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Mauro Baracco is a practising architect and a director of Baracco + Wright Architects (B+W), Melbourne, Australia. He graduated from Turin Polytechnic and has a PhD in architecture from RMIT University where he is an Associate Professor of Architecture and Urban Design in the School of Architecture and Design. He was formerly the Deputy Dean of Landscape Architecture (2013-2015) and is currently the Deputy Dean of International – both at RMIT University. Mauro is a member of RMIT’s School of Architecture and Design executive committee and d___Lab/Centre for Design Practice Research through which he leads consulting projects in partnership with industry and government bodies, some of which undertaken in collaboration with international architecture schools and cultural institutions, including the School of Architecture, Urban Planning and Construction Engineering of Milan Polytechnic where in 2016 he was invited to lead a Master design studio focused on the urban regeneration of the town of Imperia, Liguria, Italy. His research is focused on urban resilience through cross-programming and integration of open and built space, spanning from large/territorial to small/acupuncture scales. Mauro’s projects and writing have been widely published in books and journals (Domus, Abitare, Casabella, A+U, Transition, Architecture Australia among others), exhibited and awarded, and presented at conferences and symposia, both nationally and internationally.
EVERYTHING NATURE

Ex-scalo Farini: urban/architectural/landscape strategies for a resilient Milano

“There are things that I do not like in this world, I could be ironic, but I am very careful no to be”
[Guido Guidi]

ARCHITECTURAL THINKING AND CLIMATE CHANGE/URBAN RESILIENCE

This design workshop encourages a role for architects as operative strategic figures aiming to integrate complex systems, competing needs and seemingly polarized aims, therefore leading to innovative and provocative combinations of program, siting, and built form where outcomes can be far reaching, addressing issues beyond the traditional domain of the building and/or individual object. How and where people live, work, produce their food, share community activities, participate into the world from their specific places and how these solutions interact with the natural environment must be re-thought to combine sustainable social and environmental solutions. These issues land at the feet of traditional concerns of architecture: land use and urbanization, big and small systems and relationships. What role can architecture play?

THE WORKSHOP

This workshop will place architectural design in a leading position to develop design-based solutions to climate change and urban resilience by considering the traditional concerns of land use and urbanization anew. It will investigate the role and effects of ‘urban renewal’ applied to urban environments that are currently in highly sensitive situations regarding urban, architectural and ecological degradation. The Farini ex-railway transport hub will be explored as an area with the potential to maintain the richness natural ecosystem that is currently informing the whole site, and yet also at the same time as a place for various activities to be undertaken in integration with the existing natural vegetation. This workshop aims
to produce an alternative approach to current planning that fills open space, or generally designs in isolation so that these open areas are for the most part leftover and disconnected from natural systems and the amenity of the landscape. In opposition to conventional development approaches that set up a clear distinction between built space and vegetated space, favouring the built space in any figure ground, the approach encouraged through the workshop supports the current urgency to restore our natural systems in order to preserve water supply, wetlands and biodiversity conservation as essential remedies of carbon sequestration.

The Farini area is a symptomatic example of an area that has been severed from its context by infrastructure and vacated by industrial and infrastructural activities. This area has been suffering of environmental degradation (notwithstanding the ‘spontaneous’ presence of some natural ecosystem), and is at risk to the impacts of climate change. The studio will aim to rehabilitate this area through minimal and yet effective transformations based on ‘performative landscapes’ that can contribute to make this area a resilient environment, in its turn with the potential to infuse further levels of urban resilience throughout the whole urban context of Milan and its surrounding territory.


The workshop will also address biological and technological systems, designing and arranging these into vibrant and livable urban habitats, supporting theoretical positions according to which no new land should be cleared and degraded land should be rehabilitated. It sustains the scientific fact that urban ‘bush’ contributes to ecological conservation and biodiversity. It aims to carefully consider the role of architecture and its inevitable land use on a small and large scale – from this point of view, the Green River vision by Stefano Boeri Architetti as a continuous linear system of parks, gardens, orchards and sport/leisure infrastructures for Milan is a relevant reference to the works that will be explored through the workshop. In parallel with these concerns, the workshop will also encourage projects and interventions for cross-programs, so as to also envisage economic sustainability in the form of functional and economic flexibility.

In particular, the aim of the workshop is to focus on urban visions and related architectural and landscape interventions that include the following integrated outcomes:

- urban forest and green infrastructures
- nature-based productive activities
- renewable energies
- education and professional development activities related to environmental and climate change awareness
- productive veggie gardens
- sport, fitness and leisure activities
• alternative ‘un-formed/in-formal’ spaces for residential and work activities
• spatial continuity with immediately surrounding areas, including: Cimitero Monumentale, Parco Sempione, Bovisa and Isola areas
• spatial continuity and large scale connections with extensive rural park systems around Milan

Through this workshop projects will be undertaken at many different scales, from territorial to urban and architectural, testing ideas through the simultaneous application of these scales. They will be undertaken through different and yet closely correlated approaches, exploring interventions that are at the same time architectural, infrastructural and landscape in character, as well as aiming to solutions as responses to the ecological significance and links to natural systems that are provided by existing open spaces. These projects will also engage with the notions of distributed and networked systems, opportunistically taking advantage of spatial, cultural, geographcal and urban conditions existing in both the Farini site area and its immediate and larger scale surroundings. Projects will aim to relate particular smaller scales interventions with larger scale territorial visions (and viceversa) – this may involve the relocation of inappropriately located buildings; the reconfiguration and reuse of existing abandoned buildings and infrastructures; the transformation, in use and experience, of existing open space; the questioning of the need to produce new built footprints; and other similar strategies in order to find meaningful end effective relationships between the natural and the built environments.

GROUP WORK AND DESIGN APPROACH

Group Work
Students will work in groups – larger groups in the first 2, 3 days of the design workshop; smaller groups in the last few days, also working in consolidating design ideas into strategic representations for the final exhibition.
Students will be encouraged to conceive and represent spaces in states of integration between landscape, architectural, urban, infrastructural and interior scales/elements, through projects informed by interrelation levels between small, medium and large scales. The outcomes of this design workshop will reflect interest in contextual, potential, ‘generous’ (in character, not necessarily in scale) and ‘opportunistic’ projects, rather than in expressive, iconic, symbolic or metaphorical outputs. The projects will be inclined to establish critical relationships with their immediate and territorial contexts rather than to produce isolated and individual interventions.

Design Approach – some strategic techniques:
• Responding to existing physical, social, geographical, urban, landscape and infrastructural situations; not an application of formulaic processes
• (Un)learning from/reacting to the existing
• ‘Unfamiliar’ outcomes of ‘familiar’ elements
• Generosity and Opportunism
• Integration of built and open vegetated space as a strategy for resilient urban
environments

- Flexibility and multi/cross-programming as a strategy to minimize built footprint
- No hierarchy between large and small scale
- Small as a consequence of large scale thinking – correlation between parts (often as acupuncture interventions) through consideration of space in-between
- The relevance of strategic representation – diagrams to evoke essential ideas and intentions...cross-programming and space sharing to be represented figuratively (through 3D images, not labels ad/or legend, to represent spaces and the envisaged programs/activities for their inhabitation; i.e.: Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Allegory of Good Government; OMA, isometric representations for Parc de la Villette competition entry; Raumlabor, drawings for public space and bathing culture in Frihamnen, Gothenburg, Sweden, 2014; others)
- Resistance to ‘objectification’...we are not in the world; we are the world...we are nature with nature (re: Heidegger’s state of ‘wondering’ as a way to accept and deal with original ‘Anguish’)’
- Design in states of ‘potentiality’...resisting the seduction of the individual ‘architectural’ object...designing spaces/situations that can evolve and change through the input and engagement of users, as well as through further development/growing of natural landscape
- The irrelevance of outcomes as metaphors of ideas...resisting towards the simplistic and reassuring process that leads to final formalist outcomes as literal translations of: predetermined ideas, theoretical references, metaphorical concepts, symbolic images, linear processes
- Resisting landscape design approaches inclined to formalistically shape natural elements

POTENTIAL PROGRAMS/PROJECTS (some suggestions among others…)

- Close integration between architecture/landscape/infrastructure
- Dynamic, unstable, flexible, fragile, malleable, thus resilient architectural/landscape/infrastructural spaces
- Interrelation/integration/crossing (between things/spaces/entities’)
- Programs involved with notions such as: community, volunteerism, public, revised forms of economic enterprises, etc.

The task is to create real capabilities for people to flourish in less materialistic ways...In particular we need to revitalize the notion of public goods. To renew our sense of public space, of public institutions, of common purpose. To invest money and time in shared goals, assets and infrastructures...Green space, parks, recreation centres, sports facilities, libraries, museums, public transportation, local markets, retreats and quite centres, festivals: these are some of the building blocks for a new vision of social participation...Manufacturing will need to pay more attention to durability and repairability. Construction must prioritize refurbishment of existing buildings and the design of new sustainable and repairable infrastructures. Agriculture will have to pay more attention to the integrity of land and the welfare of livestock...[Tim Jackson, Prosperity without Growth: Economics for a Finite Planet, p. 193, p. 197]
• Local economies, local resources, global connections (food-hubs, seeding/revegetation hubs, community programs-hubs, educational hubs; energy and material recycling, etc.)
• Spaces able to positively engage with water (rain, flooding), snow, wind, hot and cold weather, earthquakes, all other weather and natural phenomena
• Architectural/landscape/infrastructural systems and interventions for water filtration + low carbon emission and high carbon sequestration;
• No/less cars – Yes/more bicycle-based infrastructures
• Spatial, infrastructural and public/community sharing
• Land care+maintenance+management
• Towards states of permanent impermanence…living as camping…flying…moving…being nature with nature…nets, scaffolding, garden sheds, balloons, tarpaulins, curtains, tents, decks, rafts, trees…

Is it not odd that ours, the most nomadic and migratory of cultures, should found its policy, its psychology, its ethics and even its poetics on the antithesis of movement: on the rhetoric of foundations, continuity, genealogy, stasis? 
[Paul Carter, The Lie of the Land, 1996]

TYPICAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN CURRENT URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

• Water shortage and collection/discharge (engineering-based urban infrastructures)
• Flood and flash flooding
• Lack of general interest in alternative energy sources
• Need of habitat corridors
• The overwhelming presence of hard surfaces and the consequent result of heat-island effect due to lack of cooling
• Existing planning processes in favor of occupation of space and production of built space in figure ground, rather than coexistence with existing natural environment
• Deterioration of biological values due to the development of ‘lifestyle’ residential blocks and other amenities/programs
• Rehabilitation of indigenous vegetation as a means to re-establish healthy levels of biodiversity, but also to provide cool habitats
• Others..

“I like to think (...) of a cybernetic meadow where mammals and computers live together in mutually programming harmony like pure water touching clear sky. 
I like to think (...) of a cybernetic forest filled with pines and electronics where deer stroll peacefully past computers as if they were flowers with spinning blossoms.
I like to think (...) of a cybernetic ecology where we are free of our labors and joined back to nature, returned to our mammal brothers and sisters, and all watched over by machines of loving grace.”
[Richard Brautigan]
Suggested Case Studies

Tomas Saraceno, Stillness in Motion / Cloud Cities
from December 2016, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
Tomas Saraceno, *In Orbit*
2013, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, K21 Ständehaus
R&Sie(n), Spidernetthe wood
2007, Nimes, France
FAR Frohn&Rojas, Wall House
2004-07, Santiago, Chile
http://www.f-a-r.net/projects/en_projects/004_wall-house/
Philippe Rahm, Architecture météorologique
Baltic Pavilion
Biennale 2016, Venezia
http://balticpavilion.eu/
Junya Ishigami, ‘Extreme Nature: Landscape of Ambiguous Spaces’
2008, installation at the Japanese Pavilion, 11th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia
ADH Doazan + Hirschberger, Jardin des Fonderies
2009, Nantes, Francia
Petra Blaisse, Maison à Bordeaux
2011-2012, Bordeaux, Francia
Lacaton & Vassal, Maison Keremma
2005, Keremma, Francia
Dominic Stevens Architects, Fluid City
2006, Irish Pavilion, Venice Biennale
http://www.dominicstevensarchitect.net/#/waterscapes/
Hiroshi Iguchi, Millenniumcity
2008, Japan
Cedric Price, London Zoo aviary
1958, London
Baracco+Wright, Garden House
2014, Westernport, Coastal Victoria
Frei Otto, German Federal Pavilion Expo Montreal
1967, Canada
Turenscape, Qunli Storwater Park
2009-2011, Haerbin City, China
“Understanding how we are programmed by architecture is vital to the pursuit of egalitarian social power models.”
Jack Self, page 16

“Lazzarato’s isn’t a view of history that empowers anyone – let alone artists.”
Peggy Deamer, page 86

“In the 1980’s history, subject to the same ideological transformations as other economic sectors, became one of the new post-industrial products. This was the privatisation of history.”
Sam Jacob, page 30

“The cult of the architect is a distraction, a parlour game for the top 0.1%.”
Leo Hollis, page 74

“Let us turn the whole country into a socialist fairyland!”
(Kim Jong-il)
Oliver Wainwright, page 50

“I have nothing against artificial intelligence, except when it claims, with its universal calculation, to absorb all the other forms and reduce mental space to a digital one.” (Jean Baudrillard)
Franco “Bifo” Berardi, page 60

“Architecture is suffering a chronic crisis in its professional identity.”
Pier Vittorio Aureli, page 86

“Empathy is replaced by competition. Social life proceeds, now more frantic than ever: living, conscious organisms are unconsciously penetrated by dead mathematical functions.”
Franco “Bifo” Berardi, page 65

“A life spent entirely in public, in the presence of others, becomes shallow.” (Hannah Arendt)
Superreel, page 67

“This is the spirit of a generation that recognises itself as a casualty – of both the austerity regime and the digital economy.”
Matteo Pasquinelli, page 29

“The way we experience space now changes much faster than the fabric of the spaces we occupy.” (Patrick Keiller)
Casimir Shepard, page 91

“To remain temporary is to continue to resist... refugee camps embody the right of return.”
Ana Nasmi de Sousa, page 87
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- Lacaton & Vassal, House-Village, Keremma, France, 2005
  Refer: Lotus, no. 130, 2007, pp. 67-70
- Lacaton & Vassal, Palais de Tokyo, Centre for Contemporary Creation, Paris, from 2001
  Refer: 2G no. 21, 2002
- Lacaton & Vassal, Ecological Neighborhood housing, La Vacquerie, Saint Nazaire, France, 2009
  Refer: Lotus, no. 157, monographic issue on City as nature, 2015, pp. 52-55

- R&Sie(n), Spidernetwood (house/landscape with nets), Nimes, France, 2007
  Refer: Lotus, no. 133, 2008, pp. 104-109

- Langarita-Navarro Arquitectos, Red Bull Music Academy, Madrid, Spain, 2011
  Refer: Domus, no. 955, February 2012, pp. 38-45

- FAR Frohn&Rojas, Wall House (tent outdoor spaces), Santiago, Chile, 2004-07
  Refer: Lotus, no. 140, 2009, pp.110-112

- Ensamble Studio, Truffle House, Candamo, Spain, 2010

- Peter Willmott, House for an artist, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 1989
  Refer: Gustau Gili Galfetti, Casas Refugio – Private Retreats, GG Publisher, Barcelona, 1995, pp. 80-81

- Norman Foster (Team 4), Cockpit Gazebo, Pill Creek, Cornwall, England, 1964
  Refer: Gustau Gili Galfetti, Casas Refugio – Private Retreats, GG Publisher, Barcelona, 1995, pp. 92-95

- Eugeen Liebaut, Weekend Cottage, Aalst, Belgium, 1987-88
  Refer: Gustau Gili Galfetti, Casas Refugio – Private Retreats, GG Publisher, Barcelona, 1995, pp. 110-113


- Tomas Saraceno, ‘In Orbit’ intervention
- Tomas Saraceno, ‘Stillness in Motion’ intervention

- Raumlab, ‘Spacebuster’ (mobile inflatable infrastructure system for expandable pavilions that activate many different urban situations)
- *Inside Outside* (Petra Blaisse), various works (graphic, textile, interior design)
  Refer: Domus, no. 954, January 2012, pp. 54-59
  In particular refer to several examples of relationship between ‘real’ and ‘represented’ nature, including interventions in OMA, Seattle Library and patterns for curtain systems

- **Patrick Dillon**, SaLo House, Veraguas, Panama
  Refer: Casabella, no. 845, January 2015, pp. 14-23

- **Baracco + Wright**
  - Community School, Thornbury, Melbourne, Australia

- **George-Murphy House**, Kew, Melbourne, Australia
  - George Murphy Farm Barrabools Hills, Geelong, Victoria, Australia
  - Rose House, Merricks Beach, Victoria, Australia
  - Green House, Tenby Pont, Westernport Bay, Victoria, Australia
  Refer: www.baraccowright.com

For Garden House, see also:
- **Anna Johnson, Richard Black**, Living in the Landscape, Thames & Hudson, Melbourne, Victoria, 2016, pp. 72-79

- **Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen**, Weekend House, Merchtem House, Belgium, 2009-12
- Garden Pavilion, exhibition, Venice Arsenale, 2010-11
- Oases, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 2012-13

- **Architecten De Vylder Vinck Taillieu**, House Bern Heim Beuk, GB, Belgium, 2009-11
  Refer: A+U, no. 499, 2014, monographic issue on Small and Sustainable, pp. 66-69

- **Kazuyo Sejima and SANAA** (Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa), Inujima Art House Project (small architectural interventions in the existing context) Inujima island, Japan
  Refer: Domus, no. 939, September 2010, pp. 21-33
  - SANAA, Moriyama House, Tokyo, 2005

- **Atelier Bow-Wow**, RAPT ‘civic/urban workshop tent installation’, Melbourne, Australia, 2006

- **Hiroshi Iguchi**, ‘Millenniumcity’, glasshouses and gardens for community programs, Chiba, Japan, 2008
Refer: Lotus, no. 140, 2009, pp. 32-35
- Hiroshi Iguchi, Camouflaged House 3, Nagano, Japan, 2008
- Junya Ishigami, Kanagawa Institute of Technology Workshop, Kanagawa, Japan, 2008
Refer: Lotus, no. 138, 2009, pp. 27-34
  Junya Ishigami, Yohji Yamamoto Store (renovation as ‘removal’), New York, USA, 2007 – 2008
Refer: Domus, no. 917, September 2008, pp. 60-62
Refer: Domus, no. 917, September 2008, pp. 34, 35
  Lotus, no. 142, 2010, pp. 88-93
- More projects and drawings by Junya Ishigami
Refer: Junya Ishigami, Junya Ishigami: small images (Tokyo: INAX Publishing, 2008)

- Atelier Ryo Abe, Shima Kitchen, Teshima Island, Japan, 2010
Refer: Lotus, no. 152, 2013, pp. 84-87
  Casabella, no. 830, October 2013, pp. 76-81

- Liu Jiakun, West Village Basis Yard, Chengdu, China (exhibited at Venice Biennale 2016: People Mountain People Sea)

- Stefano Boeri, Green River, Milan, Italy, 2016 (rehabilitation and transformation of disused Milan railway system into parklands and related mix of programs)

- Lina Bo Bardi, LBA Civic Centre, Cananéia (São Paolo), 1988
Refer: 2G no. 23/24, 2002

- Sverre Fehn, Nordic Countries Pavilion, Venice Biennale Gardens, Venice, 1958-62

- Jacques Gillet, Sculpture House, Liege, Belgium, early Sixties
Refer: Domus, no. 966, February 2013, pp. 86-93

- Aldo van Eyck, playgrounds, Amsterdam, 1947-1961

Refer: Winfried Nerdinger (ed), Frei Otto-Complete Works, Birkhäuser, Basel, Switzerland, 2005

- **Paisajes Emergentes**, Lake Park, landscape transformation of Mariscal Sucre Airport, Quito, Ecuador
  Refer: Domus, no. 938, July-August 2010, pp. 32-37

  Refer: Topos, no. 73, 2010, pp. 82-87

- **Various Norwegian architects** (Jensen & Skodvin; Snohetta AS; Nordplan AS - Arild Waage; LJB AS; Reiulf Ramstad Architects), various architectural/landscape interventions for Norwegian Tourist Routes
  Refer: Topos, no. 74, 2011, pp. 36-45

- **German del Sol**, Termas Geometricas, Villarrica National Park, Chile, 2004

- **Burckhardt and Partner + Raderschall**, MFO Park, Zurich, 1999-2002

- **ADH Doazan + Hirschberger**, ‘Jardin des Fonderies’ (public greening in ex-industrial infrastructure), Nantés, France

- **Tonkin Zulaikha Greer**, JMD Design, Paddington Reservoir (re-emergence of historical infrastructural space), Sydney, Australia

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  - Turenscape, Yanwei Zhou Park, Jinhua City
  Refer: Topos, no. 90, monographic issue on Resilient Cities and Landscapes, 2015, pp. 84-89
  - Turenscape, various projects involved with water landscapes and infrastructures, China
  Refer: Lotus, no. 155, 2014, pp. 22-37

- **Michel Desvigne**, urban landscape rehabilitation and cultural hub in ex-industrial area, Ilé Seguin, Paris, France
  Refer: Lotus, no. 150, 2012, pp. 4-7
  - Michel Desvigne, urban/environment integration through porous streetscape, Park Dräi Eechelen, Luxembourg
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  - Michel Desvigne, Parc aux angeliques, Bordeaux, France
  Refer: Topos, no. 94, 2016, pp. 32-39
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Refer: Lotus, no. 160, 2016, pp. 124-125

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+
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