

Conference

3–5.9. 2026

Learnings/

Book of

Un-Learnings

Environmental learning,
spatial design, and participatory
pedagogies within institutions
and beyond.

Abstracts

London School of Architecture

Programme Outline

Thursday 3 September

15.00 Registration
15.45 Welcome and Introduction
16.30 Paper Sessions
18.00 Keynote: Jos Boys
20.00 Social

Friday 4 September

09.00 Coffee and Pastries
09.30 Paper Sessions
11.00 Break
11.30 Roundtable Papers
13.00 Lunch
14.00 Workshop Sessions
15.30 Break
16.00 Paper Sessions
18.00 Keynote: Pelin Tan

Saturday 5 September

09.00 Coffee and Pastries
09.30 Paper Sessions
11.00 Break
11.30 Roundtable Papers
13.00 Lunch
14.00 Workshop Sessions
15.30 Break
16.00 Paper Sessions
18.00 Keynote: RESOLVE Collective / Akil Scafe-Smith

Instagram: @learnings_unlearnings

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<https://padlet.com/artslondon/learnings-unlearnings-2026-nxyp8qeqkcofc5de>

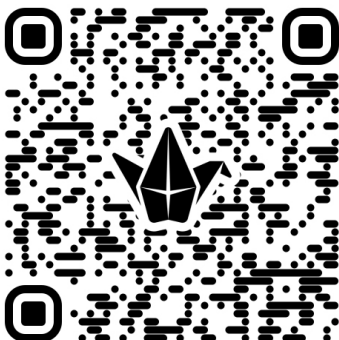


Table of Contents

I. Keynotes

- Jos Boys
10 So What is Normal? Reimagining Spatial Practices Through Disability
- Pelin Tan
11 Pedagogies of Care: “Survival with and through”
- RESOLVE Collective/Akil Scafe-Smith
12 None the Wiser: Pedagogies, Syllabi, and Practice Notes

II. Papers

- Adriana Cobo Corey
14 Taste Untold: Institutional Critique in Spatial Practice
- Andrea Sosa Fontaine
15 Unfolding Through Dress: Bodies and Resistance in Pressing Interiors
- Andreas Schmitt, Benjamin Bräutigam, Bárbara Tagliaferro and David Martin
16 Unlearning the Walls Within: Transforming Inner and Outer Institutional Spaces via an Intercultural Mental Schooling Path
- Angela Krstevska
17 Assembly as Method: On the Persistence of Non-Institutional Architectural Education
- Anna Reading
18 How can a site-sensitive approach to public sculpture activate environmental learning?
- Apolonija Šušteršić
19 Neighbours & Citizens: Learning Through Civic Space and Neighbourhood Encounters
- Asli Ingin
20 Toward a Situated and Embedded Pedagogy: Learning from Made in Şişhane

- Beatrice De Carli
21 Without Borders? Negotiating Translocal Learning at Institutional Edges
- Bo Tang and Corina Tuna
22 The Extended Studio: Intergenerational Learning and Festival-Based Civic Pedagogy in Architectural Education
- Coral Michelin and Graziela Nivoloni
23 Biosemiotics and embodied experiences mending the tension between design Academia and Market
- Cristina Cerulli
24 Entangled and Co-opted: civic pedagogy, institutional capture, and the ethics of teaching within and without
- Ecaterina Stefanescu
25 Ethnographic Modelmaking as a Situated and Participatory Pedagogy
- Elena Carlini, Francesca Savio and Donald Weber
26 Learning From Logistics: What a Cargo Ship Teaches
- Elke Krasny
27 Healing Environments: Learning How to Stay-With-Care
- Emilio Viola
28 Pedagogies at the Margins: Riccardo Dalisi’s Neighbourhood Workshops
- Emre Akbil
29 Neighbourhoods as Energy Worlds: Colearning in Thick Sites for Infrastructuring Community Energy in Sheffield
- Fabian Konopka and Marta La Ferla
30 Decolonial Pedagogies in Sicily: (Edge) Conditions of Unlearning Fascist Heritage

- Fulya Selçuk
31 Minor pedagogy at the edge of university and public sphere: Reflection on practice-based PhD research
- James Heard and Iris Giannakopoulou Karamouzi
32 Architecture as a Social Art: Civic Pedagogies Under Surveillance in Cold War America
- Janine Francois
33 Sacred Black Ecologies: Thinking with Plants as Ecological Pedagogy
- Jordan Whitewood-Neal
34 Developing a Crip Civic Pedagogy
- Kirsty Watt
35 Non-visual co-design pedagogies for inclusive architectures
- Lenny Rajmont
36 Minor Acts: Queer Spatial Disobedience as Situated Pedagogy
- Leslie McShane Lodwick
37 Family Student Housing Developments in Higher Education, 1960s-present
- Li Jönsson Kristina Lindström, Coral Michelin and Åsa Ståhl
38 Rehearsing Emerging Design Practices After Progress
- Luca Csepely-Knorr, Joy Burgess and Laura Sanderson
39 Landscape Stories: Gender, Climate and Landscape Learning in Primary education
- Magdalena Cloete
40 Working at the Margins: Participatory Environmental Assessment and Spatial Justice in South African Early Childhood Development
- Malamatenia Kouroupaki
41 Hippie Dwelling in an Archaeological Site: Matala's Caves as Counter-Space during the Greek Dictatorship (1967–1974)
- Marlene Wagner
42 A Tribute to (Un)Building a River
- Micol Sonnino
43 Squatting as Everyday Situated Learning: Environmental Conscientization in Rome and Vienna
- Monika Gravagno, Lottie McCarthy and Sara Adhitya
44 Acceptance of Difference (Here?)
- Reem Charif, Lucy Eccles and Madoka Ellis
45 Methods of Exchange
- Richard Conway and Sangram Shirke
46 Pedagogies of Proximities: Embodied, Relational Learning for Urban Architectural Education
- Riina Sirén and Iida Kalakoski
47 The Repair Shift in Architecture Education: An Analysis of Finnish Master's Theses in 1960–2025
- Ro Spankie
48 The Assembly: An Experiment in Collective Thinking
- Rosario Talevi
49 Transformative Pedagogies Within
- Sara Ortolani
50 Embodied Wetness: Pedagogies and Marginal Spaces in the Po River Delta
- Sarah Pennington and Tobie Kerridge
51 River Civics in Design Pedagogy
- Socrates Stratis
52 Subjects @ Play. Unlearning With Palestine!
- Soscha Monteiro
53 Learning from World Heritage: Early Visitor Centres as Educational Spaces in Europe and North America

Tatiana Machado

- 54 **“Dismeasuring” (Gielen 2015) Architecture Education and Bringing it ‘into Play’ (Biesta 2022): Fostering Students to Sustain a Process of Critical and Creative Engagement with their Surroundings**

Tom Moore, Tom Harvey, Jonathan Orlek and Maike Pötschulat

- 55 **Prototyping Learning at the Edge: Housing, Spatial Practice and Civic Pedagogy**

Tuba Özer

- 56 **Environmental Learning through the Making of METU Forest**

Umkiye Seyda Mutlu

- 57 **Light-touch as Prefigurative Pedagogy in the Cambridge [Urban] Room**

Wongani Mwanza

- 58 **Relationality, Care & Justice: An exploration into environmental learning through decolonial pedagogies and indigenous practices**

III. Posters

Anirudh Ramesh

- 60 **The Afterlife of Buildings: Adaptation and Institutional Space at the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad**

Benjamin Bräutigam and Elisa Bertolotti

- 61 **A Quiet Capacity to Rest: The Experience of the Mãos na Terra Community Garden**

Giovanna Muzzi

- 62 **“Portineria via Piave” an independent community hub for informal learning**

Kristina Kotov

- 63 **Walking, talking and making in landscape: a case study**

Oana Paval, Monica Muresanu and Vera Marin

- 64 **Peer to Peer Learning by designing urban space destined to empower the young generation**

Ziyuan Li

- 65 **Learning to Unlearn: Visual Hesitation and Community Knowledge in Urban Co-design**

IV. Roundtable Papers

Amalia Banteli and Dimitra Ntzani

- 67 **Unlearning Through Play: How Performing Games Reframe Care and Inclusion in Design Education**

Andrea Couture and Paul Ring

- 68 **Unconventional Affordable Housing (UAH!): A Pedagogical Paradigm for Heritage-based Adaptive Reuse for Liminal and Displaced Communities**

Angeliki Dimaki-Adolfsen, Vibeke Sjøvoll and Ellef Prestsæter

- 69 **Learning from and with the Guttormsgaard Archive. A situated pedagogical experiment with undergraduate Product Design students**

Arti Sen

- 70 **Third Space Learning: Inclusivity at the Edge of Institutions**

Assunta Ruocco

- 71 **Feminist Infrastructural Interventions: Intergenerational Art Practice and the Spatial Conditions of Learning**

Catalina Pollak Williamson

- 72 **Liminal Choreographies: Radical Play as Situated Civic Pedagogy**

Cathy Gale

- 73 **Beyond the Real in the Para-Fictional Art School**

Charis Nika

- 74 **Critical Urban Practices, Pedagogies and Knowledges for Spatial Justice: The Coast of Larnaca, Cyprus**

- Chero Eliassi
75 “Reading Transformative Landscapes”: Fieldwork, Civic Space, and Environmental Learning Beyond the Architecture School
- Denise Araouzou
76 Crafting ecopedagogy as collective artistic practices through sympoiesis in Cyprus
- Effrosyni Roussou, Shea Hagy and Emílio Brandão
77 Curating affective polyphony, or can documentation become advocacy: the “Dare to Build” book
- Emilio Brandao and Roberto Cattaneo
78 Designing with the Permit: collaborative pedagogies at the edge of regulation
- Emma Nilsson and Anders Rubing
79 BAS Trajectories: alternative institutional infrastructures
- Fabrizia Berlingieri and Arianna Scaioli
80 Reporting from/on margins
- Funda Alyanak Kaya, Hulya Aybek, Esin Bölükba Dayı, Alper Gülle and Serim Aygen Kitin
81 Designing the Derelict: Teaching Architecture Through Indeterminacy
- Henrique Andrade
82 Here design, there art and everywhere pedagogy: knowledge practices at the margins of the institution in the Cri_lab
- Ipek Avanoglu
83 Archaeological sites as pedagogical enablers of critical relating: a bonding-practice
- James Benedict Brown
84 Who holds the pen? Reciprocity and institutional dependency in rural design-build pedagogy
- James Burch and Phil O’Shaughnessy
85 Flipping Studio: students’ contestation of the spatial practices and pedagogy of traditional design school
- Katka Cerna, Hasti V. Goudarzi, Lucy Jane MacAllister Dukes, Tincuta Heinzl, Svenja Keune, Colleen Ludwig, Roland Mühlethaler, Jussi Mikkonen, Patricia Csobánczi and Asya Ilgün
86 Reciprocal F(r)ictions - revisiting mapping and observations practices in more-than-human contexts
- Laura McClorey
88 Edge Conditions: Belfast Stories
- Matthew Crowley
89 (Potential) Situated Pedagogies in the Industrial South: ‘Big Shipping’, sewage outlets, sunburn, and an amble through history
- Natalie Novik
90 Spatial Activism and Ethics of Pedagogical Approaches in Imagining Spatial Practice Otherwise
- Nisrine Habib M’samri and Zeynep Helin Kaya
91 Learning at the Edge: Decolonial Environmental Pedagogies in Fragmented Urban Ecologies
- Olivia Hamilton and Naomi Zouwer
92 Learning at the Edges: Creative Teaching Practices Beyond the Classroom
- Roy Coupland and Yaya Chen
93 Realising the Opportunities for Youth-led place making in large-scale redevelopment
- Subha Robert William
94 Women’s Experimental Writing, Art and Spatial Knowledge at the Margins of Institutions
- Ulrike Steven
95 Perfect Flower

Yuvacan Atmaca

- 96 Design Knowledge as Becoming: Xlab-Social Design-Build (Student Collective)**

Zhuozhang Li

- 97 Learning the City Otherwise: Hong Kong Cinema and the Cambridge Room as Alternative Sites of Urban Knowledge**

V. Workshops

Adam Jovanovic Kaasa

- 99 Listening Feeling Bodies: Somatic Attunement as Environmental Learning in the University**

Andrew Belfield, Thomas Moore and Nicola Antaki

- 100 An (un)Glossary of Civic Pedagogies in Spatial Practice Workshop - Edge Conditions**

Angelica Calabrese

- 101 Drawing as Intersubjective and Pedagogical Practice**

Beril Kapusuz-Balci and Mersida Ndrevataj

- 102 Photovoice: Learning Otherwise**

Colin Priest

- 103 A-Z Walking Dalston: Architectural Pedagogy and the Layered City**

Corinna Dean, Duarte Santo and Deepta Sateesh

- 104 Hacking Weather Instruments for Situated Pedagogies**

Deepika Madhava and Lianne De Vera

- 105 'Building' as a Community Classroom: Unlearning Technical Barriers through the Somers Town Retrofit Project**

Franca Carassai, Nataly Raab, Rosie Parnell and Victoria Thornton

- 106 Mapping the Edge: An Interactive Workshop on the Reach, Value, and Replicability of Youth Engagement**

Francesca Gotti and Yona Catrina Schreyer

- 107 Cyclical Comforts and Round Things: A Séance for Unlearning**

Helga Steppan

- 108 Growing together a part . . . a workshop on reciprocal gifting in multispecies collaborations through cyanotype on bark**

Inês Nascimento

- 109 UTOPOLY: An Immersive Learning Journey**

Jean-Jacques Lescure

- 110 The colours of apple sauce: a case study in place-based education**

Katya Sander

- 111 Toward a Place-Aware Film Practice**

Kuljeet Sibia

- 112 From Compliance to Consciousness: Debate, Role-play, and the Brave Space as Pedagogical Tools for Inclusive Design Education**

Liana Psarologaki

- 113 The Spatial Pedagogy of Cleaning One's Home – a connective space to explore the practiced architecture of domestic cleaning through drawing and poetry**

Louis Alderson-Bythell, Daniela P. Santillan Nunez and Marina Nikolic

- 114 Methods at the Institutional Edge: Transdisciplinary Practice and the Rhetoric of Structural Change**

Malik Becker and Kemmett Saunders-Nazareth

- 115 Collages of Deschooling**

MATT+FIONA and CIVIC SQUARE

- 116 Design & Construction Club**

Matthew Ashton

- 117 Footnotes: Learning from and with the Material Poetics Beneath our Feet**

Melanie Mortimer

- 118 Mud Mapping**

Petra Lilja, Mathilda Tham and Vera
Maeder

**119 Body-Place, Local-Place, Planet-Place
and Back Again: Towards a Relational
Place-Responsive Pedagogy for Design
Education**

VI. Acknowledgements

121 Scientific Committee

123 Conference Organising Team

124 Acknowledgements

IV. Roundtable Papers

Unlearning Through Play: How Performing Games Reframe Care and Inclusion in Design Education

Amalia Banteli and Dimitra Ntzani

This paper explores the link between performing arts and design pedagogies as a means of instilling empathy and inspiring inclusive mindset creation for architecture students at the beginning of their studies. It presents and reflects on how performing games and participatory design were used in a live teaching education innovation project funded by Cardiff University's Teaching and Learning academy. During the project, second-year architecture students collaborated with Hijinx Odyssey, an inclusive drama group based in Cardiff, to understand the needs of performers with physical and/or learning disabilities and to co-design inclusive stage environments. Students and actors shared creative routines, performing games, theatrical improvisations, ethnographic observation, and design reviews to generate stage-set designs for the Odyssey's upcoming performance: 'Humbug!'. End of project student reflections focused on what the students learnt, re-learned and, as importantly, what they had 'unlearned' as part of their interactions with the performers and their overall engagement with the live project. The reflections arising from this pedagogical partnership with Hijinx Odyssey demonstrate how knowledge shaped through performing games and participatory design can meaningfully enhance civic engagement in higher education and architectural practice. By bringing architecture students into creative exchange with inclusive drama communities, these collaborations recover marginalised or often overlooked perspectives that fall outside dominant institutional narratives. This paper advocates for the integration of performing arts and inclusive community partnership into design education as a means to cultivate an ethos of care, attentiveness, and shared responsibility. Such encounters broaden students' understanding of spatial experience and reframe design learning as a caring, relational practice grounded in empathy and mutual creativity. In doing so, they support more inclusive pathways into architectural education while empowering students to become future practitioners attuned to the wellbeing and diverse lived experiences of the communities they ultimately serve.

Dr Amalia Banteli: lecturer at Welsh School of Architecture. Her interests in inclusive design and her personal involvement in inclusive theatre groups inform her research in inclusive pedagogies. Her work explores theatrical play as a pathway to empathetic learning through participatory projects with architecture students and inclusive community drama groups.

Dr Dimitra Ntzani: Senior Lecturer in Architectural History and Theory at the Welsh School of Architecture and Director of our Masters in Architecture Programmes. Her work explores how design can better support cognitive and spatial engagement with contested heritage, while her design pedagogies foreground inclusive participatory/threshold approaches and learning reflexivity

Strand: *civic space*

VI. Acknowledgements

Scientific Committee

Andreas Lang is Reader in Situated and Ecological Design Practices, Knowledge Exchange Placemaking Lead, and Course Leader of M-Arch Architecture at Central Saint Martins. A co-founder of public works, his interdisciplinary practice spans architecture, ecology and participation, advancing citizen-led approaches to social, environmental and spatial change.

Åsa Ståhl (PhD) is a professor of design at HDK-Valand, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Her work combines participatory design, feminist technoscience and environmental posthumanities in explorations of how to make and know liveable worlds. Her current and recently concluded research includes Design after Progress: Design Histories and Futures, Earth Logic Design Agency and Holding Surplus House.

Daniel Ovalle Costal is an architect and an Associate Professor at The Bartlett School of Architecture. Daniel's research interests lay at the intersection of architectural design, domesticity, and queer studies. He has a special interest in forms of making that relate to popular culture such as dollshouses.

Emilio Brandao is lecturer in design activism at Chalmers University and a PhD-candidate at KTH School of Architecture. Action research and awarded teaching within urban pedagogies for social sustainability and inclusion, community resilience, co-creation, and design-build, collaborating with multiple actors. He works in contexts challenged by diverse urban injustices, both locally and internationally.

Karin Reisinger is Senior Scientist at the Art x Science School for Transformation, University of Applied Arts Vienna. She led the research projects 'Two Ore Mountains: Feminist Ecologies of Spatial Practices' and 'Stories of Post-extractive Feminist Futures' (<https://www.mountains-of-ore.org>). Her intersectional feminist research with communities and spaces of extractivism focuses on maintenance, futures and dealing with loss.

Kim Trogal (PhD) is Reader in Social and Political Design at the Canterbury School of Architecture, University for the Creative Arts. She is co-editor and contributor to books exploring the ethics and politics of contemporary practice, including *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture, Care and the City*, *Repair Matters* and *Borders and Boundaries in and Through Histories of Design* (forthcoming).

Lee Ivett is an award-winning architect, urban designer, educator and Head of the London School of Architecture. Founder of the participatory research studio Other People's Dreams, his work explores socially engaged architecture, everyday urban life and widening access to the profession through innovative models of architectural education

Scientific Committee

Magnus Ericson is a Stockholm-based curator. He is currently leading IASPIS' programme in design, craft, architecture, and spatial practice. In different institutional settings and as an independent curator, he has combined curatorial and pedagogical practice with an emphasis on socially engaged critical practice, alternative pedagogies, and creating spaces for learning.

Manijeh Verghese (she/her) is the CEO of Open City. She is also one of the Mayor of London's Design Advocates and an External Examiner for the M.Arch programme at The Bartlett, UCL. She is on the Board of Trustees for the Architecture Foundation and a member of the advisory board for The DisOrdinary Architecture Project.

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Ruth Lang (PhD) is an architect, researcher, curator, and MArch programme lead at the London School of Architecture. Her work explores how contemporary architectural practice can be restructured to more equitably address issues of diversity and the Climate Emergency, using collaborative and transdisciplinary research strategies.

Sara Brolund de Carvalho is an architect, educator and PhD student at KTH, Stockholm. Working in the intersection of architecture, urban planning and art, she writes on collective housing, common rooms and themes of spatial care and community building. She is a founding member of the research group Aktion Arkiv.

Torange Khonsari is co-founder and director of the urbanism, public art and architecture practice, public works, since 2004. An interdisciplinary practice working on the threshold of participatory and performative art, architecture, anthropology and politics. Her projects directly impact public space, working with local organisations, communities, government bodies and stakeholders.

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Conference Organising Team

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Meike Schalk is a professor of urban design and urban theory at the KTH School of Architecture in Stockholm. She pursues practice-based research in the field of environmental learning. In 2024, she launched the first Learnings/Unlearnings conference in Stockholm and initiated the series Learnings/Unlearnings Readers published on the Urgent Pedagogies platform (<https://urgentpedagogies.iaspis.se/>).

Nicola Antaki (PhD) is an architect, researcher and Senior Lecturer at the London School of Architecture. She has run Collective Design Practice since 2022, with a focus on co-designing public space. Her work has centered on public engagement and ecological resilience in London, Paris and Mumbai. She is a Thornton Education Trust Associate.

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