which encourages use of such assets for social and cultural purposes. In this context, the curatorial can play a key role in the making of cultural policies which can represent an alternative to speculative investments. Indeed, from this perspective, the curatorial is also strategic in securing communities' interest: my curatorial practice understands real-estate assets confiscated from organised crime as commons.

In June 2018 I curated 'Confiscated Properties: Architecture, Ideology, and Performance,' which was part of the selected Collateral Events of the international contemporary art biennale Manifesta, whose twelfth edition took place in Palermo, Italy from June to November 2018. This project initiated a process of activation and re-appropriation with the engagement of local communities which took place through the organisation of exhibitions, collective walks, performances, and a series of experimental music workshops. This approach has ultimately led to the foundation of Magazzino Brancaccio, an ongoing a model for experimental curatorial and artistic practices in the public space. Thanks to Magazzino Brancaccio negotiation and to its community-based initiatives, a former parking lot, confiscated from organised crime in 2000, was claimed and finally returned to its community, almost twenty years after its seizure.

Besides currently working on a community garden project in the same neighbourhood where the Magazzino Brancaccio project started, most recently, various collaborations with educational institutions have taken place, such as with the students on the Master in Critical Urbanisms at the University of Basel (2021-2022) and the Public Program of the Italian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2022) among others.

Valentina Sansone For the past ten years, my practice has often included an interdisciplinary approach, combining elements from postcolonial studies; community-based, and participatory strategies for the activation of the commons; care and caretaking practices in professional environments; and urban activism among its main facets. In 2023, during a two-month research residency in Vilnius, Lithuania, I have worked on a comparative study of legislative and administrative forms of management of asset confiscated from criminal organisations, also producing relations with institutions and local administrative bodies' officers.

Christina Schraml

Transforming the Invisible: Intangible Potentials of the *Built Fabric* – The Case of Vienna’s ‘Alte-Leute-Siedlungen’

Current architectural discourse revolves around the question of how to engage with the existing building stock. The focus is on renovation, re-densification, retro-fitting and the transformation of the *built fabric* in the face of climate crisis, limited resources and the urgent need for re-use and circular economy strategies. Yet, how do we address what remains invisible? Those aspects of the built environment that do not manifest in walls, facades, or architectural elements, but in everyday practices, social imaginaries, neighbourly contacts, and collective memories, i.e. the *social fabric*. This web of relations has grown over time, shaped and experienced by its users, yet is rarely acknowledged as a resource.

This contribution explores these intangible dimensions through the example of Vienna’s largely forgotten ‘Alte-Leute-Siedlungen’ (settlements for older adults) built in municipal housing in the 1950s and 1960s. In response to the housing shortage and demographic change of the post-war period, the City undertook a social housing experiment, constructing more than thirty small-scale settlements for older adults embedded within larger municipal housing estates. The housing model combined architecture with a social vision: self-determined aging, social participation and neighbourly care. Barrier-reduced apartments were paired with communal open spaces – the so-called ‘social green’ for everyday encounters. Here, the *social fabric* was not only considered but spatially planned, inscribed in the built environment itself.

Today, while many of these settlements still exist physically, their original social function has eroded. Some have been renovated, repurposed, or left vacant and deteriorating. The housing model has largely disappeared from collective memory. While the *built fabric* remains, its ‘un-built’ qualities have been lost – along with intangible resources that extend far beyond the material.

In light of today’s interrelated crisis of climate, housing and care, it becomes clear: the intangible dimensions of the *built fabric* – social infra-

structures, everyday practices, neighbourhood networks – need stronger attention when addressing the transformation of the existing stock. This paper argues for a perspective that understands transformation not only as a physical intervention but as a social practice – one that brings together *built fabric* and *social fabric*. It is precisely the ‘unbuilt’ that holds untapped potential for resilient, community- oriented housing. Transformation does not begin with material alterations, it begins with making the invisible visible, acknowledging it, and building upon it.

Christina Schraml is a Vienna-based urbanist whose projects bridge theory and practice and engage with artistic strategies of urban research. Since 2012, she has been a Senior Scientist in the Department of Social Design | Institute for Arts and Society at the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Her work focuses on everyday urban culture, public space and urban furniture, social housing and alternative forms of co-existence. She is a member of the editorial board of *dérive* – Zeitschrift für Stadtforschung and is founding member of Einküchenhaus. Verein zur Erforschung emanzipatorischer Wohnmodelle.

www.stadtaufmoebeln.uni-ak.ac.at

Between zoning and reality – dealing with undeveloped building land as a contribution to transformation

The transformation begins with the land. Spatial planning discussions are increasingly focusing on the use of designated building land and in particular its mobilisation and rezoning, because there is an urgent need to reduce new land consumption. The contribution emphasises the importance of these two land policy tools for sustainable settlement development and the transformation of land use.

There is high settlement pressure in many regions of Austria and beyond, and a growing political consensus on the need to preserve land. The allocation of new building land must be drastically reduced or stopped altogether. This increases the importance of existing building land that has been designated but not yet developed — it is becoming a key resource. However, in many places it remains unused, whether due to speculation, a lack of development or unfavourable locations. Mobilising these reserves requires targeted planning and consistent legal and fiscal measures, both of which have been ineffective thus far.

At the same time, the question arises of how building land can be rezoned. ‘Older’ building land zones, created under conditions that no longer apply today, tie up land that cannot be used ecologically or economically. Rezoning to green areas – for example, in the case of flooding, poor infrastructure or topographical disadvantages – can help to reduce land consumption.

The contribution discusses the potential and challenges of these two strategies – mobilisation and rezoning – in the context of current transformation processes. The aim is to analyse existing spatial planning instruments, identify obstacles to their implementation, and outline a consistent land policy to activate existing building land reserves. The contribution also emphasises the importance of municipal scope for action and a legal framework geared towards the common good.

The central question is how land use can be managed in order to reduce land consumption and encourage sustainable spatial development.

Barbara Steinbrunner is a research assistant at the Research Unit of Land Policy and Land Management at TU Wien, and also works in a local spatial planning office. She is also a member of Scientists for Future. Her research focuses on land policy, land conservation and rural topics.

Arthur Kanonier is a professor and the head of the research unit Land Policy and Land Management at TU Wien. He has many years of experience conducting research on land policy, land use planning, and spatial planning law, and is the author of numerous publications.

The ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war has exposed the fragility of Europe's post-Cold War security architecture, underscoring the urgent need for urban areas to enhance their resilience amid increasingly complex and unpredictable crises. As cities across Ukraine have found themselves on the frontlines of this conflict – whether through accommodating displaced people, coping with infrastructural disruption, or adjusting to economic instability – their critical role in crisis response has become unmistakably evident.

The experience of Ukrainian cities under wartime conditions exemplifies the remarkable adaptability of urban systems, demonstrating their capacity to reorganise functions, absorb shocks, and maintain operations under sustained and multifaceted pressures. This experience offers a singular and urgent source of insight for other urban systems worldwide, providing tangible lessons in resilience, adaptability, and crisis management under extreme conditions.

My master's thesis, *Spatial Reactions to War: Urban Insights from Rear and Front*, examines how war has reshaped spatial dynamics in the Ukrainian cities of Lviv and Kharkiv. These two cities represent contrasting security scenarios: Lviv was identified in the study as a 'rear-border city', which was largely spared, and Kharkiv was designated a 'front-border city', which was subject to extensive bombardment. The objective of this research was to introduce a methodological framework termed 'spatial reaction' — understood as the adaptive reconfiguration of urban functions and spaces under crisis conditions — to demonstrate how the use of public spaces, buildings, and infrastructure has been altered in these two distinct crisis scenarios as a consequence of war.

The methodology is centred upon the establishment of a networked database that records 'spatial reactions', conceived as both an analytical and design tool for mapping adaptive transformations in urban space. The database documents functional shifts of urban elements and analyses them based on variables such as causes, time, place, and the actors involved. This approach reveals the dependencies and patterns that emerge

in the spatial response of cities to crises. For instance, the findings of the present research have demonstrated that the significant demand for accommodation in Lviv, consequent to the evacuation of residents from the East, has resulted in the conversion of public cultural institutions, such as the Les Kurbas Theatre, into temporary emergency accommodation. Meanwhile, underground stations in Kharkiv, which at the beginning of the invasion functioned as air raid shelters, gradually evolved into hubs of social interaction and education. Over time, certain areas within the stations were formally repurposed to accommodate authorised schools. These transformations are reshaping our understanding of urban spaces, illustrating that functional adaptations in times of crisis are not temporary improvisations but mechanisms that can reconfigure urban structure and collective spatial behaviour in lasting ways.

The goal of my research was twofold: firstly, to analyse a particular spatial phenomenon within a defined context, and secondly, to develop tools that can be applied in a variety of contexts, scales, and dynamics. The proposed methodology contributes to the discourse on urban resilience and offers planners and policymakers a pragmatic instrument for anticipating and managing the spatial consequences of crises – ultimately informing the design of more adaptive, sustainable, and resilient urban futures. Beyond immediate crisis management, this research positions spatial reaction as a lens for rethinking architecture's agency in conditions of uncertainty, where adaptation itself becomes a form of design intelligence.

Yana Tsarynnyk Yana Tsarynnyk is a Vienna-based architect whose practice focuses on architectural competitions. Born in 1996 in Lviv, Ukraine, she holds a Master of Architecture from Lviv Polytechnic National University (2018) and a Dipl.-Ing. degree from the Vienna University of Technology (2024), where she was awarded the Rudolf Wurzer Prize for her diploma project. Her research explores the intersection of architectural and urban theory, focusing on spatial adaptability, typological transformation, and the role of cities as reactive systems in times of crisis.

Luciana Varkulja

Re-Sourcing the Built Fabric:
Forests, Material Flows, and Territorial Justice

This contribution reframes the transformation of the built fabric through the lens of extraction, foregrounding the ecological and political entanglements between urban construction and rural resource geographies. Drawing from ongoing research into tropical and temperate forest economies, this work examines how the materials that shape our buildings—especially wood—emerge from contested landscapes shaped by histories of dispossession, labor, and uneven development.

The project traces how forests, Indigenous knowledge systems, and rural infrastructures are entangled with metropolitan development, focusing on case studies in Brazil and the western United States. It interrogates the cultural and environmental costs of architectural production and explores how cities might reorient toward modes of building that sustain rather than deplete. Standing forest as infrastructure is proposed as an advocacy model—linking forest preservation to urban planning through land policy, material circularity, and care-based frameworks.

Rather than viewing transformation as a technical or aesthetic act alone, this paper argues for an expanded approach that sees the built environment as a living archive of extraction and resistance. It draws on design research, spatial ethnography, and collaborative initiatives, including work with forest communities, researchers, and institutional actors, to rethink how urban-rural relationships can be redesigned toward ecological and social equity. Central to this vision is a call to incorporate Indigenous stewardship practices and local material knowledge into architectural discourse— not as supplements, but as foundational.

By rethinking the agency of materials and the geographies they activate, this contribution invites a broader paradigm shift: one that positions transformation not only in reuse or adaptation, but as an opportunity to re-negotiate the systems and networks of support that structure the built environment.

Luciana Varkulja is a Brazilian architect, urban designer, researcher, and educator. Founder of *uma architecture & design*, she works across Latin America, Africa, and the US. Her research links architecture with food systems and forestry, examining material supply chains through ecology, labor, and extraction. She is part of the Design for Freedom Working Group at Grace Farms Foundation, advancing awareness of forced labor in the construction industry. She has taught at Columbia, Barnard, USC, and Cal Poly, and is currently Senior Lecturer at Otis College of Art and Design and Adjunct Professor at the Boston Architectural College.

The architectural discourse since the late 1960s has been characterized by an intense engagement with the historical nature of the city. Against the backdrop of the European Heritage Year 1975, architects also demanded the largely unregulated issues of heritage protection. In a present perceived as crisis-ridden due to capitalist-dominated construction, architectural design was increasingly reflected in the context of the existing building stock. Outstanding architectural projects from this period continue to be cited as references, including works by Carlo Scarpa, Alison and Peter Smithson, Gottfried Böhm, Hardt-Walther Hämer, and others. Significant beginnings of a specifically late modern understanding of ‘building within existing structures’ lie within the time frame of the boom in heritage preservation and are presented to a wider audience in exhibitions and publications. They are accompanied by theoretical reflections that first introduced concepts such as ‘Genius loci,’ which continue to shape the discourse of context-oriented architectural design to this day. However, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that architecture understood in this sense was presented at best as an aesthetic alternative to capitalist modernity and did not represent an alternative practice of building per se – especially since the cross-references to the actual alternatives, particularly of the 1970s and 80s, were lacking. The architecture of the counter culture or environmentally conscious design approaches have remained niche phenomena, despite an increasing awareness of environmental issues in Western societies at large. In the light of the dilemma that the concept of ‘context’ in architecture is often too tightly bound to the historicity of the built environment, this paper seeks to critically rethink the relationship between architecture and its societal conditions. To move beyond the limitations posed by the term ‘context,’ I propose that a unifying framework for the transformative efforts at the beginning of the 21st century could be the paradigm of environmental impact: the ideal of minimizing the environmental impact of construction. This approach not only broadens the perspective to include economic critique but also integrates discussions and practices surrounding the commons in building.

Johannes Warda is a Senior Lecturer in Historic Preservation at the University of Bamberg. Before, he has held research and teaching positions in Weimar, Dresden, at Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, and a guest professorship at the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning of FH Erfurt. He received his doctoral degree in architecture from Bauhaus University Weimar (2014). His research focuses on the history and theory of architecture and preservation, sustainability, building materials and resources.

POSTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Paola Ardizzola and Ömer Can Bakan

Educating for Transformation: Conservation Pedagogy as a Catalyst for Rethinking Built Fabric and Common Good

This poster explores an educational model that frames architectural heritage not as static inheritance but as a dynamic site for civic transformation. Focusing on the recently formulated undergraduate course ‘Architectural Heritage and Conservation’ at Yaşar University (Izmir, Turkey), the study reflects on a pedagogical structure that integrates theory, documentation, technical practice, and community-oriented design within a framework of experiential learning. Offered as a mandatory course in the undergraduate architecture curriculum, the course was conducted with 58 third-year students in their first semester, working in self-organized groups of four. Students engaged with both analog and digital modes of representation, including eidotype sketching, photographic surveys, annotated geometric drawings, material analysis, and narrative-based explorations through collage, video, and oral presentation. These were undertaken in light of the core principles of restoration, conservation, reconstruction, and adaptive reuse of architectural and urban heritage. The course critically examined international guidelines (UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS) alongside localized case studies, enabling students to develop multi-scalar strategies for intervention, ranging from construction recovery to urban infill in sensitive historic contexts. The pedagogical arc moves from foundational technical skills to reflection on decay, continuity, and reinterpretation within the contemporary city. Central to the course was the fieldwork in Izmir’s historic Kemeraltı Bazaar, where students conducted heuristic explorations, engaged in sensorial mapping, and developed community-oriented proposals for architectural and urban revitalization. Instead of assigning predefined architectural artifacts or specific buildings for study, students were encouraged to navigate the complex spatial and historical layers of

the Kemeraltı area. This open-ended method allowed them to define their focus areas and generated a more investigative and engaged atmosphere throughout the semester. This process, rooted in collaborative and place-based inquiry, fostered new understandings of the built environment as a commons negotiated between past and present, regulation and imagination. A key finding was that groups employing multiple representational techniques—video, collage, sound, and spoken narrative—developed a stronger sense of authorship and agency in heritage interpretation. This diversity fostered richer understandings of the built environment as a commons actively negotiated between past and future, material and imagined. The paper argues for a conservation pedagogy that cultivates both technical precision and critical spatial agency. In doing so, it positions education as a transformative tool capable of redefining heritage as a civic practice, rooted in place-based inquiry and capable of advocating for a new Common Good.

Paola Ardizzola is an architectural historian in twentieth-century architecture and heritage interpretation. Her research addresses the intersections of project epistemology, visual culture, sociological implications and memory. She has extensively published on Bruno Taut, Zvi Hecker and the interpretation of architectural legacy contributing to international scholarship with a critical, interdisciplinary approach. She has been awarded the Bruno Zevi International Prize for Historical Criticism.

Ömer Can Bakan is an architect, researcher, and PhD candidate at Izmir Institute of Technology. He graduated from ITU Architecture (2018), co-founded the Fabbees Digital Fabrication Team, and won awards at FabFest London. He completed his MSc at Yaşar University with full scholarship, focusing on digital media and city image. Since 2019, he has worked at Yaşar University as research assistant in design studios, heritage interpretation, and history courses.

Christoph Kirchberger and David Calas

Communal Living in Rural Areas and in Existing Buildings - Paths of two communal housing projects in rural Lower Austria and their approach to preserving valuable building stock

The housing projects *Wohnstrudel*¹ in Schönau and *dieTextilfabrik*² in Hirschbach offer an experimental field for communal living in rural areas. Both rely on the adaptive reuse of valuable existing buildings and develop housing forms beyond the widely used rural normative single-family house model. Despite differing development paths, both projects provide valuable insights into affordable, communal housing.

The starting situation in the municipalities/regions shows a similar picture: shrinkage and aging despite regional in-migration, vacancies in village centers while new single-family houses emerge at the outskirts. This connection between demographic change, vacancy, and normative housing forms makes systemic solutions necessary. Large-scale vacant buildings such as the *Kastell Schönau*³ (*Wohnstrudel*) in Schönau/Triesting or the former knitwear factory in Hirschbach (*dieTextilfabrik*) in the village center of Hirschbach (district of Gmünd) can open up new paths. The latter was taken over in 2021 by the initiative *Vacancy Activation dieTextilfabrik*. Through the involvement of the local population, exhibitions, and interim uses, a participatory process⁴ was initiated. Within the framework of the project *Young Living+*, a building assembly for communal reuse is being established by 2026 with support from the housing research program of Lower Austria. Low-threshold participation formats such as so-called *Wohn | Events*⁵, trial living, and artistic activities help to make needs and interests visible.

The self-organized project *Wohnstrudel* is already a step further. In 2024, the listed *Kastell Schönau* was transferred into the collective ownership of the *Wohnstrudel* group with the support of around 200 direct-loan investors⁶, using the *habiTAT* model⁷. Currently, 12 adults and 3 children live on site, and two apartments have been renovated with respect for the existing structure. After the conversion of three more apartments, by 2027 additional communal space and living space for about four more residents can be created.

The approaches of both projects—with different degrees of self-organization and professional support—show a possible ‘modular’ model to provide an affordable alternative to the demolition–new-build mode and

the desire for large-scale individual housing. Communal, ecological, and in harmony with the existing building stock.

Footnotes

1 Website <https://www.wohnstrudel.org>

2 Website <https://www.dietextilfabrik.at>

3 Small insight into the history of the building can be found here: <https://www.kleinezeitung.at/lebensart/19694118/eine-wg-in-einem-herren-haus-der-habsburger>

4 In collaboration with DI Lisa Steiner as part of the TU Vienna master's thesis 'Spatial Enterprises in Rural Areas', 2022

5 The methodology as well as the program can be viewed on the website www.dietextilfabrik.at

6 For more informations about peer-to-project loans <https://www.wohnstrudel.org/direktkredite>

7 <https://habitat.servus.at/>

Christoph Kirchberger – managing partner at mobyome with a focus on rural mobility solutions and innovative participatory workshop concepts. Since 2021 part of the Wohnstrudel housing project and responsible for alternative financing and accounting.

David Calas – Architect, urbanist/ruralist, director of *Studio Calas*, Professorship for Adaptive Reuse at FH Salzburg, Visiting Professor at Politecnico di Milano. Since 2021, together with Barbara Calas-Reiberger, part of the vacancy activation initiative *dieTextilfabrik*.

In Hong Kong, the ground on which we build is constantly moving and transforming. This paper draws on firsthand materials collected during the design and construction of the Urban Living Lab, a community gathering space situated on a reclaimed site in the urban renewal neighborhood of Tai Kok Tsui. It examines how the transformation of land, community, and public policies are deeply interconnected in the urban development processes of contemporary Asian cities like Hong Kong. Material culture has played a crucial role in the design process, serving as a tool to foster shared understanding among stakeholders and to infuse new meanings into the concept of ‘grounding’ within our evolving architectural practices.

Hong Kong is undergoing one of the most intense urban renewal efforts worldwide, affecting over 250 hectares of high-density neighborhoods and impacting more than 854,000 households over the next two decades. Most of these neighborhoods are located on reclaimed land, which has historically transitioned from natural landscapes to built environments, followed by densification and regeneration.

The Urban Living Lab functions as an experimental public space designed for communities impacted by this urban renewal. The project transforms a residual urban site into a communal shelter—a parasol—that provides relief from Hong Kong’s subtropical climate. By integrating locally produced galvanized steel crafts and glulam bamboo materials, the design adopts a material-based approach to broaden the understanding of sustainability across environmental, cultural, and social dimensions.

This paper begins with a nuanced examination of the concept of ‘ground’ in Hong Kong, considering its physical, cultural, and political dimensions to contextualize the city’s unique urban ‘transformation.’ It then presents a case study of the Urban Living Lab and the Tai Kok Tsui neighborhood—a former coastal community that has become one of Hong Kong’s densest areas and is poised for significant building transformations in the coming decade. Through an analysis of stakeholder involvement and the construction process of the Urban Living Lab, the paper explores how a material-centric understanding of the community’s cultural identity

can open new possibilities for design in high-density Asian cities experiencing rapid change. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the multifaceted nature of 'ground' in contemporary cities to create architecture that is environmentally, culturally, and socially sustainable.

Su Chang is an Assistant Professor in Architectural Design at the University of Hong Kong and Principal of Su Chang Design Research Office. His current research explores a water-centric perspective for understanding architecture, development, and conservation in Hong Kong, the Greater Bay Area, and Asia context. Navigating the shifting dynamics between inland and coastal areas, he has developed design experiments with a material-based approach to rejuvenate spaces and regenerate social fabrics for communities undergoing transformation. His design collaboration with contemporary art and cultural institutions has built a reputation for its sensitivity to emerging cultures, new economies, and the expanded notion of sustainability.

Jonas Käckenmester

The House as Workpiece: Curated Process Architecture as a Design Strategy for the Transformation of Vacant Rural Buildings into Cultural Infrastructure

The project *The House as Workpiece* investigates how rural areas can be sustainably transformed through process-oriented, curated architectural practice and the catalytic influence of art and culture. The starting point is the prototypical adaptive reuse of a listed farmhouse in Lüchow-Dannenberg (Lower Saxony), conceived not only as a physical structure but as a cultural and social ‘workpiece.’ The reuse is pursued as a dynamic, participatory process grounded in continuous dialogue and adaptation, rather than as a static concept.

A central methodological approach is curatorial guidance, which operates as an interface between architecture, art, and local needs. It moderates and structures the entire transformation process—from concept development through construction to the long-term use of the site as a cultural infrastructure in the rural context. This concept of ‘curated process architecture’ integrates curatorial practice with co-creation, thereby actively fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders. It enables an open and adaptive engagement with the existing building fabric, in which social, ecological, and cultural requirements are negotiated.

Particular emphasis is placed on art and culture as catalysts for change. Artistic practitioners are involved as active contributors to the transformation itself. Their interventions accompany the redevelopment as a performative process, generating new perspectives on use, space, and community. Through this interrelation, a creative field of possibility emerges in which rural and also urban cultural production interact and learn from one another. At the same time, the project examines how such exchange can generate new networks and synergies between urban and rural contexts.

An exemplary component of *The House as Workpiece* was the Summer School ‘*Design + Build: Architectural Transformation by Bridging Tradition and Innovation in Rural Context*’, held in August 2025. Organized within the framework of EULIST – *European Universities Linking Society and Technology* – the initiative was led by Leibniz University Hannover in

cooperation with Vienna University of Technology and Brno University of Technology. The aim of the Summer School was to realize a practice-oriented architectural project at the intersection of teaching, research, and the local community. Traditional craft methods were combined with innovative construction approaches and artistic interventions to develop sustainable strategies for rural transformation and to present them to the public.

The House as Workpiece explores the potential of adaptive reuse to function as a multidimensional platform for artistic and societal negotiation processes. It positions architectural transformation as a collaborative, curated practice with significant cultural and social impact for rural regions.

Jonas Käckemester studied architecture in Hamburg, graduating with distinction. He was awarded scholarships from the BDA, the BMBF, the Heinrich Tessenow Gesellschaft, the Werkbund Berlin, among others. With a background in fine arts, he presented his work at Galerie Renate Kammer in Hamburg in 2018. In 2019, he joined Herzog & de Meuron in Basel. Since 2021, he has been developing non-profit cultural spaces such as *Vorfluter* in Berlin and *Atelierhaus Prezler 8* in a rural context. Since 2023, he has been an assistant at the Institute of Design and Building Theory at Leibniz University Hannover. In 2024, together with Kay Fischer, he founded the architectural practice *studio kaefi*.

After only 45 years of use, the former campus of the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) is slated for demolition. Since the university's relocation in 2013, the site has undergone multiple transformations—from temporary accommodation for other institutions to, since 2022, a vibrant landscape of interim uses encompassing art, culture, education, and social initiatives. This spontaneous and user-driven reactivation has revealed unexpected potentials of the existing structure: dance classes in lecture halls, cafés in corridors, cultural programs in the former cafeteria, and even an aviary of over 200 parrots and parakeets in a greenhouse.

These bottom-up practices demonstrate that future-oriented urban and architectural development can emerge not only through design, but through temporal openness, functional vacancy, and collective appropriation. The 'Alte WU' thus, almost inadvertently, became a laboratory for *unplanned flexibility*—a resource-efficient, socially embedded form of transformation that challenges conventional notions of planning and value in architecture.

The 'Alte WU' in particular presents a unique opportunity: a (semi-) publicly owned building originally designed as a mono-functional educational campus — and currently planned to become one again. Why not transform it into a truly 'state-of-the-art' educational campus? One that connects formal and informal learning. One that truly offers added value for the surrounding population and the city as a whole. The interim users are already offering initial answers: they demonstrate how informal educational work operates — within existing structures — and what minimal conditions it requires.

The contribution presents findings from the project *Archiv der Aneignung* ('Archive of Appropriation'), realized by *Kollektiv Raumstation* in September 2025. Through participatory documentation methods, the project captured spatial adaptations and informal practices to preserve them as knowledge resources for future planning. The poster discusses how these forms of use and the knowledge they generate could inform socio-ecological urban transformation and rethinking of educational spac-

es—spaces that are open, diverse, informal, and collectively sustained. The central question is: can interim use become a foundational principle for a new, more adaptive mode of architectural practice and development?

Kollektiv Raumstation approaches space both critically and playfully, working site-specifically and in close dialogue with local contexts. Through interventions in public space, exhibitions, walks, and audio installations, it questions the familiar, explores, doubts, and gives voice to unheard perspectives. Founded in 2013 in Weimar, it now operates as an open collective in Berlin and Vienna. Raumstation is part of the cultural center at Althangrund and thus itself a user of the Alte WU.

www.raumstation.org

Eva Kukurite, Danijela Müller-Stojanovic, Josef Piroddi and

Few forms of housing are as deeply embedded in the collective consciousness as the single-family home – a symbol of freedom, security, and self-fulfillment. This is especially true in Vorarlberg, where the phrase ‘Schaffa, schaffa, Hüsle baua’ still represents a prevailing life model. Yet, this is precisely where criticism begins: experts are calling for a paradigm shift, while the single-family home remains firmly anchored in society and the economy – with problematic consequences.

As part of the DTFLR research labs, the Bregenz-based office developed the study ‘Das Erbe des Einfamilienhauses (‘The Legacy of the Single-Family Home’).’ It examines the topic from architectural, cultural, social, ecological, and economic perspectives – with a focus on Vorarlberg. Interviews, surveys, and personas reveal that the desire for a private home is widespread but often rooted in societal conditioning and a lack of viable alternatives.

A key finding: there is a cognitive dissonance between housing aspirations and living reality. Many dream of a house in the countryside, yet simultaneously long for urbanity, community, and short distances. The consequences – along with financial difficulties or unresolved inheritance issues – include vacancy, oversized living spaces, and high levels of debt. These are well-known issues, yet they often receive insufficient attention from those affected.

Ecologically and economically, the costs are high: land consumption, soil sealing, elevated energy expenses, and underutilized living space. Problematic inheritance structures and social isolation – particularly among older women – further exacerbate the situation.

The study does not advocate for the abolition of the single-family home but rather calls for a rethinking – in both planning and usage. Many people perceive the single-family home as the only viable option. This is where the F-Lab intervenes: it views the single-family home as a starting point for transformation – through repurposing, subdivision, renovation, or deconstruction. Instead of standardized solutions, diverse, context-sensi-

tive housing models are needed – models that reflect current life realities and aim to reach the target audience, namely users outside the professional architectural sphere. These are the individuals we seek to engage with in our daily work to drive transformation forward.

Thus, the single-family home is understood and communicated as an expression of past, yet adaptable, life models. It is the residential object that, both in theory and practice, generates the strongest sense of identity – grounded in comprehensible facts.

Now is the time to reimagine this space – collaboratively, contextually, and with courage for change.

DTFLR As an architecture firm with strong regional roots, we view building as a cultural practice. We design spaces that respond to genuine needs – not nostalgic ideals. In addition to our building practice, we engage with current interdisciplinary questions in architecture. These topics are explored and communicated across five locations on various levels.

F-Lab #001 The team of the first research lab in Bregenz consists of architects who, beyond their daily project work, have come together out of a shared interest in the built environment. In their work, they combined practical expertise with scientific approaches to focus on a topic that is already highly visible in the media, yet has received little to no social attention outside architectural circles. The team aims to address the building transition toward sustainability beyond their own profession and make it tangible for those affected – in this case, the users.

landuni is a model project for the transformation of rural areas in the public interest. Initiated by the Vienna University of Technology in cooperation with the province of Lower Austria, Drosendorf Castle in the north-eastern Waldviertel region, formerly used as an educational institution, has been revitalised by the permanent presence of university teaching and research, saving it from impending vacancy. Under the motto “Research. Teach. Learn. In the countryside. For the countryside.”, landuni combines scientific practice with local experiences and everyday realities.

The aim is not only to study transformation processes, but also to actively shape them together with students, scientists and regional actors. The focus is on dealing with what already exists – buildings, stories and social structures. Dealing with vacant properties, rethinking existing locations and reusing materials are linked to topics such as local supply, mobility, digitalisation and regional resilience. The topic is also institutionally anchored: the Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Planning at TU Wien has declared 2023/24 the annual theme of transformation of existing buildings. Climate change, land conservation and social sustainability were at the centre of this. Courses and research initiatives are intended to enable new synergies between disciplines and scales.

In this context, nearly 60 courses with over 700 students took place at landuni. This led to the creation of the landuni Platzlerl, which was realised in collaboration with the municipality and regional actors and now serves as a place of exchange. Another example of this form of shared appropriation of space is the intervention Ränder verändern (Changing Edges, Wald/4 Festival 2023). Students from Austria and Czechia jointly created a temporary connection across the border river Frattlingbach – a year later, the municipality of Vratěňín installed a permanent foot and cycle bridge. Such processes show that transformation requires collective experience, new narrative spaces and concrete, location-specific impulses.

The next step is the implementation of a mobile land.LAB, a transportable spatial laboratory with which landuni will move out into the region. It is to be used as a method of regional development and provide concrete

impulses for transformations on site – in dialogue with municipalities, associations and the population. The LAB also accompanies future research projects, such as the development of co- working and educational spaces with digital participation in vacant buildings or the cultural revitalisation of vanished social meeting places such as inns.

landuni sees itself as a platform for context-sensitive, open and future-oriented education and research work. Education becomes social infrastructure, research becomes a collaborative search process – with the country, not about the country. In this way, transformation becomes a shared task.

Kerstin Schmid studied spatial planning at TU Vienna and HCU Hamburg and completed her master's degree in 2021. She conducted research on digitalisation in rural areas, was a junior researcher at AIT, coordinates the landuni project at TU Wien and has been working in regional development for the LEADER region of Thayaland since 2024.

Benjamin Altrichter studied architecture at Carinthia University of Applied Sciences and the University of Art and Design Linz. In his master's thesis, he developed visions for the future of Kautzen together with residents. He is a construction engineer, co-founder of Ruranauten, board member at LandLuft and works on rural transformation. Since 2023, he has been a project assistant at the Vienna University of Technology and, since 2024, also a building culture mediator.

Visibility/invisibility: On the discursive and functional challenges of religion-related conversions

In the context of building transformations, places of worship represent a small but very relevant topic. In the social discussions about between religious and secular use and vice versa arise issues that go far beyond the built substance itself: architecture is not a private matter. Building, renovation and/or conversion define our living environment not only materially, but also through their use and perception far beyond that.

Drawing on a broad database compiled in a study on sacral topographical change in Germany since reunification my work discusses specific cases and general patterns. I argue that debates on repurposing should also be seen as an opportunity to reinterpret cities, infrastructure, neighbourhoods and even sacred buildings in the context of a contingent society.

As such, I understand places of worship as specific field of study and insight but at the same time as a means to uncover the potential complexity of conversions beyond building alone. There are various phenomena that can often be transferred back into the general discourse on conversion, but which have remained underexposed until now. They range from changes in the temporal and spatial regime of the entire neighborhood to conflicts of interpretation of architectural symbolism to genuine design challenges, such as the creation of specifically coded spaces in existing buildings.

Beate Löffler is a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering at TU Dortmund. With degrees in both architecture and (art) history, she earned a doctorate with a thesis on Christian church architecture in modern Japan and a habilitation with a book on knowledge systems in architecture in the late 19th c. Her research focuses on cultural transfers in a global context, the role of sacred spaces in modern societies and contemporary communication about things architectural.

Technocratic Urban Planning in Central Europe (1880–1945): Ideology, Control, and Lasting Spatial Consequences

The systematic historiography of urban planning remains underexplored, often subsumed within architectural history's focus on stylistic forms or isolated case studies. While cross-influencing between planning paradigms, a critical gap persists in examining systematic urban historiography with technocratic planning's expansion during the 19th and 20th centuries not only as a tool for improvement but as a tool of state control.

Focusing on Germany, Austria, and Slovenia between 1880 and 1945, this research argues that in technocratic systems, seemingly depoliticized mechanisms served ideological agendas and implemented state power over populations. Despite differing political settings—from democracy to totalitarianism—these countries shared interconnected planning traditions and practices, facilitating comparable urban outcomes.

The study frames centralized planning processes both as an expression of state ideology and as instruments for implementing power relations. As a starting point, it demonstrates how 'organic' urban development—which was linked to the longing for an 'organic community' and which led to an anti-urban ideology¹—concealed technocratic interventions that initially fostered differences among individuals and subsequently aligned with nationalist and fascist spatial regimes. Architects and planners, though seemingly serving public welfare, often advanced exclusionary practices. Even in Austria and Slovenia, workers' housing, presented as progressive, often prioritized the interests of the middle class². Moreover, the neighbourhood unit, a planning concept that emerged against the background of social reform approaches in Great Britain, had the implementation of social order as goal. The planners tried to influence social action by spatial means and to bring about a certain form of communal life. The NS local group as a settlement cell (*die Ortsgruppe als Siedlungszelle*), a variation of the neighbourhood unit, can be considered a spatial concept based on a spatial authoritarian führer-principle. Case studies illustrate how utopian ideals turned into segregation instruments, from Theodor Fritsch's 'Stadt der Zukunft' (City of the future), a UK garden city model from 1896,³ already institutionalizing social stratification, to the Nazi *Reichardtbeitsdienstlagern* (RAD camps)⁴, unrealized Nazi urban planning in Maribor⁵ (similar to Generalplan OST) and Josef Umlauf's resettlement policies for the new 'German Eastern Territories'⁶.

Drawing on *Kulturwissenschaft* and critical historiography (e.g. Jaskot, Tafuri), the study exposes how technocratic planning naturalized spatial segregation and manipulation – still enduring in contemporary urban inequalities. By historicizing these patterns, the research implicitly proposes alternative frameworks for inclusive urban futures, by revealing recurring technocratic tropes which still challenge participatory planning. Ultimately, it underscores the urgency of questioning and transforming inherited spatial hierarchies to foster connectivity across race, gender, and class in the world's layered urban fabric.

Footnotes

- 1 Manfredo Tafuri: *Kapitalismus und Architektur*, 1977, p. 88
- 2 Ivan Vurnik: 'O reševanju stanovanjski krize v zapadni Evropi', *Dom in svet*, 15.5.1927, p. 145-148.
- 3 Howard, 1899.
- 4 Robert Jan van Pelt in Grancy, A. S. et al.: *Reflections on Camps - Space, Agency, Materiality*. 1st ed. V&R Unipress, 2019, p. 507-536.
- 5 Regional Archives of Maribor.
- 6 Josef Umlauf: 'Zur Stadtplanung in den neuen deutschen Ostgebieten', in: *Raumforschung und Raumordnung* 5 (1941) 3/4, p. 100-122.

Lavinia Munteanu was born in 1981 in Romania and is currently living in Germany, where she completed a degree in architecture. After, she studied stage-design and cooperated with various architectural offices and theatres. Besides working as a freelance visual artist, she is a PhD candidate in the field of architectural theory at Graz University of Technology, Austria. Her research explores how spatial concepts have partially merged with utopian thought streams and with totalitarian systems.

Ana Lovrec Medved was born in Maribor, Slovenia in 1994 and finished her master's degree at the Faculty of architecture in Ljubljana. She works as a freelance architect, editor, researcher, and curator. Her research projects on architectural theory reflect her interest in the historical and interdisciplinary views on architecture. Since 2023, she is a PhD candidate at AKK Institute, TU Graz. She is researching how the political, social and cultural streams influenced architectural development in the interwar era and the Second World War with a focus on Maribor.

Henriette Lutz

Male construction – female use: A look at the gap between planning and user needs, using the example of the Werkbundsiedlung Neubühl in Zurich¹

Since planning teams continue to be relatively undiversified and largely lack sufficient care experience, involving users with their specific experiential knowledge in planning processes offers those responsible the opportunity to respond to the needs of a changing society.

This article highlights the spatial experiences of residents of the Werkbundsiedlung Neubühl in Zurich and shows how the needs of female residents can be incorporated into planning in the context of a socially sustainable transformation process. In doing so, Neubühl, a Swiss icon of modernism, is viewed from a new perspective and existing narratives are questioned.

The Neubühl housing estate, which was built in 1932 as an architectural manifesto of modernism, was critically examined from the perspective of its female residents as part of the third semester of design theory in the bachelor's degree programme in architecture at the Bern University of Applied Sciences. Historical and current residents of the estate were brought together in a didactic setting to reflect on the relevance of the built and theoretical concepts of modernism and their impact on the housing and everyday lives of women in the estate. It is shown how interviews with residents not only lead to a more inclusive understanding of architectural history, but also to a deeper examination of the social dimension of architecture and the role of women as actors in housing construction. The contemporary female user perspective on a historic housing estate allows for a multi-layered approach to the familiar concepts of modernism.

Methodological and content-related inspiration for the study of the Neubühl housing estate was also found in the work of Swiss social worker or welfare worker, as she was then called, Hanni Zahner. She studied new Swiss housing estates from the 1950s, a time of great housing shortage, with a focus on the lives of women and families.² Hanni Zahner's concrete and detailed resident surveys provide insights that can be used in today's studies and to raise residents' awareness of their own living environment.

In general, resident interviews are a method that enables students and planners to reflect on the different perceptions and needs of residents in their respective times and contexts.

Making residents' perspectives visible helps to make housing more inclusive and liveable. By listening to and taking residents' voices seriously, planners, owners and political actors can transform housing construction in a socially acceptable, care- oriented and diversity-focused way.

Footnotes

1 This article is a further development of the work on the book project *Frauen(leben) im Neubühl. Vom Wohnen in einer Ikone* (Women's Lives in Neubühl: Living in an Icon), edited by König Sandra, Lutz Henriette and Schröer Ulrike, Jovis Verlag, Berlin, expected publication date 10/2025. It includes an essay by Henriette Lutz entitled 'Resident interviews in architectural teaching: Between Typological Analysis and Biographical Narrative.' The book brings together contributions on the history, typology and significance of the settlement and, with portraits of the residents, sheds light on the contemporary living environments of women living in the settlement. The portraits are based on interviews with residents conducted by the students.

<https://www.jovis.de/de/book/9783986122003>

2 Zahner, Hanni, und Schweizerische Gemeinnützige Gesellschaft. *Moderne Bau- und Wohnprobleme von der Familie her gesehen*. Zürich: Zentralsekretariat der Schweizerischen Gemeinnützigen Gesellschaft, 1957.

Henriette Lutz studied architecture at the Technical University of Munich and completed her MAS in History and Theory of Architecture at ETH Zurich. As a scientific collaborator at Bern University of Applied Sciences, she was a member of the board of the Institute for Urbanism, Architecture and Construction. She is active in research and teaching, currently as a lecturer at the Technical University of Munich, as well as a independent architect in Zurich. She is also on the board of *créatrices* and co-founder of Research Walkers. In addition, she is co-editor of the book *Frauen leben im Neubühl – Vom Wohnen in einer Ikone* (jovis, 2025).

Paige Michutka

Property and Power: A Feminist Strategy for Transforming Housing Narratives in the United States

This project examines the growing affordable housing crisis in the United States as systematic failure rooted in the century-long attachment to the single-family house as a symbol of success. For over a century, this assumption has shaped the built environment, influenced policy, zoning, and economic systems, and reinforced societal ideals around ownership, stability, and worth. By transforming property into a commodity and marker of status, it has concentrated wealth and power, producing a housing system that generates social and economic exclusion, displacement, and inequality.

Addressing this crisis requires confronting and unlearning entrenched beliefs about property, power, and housing as a symbol of status. Without this ideological shift, alternative housing typologies remain undesired and ineffective solutions to the housing crises. Guided by an intersectional feminist perspective, this project proposes an approach that resists capitalist logics, centering instead on empowerment, solidarity, and justice. It asks: How can a feminist critique of the housing crisis in the United States reveal inequalities embedded in housing ideologies and enable collective exploration of alternative housing narratives?

This project develops a participatory architectural strategy that materializes housing ideologies into a tangible, speculative process. Acting as both a research tool and interactive intervention, participants embody and navigate these forces, critically assess power dynamics, explore alternative possibilities, and collectively recognize the need for new housing narratives. Grounded in a feminist lens and cultural values of independence and agency, in this project the architect's power is exercised as a creator and facilitator of tools and processes, rather than a prescriber of solutions, guiding communities to critically examine and transform their own housing perspectives.

By reframing property and power through feminist critique, architecture becomes a tool for activism, collective reflection, and social transformation. It materializes housing ideologies in ways that are relational,

negotiable, and spatially legible. At this critical moment of political instability and systemic inequality, housing precarity is not only a crisis of supply but a call for social transformation, offering communities the opportunity to question entrenched housing ideologies, forge solidarity, and act collectively to create empowered, equitable, and sustainable housing futures.

Paige Michutka is an American architectural designer based in Vienna, Austria. She holds a BSc. in Architecture from the University of Cincinnati and has worked in offices across the U.S., Germany, and Austria. She is passionate about sustainable, equitable, and innovative design processes that reimagine architecture's role in shaping social, economic, and environmental justice. She is currently completing her Master's in Architecture (BASEhabitat) at the University of Art and Design Linz.

Jakob Pesendorfer

Tracing Steelscapes:

Spatialising Spatial-Functional Relationships of the Steel Industry in the Metropolitan Region of Linz

This paper builds on the authors definition of *Steelscapes* to examine, through the case of the Metropolitan Region of Linz, the spatial-functional relationships between territories, spaces, and socio-economic dimensions shaped by the steel industry. By locating and mapping Steelscapes through the conceptual lens of *Steelscape Metabolism*, it challenges conventional spatial planning and design paradigms, which are grounded in linear economic growth models. This new systemic definition integrates local spatial configurations and territorial conditions with insights from literature on Urban Metabolism and contemporary theoretical approaches on Circular Societies. In addressing today's challenges, particularly uncertainties triggered by extreme climate events, economic disruptions, and geopolitical instability, this paper aims to uncover alternative pathways for spatial planning and design, fostering more adaptive and sustainable approaches.

Jakob Pesendorfer is a researcher and urban designer based in Vienna. He graduated cum laude with a Master's in Architecture, Urbanism, and Building Sciences from TU Delft. Currently, he is working at the Research Unit of Local Planning within the Institute of Spatial Planning at TU Wien. His research interest lies at the intersection of Urban Design and Spatial Planning, with a focus on systemic thinking and spatial practices that foster Circular Societies and Regenerative Territories, exploring approaches beyond conventional planning systems.

Abhinav Thakar

Re:Learning Earthen Architecture: Earthen architecture pedagogy and research between imaginaries of poverty, othering, sufficiency and sustainability

Amid growing efforts to transition the building sector towards climate-friendly practices, the architectural discourse in Germany is currently witnessing a renewed interest in earthen architecture. This materialises in numerous experiments investigating the potentials of how to re-establish one of the oldest and least environmentally harmful building materials in contemporary construction on a broader, planetary scale – whether through technical innovation, the reframing of norms and standards, or, by creating alternative imaginaries of urban futures.

In this contribution, we argue that beyond creative material experimentation, a critical examination is needed of how earthen architecture has been situated within architectural knowledge systems and pedagogies from the 20th century to the present. Such an investigation is essential to opening up new possibilities for building in ways that are both ecologically and socially just.

As a point of departure, we trace the stories and imaginaries around several earthen architecture prototypes and demonstration projects at German-language architecture research and education institutions in highly divergent socio-political situations of the 20th and 21st centuries – situated in the context of colonialist appropriation and cultural othering, resource shortages and housing emergencies, so-called development cooperation, or, architectural agendas of ecological sustainability and sufficiency.

Thus, we aim to foster a process of un-learning dominant assumptions about the material's place in architectural history and construction practice, by scrutinizing processes of material knowledge production and brokerage from a critical material culture and decolonial perspective. In doing so we move towards spaces of possibility for pluralising histories and potentials of earthen architecture around the world.

Abhinav Thakar is a researcher in urban and architectural studies and a cultural practitioner. His work focuses on investigating and enabling the negotiation of identity in transnational contexts, particularly in relation to the built environment, architecture, materials (especially earth), and art. His doctoral research, *Sociotechnical Imaginaries of Earthen Architecture*, builds on his M.A. thesis in Historical Urban Studies at the Centre for Metropolitan Studies, TU Berlin, titled *On the Repression of Earthen Architecture in Western Europe from the 18th Century Until Today* (2023).

Zukunft Bestand is a holistic concept for the ecosocial transformation – that is the ecological and socially inclusive renovation – of existing housing complexes. The project was published by Ruby Press in 2024 with the support of the Austrian Science Fund FWF and the Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport. Zukunft Bestand is further developed as an FFG project in 2025-26 in a comprehensive proof-of- concept as the next step toward prototypical implementation.

The project is based on 20 specific measures that – like a toolbox – can be applied independently of one another but together implement a comprehensive and long-term improvement of buildings, green spaces, and mobility – effectively a transformation of entire neighborhoods. The objective is to preserve and inclusively improve existing buildings and outdoor spaces, carefully integrate new elements and save resources in the process.

The book presents the ecosocial transformation based on two case studies in Vienna and Linz. These two housing complexes are examples of typical construction methods of the 20th century - brick construction of the 1920s to 1950s and prefabricated reinforced concrete construction of the 1960s and 1970s. The ecosocial transformation – presented at the scales of territory, settlement, building and detail – is therefore applicable to many housing complexes in Austria and beyond.

PROJEKT Founded in 2023 by Barbara Weber and Laurenz Berger, the office PROJEKT pursues a clear agenda: to contain the climate crisis, strengthen climate resilience, and foster social inclusion – through specific projects from territory to detail.

Barbara Weber is an architect and civil engineer, graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and teaches at TU Vienna. Laurenz Berger is an architect and graduated from the Architectural Association in London. They worked in Vienna, Berlin, Copenhagen, and Tokyo. www.projekt.studio

MODERATORS

Margaret Haderer (Sociology, TU Wien) has been researching urban transformations for years. In her book *Rebuilding Cities and Citizens* (2023), she examines the politics of urban transformation in the context of Red Vienna and Cold War Berlin. Her recent work focuses on urban sustainability transformations. Her research has appeared in numerous journals. She serves on the editorial board of the leading sustainability journal *Sustainability: Science, Practice & Policy* and as secretary of the ISA's RC 43 Housing and Built Environment.

Patricia Grzonka, born in St. Gallen (Switzerland), is an art and architecture historian living in Vienna. She studied art history in Zurich and Rome and received her doctorate from the Vienna University of Technology on the development of the concept of autonomy in architectural theory. Lecturer at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. Freelance author and art critic for *Monopol*, *Spike*, *WoZ*, and *springerin*. 2015 Art Critics Award from the Kunsthalle Wien. Member of AICA Austria. patricia-grzonka.net

Julia Nuler is an architect whose practice, research, and teaching are shaped by feminist approaches. She studied architecture at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna and Copenhagen. Based at TU Wien, where she was a senior lecturer in the Research Department for Spatial Design for several years, she is currently completing her dissertation on the Polish architect Halina Skibniewska. As a member of the queer-feminist collective Claiming*Spaces, she co-organised the international conference Whose History? (AzW 2022). The forthcoming publication Unvoiced Heritage – Queer-Feminist Care for Tabooed Spaces, funded by the Institute of Architecture and Spatial Planning at TU Vienna (Excite 2024), brings together researchers from art history, heritage conservation, and spatial design.

Madlyn Miessgang studied architecture at TU Wien and works in the fields of architecture, urban planning, and science communication. Her focus is on visual communication of scientific content and scenarios, as well as planning approaches. Since 2019, she has been the coordinator of the future.lab at the Faculty of Architecture and Planning at TU Wien, is active in interdisciplinary teaching—such as field trips—and is responsible for knowledge transfer formats, including the future.lab Magazin and the ZUKUNFT STADT podcast. In the academic year 2024/25, she also coordinated and supervised the faculty's annual theme of transformation of existing buildings.

Ines Nizic is a lecturer and practicing architect in Vienna. She completed her architecture studies at the Faculty of Architecture at the Technical University of Zagreb. Since 1998, she has been teaching and conducting research at the Vienna University of Technology at the Institute of Architecture and Design, Research Area Building Construction and Design, where she received her doctorate in 2009 with a thesis on The Influence of Disneyfication on Contemporary Architecture. She curated the contributions for Croatia for the traveling exhibition Wonderland and represented Austria at the Young European Architects conferences. From 2007 to 2016, she was a member of the European Scientific Committee. In teaching and research, her focus is on structural aspects of design strategies, in particular reuse strategies.

Heike Oevermann is professor of Monument Preservation and Building within Existing Structures at TU Wien. Her career has been marked by numerous teaching and research positions in Europe, including Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Università Roma Tre, and a visiting lectureship at the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. With a background in architecture and heritage studies, her research focuses on transformation, particularly of industrial and urban heritage and monuments, as well as residential developments.

Nicole Sabella (she|her; they|them) is an artist, cultural theorist and currently professor for Gender & Space at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. She holds a master's degree in Art History, Czech Studies and East Central European History from the University of Regensburg and a master's degree in Fine Arts from the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna. She co-curated the exhibition Liberated Space: care – architecture – feminism at Bratislava City Gallery in 2023/24. The associated publication is scheduled for release in 2026.

Lisa Schmidt-Colinet is an architect and an educator. Her work includes architecture, as well as artistic research, exhibition projects and films. She is co-founder of schmidt-colinet.schmoeger and teaches at the IKA, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna, within the platforms Geography | Cities | Landscapes and History | Theory | Criticism. In collaboration with Alexander Schmoeger and Florian Zeyfang she is researching on Cuban architecture through exhibitions, publications, installations. This work has been widely exhibited in Berlin, Gdansk, Lisbon, Los Angeles, Havana, and Rio de Janeiro. She is co-editor of the book Pabellón Cuba and the films Microbrigades, Variations of a Story, and Institute Above-Ground, both of which were shown at the Berlinale Forum Expanded. She is co-initiator and planner of Living for Future, a self-organised cooperative housing project, currently under construction.

Angelika Schnell is professor for architectural theory, architectural history and design at the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna (Institute for Art and Architecture). Study of theater science and architecture at the University Munich, Technical University Berlin und Technical University Delft. Awarded PhD on Aldo Rossi's theoretical work at the Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart. From 1993 until 2001 editor of the magazine for architectural theory ARCH+ in Berlin, since 1999 teaching positions at the TU Berlin, Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart, University Groningen and University Innsbruck. Co-editor of the book series Bauwelt Fundamente.

Astrid Staufer is an architect and co-principal of the architectural practice Staufer&Hasler Architekten, based in Frauenfeld, Switzerland, which she founded in 1994 together with Thomas Hasler. From 1997 to 2022 she taught at the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW), where she became head of the Institute of Constructive Design in 2015 and co-head in 2018. Since 2011 she has held the position of Professor of Building Construction and Design at TU Wien. Her work has been recognised with several awards, including the Prix Meret Oppenheim in 2015. In addition to her architectural practice and teaching, she is active in research, publishing and public discourse on building culture.

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