



Latsis Symposium 2023

Affirming Actions

Models of architectural agency from
the work of women-led practices

EPFL

FAR

Laboratory of
Construction
and Architecture

@affirmingactions

24.03.2023 : 17h30-20h00

25.03.2023 : 08h30-18h00

26.03.2023 : 08h30-18h00





Latsis Symposium 2023

Affirming Actions

Models of architectural agency from
The work of women-led practices

Can architecture convey operative positions about what is relevant and urgent in the world today? Can we look at the results of design activity as affirmations of specific stances that use constructions as platforms for systems of values and organisational ideas with collective import?

At a time of environmental, technological and economic upheavals, questions such as these should have the power to coalesce newfound interest in architects' practices and the forms they may take vis-à-vis the challenges we face. Are there models of practice that could be seen more contemporary than others in light of their capacity to interpret perils and possibilities of our times? If so, are these models a continuation of established trajectories of architectural professionalism or do they imply a break with the past and the emergence of new actors?

To elucidate these issues, and following on from a first online edition in 2021, the 2023 Latsis Symposium *Affirming Actions* will highlight and reflect upon goals, strategies and impact of fifteen professional practices prevalently established and led by women, which, through the work carried out, have shown an ability to articulate and engage with polity concerns.

Indeed, many of their projects affirm the power of architectural agency even in conditions of limited means. At the same time, the industriousness underlying the work suggests both the need and the relevance of carrying out disciplined reflection (when not outright research) in areas that are strategic, yet traditionally tangential, to the task of the architect as conventionally understood.

By the nature of the concerns outlined, the symposium engages with diverse regions of the world and modes of practice whilst emphasising intellectual energy, entrepreneurial spirit and eventual achievements of the architects invited. Participants come from different continents and countries, represent different ethnicities, and comprise practitioners of different generations, at diverse stages of their careers, and with varying academic experiences.

They include, amongst others: Anna Chavepayre, winner of the 2018 Swedish Kasper Salin Prize; Anupama Kundoo, the 2021 winner of UIA's August Perret Prize for Technology in Architecture; Rozana Montiel, recipient of the 2022 ARVHA International Prize for Women Architects; Toshiko Mori, former Chair of the Architecture Department at the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University and 2023 Editor of *Domus* magazine; Carole Ross Barney, the 2023 recipient of the Gold Medal of the American Institute of Architects; Marina Tabassum, John Soane Medal recipient in 2021 and Aga Khan Awardee in 2016; Elisa Valero, winner of the 2018 Swiss Architectural Award; and Xu Tiantian, winner of the 2022 Swiss Architectural Award.

ORGANISATION

Affirming Actions will be held in the Forum of the Rolex Learning Centre over three days. The event will start on the night of March 24, at 17h30, with an introduction by the symposium organiser, Paolo Tombesi, and an address by Toshiko Mori. On March 25, there will be four thematic conversations, each involving two architects, the facilitator, and the public. Each conversation is structured around a

general topic, chosen as a strategic opportunity for the invited guests to articulate some of the aspects informing their architectural positions – initially by making a TED-like presentation of their work, and then by engaging in a panel debate and Q+A discussion with the public. The same format will continue on March 26, with another three conversations. Two open group sessions on the evolution of practice and the role of universities in facilitating the experiences relayed will conclude the symposium.

SPEAKERS

Anna Chavepayre, Collectif Encore, Auterive; **Laurane Coornaert**, Degré 47, Bruxelles; **Sophie Delhay**, Sophie Delhay Architecte, Paris; **Alessia Griginis**, Vibes, Turin; **Anupama Kundoo**, Anupama Kundoo Architects, Berlin; **Rozana Montiel**, Rozana Montiel Estudio de Arquitectura, Mexico City; **Toshiko Mori**, Toshiko Mori Architect, New York; **Salima Naji**, Agence Salima Naji Architecte, Tiznit; **Hannah Robertson**, The University of Melbourne; **Claudia Rodriguez**, Taller Nuevos Territorios, Mexico City; **Carol Ross Barney**, Ross Barney Architects, Chicago; **Marina Tabassum**, Marina Tabassum Architects, Dhaka; **Kerstin Thompson**, Kerstin Thompson Architects, Melbourne; **Elisa Valero**, Elisa Valero Arquitectura, Granada; **Xu Tian Tian**, DnA, Beijing.

PROGRAM

March 24

17h30 – 18h00	<i>On the 2023 Latsis Symposium</i> – Paolo Tombesi
18h00 – 18h45	<i>On agency</i> – Toshiko Mori
18h45 – 19h15	Q&A session
19h15 – 20h00	Drinks

March 25

08h30 – 09h00	Welcome coffee
09h00 – 10h45	<i>On ecology</i> – Claudia Rodriguez & Anna Chavepayre
10h45 – 11h15	Coffee break
11h15 – 13h00	<i>On integration</i> – Xu Tiantian & Salima Naji
13h00 – 14h00	Lunch break
14h00 – 15h45	<i>On geography</i> – Hannah Robertson & Marina Tabassum
15h45 – 16h15	Coffee break
16h15 – 18h00	<i>On scale</i> – Laurane Coornaert & Carole Ross Barney

March 26

08h30 – 09h00	Welcome coffee
09h00 – 10h45	<i>On aesthetics</i> – Elisa Valero & Sophie Delhay
10h45 – 11h15	Coffee break
11h15 – 13h00	<i>On comfort</i> – Kerstin Thompson & Alessia Griginis
13h00 – 13h45	Lunch break
13h45 – 15h30	<i>On materials</i> – Rozana Montiel & Anupama Kundoo
15h30 – 16h00	Coffee break
16h00 – 16h45	<i>On practice</i> – Paolo Tombesi & participants
17h00 – 18h00	<i>On culture</i> – Open roundtable: The role of universities

For organisational reasons, access to the Rolex Forum requires online registration, available at the following link: <https://memento.epfl.ch/event/affirming-actions-2023-latsis-symposium/>

The event will also be live streamed. Details will be uploaded on the same webpage.

The 2023 Latsis Symposium has been organised by the Laboratory of Construction and Architecture FAR, directed by Paolo Tombesi (<https://www.epfl.ch/labs/far/>).

For any information, contact Beatriz Descloux (beatriz.descloux@epfl.ch, +41 21 693 65 20).



Latsis Symposium 2023

Actions Affirmatives

Modèles de démarche architecturale suggérés par le travail des agences conduits par des femmes

Au carrefour de préoccupations politiques communes et de volontés individuelles, la pratique architecturale est porteuse tant de valeurs culturelles que d'hypothèses organisatrices pour l'affirmation concrète de ces positions. À l'heure de grands bouleversements environnementaux, sociétaux et économiques, il devient nécessaire d'interroger non pas simplement les produits formels de l'architecture, mais bien la pratique architecturale en tant que telle.

Comment les architectes peuvent-ils adapter leurs manières de travailler pour répondre aux défis contemporains ? Peut-on identifier les mécanismes concrets du travail architectural, la présence et le développement d'une méthode, les éléments nécessaires à sa maturation et à son utilisation ?

Afin d'élucider ces questions, et après une première édition en ligne en 2021, le 2023 Latsis Symposium *Actions Affirmatives* mettra en lumière et questionnera les objectifs, les stratégies et l'impact de pratiques professionnelles innovantes majoritairement établies et dirigées par des femmes, qui, à travers leurs travaux, ont montré une capacité à articuler et à se confronter à des préoccupations politiques.

En effet, leurs réalisations démontrent la capacité à mettre au point des stratégies opérationnelles, même dans des conditions de moyens limités. Néanmoins, leurs qualités réaffirment la capacité des bureaux d'architecture à réagir face à une culture du bâtir imposée par le lieu dans lequel ils prennent place. La mise en relation de leurs expériences diverses est l'occasion de mener une réflexion approfondie sur le rôle et la tâche de l'architecte, d'explorer la notion de "pratique", entendue non seulement comme une activité professionnelle normative mais surtout comme une manière d'organiser son travail en fonction de ses objectifs.

Par la nature des préoccupations exposées, le symposium couvrira diverses régions du monde et divers modes de pratique, tout en mettant l'accent sur l'énergie intellectuelle, l'esprit d'entreprise et les réalisations des architectes invités. Les participantes viennent de différents pays et continents, représentent différentes ethnies et incluent des professionnelles de différentes générations, à divers stades de leur carrière et avec des expériences universitaires variées.

Elles comprennent, parmi d'autres : Anna Chavepayre, lauréate du prix suédois Kasper Salin 2018 ; Anupama Kundoo, lauréate 2021 du prix August Perret de l'UIA pour la technologie en architecture ; Rozana Montiel, lauréate 2022 du prix international ARVHA pour les femmes architectes ; Toshiko Mori, ancienne directrice du département d'architecture de la Graduate School of Design de l'université Harvard et directrice de la revue *Domus* pour 2023 ; Carole Ross Barney, lauréate de la médaille d'or de l'American Institute of Architects en 2023 ; Marina Tabassum, lauréate de la médaille John Soane en 2021 et lauréate du prix Aga Khan en 2016 ; Elisa Valero, lauréate du prix suisse d'architecture 2018 ; et Xu Tiantian, lauréat du prix suisse d'architecture 2022.



ORGANISATION

Actions Affirmatives se tiendra dans le Forum du Rolex Learning Centre pendant trois jours. L'événement débutera le soir du 24 mars, à 17h30, par une introduction de l'organisateur du symposium, Paolo Tombesi, et une allocution de Toshiko Mori. Le 25 mars, il y aura quatre conversations thématiques, chacune impliquant deux architectes, l'animateur et le public. Chaque conversation est structurée autour d'un sujet général, choisi comme une opportunité stratégique pour les invités d'articuler certains des aspects qui informent leurs positions architecturales - d'abord en faisant une présentation de type TED de leur travail, puis en s'engageant dans un débat et une discussion Q+R avec le public. Le même format se poursuivra le 26 mars, avec trois autres conversations. Deux sessions collectives ouvertes – sur le rôle des universités dans la facilitation des expériences relayées et les leçons tirées des travaux – compléteront et concluront le symposium.

INTERVENANTES

Anna Chavepayre, Collectif Encore, Auterive; **Laurane Coornaert**, Degré 47, Bruxelles; **Sophie Delhay**, Sophie Delhay Architecte, Paris; **Alessia Griginis**, Vibes, Turin; **Anupama Kundoo**, Anupama Kundoo Architects, Berlin; **Rozana Montiel**, Rozana Montiel Estudio de Arquitectura, Mexico City; **Toshiko Mori**, Toshiko Mori Architect, New York; **Salima Naji**, Agence Salima Naji Architecte, Tiznit; **Hannah Robertson**, The University of Melbourne; **Claudia Rodriguez**, Taller Nuevos Territorios, Mexico City; **Carol Ross Barney**, Ross Barney Architects, Chicago; **Marina Tabassum**, Marina Tabassum Architects, Dhaka; **Kerstin Thompson**, Kerstin Thompson Architects, Melbourne; **Elisa Valero**, Elisa Valero Arquitectura, Grenade; **Xu Tian Tian**, DnA, Pékin.

PROGRAMME

March 24

17h30 – 18h00	<i>Sur le Symposium Latsis 2023</i> – Paolo Tombesi
18h00 – 18h45	<i>Sur l'action</i> – Toshiko Mori
18h45 – 19h15	Session de questions et réponses
19h15 – 20h00	Apéro

March 25

08h30 – 09h00	Café de bienvenue
09h00 – 10h45	<i>Sur l'écologie</i> – Claudia Rodriguez & Anna Chavepayre
10h45 – 11h15	Pause café
11h15 – 13h00	<i>Sur l'intégration</i> – Xu Tiantian & Salima Naji
13h00 – 14h00	Pause déjeuner
14h00 – 15h45	<i>Sur la géographie</i> – Hannah Robertson & Marina Tabassum
15h45 – 16h15	Pause café
16h15 – 18h00	<i>Sur l'échelle</i> – Laurane Coornaert & Carole Ross Barney

March 26

08h30 – 09h00	Café de bienvenue
09h00 – 10h45	<i>Sur l'esthétique</i> – Elisa Valero & Sophie Delhay
10h45 – 11h15	Pause café
11h15 – 13h00	<i>Sur le confort</i> – Kerstin Thompson & Alessia Griginis
13h00 – 13h45	Pause déjeuner
13h45 – 15h30	<i>Sur les matériaux</i> – Rozana Montiel & Anupama Kundoo
15h30 – 16h00	Pause café
16h00 – 16h45	<i>Sur la pratique</i> – Paolo Tombesi & intervenantes
17h00 – 18h00	<i>Sur la culture</i> - Table ronde ouverte : Le rôle des universités



Pour des raisons d'organisation, l'accès au Forum du Rolex Learning Center nécessite une inscription en ligne, disponible sur la page suivante :

<https://memento.epfl.ch/event/affirming-actions-2023-latsis-symposium/>

L'évènement sera également diffusé en ligne. Les détails seront communiqué sur la même page.

Le Latsis Symposium 2023 est organisé par le Laboratory of Construction and Architecture FAR, dirigé par Paolo Tombesi (<https://www.epfl.ch/labs/far/>).

Pour toute information, contactez Beatriz Descloux (beatriz.descloux@epfl.ch, +41 21 693 65 20).

24 - 26 March 2023
EPFL Rolex Learning Center

FONDATION LATSIS
Internationale



Latsis Symposium 2023

Affirming Actions

Models of architectural agency from
the work of women-led practices

With the participation of :

Anna Chavepayre | Laurane Coornaert | Sophie Delhay | Alessia Griginis | Anupama Kundoo
Rozana Montiel | Toshiko Mori | Salima Naji | Hannah Robertson | Claudia Rodríguez
Carol Ross Barney | Marina Tabassum | Kerstin Thompson | Elisa Valero | Xu Tiantian

Organiser : Paolo Tombesi

@affirmingactions

24.03.2023 : 17h30-20h00

25.03.2023 : 08h30-18h00

26.03.2023 : 08h30-18h00

Registration



FAR

Laboratory of
Construction
and Architecture

EPFL



Affirming Actions

OPENING NIGHT

March 24, 17h30 – 20h00

Toshiko Mori



Toshiko Mori is the founder and principal of Toshiko Mori Architect, and founder of VisionArc, a think-tank promoting global dialogue for a sustainable future. She is the Robert P. Hubbard Professor in the Practice of Architecture at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design and was the Chair of the Department of Architecture from 2002 to 2008. Mori has been a member of both the American Academy of Arts and Sciences since 2016 and the American Academy of Arts and Letters since 2020. She has been honored with numerous awards, including the Philip Hanson Hiss Award in 2023, the Isamu Noguchi Award in 2021, the Louis Auchincloss Prize in 2020, the AIA/ASCA Topaz Medallion for Excellence in Architectural Education in 2019, the OMI Arts Leadership Award in 2019, Architectural Record's Women in Design Leader Award in 2019, and the

Tau Sigma Delta National Honor Society Gold Medal in 2016. Her two projects in Senegal, Thread Artists' Residency and Cultural Center and Fass School and Teachers' Residences, have both won the AIA Architecture Award, while her recent work on the Brooklyn Public Library Central branch won the 2022 MASTerworks award for best restoration. Architectural Digest has included Toshiko Mori Architect in their annual AD100 list since 2014. In 2023, Toshiko is working with Steven Holl as guest editor for Domus magazine, and recently curated Candida Höfer's exhibition titled 'Heaven on Earth', on view at the Sean Kelly Gallery in New York City.

Paolo Tombesi



Paolo Tombesi is Professor of Construction and Architecture at ENAC, and the director of the laboratory FAR. Trained as an architect in Italy, he received his PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles in 1997. That same year he joined the University of Melbourne, where he was awarded the Chair of Construction, which he held between 2009 and 2016. Tombesi has long cultivated a specific interest in the relationship between the intellectual dimension of building and the social and technical aspects of its realisation. He is an international authority on the organisation of architectural practices and the analysis of the construction procurement process. His analyses employ industrial economics, labour theory and regional development models to examine the relationship between design, technological innovation, knowledge production

and construction markets. In 2021, he organised the first edition of Affirming Actions, as part of the celebrations for the 10th anniversary of the opening of the Rolex Center.

Affirming Actions

ON ECOLOGY

March 25, 09h00 – 10h45

Claudia Rodriguez



Claudia Rodriguez is a Mexican practitioner and a member of the Taller Nuevos Territorios who combines traditional architectural education with land management training. She practices as an individual, remains involved in every stage of the project, and collaborates with engineers, biologists and agronomists. Her interventions in architecture focus on the establishment of collaborative processes to develop projects that relate to landscape at different scales, from territorial planning to domestic structures. The work responds to the ultimate aim of minimising buildings' impact on the environment by integrating architecture with its surroundings and by enhancing the natural wealth of rural communities. Rather than toiling against natural elements, Rodriguez seeks to operate around or alongside them, a tactical resolve that has seen

her work span from the preservation of existing vegetation to the re-imagination of entire hydrological systems. This latter end of the spectrum has led to innovative methods to analyse, understand and act on the territory, for example through the spearheading of masterplans for the organization of hiking trails and natural reserves, set on preserving their indigenous communities' traditional methods of governance and land management practices. Rodriguez's peculiar approach to the profession is clear: it requires a broad comprehension of its physical territory, and uses architectural thinking as a driving force behind nature's regeneration and local expression.

Anna Chavepayre



Anna Chavepayre is the French-Swedish architect and co-founder of Collectif Encore, an architecture and landscape office based in Auterive, in France's Nouvelle Aquitaine, which seeks to assert the availability of space as a priority condition for freedom of use and diversity, as well as evolution and innovation, "because it is there that air, light and encounters are found". Chavepayre's projects do not consider boundaries between architecture and landscape. Rather, they take into account all possible actors (including earthworms), the richness and formal variety they imply, and the value of everything that existed before them. In an age where only the simplified and binary becomes visible, Collectif Encore values complexity, interactions and social links, transformations and modularity. The office's explicit

ambition is "to make life more beautiful than architecture, to make projects richer in reality than in image, more interesting to live in tomorrow, and even more so in 10 years". In order to achieve this, Collectif Encore conceives of itself as a partner and interlocutor of the daily life of the communities it serves – attentive, committed and reactive advisors, designers and trainers. A fervent advocate of a reinvented rurality, Chavepayre was awarded the 2018 Kasper Salin Prize, Sweden's most prestigious architectural award from the Swedish Order of Architects.

Affirming Actions

ON INTEGRATION

March 25, 11h15 – 13h00

Xu Tiantian



After graduating from the Master program in Urban Design at Harvard University, Xu Tiantian founded the studio DnA (Design and Architecture) in Beijing in 2004. Originally intended to be an experimental practice addressing the country's 'contemporary living environment, both physical and social', DnA has eventually gained a strong reputation for its architectural engagement with China's rural revitalisation strategy. Within a relatively short period of time, DnA has completed a series of small but significant interventions in villages in the Zhejiang province. Whilst promoting the unique cultural and industrial heritage of the region, DnA's projects have contributed not only to the policies for slowing down rural exodus but also to the attraction of city dwellers and investments to rejuvenate the areas. Xu's architecture reflects systematic and sustainable

strategies in the careful selection of programmes to work on, deployment of local materials, and construction processes that put place and local people at the centre of the work. Through these minimal design interventions, DnA has been testing methods to address long-term issues in the social, cultural and economic balancing of territories seeking to rebuild 'rural self-confidence'. In 2019 she was awarded the Moira Gemmill Prize for Emerging Architect; in 2022 she was appointed Honorary Fellow of American Institute of Architects; and in 2022 she won the Swiss Architectural Award. Xu Tiantian currently holds a visiting professorship at Yale.

Salima Naji



The author of the 2019 book, "Architectures of the Common Good. For an ethic of preservation", Salima Naji is a French-Moroccan architect/anthropologist with a keen interest in the preservation and rehabilitation of monumental historic building infrastructure in South Morocco, where she practices. The engagement with heritage work, traditional construction techniques and use of local materials has led Naji to develop a very distinct position about sustainable contemporary building in rural areas, increasingly subject to colonisation by generic urban materials and technologies. In traditional bio-sourced architecture, Naji sees the ability to constitute a viable built environment in spite of extreme climatic conditions and in association with landscape. By pairing environmental performance with cultural identity, the adaptation of ancestral techniques to

current programmes and processes can give heritage a present-day anthropological dimension, thus guaranteeing not only better preservation of traditional vernacular in the long term but also its reflective reintegration into contemporary practice. By going beyond the aesthetics of heritage and probing its capital of resilience, Naji's work methods naturally privilege integrative and participative projects, where people constitute part of the designer's equation. Direct building action is complemented by engagement in educating the public, raising awareness, and providing guidance to relevant administrations to change building laws. This last activity, in particular, has enabled the reintroduction of vernacular techniques in the normative framework of the industry, and with it the recreation of organic channels for their use.

Affirming Actions

ON GEOGRAPHY

March 25, 14h00 – 15h45

Hannah Robertson



Hannah Robertson is an Australian architectural designer and educator whose multiple research interests include humanitarian construction, remote area building, sustainable development and participatory design, immersive and trans-disciplinary teaching. Her master's thesis 'Bush Owner Builder' involved collaborative self-building on homelands surrounding Hope Vale, Cape York, and was awarded the Royal Institute of British Architect's President's Dissertation Medal (2011). Her subsequent PhD was based in remote Northeast Arnhem Land, and involved the development of a theoretical framework and the design of technical systems using appropriate technologies for building in the region. Her theses have seen her embark on an unusual architectural career that combines a socially driven and contextually responsive design-and-construction

approach with policy making to work in and with remote communities. Widely published in the field, Robertson has been able to identify the shortcomings of urban building policy principles when applied to remote areas. By contrast, her work seeks to demonstrate how an endogenous territorial and regional resource and typology-based approach to building can contribute to the development of the local industry and the fulfilment of the contextual needs of the local communities. An advocate of collaborative design processes when partnering with communities to tackle indigenous settlement issues, Robertson supports the transfer of design and construction process ownership to buildings' end-users as a form of social empowerment. Robertson currently lectures in construction at the University of Melbourne. In 2022, her work with the Olkola Community in Cape York, Northern Australia, was recognised by the Australian Research Council through the award of the prestigious Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA).

Marina Tabassum



Bangladeshi architect and educator Marina Tabassum founded Dhaka-based Marina Tabassum Architects in 2005, after ten years as a partner and cofounder of URBANA in Dhaka. In her work, spanning from institutional to multi-residential, to commercial, Tabassum seeks to establish a language of architecture that is contemporary yet reflectively rooted to place. As such, materials selection and environmental strategies play a major role in the definition of the building fabric, always against an ecological rubric containing climate, context, culture, history. The wide portfolio of work notwithstanding, Tabassum's practice remains consciously contained in size, undertaking a limited number of projects per year. The architect is engaged in fair-trading activities empowering Bangladeshi women through the export of handcrafted objects, and has also

initiated low-cost housing projects in villages surrounding eco-resort initiatives currently under construction in Southern Bangladesh. Tabassum is the Academic Director of the Bengal Institute for Architecture, Landscapes and Settlements, an intellectual platform for those involved in imagining and shaping environmental futures in the region. In 2016, Tabassum was awarded the Aga Khan Award for Architecture for her Bait Ur Rouf Mosque in Dhaka. In 2021, she received the Soane Medal in London, the Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Gold Medal of the French Academy of Architecture. She currently holds the Gehry Chair at the University of Toronto and has a solo exhibition at the Architecture Museum in Munich.

Affirming Actions

ON SCALE

March 25, 16h15 – 18h00

Laurane Coornaert



Laurane Coornaert is a Belgian entrepreneur with double degrees in architecture and environmental management at the Université Libre de Bruxelles in the mid-2010s. After two years spent in architectural offices, in Belgium and abroad, Coornaert took the decision to re-direct her career. By 2020, with the help of the “Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs” program of the Brussels Agency for Business Support, and a Belgian Vocatio fellowship – for passionate people under 30 years of age, “with a real vocation or life project, but lack of financial resources or adequate supervision” – Coornaert travelled to Portugal to train, and eventually established Degré 47, an architectural firm focusing on research, training and transmission of sustainable construction techniques. This includes highlighting traditional construction methods and studying alternative solutions

while promoting knowledge and the reuse of materials. A passion for sharing knowledge and experiences, for mixing ideas and for promoting intercultural exchanges, has resulted in the series of activities that today characterise Degré 47’s professional profile: regularly advising self-builders in their projects; organising and leading practical workshops across Europe for young architecture graduates from all over the world; or participating in the training of more experienced architects on specific and practical subjects related to the knowledge of materials. By design, Degré 47 favours construction short circuits: it helps planning building sites; finds the necessary manpower; and connects tradesmen that use environmentally friendly methods.

Carol Ross Barney



Carol Ross Barney is the principal of Ross Barney Architects, a Chicago-based firm with an international reputation for the design of institutional and public buildings and a declared focus on the collective realm. R-barc was founded in 1981, after Carol’s stint in the Peace Corps in Costa Rica and time at Chicago’s oldest architectural firm Holabird & Root. To date, Barney’s work has been celebrated with more than 200 national and international awards, including two AIA COTE Top Ten Awards, the 2005 AIA Award for Excellence in Public Architecture, and AIA Illinois Firm Award and Gold Medal. In 1997, Barney was appointed lead designer for the Oklahoma City Federal Building to replace the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building destroyed in the 1995 terrorist bombing. The project marked the first time a woman architect has been selected to lead a

federal commission in the US. Barney has also championed the movement to inject new life into the Chicago River. The resulting Chicago Riverwalk, a 1.25-mile stretch of civic space from Lake Michigan to several of the river’s confluences, is the new living room for the denizens of the city, and has become a model for cities rethinking their water resources. Gathering support for it before being awarded the design contract was a major focus of the firm for 20 years. In 2023, Barney received the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal—the first woman to receive it while still alive and without sharing it with a partner.

Affirming Actions

ON AESTHETICS

March 26, 09h00 – 10h45

Elisa Valero



Elisa Valero is a Spanish architect and the youngest architecture chair appointee in her country. An innovator in the way she uses and reinvents common construction techniques and materials, Valero engages with every aspect of the architectural process, from idea to manufacturing, to site assembly. Her work is ultimately defined by material simplicity and economy of means, within a design paradigm centered around the attainment of internal spatial quality. Experiences on the rehabilitation of Felix Candela's structures in Mexico as a young architect may have left an imprinting on Valero's formation in this sense. Light and volume composition are powerful allies in this architect's quest, as demonstrated by many of her built projects. Divided between typological concerns, for instance children hospitals, and strategic technological advances,

such as fiber-reinforced concrete, Valero is a believer in radical approaches to sustainability, which include the need to give new form to new materials as a way of maximizing the efficiency of building assemblies. Hand-drawn sketches remain the communication medium of choice though, with their production continuing until the end of construction. As an educator, she places great emphasis on the cultural role of architectural schools. She teaches at the University of Granada; she is the author of several books; and was the winner of the Swiss Architectural Award in 2018.

Sophie Delhay



Sophie Delhay is a French architect based in Paris. After graduating from ENSAP, in Lille, in 1999, she designed 55 experimental flats in Nantes as part of the Boskopcollective - an experience she credits with the decision to establish her own office, in 2010, a practice almost exclusively dedicated to social housing on the French territory. Such a clear mission has since allowed Delhay to develop a specific method of work and distinctive themes around collective housing, in the process challenging established patterns of spatial agglomeration and product standards. Notional rooms are the elemental units and the starting point for each project, and it is their logical threading that produces collections of flexible spaces, open to functional permutations and multiple living structures yet mindful of surrounding urban conditions and aspect. The centrality of the

room in the housing product development process is acknowledged upstream and downstream from the architectural part, by considering preliminary discussions with the social landlords as integral to the project and its success, and by observing inhabitants' appropriation of the building's spaces after its delivery. The specific building sector's constraints in terms of limited allowable expenditure and material selection - predominantly concrete - give Delhay's work a palette of solutions where the architect's priorities and choices must understand, blend with, and take advantage of industrial frameworks and production chains. Delhay teaches design at EPFL. In 2022, she was awarded the Architecture Prize of the German Schelling Architecture Foundation.

Affirming Actions

ON COMFORT

March 26, 11h15 – 13h00

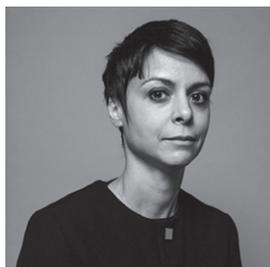
Kerstin Thompson



Since establishing her own practice KTA in Melbourne in 1994, Kerstin Thompson has become one of Australia's most accomplished architects. Her extensive built portfolio ranges from single detached houses to social housing, adaptive reuse, commercial fitout, schools and civic buildings. Convinced of the 'extraordinarily uplifting' potential of 'beautiful space', Thompson made a conscious transition from private single residential to the public sector around the mid-2000s, and it is indeed public work that best embodies her ethos of architecture as a civic endeavour. Panoplies of institutional design projects have enabled KTA to explore the relationship between architecture, its environment and its inhabitants. Here, Thompson's experiential sensibility is accompanied and strengthened by a rigorous typological approach that examines programme,

spatial quality and planning vis-à-vis the relationships with surrounding landscape and/or urban context. These essentials are to Thompson 'the bones of a project', which bring out a full rounded, cost-effective architectural outcome, with little reliance on applied embellishments and finishing touches. Thompson is professor at the School of Architecture at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and Adjunct Professor at RMIT University in Australia. She was a member of Australia's Built Environment Industry Innovation Council Advisory Committee, and she is currently a panel member of the Design Review Panel in Victoria. In 2021, Thames and Hudson published a monograph on Thompson's work – Encompassing people and place; and, in 2022, she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to architecture and tertiary education.

Alessia Griginis



A graduate in architecture from the Polytechnic of Turin, Alessia Griginis obtained a PhD in Technological Innovation for Architecture and Industrial Design in the Energy Department of the same institution in 2006, focusing on speech intelligibility and spatial acoustics in educational environments, a concrete issue in the existing school building stock across Turin's region. A certified acoustic engineer since 2007, she worked for fifteen years, until 2021, in a company set up as part of the innovative business incubator of the Polytechnic, as head of the acoustics sector. This provided her with the opportunity to acquire experience, work on important and prestigious projects, and establish herself as a high-skill professional. The first job officially signed off as environmental acoustics expert was the consultancy carried out alongside the Paris-based company

Peutz for Renzo Piano's Intesa San Paolo skyscraper in Turin. Over the years, Griginis worked on the acoustics design of projects by internationally renowned architects, such as Kengo Kuma, Rafael Moneo, Mario Cucinella, Carlo Ratti, and Navarro Baldeweg. At the beginning of 2022, she decided to invest in the cargo of knowledge developed over time, by founding, in association with Sabrina Casale, Vibes, a company dedicated to acoustic wellbeing. Griginis is an adjunct lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic of Turin and the author of several scientific and lay publications.

Affirming Actions

ON MATERIALS

March 25, 13h45 – 15h30

Rozana Montiel



A proponent of architecture as theoretical, interdisciplinary and critical practice, Rozana Montiel is the director and founder of a Mexico City-based firm at work on projects that range from the urban scale to micro-objects, and which are developed through research, exhibitions, industrial design and actual construction. Montiel believes in architects' charter to ameliorate living conditions, especially in contexts of limited means. One of her conceptual targets is the Mexican urban grid, the repetitiveness, monotony and alienation of which the architect considers necessary to reclaim in order to transform its space into places. One of the practice's by now distinctive strategies is low-budget 'urban action' aimed at changing the perception of non-descriptive public surface whilst providing necessary infrastructure. The work implies methodical exploration of the

'content' embedded in humble everyday contexts, a practice resulting in the eventual interpretation of the opportunities and scarcities of any locale, materially and otherwise. Although the act of building is often rendered subservient to the firm's place-making strategies, with their emphasis on relationships, boundaries and paths, Montiel's architecture also offers powerful testimonies of construction robustness, innovative building systems development, and material lyricism. In the course of her career, Montiel has won numerous prizes, most recently the 2022 International Prize for Women Architects, organized by the French Association for Research on Cities and Housing.

Anupama Kundoo



Born in Pune, India, Anupama Kundoo graduated as an architect at the JJ College of Architecture in Mumbai in 1989 before building a substantial body of work in the experimental town of Auroville, Puducherry, from 1990 - 2005. Within this environment, she developed a long-term research project into sustainable and building technologies characterised by material reuse and socially inclusive construction methods. In 2008, she received her PhD degree from TU Berlin, and today she maintains offices in Germany and India. Sustainable and research-based practice followed Kundoo to her roles as lecturer and professor at universities across the world, including Parsons New School for Design, Yale University, University of Queensland and now Fachhochschule Potsdam, Germany. Her work has been published widely and has been the subject of several exhibi-

tions, most recently the retrospective 'Taking Time' at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, in 2021, and the "Co-creation: Architecture is collaboration" at the Roca Barcelona Gallery in 2022. In 2021, she was the recipient of the RIBA Charles Jencks Award, given to architects who have «made a major contribution simultaneously to the theory and practice of architecture»; the Auguste Perret Prize in technology from the International Union of Architects; and the Building Sense Now global award of the German Sustainable Building Council. Among her best-known projects is the Full-Fill Home prototype - modular crates in ferrocement that can be assembled in less than a week with minimum construction experience.

Affirming Actions

ON PRACTICE

March 26, 16h00 – 16h45

Paolo Tombesi & Participants

ON CULTURE

March 26, 17h00 – 18h00

Open roundtable: The role of universities

Affirming Actions