



# Refinement and Explication of Methods

Work Package 1.6 - Deliverable 11

*Collection of Data*

# Work Package 1.6 Refinement and Explication of Methods

## Part one out of two: Collection of Data

### Deliverable 11

#### '19 accounts of the Refinement and Explication of Methods'

An internal document by ADAPT-r

Lead Partners:

Richard Blythe (RMIT)

Sally Stewart (Glasgow School of Art - GSA)

Veronika Valk (Estonian Academy of Arts - EAA)

Co-authored by

Alice Buoli, Cecilia De Marinis, Dorotea Ottaviani

Edited by

Sally Stewart

The interviews are to be considered as co-authored with the interviewees:

Alice Casey, Karin Helms, Eric Guibert, Martí Franch Batllori, Karli Luik, Michael Corr, Petra Marguč, Johannes Torpe, Anna Pla Catala, Marco Poletto, Sam Kebbell, Federico Del Vecchio, Dermot Foley, Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Claudia Pasquero, Koen Broucke, Ana Kreč, Alicia Velázquez, Jo Van Den Berghe, Arnaud Hendrickx, Toomas Tammis, Boštjan Vuga, Leon van Schaik, Jure Hrovat and Ana Kosi (SVET VMES).

The edited transcription of Supervisors Round Table Ghent PRS 2016 is to be considered as co-authored with the participants: Sally Stewart, Richard Blythe, Marcelo Stamm, Mauro Baracco, Tadeja Zupancic, Claus Peder Pedersen, Johan Verbeke, Michael McGarry, Veronika Valk.

The edited transcription of the Fellows Workshop Ghent PRS 2016 is to be considered as co-authored with the participants: Karin Helms, Koen Broucke, Ana Kreč, Hseng Tai Lintner, Petra Marguč, Irene Prieler, Michael Wildmann, Karli Luik, Eik Hermann, Federico Del Vecchio, Anna Pla Catala, Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Eric Guibert, Michael Corr, Mark Raymond, Alicia Velázquez, Chris Johnstone.

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Ben Robberechts, Hanne Van Den Biesen & Sam Dieltjens

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*Collection of Data*

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**Karin Helms**  
*RMIT Europe, Spain*

**Eric Guibert**  
*KULeuven, Faculty of Architecture, Sint Lucas, Belgium*

**Martí Franch Batllori**  
*The Glasgow School of Art, UK*

**Karli Luik**  
*Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia*

**Michael Corr**  
*Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia*

**Petra Marguč**  
*KULeuven, Faculty of Architecture, Sint Lucas, Belgium*

**Johannes Torpe**  
*University of Westminster, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, UK*

**Anna Pla Catala**  
*University of Westminster, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, UK*

**Marco Poletto**  
*Aarhus School of Architecture, Denmark*

**Sam Kebbell**

*University of Westminster, Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, UK*

**Federico Del Vecchio**

*University of Ljubljana, Slovenia*

**Dermot Foley**

*RMIT Europe, Spain*

**Siobhán Ní Éanaigh**

*RMIT Europe, Spain*

**Claudia Pasquero**

*Estonian Academy of Arts, Estonia*

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# Preface

Sally Stewart and Veronika Valk

December 2016

At the core of every creative practice is a desire to understand better what it is that we do when we practice our practice.

However we struggle to find tools and techniques, tricks and tactics that let us reveal to ourselves what has often become such an internal action, second nature, a reflex that we no longer remember or know what it is that we do. How then are we to examine our practices if we wish to avoid research of practice and instead produce research for practice as Ranulph Glanville would gently remind us.

Here within this collection of research accounts, findings, observations, dialogues are presented a repertoire of moves that, in following them, may allow the practitioner to examine their own practice in the mode of practice itself. Reading these will provide insights, particularly due to the extraordinary range of ADAPT-r fellows and the diversity of their individual perspectives and research journeys, while this repertoire is also offered as a tool for practice itself, to be utilized, developed and extended to support new networks and constellations.

Sally Stewart

Deputy Head of the Mackintosh School of Architecture, the Glasgow School of Art, Reader in Architectural Education and Practice.

Knowledge production and sharing in architecture in operational and experimental. Architect is simultaneously operating on many fronts: client's demands (that might be conflicting), considering the physical context (urban fabric, soil, geology etc), requirements by the planning authority, budgetary issues, among many others. Dealing with them requires a form of knowledge rooted within and surface through the very act of designing. The venturesome practitioners engaged in the ADAPT-r project have rigorously searched for ways to provide access to the profession's knowledge, each following a uniquely individual methodology.

Yet certain undercurrents surface as common. For instance, practicing architecture is learned primarily by studio-based experience. The studio-based model means that architects' education relies largely on learning in action, learning



through the practice of designing. According to Ranulph Glanville, contrary to scientification of design, we can look at design as a way to come across a solution which in turn tells us about what the problem was. It is exactly the opposite way around to this approach of problem solving where we define a problem to get to solution. In design, it is the solution that precedes the problem.

**Veronika Valk**

Head of Research at the Estonian Academy of Arts Faculty of Architecture.



# INTRODUCTION

## *Guide to Deliverable 11*



# Introduction and guide to Deliverable 11

*The 'Introduction and guide to Deliverable 11' aims to clarify the topics and contents of the research and its backstage, as well the research journey that the authors have taken throughout 2016.*

## Map of the Research

The reporting activity for Work Packages 1.5 “Explication of Tacit Knowledge” and 1.6 “Refinement and Explication of Methods” follows a symmetric narrative approach, in coherence with the former Deliverables.

The research for both Work Packages have been documented through two distinct documents: the first devoted to the presentation of the main data which have been collected throughout the research trajectory; the second reporting the interpretative reading and working on the data.

The following chart describes relationships between Data Collection and Interpretative Research and the main contents of each deliverable.

<b>Work Package 1.5</b> Explication of Tacit Knowledge	<b>Work Package 1.6</b> Refinement and Explication of Methods
<b>Collection of Data</b>	
<b>Deliverable 9</b> 20 accounts making explicit the Tacit Knowledge developed by venturous practice	<b>Deliverable 11</b> 19 accounts of the Refinement and Explication of Methods
Chapter 1. Methodology Chapter 2. 20 Accounts Chapter 3. Conversations with supervisors on Tacit Knowledge Chapter 4. Reports and other documents	Chapter 1. Methodology Chapter 2. 19 Accounts Chapter 3. Conversations with supervisors on Methods Chapter 4. Reports and other documents
<b>Interpretation</b>	
<b>Deliverable 10</b> Synthesis of combined explication of Tacit Knowledge	<b>Deliverable 11b</b> Refinement and explication of Methods
Chapter 1. Research Operations Chapter 2. Tacit Knowledge in CPR Chapter 3. Focused Views <u>Chapter 4. Cross Views</u>	Chapter 1. Research Operations Chapter 2. Creative Practice Research Methods Chapter 3. Focused Views <u>Chapter 4. Cross Views</u>

Along with an in-depth explanation of the methodological approach adopted in the research, the two deliverables devoted to the Collection of Data (9 and 11) present two different kind of materials: from one side a series of interviews (or accounts) conducted with ADAPT-r practitioners on the two macro themes “Making explicit Tacit Knowledge developed by venturous practice” and “Refinement and Explication of Methods”; from the other, the collected reports of the research activities we have run throughout the year: workshops, roundtable, research trips, ADAPT-r Days, further interviews with other ADAPT-r actors (supervisors and partners).

A distinctive feature between Deliverables 9 and 11 regards the contents of the accounts and reports, which are tailored around the two Work Packages. Even though following a similar structure in terms of contents organization, Deliverable 9 and 11 report original research data, which are meant as continuous dialogue across the four documents.

Conversely, the reports devoted to interpretation (Deliverable 10 and 11b) are meant to provide evidence supporting our main research hypothesis: the mutual influence and sustenance among two dimensions of the Creative Practice Research: Tacit Knowledge and Methods (further presented in the following introducing pages) and for this reason, together with a common methodological approach and contents’ structure, the two interpretative reports have substantial overlaps as regards the last two sections: Focused Views and Cross Views. These two interpretative tools will be explained more in depth in Chapter 1. It is our intention to assert that Focused and Cross Views - drawn on the methodological approach developed in Deliverables 1-4 by Experienced Researchers Maria Veltcheva and Valentina Signore - are to be considered as the core interpretative features of our research and are meant to work in an integrated way across Deliverable 10 and 11b.

On one hand, the Focused Views are individual accounts of a selection of Venturous Creative Practices involved in ADAPT-r practice-based PhD, aiming to report/provide a description and interpretation of each practice through the reading key of the main topic of this research: Tacit Knowledge (Deliverable 10) and Refinement and Explication of Methods (Deliverable 11b).

On the other hand, the Cross Views aim to explore a series of thematic clusters which are transversal and shared among ADAPT-r practitioners. Continuing on from Deliverables 1-4, a Cross View can be defined as “*a thread that connects some practices not to unify or make a synthesis of them, but to even emphasize their singularities around similar issues*”.<sup>1</sup>

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1 ADAPT-r Deliverable 2, p. 15.

## Work packages and Deliverables

This work, entitled '*Collection of Data. 19 accounts of the Refinement and Explication of Methods*', presents a collection of data with the aim of giving an overview of the ADAPT-r ecosystem in relation to the topic of Methods, gathering the multiplicity of reflections, insights, perspectives and meanings developed inside the program and collected throughout 2016 by the Experienced Researchers.

The report is part of a research on Work Package 1.5 ('*Explicating Tacit Knowledge about Innovative Practice*') and Work Package 1.6 ('*Refinement and Explication of Methods*') which comprises three more volumes: Deliverable 9 '*Collection of Data. 20 accounts making explicit the tacit knowledge developed by venturous practice*', Deliverable 10 '*Interpretation. Synthesis of combined explications of Tacit Knowledge providing an overview of the ADAPT-r research*', and Deliverable 11b '*Interpretation. Refinement and Explication of Methods*'.

The two Work Packages have been addressed in parallel and in an integrated way throughout the research, as a consequence of the mutual influence and sustenance among these two dimension of the Creative Practice Research (Tacit Knowledge and Methods).

## Aims & approach

This document presents more specifically the sources for the Deliverable 11b '*Interpretation. Refinement and Explication of Methods*', which embodies an analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. Therefore, the two Deliverables 11 and 11b are meant to be read together since they work in an interrelated way.

This collection is formed by several accounts of the activities we have undertaken during our research. These can be divided in collective and individual research activities we conducted in collaboration with ADAPT-r fellows, partners and supervisors. The individual accounts are achieved through interviews with ADAPT-r fellows, while the collective accounts are focused on the 'conversations' among peers and supervisors within the ADAPT-r ecosystem with the aim to investigate the interactions and the production of collective new knowledge. Therefore these individual activities, along with the observations of the PRS of each fellows and of their work, provide the material of analysis for the Deliverable 11b.

This work attempts to be a record of different voices and to gather the multiplicity and diversity, within the project itself, with a focus of the topic of Methods.

To a larger extent, this work wishes to contribute to the comprehension of Creative Practice Research, through a heuristic approach.

## **Deliverable Structure**

The document is divided in four chapters.

The first chapter ‘Methodology / Research Operations’ is related to the meta-research Methodology we used. This section articulates and describes in depth the research operations that have been undertaken in order to collect the data for the analysis and research.

The meta-research operations carried out are: semi-structured interviews, workshops and roundtables / focus group, direct observations of the Practice Research Symposia (PRS) presentations and vivas, and presentations at the ADAPT-r Days, the design of diagrams and of a call for postcards (on the topic of ‘Scientific Autobiography’).

The second chapter ‘19 Accounts / Focused Interviews’ presents the edited transcriptions of the ‘focused Interviews’ we designed and accomplished with 19 ADAPT-r fellows, in relation to the topic of Methods.

Chapter Three presents a series of interviews with supervisors and co-supervisors on the topic of Methods.

The fourth chapter is constituted by a series reports and edited transcriptions of the collective activities we carried out with the ADAPT-r PhD candidates and supervisors, with the extended community of the ADAPT-r project and with practice-based PhD supervisors, practitioners and scholars outside the program.

## **Who we are: prior to ADAPT-r**

As Experienced Researchers, although coming from different cities in Italy, we all share a common background in terms of higher education and professional training.

**Alice Buoli** received her Master of Architecture and PhD in Territorial Design and Government at Politecnico di Milano (Italy). Prior to ADAPT-r her professional and academic activities focused on the intersection between urban studies, design thinking and borderlands studies. After a period of professional practice in the field of architecture and research and teaching activities in Italy, Spain and Belgium. In 2016 she has been an Experienced Researcher based at the Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn.

**Cecilia De Marinis** is an Architect trained in Architectural Design in Italy and Spain, with an interest in architecture as a socially transformative tool. She gained her Master of Architecture and PhD in Urban Sustainable Design at Roma Tre University. She has been working in several architectural offices in Italy and Spain, combining teaching with research and practice. After she has been an Experienced Researcher based at RMIT Europe, Barcelona.

**Dorotea Ottaviani** is an architect trained in Architectural Design in Italy and in the Netherlands. She gained her Phd at the Department of Architecture and Design, “Sapienza” University of Rome with a research on the transformation of public housing districts. Since 2010 she has been working as an architect since 2010 in different architectural firms in Italy, Germany and Portugal, before becoming an Experienced Researcher based at the Glasgow School of Art.



# CHAPTER 1

## *Research Operations*



# Research Operations

*The following chapter presents as an explanation of the methodology built throughout the process of meta-research on the Tacit Knowledge and the Methods within ADAPT-r project.*

*As explained in a broader way in the Deliverables 10 and 11b the two Work Packages (Work Package 1.5 'Explicating Tacit Knowledge about Innovative Practice' and Work Package 1.6 'Refinement and Explication of Methods') have been addressed in parallel and in an integrated way throughout the research, as a consequence of the mutual influence and sustenance between these two dimensions of the Creative Practice Research (Tacit Knowledge and Methods), the result of this approach can be perceived throughout the documents, with a constant resonance of one research on the other.*

## 1.1 Meta Research Methodology Overview

*Understanding meta-research as an interplay between theoretical research and heuristic research (creating reciprocity between conversations and diagrams)*

This chapter aims to present the adopted methodology underpinning this research work. In this occasion, the research operations that have been undertaken for the research will be illustrated and analyzed.

This research lies inside the sphere of the broad Qualitative Research methodological approach coming mainly from the field of the social sciences. Qualitative methods examine motivations and modes besides the quantitative and dimensional analysis.

In addition, the understanding of a phenomenon, a situation or an event is based on the totality of the situation, following a phenomenological/ heuristic approach. Such methods are usually more flexible, simplifying and making informal the interaction and collaboration between the researcher and the participant (*to be implemented*).

Four main techniques for generating data come under the qualitative research methods are: interviews, which can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured, participant observation, observation from a distance, and focus groups.

In this research work three data collection methods have been used:

- The semi-structured interview model, used to undertake individual interviews defined as *Focused Interviews* to highlight the interest in the specificity of each practitioner involved in the ADAPT-r system.
- The observation from a distance consisting of attendance to PRS presentations and presentations final examinations, and analysis on the materials submitted by the fellows.

- The focus group, a moderated group interview process, with the aim to trigger collective debate and interchange among actors involved in the project. In this research the method of the focus group has been used to structure workshops and a Round table.

The three methods will be explained in depth in the following sections.

## 1.2 Data Collection Methods

### 1.2.1 Focused interviews / Semi-structured Interviews

#### **Focused interviews methodology adopted: semi-structured interviews**

Interviews are designed to be focused and tailor-made for every practitioner. We start from the review of the practitioner's materials submitted for the ADAPT-r project and on this base we formulate a series of questions on the topics of the Tacit Knowledge and of the Methods.

Before every interview an agenda with the topics and the following key-words is sent to the practitioner.

#### *Characteristics of semi-structured interviews*

- The interviewer (the Experienced Researcher team) and respondent (the practitioner) engage in a formal interview.
- The interviewer develops and uses an 'interview guide.' This is a list of questions and topics that need to be covered during the conversation, usually in a particular order.
- The interviewer follows the guide, but is able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that may stray from the guide when he or she feels this is appropriate.

#### *When to use semi-structured interviews*

According to Bernard (1988)<sup>1</sup>, the semi-structured interviewing is best used when there will be no more than one chance to interview someone and when you will be sending several interviewers out into the field to collect data.

The semi-structured interview guide provides a clear set of instructions, a scaffolding of themes, for interviewers and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data.

Semi-structured interviews are preceded by observation, analysis on the materials

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1 Bernard, H., 1988, Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology, Sage Publications, Newbury Park, CA.

submitted by the fellows, informal and unstructured interviewing in order to allow the researchers to develop a keen understanding of the topic of interest necessary for developing relevant and meaningful semi-structured questions.

The inclusion of open-ended questions and training of interviewers to follow relevant topics that may stray from the interview guide does, however, still provide the opportunity for identifying new ways of seeing and understanding the topic at hand.

#### *Recording Semi-Structured interviews*

The interviewers have a paper-based interview guide to follow. Since semi-structured interviews often contain open-ended questions and discussions may diverge from the interview guide, the interviews are tape-recorded and later transcribed for analysis while hand-written notes have been used for adjusting the following questions but do not form the base for the report of the interviews.

#### *Benefits and outcomes*

Semi-structured interviews allow the practitioner the freedom to express their views in their own terms and they can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data. The objective is to understand the respondent's point of view rather than make generalisations about behaviour. It uses open-ended questions, some suggested by the researcher ("Tell me about...") and some arise naturally during the interview ("You said a moment ago...can you tell me more?").

The researcher tries to build a relationship with the respondent and the interview is like a conversation. Questions are asked when the interviewer feels it is appropriate to ask them. They may be prepared questions or questions that occur to the researcher during the interview.

The wording of questions is not necessarily the same for all practitioners.

Few days before the interview a list of key-words on the themes of the interview is sent to the respondents allowing them to consider what the interview will be focused on.

### **Interview guide**

Since every interview is specifically focused on the experience of the individual practitioner the following list of questions is not a fixed structure but more a scaffold of thematics that are likely to be crossed during the dialogue with the fellow. This guide is meant to show the themes which were more likely to be covered during the interviews and some of the questions asked for every element of interest for the research.

## Interview structure and questions

### Key Words<sup>1</sup>:

#### 1) Tacit Knowledge

*Memory*

*Mental space*

*The experiencing self and the remembering self*

*Spatial intelligence*

*Spatial history of the practice*

*Space of perception and memory, built through the spatial intelligence*

*Subterrain/terrain (circular process of nourishment from the unconscious to the conscious)*

*Tacit drivers*

*Skill-based knowledge (phronesis)*

*Intellectual knowledge (sophia)*

#### 2) Methods

*Supervising process*

*PhD Journey*

*Interpretation/ deviation*

*The role of the PRS*

*Case Studies*

*Community of Practice*

*Transformative Triggers*

*Public Behaviors*

*Tacit Knowledge*

*Reflection on, Reflection in, Reflection for*

*Interpretation of Adapt-r methodology by the specific research method of the fellow*

### Prompts

- *How/why did you decided to enrolled in a practice-based PhD?*
- *What were you doing at the time you started your PhD?*

### About Tacit Knowledge:

#### a. Tacit Knowledge Background

- *Can you briefly tell us about your most relevant educational/training experience?*
- *Can you tell us about any memory or experience that you think had lead to become an artist/architect?*
- *How do you think that these experiences/memories have affected your mental space?*

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1 A list of keywords is sent to fellows prior to the interview

## b. Reading / Interpreting Tacit Knowledge in Creative Practice

- *What would you consider to be urges and fascinations in your creative process?*
- *Could you tell us more about how you have discovered these urges and fascinations that drive you in your creative process and research?*
- *How do you think your environment and your community of practice aids the discovery of your urges? (Environmental Tacit Knowledge)*
- *Who do you think has/could most effectively prompt or support the discovery of such urges and fascinations? (Environmental Tacit Knowledge)*
- *How has the recognition of these urge and fascination occurred in the way of an epiphany or it was a slow and unfolding process of discover?*
- *How has this discovery of Tacit Knowledge is changing your practice? In what ways are you acting with more awareness? Do you recognize a circular process of arise of the awareness between the implicit and the explicit? Were there key moments of shifting in your practice, due to the emerging of Tacit Knowledge?*

## b.1 Artifacts

- *What role does the media / artefacts you use and produce have in surfacing Tacit Knowledge in your research?*
- *Which artifact or media helps you the best in researching and understanding your urges and fascinations?*

## b.2 Multidisciplinarity

- *How do you think multidisciplinarity influences your creativity process?*
- *Where and how do you look for the tacit dimension of knowledge in (your) Creative Practice?*

## c. Discovering Tacit Knowledge

- *How do you mediate between your urges and fascinations and the requests and needs of your clients?*
- *Does a kind of “collective tacit knowledge” exist in your practice? Who are the people with whom you share such knowledge?*

## d. Self positioning and self-defining

- *Can you explain your social positioning as practitioner / researcher and in relation to your communities of references (clients, students, civil society, etc.)? And how has ADAPT-r Method fed the awareness about this position?*

## **About the “Refinement and Explication of Methods”:**

### a. Methodology and Methods + PhD as a Journey

- *What are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project?*
- *How would do you describe your journey through these elements?*

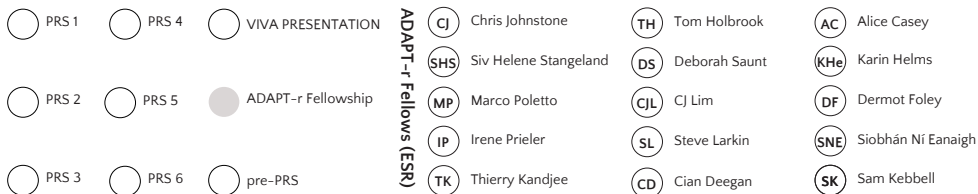
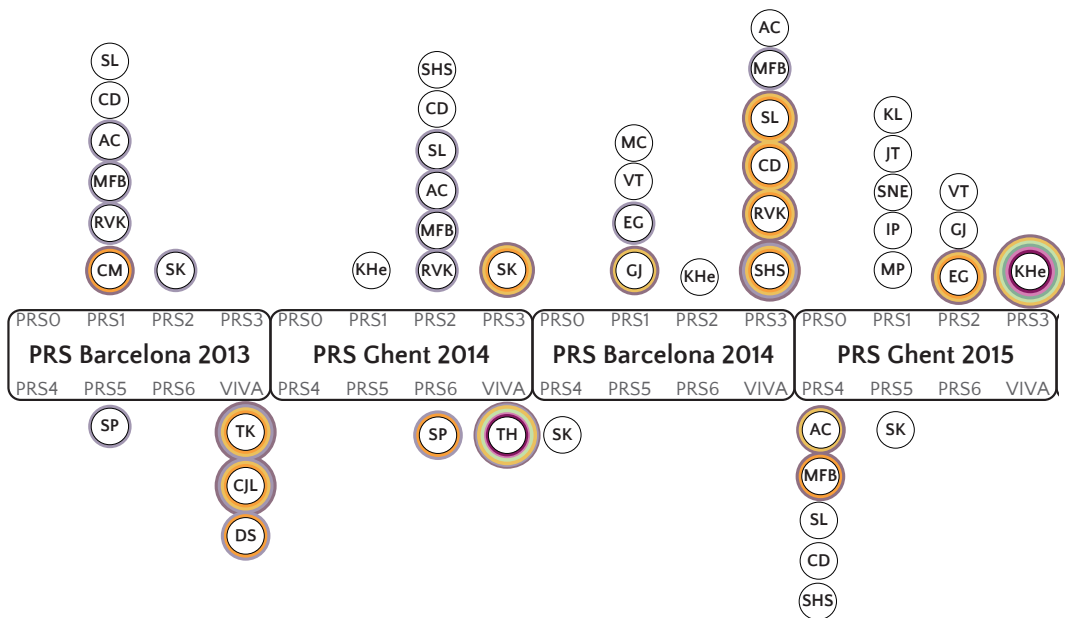
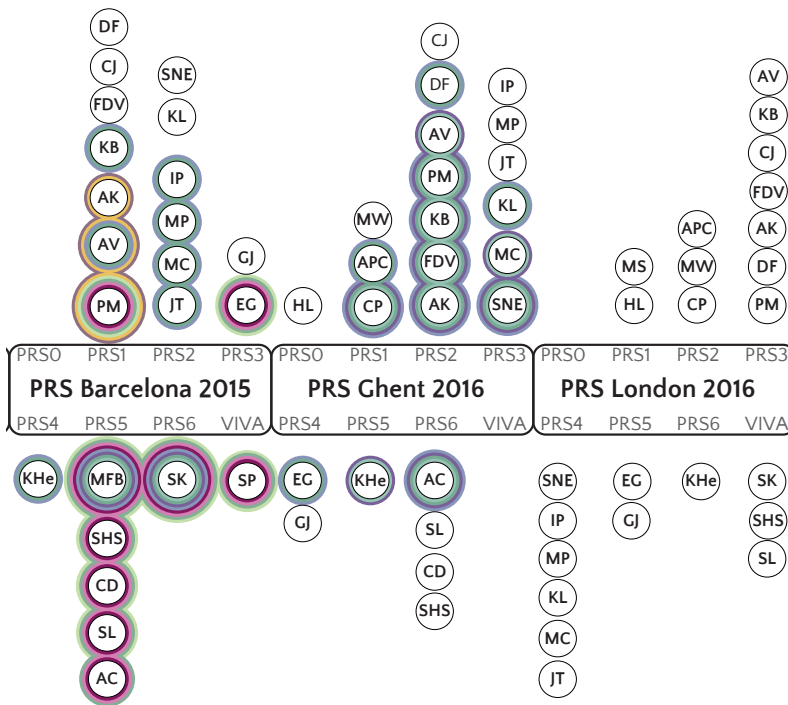


Fig. 1 / Fellows interviews throughout ADAPT-r according to PRS and Work Package sequence



- |                            |                            |                                  |                                 |        |        |            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------|--------|------------|
| <b>CM</b> Colm Moore       | <b>PM</b> Petra Marguc     | <b>RVK</b> Rosanne Van Klaveren  | <b>KB</b> Koen Broucke          | Del. 4 | Del. 8 | Del. 11bis |
| <b>JT</b> Johannes Torpe   | <b>VT</b> Villem Tomiste   | <b>MC</b> Michael Corr           | <b>KL</b> Karli Luik            | Del. 3 | Del. 7 | Del. 11    |
| <b>APC</b> Anna Pla Catala | <b>AK</b> Ana Krec         | <b>CP</b> Claudia Pasquero       | <b>FDV</b> Federico Del Vecchio | Del. 2 | Del. 6 | Del. 10    |
| <b>HL</b> HsengTai Lintner | <b>AV</b> Alicia Velazquez | <b>SP</b> Sebastien Penfornis    | <b>GJ</b> Gitte Juul            | Del. 1 | Del. 5 | Del. 9     |
| <b>EG</b> Eric Guibert     | <b>MW</b> Michael Wildmann | <b>MFB</b> Marti Franch Battlari | <b>MS</b> Marija Strajnic       |        |        |            |

- *How has the discovery of your urges and fascinations occurred in your research?*
- *How is this recognition affecting the way you design?*
- *How has the ADAPT-r methodology affected the research on your practice?*
- *Can you describe moments of adherence or of distance from those ADAPT-r's steps?*
- *How do you understand and interpret the overlapping structure of the training of the adapt project? Which part of the training is mostly relevant for you?*

#### b. Supervising process

- *How do you describe your relation with your supervisor(s)?*
- *Can you tell us a key moment in this relationship?*
- *How has the ADAPT-r supervising / PRS model stimulated your method of research?*
- *Did you discover any new research methods during the PhD path?*

#### c. Community of practice

- *Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers?*
- *How your relation with clients, students and other people you work with outside the studio has changed?*

#### d. PRS system

- *How do you describe the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, presentation itself, panel's feedback)?*

#### e. Social Role

- *Can you explain your social positioning as practitioner / researcher and in relation to your communities of references (clients, students, civil society, etc..)? And how ADAPT-r Method has fed the awareness about this position?*

#### d. Glossary

- *Have you adopted any of the ADAPT-r project terms in your research?*
- *Do these words affect the way you look to your practice?*
- *Are there any new meanings that you see around such glossary?*
- *Do you see any evolution in such lexicon throughout your PhD journey?*

#### e. Mobility & Displacement

- *Can you tell us about the most relevant outcomes of your mobility / fellowship to your institution? How does displacement is affecting your research? How are you using the "commuting" time?*

#### f. Question about the influence of the PhD: past-present-future:

- *How do you think, the PhD process has changed your way of looking at your past*

*practice?*

- *How do you think being involved in a practice based research is affecting in the present your practice?*
- *How do you think the PhD will affect your future practice?*

### **1.2.2 Workshops**

*The Workshops aim to:*

- *Collect anecdotes / examples of interpretations and discoveries during the PhD journey*
- *Explore the topics of Tacit Knowledge and Methods in practitioners' work – through their voices*
- *Trigger the debate about Tacit Knowledge and Methods among peers*
- *Stimulate other views / perspectives of fellows' work*

#### **Workshop key methodology adopted**

Workshops provide a data collection opportunity, as well as focus groups (see below Round table), that provides insights from both an individual and collective perspective. Workshops are means of engaging people in dialogue in relation to a specific proposed topic.

In creative practice, workshops are usually focused on the creation/production of an tangible outcome. In fact, in workshops the topic is addressed and interpreted through the production or tangible “products/objects” individually or collectively. The discussion hinges on such tangibles products, which are at the same time the outcomes of the workshop.

It is important to ensure that as well as meeting the needs of the researchers, workshop activities are designed in such a way as to keep people stimulated and engaged with the research.

*Workshops may be used:*

- To engage people with a research topic.
- To introduce a new concept, spurring participants on to investigate it further on their own, and encourage the practice of actual methods.
- To provide individual and collective insights about the addressed topic.
- To create or strengthen a sense of community or common purpose among its participants.

*Main general features:*

- Generally small, usually from 6 to 15 participants, allowing everyone some personal attention and the chance to be heard.
- Often designed for people who are working together, or working in the same field.

- Conducted by people who have real experience in the subject under discussion.
- Often participatory, i.e. participants are active, both in that they influence the direction of the workshop and also in that they have a chance to practice the techniques, skills, etc. that are under discussion.
- Informal; there's a good deal of discussion in addition to participation, rather than just a teacher presenting material to be absorbed by attentive students.
- Time limited, often to a single session, although some may involve multiple sessions.
- Self-contained. Although a workshop may end with handouts and suggestions for further reading or study for those who are interested, the presentation is generally meant to stand on its own.

### **Structure of the workshops: activities in general**

The following structure highlights the general activities undertaken and the main points of a workshop, as developed on the basis of the methodology previously explained. Every single workshop has then different steps and parts in regards to the topic covered.

#### *a. Introduction and presentations of the topics by the ERs*

#### *b. Activity*

Practitioners are invited to interact with given diagrams/drawings or written words with their own diagrams/drawings/written words in order to explain their interpretations in relation to the proposed topic of discussion

#### *c. Presentation of the outcomes*

Every practitioner is invited to explain their diagrams. A discussion follows, observing the different diagrams/drawings, and sharing the different experiences.

#### *d. Follow up*

After the workshop, a crossed analysis of the different emerged diagram will be undertaken by the ERs and the outcomes will be shared with the fellows

### **1.2.3 Round table / focus group**

#### *Aims of the Round table:*

1. *Involve ADAPT-r partners and supervisors in the debate on ADAPT-r Training activities and methods*
2. *Unfold "Training" in its dimensions and moments through the voices and the debates among the supervisors*

3. *Highlight the key elements of innovation of ADAPT-r Training in the arena of Creative Practice Research PhD programs*
4. *Understand the supervisors' roles and interactions during the key moments of the Training activities, in particular the PRS*
5. *Draft some potential "horizons of change" in Training and Supervision Methods*

### **Focus group and key methodology adopted**

Focus groups are a data collection method, providing insights into how people think and helping developing a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied. Focus groups are group interviews that give the researcher the ability to capture deeper information more economically than individual interviews. Data is collected through a semi-structured group interview process. Focus groups are moderated by a group leader.

#### *Focus groups may be used:*

- To explore new research areas
- To explore a topic that is difficult to observe (not easy to gain access)
- To explore a topic that does not lend itself to observational techniques (e.g. attitudes and decision-making)
- To explore sensitive topics
- To collect a concentrated set of observations in a short time span
- To ascertain perspectives and experiences from people on a topic, particularly when these are people who might otherwise be marginalized

#### *Amount of people in a focus group:*

A focus group is a small group of six to ten people led through an open discussion by a skilled moderator. The group needs to be large enough to generate rich discussion but not so large that some participants are left out.

#### *There are three types of focus group questions:*

1. Engagement questions: introduce participants to and make them comfortable with the topic of discussion
2. Exploration questions: get to the meat of the discussion
3. Exit question: check to see if anything was missed in the discussion

### **Structure of the Round table**

The following structure highlights the general activities undertaken and the main points of a focus group, as developed on the basis of the methodology previously explained. Every single activity has then different steps and parts in regards to the topic covered.

*a. Introduction to the Round Table and presentation of the topic addressed, by the ERs*

*b. Presentation of a series of 3 groups of questions on the topic:*

1. Engagement questions
2. Triggering / Exploration questions
3. Future-oriented questions

*c. Round of opinions on the topic addressed*

Participants are invited to articulate their opinions and experiences around such questions.

*d. Debate*

*e. Conclusions*

#### **1.2.4 Direct observation and Field working**

The research is undertaken with an heuristic approach, doing a systematic exploration of practitioners' work. The core of the research is the observation of the PhD process from a meta level perspective. The observation is done at multiple and variable distances, shifting from a closer look at each practice until the meta-level of a comprehensive view on the ADAPT-r project. (Observation from a distance: method of the Qualitative research)

During this research, the observation of the practitioners has been carried out with different tools and in different situations, in order to collect different information by more or less structured positions.

Here the list of kind of situation in which we have observed the practitioners:

The documents submitted by them for the ADAPT-r project

Practice Research Symposium (PRS) presentations

Final Examinations

Supervision processes

Presentations at ADAPT-r Days

Workshops

Visits to the studio

Due to the pivotal role played by the Practice Research Symposium (PRS) in the methodology of this PhD<sup>2</sup>, as it will be further explained in this research, the presentations made by the practitioner during the symposia are key moments on which this research has focused. The direct observation in this context has the closest meaning to that usually given to the methodology of Qualitative Research

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2 Cfr. Report PRS Melbourne Deliverable 11 and Paragraph on PRS Deliverable 11b

as the observers do not try to participate in or contribute to the context and, on the contrary, they strive to be as neutral as possible toward the presentations, trying to engage in the most detached perspective possible. Technology plays a useful part in this kind of observations, as the videotape or audiotape, allowing the presentations to be reviewed many times in order to take as much information, data and impressions as possible.

The same kind of attitude is employed by the researchers in the observation of the supervision process<sup>3</sup>, another essential moment of the practice-based PhD methodology. The critical distance of a creative practitioner observing his/her practice could be identified as a 'zero distance', that means observing in the practice while practicing. The supervisor comes the closest possible to this 'zero distance' in order to be as effective as possible. The meta-researcher participates to these encounters keeping the distance to it to observe the process directly, without biasing it to any extent but looking at them in real time, without having them filtered or post processed by the PhD candidate.

### 1.3 Interpretative Methods

#### 1.3.1 Diagrams and Constellations

Like practitioners in their research journeys, we use diagramming and mapping to understand, interpret and communicate our research insights and outcomes.

The techniques of diagramming and mapping allow to transfer knowledge that is otherwise not easily expressed in words. These also facilitate the highlighting of relevant topics and allow different levels of reading. In fact, they are used not only as a means to move forwards with the research and explain it, but also to trigger new reflection on the practitioners, in relation to the research topics.

Diagrams have been used for both Tacit Knowledge and Methods' investigations.

#### **Explications of Tacit Knowledge: From the Tacit Knowledge Constellar Taxonomy to the Tacit Knowledge Cloud of Meanings**

This research has been addressed across three main phases.

In addressing the research on the topic of Tacit Knowledge we started with a inductive process of analysis/study, attempting to define categories and give meanings to the concept of Tacit Knowledge [Fig.1].

We conducted a research on the literature about the Tacit Knowledge. On the base of what we found we extrapolated the meanings and topics that we arranged in the taxonomy.

Following this method we developed a tool that we called *Tacit Knowledge Constellar Taxonomy* [Fig.2].

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3 Cfr. Report Trip to Ireland Deliverable 11 and Paragraph on Supervision Deliverable 11b

Subsequently this tool allowed us to build a system of ideas around the concept of Tacit Knowledge. The practitioners were introduced to it during a workshop (See the Report of Workshop Barcelona February 2016, Chapter 4) and asked to interact with it.

Reflection led us to open the tools on the outcomes of the above mentioned workshop and to shift its focus from the theoretical perspective, through which we were looking at the Tacit Knowledge, to the actual work of the practitioners, drawing attention to the multiplicity and diversity and trying to capture the complexity of the critical mass we had at our disposal for our research.

Starting from this new insight we addressed the investigation of a deductive method. This second phase of the research led us to the definition of a new tool the *Tacit Knowledge Cloud of meanings* [Fig.3] which is an open and growing system. The shift between the first phase and the second phase happened through the direct and methodical observation of the practitioners' work (work, behaviours, work, presentations), applying an heuristic approach.

What have emerged from our research is the importance of the integration between both the theoretical and heuristic approaches to address the research, the need for a dialogue between the two, within the realm of creative practice-based research.

The Cloud of Meanings is an organising framework which help us in collecting and describing uses and meanings of Tacit Knowledge emerging in practitioners' actions and artefacts allowing us to depict them in a multidirectional structure where a series of macro descriptive categories (namely background, mind and body, and media) are used to define and select different meanings and mechanisms of Tacit Knowledge.

### **Refinement and explication of Methods: mapping the ADAPT-r programme**

We have produced a number of diagrams to explain and make clear how the ADAPT-r ecosystem works, what are the relationships between the involved actors, what are the key methodological elements of the projects, the multiplicity and diversity within the project.

The following diagrams about Work Package 1.6 are integrated in Deliverable 11b:

1. Levels of the methods + ADAPT-r methodology
2. Diagram PRS in the ADAPT-r project #1: mapping each fellow's PRS stages during the ADAPT-r three years project
3. Diagram PRS 2 in the ADAPT-r project #2: mapping for every PRS (1. Barcelona November 2013, 2. Ghent April 2014, 3. Barcelona November 2014 ... etc) in which fellows participated
4. ADAPT-r ITN (Training + PRS)
5. PRS supervising moments - sequence
6. PhD Journey
7. ADAPT-r Geographies
8. ADAPT-r Ecosystem



Fig. 2 / Tacit Knowledge Constellar Cloud – example of the words and meanings

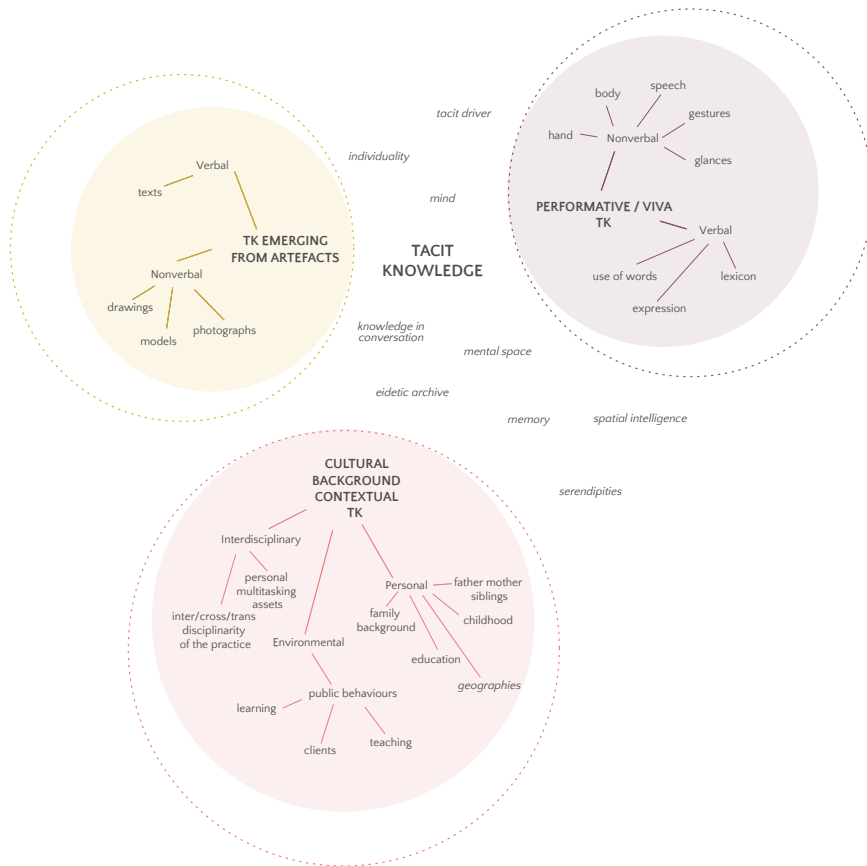


Fig. 3 / First Constellar Taxonomy of Meanings of Tacit Knowledge

### 1.3.2 Focused Views

The Focused views are individual accounts of a selection of Venturous Creative Practices involved in the practice-based PhD, aiming to report/provide a description and interpretation of each practice through the reading key of the main topic of this research: Tacit Knowledge and Refinement and Explication of Methods. Analysis and interpretation are based on data collected through different meta-research methods adopted in this research work.

Accordingly, a crossed analysis of collected materials along with analysis of the material delivered by the fellows for their fellowships<sup>4</sup>, and attendance at the PRS events: the presentations and the informal moments, have been the starting point for interpretation.

The selection of the creative practices to be explored, analyzed and narrated, arises from the intent to cover a wide range of diversity. Practitioners coming from different fields, being at different steps of the PhD journeys, at different moments of their professional paths, have been selected to provide a broader framework/overview of creative practice research.

The focused views have been addressed separately from the two perspective of Tacit Knowledge<sup>5</sup> in creative practice and Refinement and Explication of Methods<sup>6</sup>, but they are meant to be read in an intertwined way, having internal references that allow an overlapped reading.

The views are meant to surface and highlight individuality and uniqueness of each practice. Hence, each report/views/storytelling is tailor-made in relation to the specificity of the practice, without following a predefined pattern. A series of macro-categories have been used only as a guide for interpretation, providing relevant themes to look at.

In relation to the topic of Tacit Knowledge, the analysis proceeded/moved according to the descriptive categories formulated for the research tool of the Tacit Knowledge Cloud of Meanings<sup>7</sup>: background, mind and body and media. This general guide provides a reference to explore and illustrate different meanings and mechanisms of tacit knowledge in terms of where it come from in each practice, how they discover, surface and communicate it.

Furthermore, the views/reports describe and analysed the specific urges and fascinations of the practices.

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4 The ADAPT-r fellows has to deliver several work packages in relation to the duration of their fellowships

5 Focused views, Deliverable 10 “Synthesis of combined explications of Tacit Knowledge providing an overview of the ADAPT-r research”, Chapter 3)

6 Focused views, Deliverable 11b “Refinement and Explication of Methods”, Chapter 4

7 Cfr. Paragraph 1.3.1 Diagrams

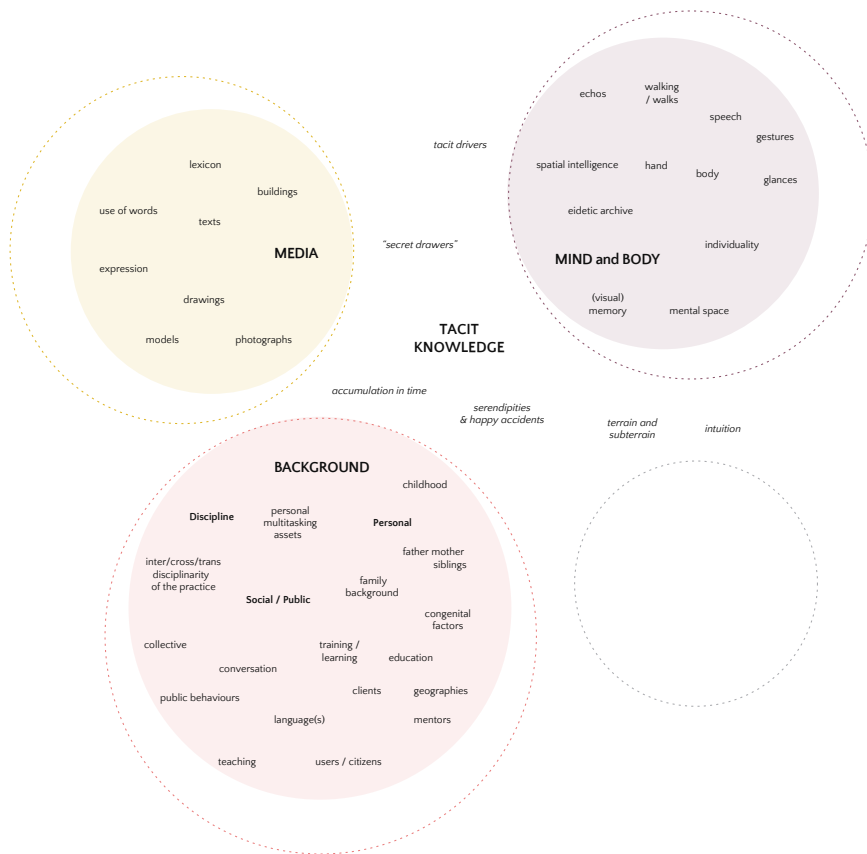


Fig. 4 / Cloud of Meanings of Tacit Knowledge

In the case of Explication and Refinement of Methods, the focused views follows a pattern referred to the focused interviews<sup>8</sup> guide. An exploration of the unique methods of research and practice addressed by the practitioners as well as their specific understanding and expectations related to the ADAPT-r/PhD methodology/framework and its features, are the main aspects of the narration.

The focused views, hence, provide an overview of the practices, highlighting specificity and singularity and manifesting a reiterative process of overlapping and cross-reference between Tacit Knowledge and Methods in creative practice. This verifies the initial assumption/intuition that the two topics are inseparable, since the PhD Methodology is a framework in which the development of individual methods, tactics and strategies move forward the process of surfacing tacit knowledge in creative practices.

### Focused Constellations

To allow quick reading of the Focused Views, the interpretative tool of the Focused Constellation has been adopted. This device captures in a diagram the main relevant concepts/topics emerged from the reports/narrations, summarizing relations and connections among them. Another layer of reading is given by relevant projects and places defining the field of action of the practitioners and strengthening the connection between interpretation and practitioner's work.

The depiction as a constellation suggest/hint at the openness and expansion of the "story", providing a "snapshot"/a section along the research and professional path of the practitioner.

### **1.3.3 Cross Views (Intertwined views between Tacit Knowledge and Methods)**

As a further interpretative step, drawn on the intersection between the above-mentioned Focused Views, the Cross Views aim to explore a series of thematic clusters which are transversal and shared among ADAPT-r practitioners.

Continuing on from Deliverables 1-4, a Cross View can be defined as "*a thread that connects some practices not to unify or make a synthesis of them, but to even emphasize their singularities around similar issues*"<sup>9</sup>.

Along with such general use and meaning of the Cross View, a crucial methodological and epistemological premise lies on the hypothesis that Tacit Knowledge and Practice Research Methods are two different dimensions of a practice which are impossible to read as separate categories.

Consistent with the distinction proposed by the organisation of ADAPT-r Work Packages, we have conceived each practice as a "prism" with many "facets".

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8 Cfr. Paragraph 1.2.1 Focused interviews

9 ADAPT-r Deliverable 2, p. 15

Tacit Knowledge and Methods can be seen as two foundational dimensions of the practice, with a further specific reflection: the ontological circularity between thinking and doing<sup>10</sup>, between knowledge and its mechanism of production.

What began as an intuition in the early research design of our methodological approach, such hypothesis has become a key insight during the observation of the practices and the encounters with fellows and supervisors. In particular the interviews we conducted during the data collection phase showed us how practitioners tend to talk about their methods of research while explaining the relevance, role and functioning of the tacit knowledge embedded in their research and personal trajectories and vice-versa. Such common and diffuse “reaction” to the questions we designed for the individual interviews witnesses a semantic stratification and a mutual exchange across a series of thematic fields which are meant to function as interpretative “hinges” at two levels: between practitioners’ and between the “facets” of the different practices.

For this reason we choose to adopt a unique set of Cross Views for the two Work Packages and Deliverables<sup>11</sup>, as intertwined thematic fields which are built around recurrent fascinations and drivers of research, as well as common research methods. These are organised in 6 different accounts or “views”: ***Details - Reiterations - Sensing, Visualising and Using Time - (Being) In-Between - Conversation - Body/spatial experience.***

“**Details**” explore the different meanings and uses of details in some of the practitioners: as a transcalar unifying and metonymic device between ideas and phenomena, as a research tool allowing the practitioner to make visible the invisible and as a lens through which the practitioner can look at reality and everyday life, and make everyday life a material of research.

“**Reiterations**” explains and develops further the hypothesis of the circularity among doing and thinking (and back) and the role of reiteration as design strategy and a research methodology.

“**Sensing, Visualizing and Using Time**” creates a common interpretative framework to read Creative Practice Research across the two thematic poles at the centre of our research: from one side the elements of the “spatial history” emerging from memories, fascinations and expectations (*Sensing Time*), and from the other the methodological apparatuses adopted to make time visible as a design “material” (*Visualising Time*) and as a research method tool (*Using Time*).

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10 Ranulph Glanville suggests that: “we get our intellectual knowledge from doing and we test it by returning to doing” (Glanville 2014)

11 Work Package 1.5 ‘Explicating Tacit Knowledge about Innovative Practice’ and Work Package 1.6 ‘Refinement and Explication of Methods - ADAPT-r Deliverables 9, 10, 11 and 15

**“(Being) In-Between”** explores “in-betweenness” as a feature of the personal and professional trajectories of professionals, as a conceptual / “political” self-positioning and as a design strategy and research methodology.

**“Conversation”** explores the topic by conceiving conversation as a driver in/for the circular process from tacit to explicit knowledge, as a sharing “place” to build a collective tacit knowledge. Conversation is explored at different levels and through the role of language inside ADAPT-r community and spaces of encounter.

**“Body/spatial experience”** explores the physical and mental role of (spatial) movement and experiences as a mechanism for surfacing tacit knowledge and producing new knowledge.

## 1.4 The Scientific Autobiography

As previously mentioned, two Work Packages which have been studied and analysed as a complex unit were Tacit Knowledge and Methods each allowing the development and surfacing of the other and vice versa. In this sense we found it necessary to deploy a tool which could help in the description of this subtle and inextricable link between these two elements.

As such we imagined an interpretative tool which could help in this task. The idea of a Scientific Autobiography (referring to Aldo Rossi’s use and conceptualisation of the term - cfr. Rossi, 1981) was adopted as a “place” that can host the narrative of the practitioners’ research offers a structure in which Tacit Knowledge and the Methods (of surfacing the new knowledge) are woven together. The snapshots/core samples taken from the practitioners’ works are read as elements of these narratives and showing a red thread through the relevant elements of the PhD journey.

We examine at the Creative Practice Research PhD methodology as a framework in which the practitioners develop their individual methods to surface their Tacit Knowledge, discovering their specificity and finding their “voice”.

Thus, through the PhD process, the practitioners become aware of their “inner voice” and discover their positioning within their community of practice and in society at large (“public voice”).

Every practitioner uses a specific method in order to unfold their Tacit Knowledge.

### The Call for Postcards

Consequently we launched a Call for Postcards on the theme of the “Scientific Autobiography”. The Call for Postcards aims to challenge creative practitioners in unveiling their Scientific Autobiography that resides “... somewhere between imagination and memory” (Rossi, 1981, p. 23), and in response to the question:

“why is it important that creative practitioners reflect on and unveil their modes of practice/research?”.

This call aims to collect a number of scientific autobiographies in the form of different media like diagrams, drawings, written texts, photographs, collages, etc. Practitioners are invited to create a representation of their scientific autobiography in a postcard. This tool helps us in collecting a large amount of information about the way practitioners perceive and narrate their research and practice altogether with the possibility to trigger new practitioners towards the possibility of enrolling in a practice-based PhD and to disseminate the project.

### 1.5 Meta-research journey

For over a year we have been working together, as a strong collaborative team. Although we have been employed in three different institutions, in different Countries (Estonia, Spain, and Scotland/UK) we have been able to become a strong collaborative team [Fig.4]. This is probably due to our shared background, as Italian architects, with awarded PhDs in Italy and trained in Architectural and Urban Studies in Italy and other countries, after a secondary school specialised in humanistic studies.

This encounter of language, background, education, and fields of interest, that could be called serendipitous, led us to a fluid and natural collaboration and sharing of intents and research methodology, building a common ephemeral/online work environment. Being based in three different countries we worked online sharing files and frequently doing Skype meetings. We met in person every one of two months, during ADAPT-r activities.

During the fellowship we have travelled around Europe, attending and organizing collectively a series of activities, as part of the ADAPT-r project, also in collaboration with the ADAPT-r partners and Early Stage Researchers.

A list of activities accomplished during our research journey, is below presented in reverse chronological order.

*November 24-27th 2016*

#### **Practice Research Symposium**

University of Westminster, London, UK

*Activities: Attendance / running a workshop/Round table on Monday 27th / presentation of the ERs Research Advancement to the ADAPT-r Partners*

*27th November to 18 December 2016*

#### **ADAPT-r Exhibition**

Ambika P3, University of Westminster, London, UK

*Activities: Set up of the exhibition “Postcards from the Scientific Autobiography”*

*17–18th November 2016*

**ADAPT-r Days Tallinn**

Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn, Estonia

*Activities: Presentation of the ongoing research “Exploring Tacit Knowledge and Methods in Creative Practice Research”*

*27–28th October 2016*

**ADAPT-r Days “Mentors, Epiphanies and Sidetracks of the Research”**

Glasgow school of Art, Glasgow, UK

*Activities: Organization of events; running the workshop “Tacit Knowledge and the Mentors in Creative Practice Research”; Presentation of the ongoing research “Exploring Tacit Knowledge and Methods in Creative Practice Research”*

*8th October 2016*

**MDFF Milano Design Film Festival**

Milan, Italy

*Activities: running the workshop “Tacit Knowledge in Creative Practice Research”;*

*27th September 2016*

**ADAPT-r Workshop “The Role of the Mentors in Creative Practice Research”**

RMIT Europe, Barcelona, Spain

*Activities: running the workshop*

*7–8th September 2016*

**ADAPT-r Partners Meeting**

Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn, Estonia

*Activities: presentation of the ongoing research, accomplished and following activities.*

*5th July 2016*

**ADAPT-r Day Barcelona “The Public Role of Design”**

RMIT Europe, Barcelona, Spain

*Activities: organization of the event, presentation “The Public voice of Design : A Polyphony of ‘voices’ inside the ADAPT-r Program”, chairing the Round table*

*6–7th June 2016*

**ADAPT-r Day Ljubljana**

University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana, Slovenia

*Activities: Round table presentation “Exploring Tacit Knowledge and Creative Practice Research Methods in the ADAPT-r PhD Model”*

*2nd-5th June 2016*

**Practice Research Symposium**

RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia

*Activities:* attendance of PRS examinations and presentations, attendance of research training sessions

*2nd-5th May 2016*

**Trip to Orkney with Koen Broucke**

Orkney Islands, UK

*Activities:* observation of the (art) mission of Orkney exploration by the fellow Koen Broucke

*26-30th April 2016*

**Supervision Trip to Ireland**

Trip from Dublin to Belfast

*Activities:* observation of the supervision activities with ADAPT-r supervisors and fellows

*22-25th April 2016*

**Practice Research Symposium**

KU Leuven, Ghent, Belgium

*Activities:* presentation of the ERs Research Advancement to the ADAPT-r Partners; running a workshop with Early Stage Researchers / organising a Round table with ADAPT-r Supervisors "Exploring ADAPT-r Training: the supervisors' (collective) voice"

*7th April 2016*

**ADAPT-r Day Tallinn**

Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn, Estonia

*Activities:* Organization of activities / presentation "Creative Practice Research Methods. The ADAPT-r model"

*5-6th April 2016*

**ADAPT-r Days London**

University of Westminster, London, UK

*Activities:* running the workshop/presentation "Scientific Autobiography in Creative Practice"

*4-5th February 2016*

**ADAPT-r Partners Meeting**

University of Westminster, London, UK

*Activities:* presentation of research intents and activities to be accomplished during the year

26-29th November 2015

## Practice Research Symposium

RMIT Europe, Barcelona, Spain

Activities: presentation of ongoing research “Tacit Knowledge”

September 10-12th, 2015

## “Making Research | Researching Making” ADAPT-r Conference

Aarhus School of Architecture, Aarhus, Denmark

Activities: attendance of presentations

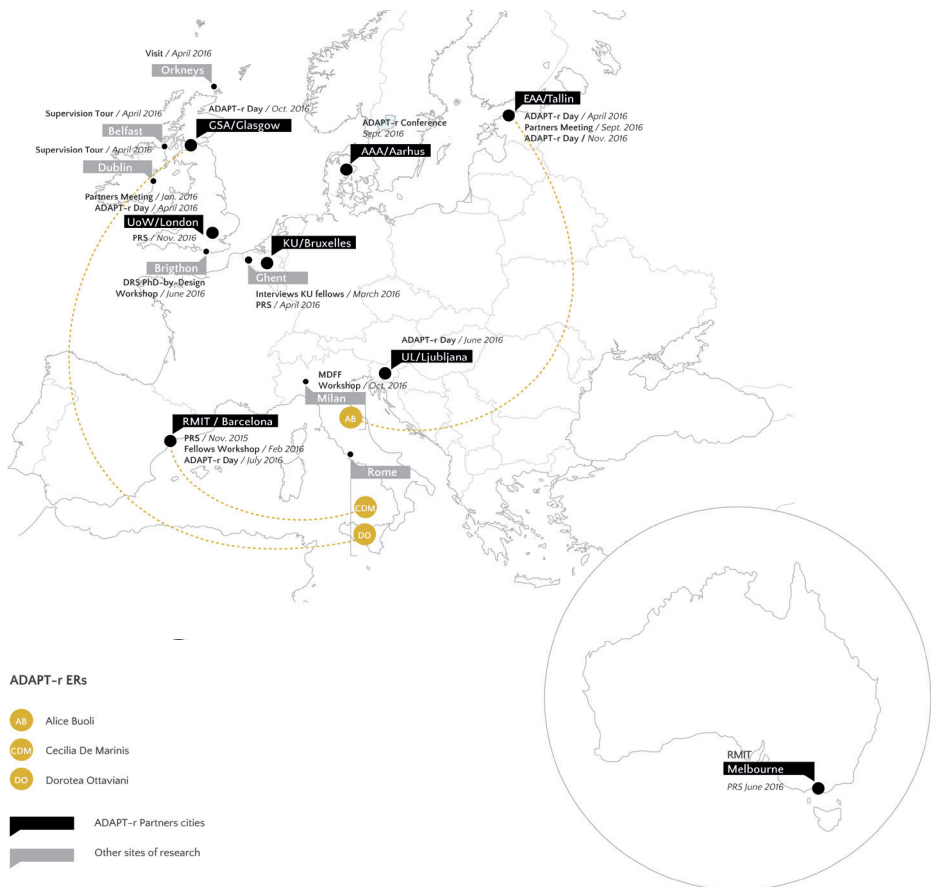


Fig. 5 / Experienced Researchers Mobilities and affiliations



## CHAPTER 2

*19 Accounts*

*Focused Interviews*



# Alice Casey - TAKA Architects



RMIT Europe

## Candidate Profile

Alice Casey is Principal of TAKA Architects with her partner, Cian Deegan. The practice was established in 2008 and is based in Dublin, where Alice was born and educated. TAKA has exhibited in the Venice Architectural Biennale in 2008 and co-curated the Irish Pavilion in 2010. As well as national and international awards, TAKA have been nominated for the Mies Van der Rohe award and were finalists in the 2014 BD Young Architect of the Year Award. Alice also teaches Architecture in Queens University, Belfast and at Dublin Institute of Technology. She has been an ADAPT-r fellow at RMIT Europe since April 2015.

## Interview edited transcription

RMIT Europe, Barcelona  
10th February 2016

## Key

**AC** Alice Casey

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## AB

Focusing the attention to your own process, your own PhD experience, we would like to ask you how discoveries that you have done during your PhD so far, have affected your own practice, your own way of working in the office? How this process of awareness developed, etc.

## AC

It's weird, I don't think it has. This isn't the right thing to say, I do realize that. But I don't think it has affected the way we work. I think it has affected the way we think about our work and so it is made as much more articulate and much more conscious. So when we talk to others about our work, we are much clearer. Also, it has opened up new avenues for us. I think, again going back to that thing

of before we started the PhD: I was afraid, we had five years of practice and I was afraid that again we'd have these two ideas and then we need to spend the rest of our professional careers looking at these two ideas.

I'm really pleased to say that the PhD has done exactly what we wanted to do, in that it has completely opened up our thinking on things and made us much more clearer and articulate. We were interested in, we still are interested in this idea of the expression of the tectonic and things like that. But then through the research, we started to.. it's really that we identified that we had another interest. It was always there, but maybe it wasn't conscious. Then through the PhD we've become conscious of it and that frees you to explore that. Whereas before, so this idea of space and thinking and and certain types of space, before that I don't think we would have felt comfortable talking about space and just making rooms or things that are just purely spatial, that aren't this kind of expression of honest construction and technology and all that kind of stuff.

So certainly, I suppose what the PhD has done for us and the research has done for us is allowed a lot more in. So it has expanded our horizons, if that is really cheesy thing to say. But, it really has. But I don't think it has changed our work method. I think that we have been very conscious not to allow it to change our work method too much because we were very, very, worried in the beginning that by looking too much into how you design means you become too conscious. It stops working because a lot of what we do is intuitive. But then as you go through the PhD you realize intuition is just another name, it's just something that you haven't put a name on yet. Becoming more conscious allows you to be much more clearer about your intuition, it doesn't take it away, it doesn't mean that you don't have it anymore.

## **CDM**

In connection to your practice, in your last PRS you talked about the process of distillation and the process of design you are using in your practice. Would you like to tell us more about that?

## **AC**

Yeah, I haven't done much work on this since my last PRS, so I'm a bit fuzzy about it. I've been working on the concrete thing so..

Distillation. Really, I suppose it's the how of how we work. It's a work method. Again, I couldn't say it was unconscious, but I couldn't say it was conscious either. I think we always knew that what we're trying to do is to make these kind of intense things. I'm still not totally sure how, but I have an idea that we distill things. Like, I think I was talking one of the documents about painting plywood and steel and that the reason you paint steel is to really enhance that character and to distill the character of steel, and same with plywood. I think, we consciously or unconsciously, that's what we want to do all the time - is to make the plywood

the most plywood plywood can be or the living room the most living room it can be in that context, if that makes sense. So we want things to be very intense and I think a lot of that comes from actually having to pour a lot of ideas, maybe, into our first two projects. Also, always working in small spaces, we're based in the city, most of our sites are incredibly tight. And then I think it's also this working method of the technical drawings that we make the drawing and then we change it a little bit and then we change another little bit.. and that a process just keeps going. So it's always this kind of fine tuning is the wrong word because fine tuning makes you think that you know what the hole is and you're just kind of tuning it to be better. But really we're just looking at that bit and then changing that bit and if that bit changes, then this bit has to change and work on that bit again. And then every now and again you step back and say, "Oh, ok, that's what the building is."

The idea of distillations it's somewhere between conscious and unconscious. It's one of those things that I don't want to become too conscious of again because the minute you start to say, "Right, I need to have the most bathroomy bathroom," you've suddenly completely confused yourself. I'm still kind of working through that.

## **DO**

Can you tell us about the key moments you find in the supervising process during this PhD? What do you think is important and how it helps you go through this process?

## **AC**

For the first (maybe) four PRSs, actually the supervision was quite light and I found that a very, very, good thing because it allowed you to to just sort of find your level and find your way. I think if it had been more intense or more involved, I think, I just would have done what someone wanted me to do. Do you know what I mean? Other people would be different, but I think if someone suggested something, I'd say, "Ok, I'll do that." It was very good.

But one of the key moments, I think, was that and it wasn't even on reflection at the time (that) it was a key moment. It was when Richard came and asked us about plywood and steel. Really it was a five-minute conversation, but I knew at the time, I was like, "Oh my god, this has just pulled the rug out from underneath us." Cian quite got on with him, he didn't really bother him too much. He bothered me much more. So that was very good and actually with Leon and Richard, they're very good at doing that. They just kind of arrive and say, "Ok, yeah, that's great." Everything, everything is great, there's nothing ever bad. Then they'll say something really incisive and they kind of know to only say maybe two or three incisive things. Critiques you can take too much.

I'm trying to think of other ones.. yeah, it's hard to pick them out because they're quite spaced out. Each one certainly influences the direction of the research, probably unconsciously, but it really does. So that one with Richard was definitely one, it was very simple thing.

We now have Jo, as well, and Jo is always very good at looking really carefully at everything that you're saying and then just expanding out. Actually, I think a lot of the key moments of supervision actually come from the feedback in the PRS. I found it useful too. I'm always listening back to them, that's a really good thing, and just go through all the comments and just really think about them. But then also to write out some of the comments and to respond to them. So I found that in PRS4 that doing the very pragmatic, slightly dumb thing, take a comment that you found was interesting and then making a response to that. It just made the research much clearer.

And Jo came up with the word "fascinations" which was to do with this idea of references which has certainly driven, I mean it features in my research, but it's driven Cian's research a lot.

## **AB**

Could you describe the moment of the PRS itself? How do you prepare for this very key moment? What do you usually expect from the panel?

## **AC**

Normally we just hope not to be shouted at!

In all fairness, that the PRS for us, what really attracted us to the PhD because it's almost like being back in college, you know, without the horrible feedback. Generally the feedback's quite encouraging. But it's absolutely, actually, a lot of the time, it is like "crits" (critiques) in college. A lot of the times very hard to digest what's being said to you. A lot of the time, you're not sure where it's coming from, you don't understand a comment, it seems completely unrelated to what you're saying. But as you listen back and I think the recording is really important for that, as you listen back, even someone that says two sentences can really spark things that you haven't talked about before. We found Jo really useful that way in the beginning in that he's very insightful and has (sorry) on the surface a very simple way of talking but it's incredibly complex underneath. It's always really insightful and same with Leon.

Leon has that really broad view that I remember once he told us exactly where we set on his chart, you know the kind of idealist, figurative, the fan diagram that he does. We disagreed with absolutely everything that he said. But as we've gone through the process, we've realized he was obviously completely right about it all. I mean, that feedback is the reason that we're doing the PhD, really. I think other people want a PhD and need it for a career or for an academic career. I don't have any interest in either. I wanted to go through this process and to go through

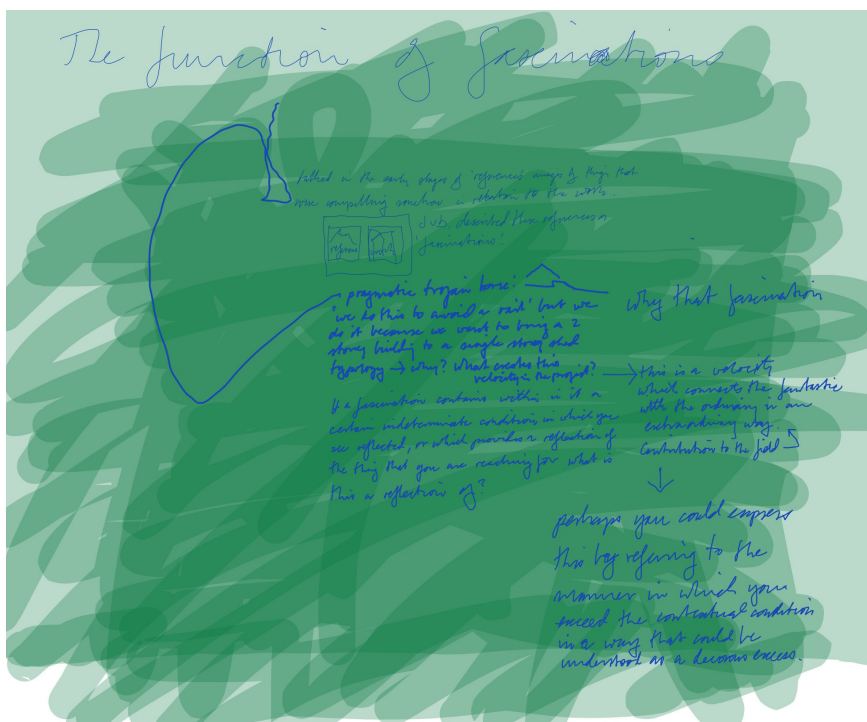


Fig. 1 Supervision moment at TAKA Office, April 2016

Fig. 2 Richard Blythe, Supervision at TAKA Office, April 2016

the process of the PRS and to get that feedback and to be challenged that way. So I think it's an invaluable part of this method of the PhD.

### **CDM**

Talking about the method of the PhD, we would like to ask you what is the relation between your research method/your design method and the ADAPT-r methodology?

So the ADAPT-r methodology is like case studies, community of practice, transformative triggers.. See your ADAPT-r methodology I find really difficult. Certainly, I mean, again it's good that it's there as a challenge, I think. It can help you when everything feels a bit nebulous and you're not really sure what it is you're talking about. The adapter methodology can help you give a name to what it is you're doing. I think, sometimes it can be really confusing and sometimes then you're trying to fit a part of your practice into this methodology that might not necessarily (work). Like we found, the community, weirdly, the community of practice thing really difficult, even though we have this kind of amazing community of practice. But again because it was so close to us and so basic to us, it just felt really stupid to be talking about it. So then we had to approach it from the other way which is looking at our fascinations or references as a community of practice. Public behaviors, like, I still have no idea what that is, really. Tacit Knowledge, I get, but Tacit Knowledge in itself is a really difficult thing to talk about. So I think it has its uses, I think, it has helped in some ways but it has also caused an awful lot of confusion - for me, but having that said, the whole of the PhD has caused a lot of confusion for me! So it's not necessarily to do with the ADAPT-r method.

### **AB**

One question we would like to ask you: how do you think the PhD experience or the ADAPT-r experience will affect your work in the future?

### **AC**

I think it's exactly like what I was saying before, that it has given us motivation and inspiration and a way forward for the practice, I think. As they say, I don't need the PhD as an academic thing. I have currently no intention of I'm working in the university. I think the methodology behind it is what, even though I say yes, the ADAPT-r methodology is confusing and difficult, it is a methodology, you know. And even going through that process is really beneficial to bring rigor to your thinking because in practice after a certain amount of time, no matter how rigorous you are, you can lose that. You can get overwhelmed by sites and budgets and clients, and start to lose your way a little bit. But the PhD has brought rigor to the way that we think about things and has given us methodologies to think about the way that we think about things. So that in itself is has changed our

practice. It's very difficult to quantify that, obviously you know, it's changed. But it's completely fulfilled what we wanted for us.

## DO

So, one more question about the framework of the ADAPT-r methodology. Are there any of the words which we use inside the project that somehow you have adopted into your vocabulary or have affected the way you look at your own practice?

## AC

I think we use.. we would say something about spatial history, I think because I think it's so relevant to our practice because we're born in Dublin, raised in Dublin, practicing in Dublin, all our projects are in Dublin. I know the spatial history isn't just about where you're from, but I think for us, it really is. It's definitely changed how we talk about it, I definitely don't use the term "public behaviours" or a "transformative triggers". Community of practice, we might do (I'm trying to think if there's any other others..) But I think they're the two most important to us anyway. Although spatial history isn't one of the ADAPT-r things, sorry. It definitely does, they definitely infiltrate the way that you speak. Actually, when I speak to someone who's not doing a PhD and I say something like, "well, it's to do with spatial history," nobody understands. I have found myself trying to explain them to other people, so I definitely have been using them.

The first part of the interview is reported in [Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2](#)



# Karin Helms - Karin Helms, Paysagiste Sarl



RMIT Europe

## Candidate Profile

Karin Helms is a landscape architect and created her own office “Karin Helms, Paysagiste Sarl” in 1993. She is currently on sabbatical leave as Associate Professor of Design at Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Paysage Versailles where she was head of the design department and the international relationships for 14 years. In February 2017 she will be in charge of setting up the new Post-Master in Landscape Architecture at ENSPV. She is the founder of European Master in Landscape Architecture EMLA, and State Landscape Architect Adviser in Upper Normandy. Her research includes large scale landscape transformations and landscape urbanism. She received the “Trophée du paysage, mention special du jury for a landscape project in Northern France in 1999 and the French Order of Chivalry for “academic, cultural and education figures” in 2013. She is currently a visiting researcher at Kingston University London and an ADAPT-r fellow at RMIT Europe Barcelona since April 2015.

## Interview edited transcription

RMIT Europe, Barcelona  
10th February 2016

## Key

**KH** Karin Helms

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## DO

In the ADAPT-r process we have a series of steps, the PhD go through the Case studies, the community of practice, the Transformative Triggers to the Public Behaviours and Tacit Knowledge and so on, and so we are really interesting in understanding how every practitioner is going through this journey, if it feels really like in adherence with the methodology of ADAPT-R or if instead he is doing some kind of deviation?

**KH**

We are more landscape architects in this process and we made a sort of group but not only landscape architects actually there are more, and it is more to prepare ourselves to the next PRS and we critic each other and we meet 5 weeks before the PRS and we are much severe to each other then the panellist actually! It is a good exercise and here it's very funny to see that we don't understand or interprets all those steps, but for sure I think that what is common that this adapt we are all fellows we do actually follow this as a guide, maybe we interpret this differently and some of the notions comes in before or put a bit aside because we still are uncomfortable with some of them, but we don't do it on a sort of freelance situation! I think that most offices think in case studies this has been interpreted very differently from one to another; some of colleagues concerning the mentors they took some of the mentors' work and analyse it makes the relationship to their projects; I didn't do that, well for me the case studies were the speculative projects and I took the example from Marti Franch Batllori who started to make a speculative project, it means that there was no a contractor asking him but he decided to take one and I was struggling last year and I took his example and I did also a speculative project and that was the way to try to show through a case study that was my speculative project one was actually my design process. Because analysing back projects, I have done that, it was actually interesting to see that I was mostly doing the same way, I was not aware about this, so that was one point but then to go further I needed to do a design where I had no budget problems and a contractor problems! So for me case studies have been speculative project that helps me to explain how I work and that I took from Marti and I think that others too did it, Eric Guibert did it, and it is because we in our small and we said "Why don't you also do a speculative project?" We saw that this is helpful for some of us and others took the same idea.

**AB**

So in a way it is like a concept of approaching to travelling through your group of colleagues, that is interesting this collective.

**KH**

What happened is that we were quite amazed that Marti, well because he is sort of part of this community in Girona since very long, in which the politicians became interested and then I try to copy him because I did ask where I am state advisor if they were interested in my work so I shown them and it went up quite high and now they want me next September to do some work, so wow! Thanks Marti! I had no budget no contractors contract I just did it and it came to be of interest also for the politician and the locals, so that seas the lucky event! very surprising me I have to say! Well, the transformative triggers is a word that I

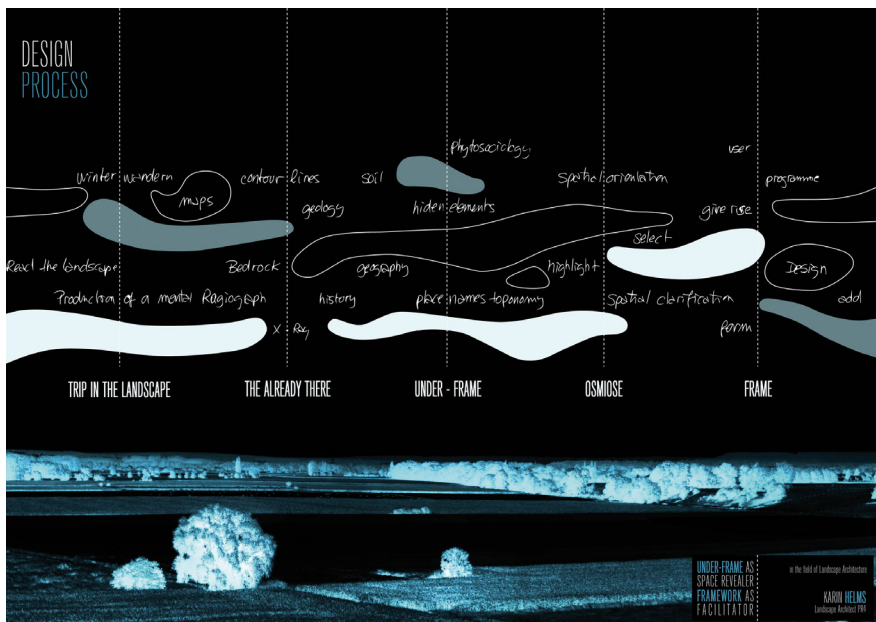
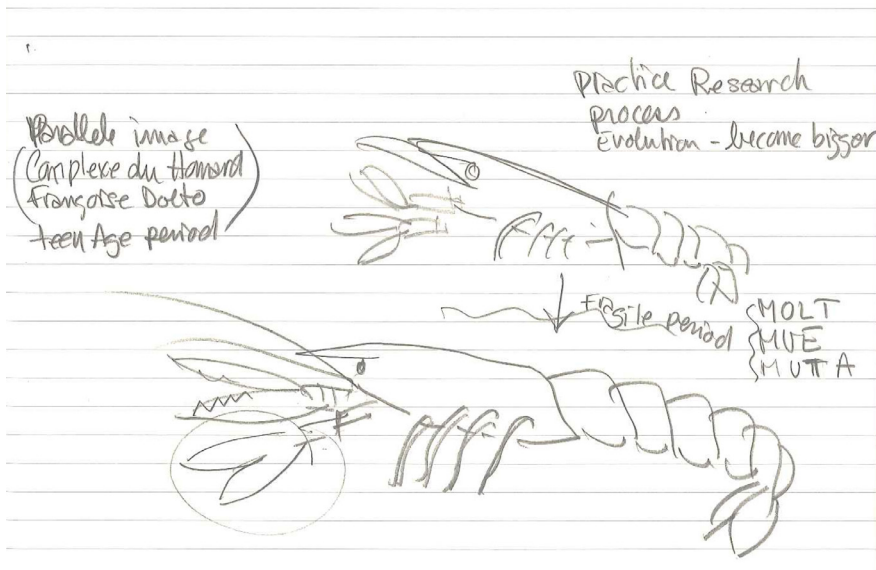


Fig. 1 Karin Helms, *The PhD as a Lobster*

Fig. 2 Karin Helms, *ADAPT-r Scientific Autobiography Postcard submission - The Design Process*

have not understood exactly so there has been a switch from last, by writing the mid-candidature and putting in words also - that was the critic I had that there were many words and not enough drawings - but okay one step after the other - so the transformative trigger if I understand is what happens at the moment when I changed and understood the benefit of the PHD that for sure was the PRS 4 that was really the moment where you are asked to write down and try to explain your design process.

For me it was through this speculative project and the other thing was to be, when I say as the lobster to change, I have had also to be very clear with everybody that we have a sort of a personal way of being or what is congenital and I had also to look at what is maybe slightly different to others. I never wanted to talk about dyslexia from one side I have to open my book and say okay there are people I really feel very related to or I fell very close, so what is in common even if we are not in the same fields, but there is something about that we look slightly different at a place and I look that it is very dyslexic.

So how do we use it in it? So I try to be very honest and this is something that professionally I never talk about but then I have to put it down with it okay I am dyslexia and it means in design that I see everything in 3D and it is also related to that I see on the same time the details and the largest scales.

And sometimes I don't understand why students don't see it! Can you see the relationship between what's happening here and large scale? This seems to be typical from dyslexia when I began to read, I never wrote about and I never really was interested in it but suddenly I have to say, if I have to explain how I do and what is my interest and how I started design, I have to be very honest! and take out also elements of myself that I'm not keen to talk about, socially it's not really accepted to be slightly different or something like that, so instead of see it as a negative and point out what you don't you are not skilled, for instance I make a lot of mistakes in writing in all languages - but then see what is the good point of it and I remember when my son was four years old he was drawing and everything and everything he was drawing was in 3D this means a house or a turtles everything was in 3D at four years old you know that children do it in 2D and just that there is it okay unfortunately my son has inherited from me to be dyslexic and he was just 4 years but I could see it by his way of drawing. So why should we see if as negative try to see at. You know he had the much more beautiful drawings then all of the others children of the kindergarten when he was and try to see that this is amazing! So highlight what is good instead of looking at the negative part of it. But there is a sort of first time that I tried to look what is the specific, how do you look at things differently and try to make the relationship about what was your studies and your way of looking and reading the landscape for instance, how you look at it differently and what does it mean when you are interested in botany or in phytosociology and landscape. So this relationship was maybe where I could see the transformative triggers maybe that I was more conscious and take

in charge myself with! And make it as a positive point. So and be more explicit in how I do, so during this mid candidature I didn't take the word Transformative Triggers it came by doing this writing down that I can say yes this has been a change in my way of firm thinking and way of understanding how I do it.

this is very related also to tacit knowledge that is maybe pointing out better how we're doing and the steps. Then about public behaviours, I haven't done something specific about this but in the last PRS I shown I am adviser, teacher or a designer and obviously you do things for people this is very important, the landscape architect is not an artist, doing the work and he sometimes it's could not be interested in how his work is going to be received by the public, but for a landscape architect for sure you do it for the landscape, for people and it could also be for plants and animals but for people first. There are some projects where it is for environment reasons for instance Mont Saint-Michel they have taken away the road and now is back to be more wild and it was first for environmental reasons but for people too because now there is a sort of magic again and the island is back to be an island!

About public behaviours, at the last PRS people said that I was a good facilitator this means when I am teacher is a design facilitator this mean to help students to go on with the design or find their way in design and when I'm advisors is a decisional facilitator to help politician to take the decision well there is a public behaviour and the other thing is that since I was students long time ago I have always been member of association for the promotion of the profession and I think that this is maybe where I have been the best public behaviour maybe trying to explain our profession is a very small profession in Europe anyway in France there are only three thousands landscape architects less in Italy the country with most landscape architect I think is in Germany where are 7000 and where the profession is title, it is recognised and it is really clear what is the frame of the profession. In France we are asking for the recognition but is 2016! There are so many landscape architects that have done so many nice projects to change the face and the uses of a city but is still not recognised.

**DO**

Are you inside the umbrella of the architects?

**KH**

No, landscape architecture comes from two different urges, during the end of 19th century the profession was created due to rural changes- reparcelling and mecanisation of the farming activity . Landscape architects ( named at that time garden architect) had a role in redesigning the parcels and provide ideas in new plantations. After second world war the profession grow due to rural exodus toward the cities – suburban stelements and later in the 90 a boom of the profession came in Europe due to sururban sprawl and a critic view on the former

settlements in the 60's and 70's. Since the 19th century the profession has learned from Architect's work on public spaces and has worked out their own mode of practicing on public spaces. They look at the space as a landscape with memory and try to re-fertilize the lifeless soil of the city. The current work of the landscape architects are to act on urban planning and integrating ecological process as in landscape urbanism planning - large scale landscape transformations - green infrastructures or bringing back "nature" in town and urban spaces, some says "wilderness". The other tends is the more social benefit for the communities working out projects that help people to merge together, more collective instants or even anticipatory work to help refugees or other type of ephemeral living camps. If we think about where do landscape architect get their education in Europe, there are two ways linked to this historical past of the urges in Europe : or you get your education in landscape architecture in an art or architect school/university or in an agronomy school.

Personally I have been educated in both systems – I started (after my biology studies) to get a Bachelor in landscape architecture in Belgium in an Agronomy university and then ended in Versailles ENSPV which is actually run by a Agronomy ministry but had teachers from Art schools as Michel Corajoud.

Thinking about Public Behaviours : I'm clearly a advocate for the profession having been involved in different associations to promote it: I have been member of *Pages Paysages* a French Magazine, later I was the chief editor of the French Magazine *La Feuille du paysage* edited by the French landscape association . I'm since 25 years member of this French association and have been General secretary of IFLA Europe (EFLA) . I have also been president of the French landscape state advisor and organised many conferences and study tours for them all over Europe.

Public behaviour is my sort of engagement trying to facilitate students to design or as an advisor to be decisional facilitator and in general try to show how interesting it can be to go through the landscape architecture design process for change, adapt or transform an area. In France there is for sure a lack of Designer due to a lack of design culture . There is still a long way to promote the profession in France .

## CDM

Yes, so how do you think the PhD will affect your future work?

## KH

Yes, definitely. In 2017 I am invited to come back to teach in Versailles, I have a long leave from Versailles that is quite rare to have such a long leave . I definitely think that now I can see that I have learned from the findings of the PhD process. Before I was full time teaching studios at Bachelor and Master levels and never made the link with research So my contribution will be when I'm back at Versailles is to make this link between design and research . I actually do not see

why it is so difficult to make the relationship between academic research and this more tacit research practice research by design. Scientific research as Biology do make the relation by experimentations. Doing a diagrams on Mentors influences in my way of doing I mentioned the environmental notions and design notions learned from them - (she shows us the diagrams) for sure you can cross fertilise the two spheres .

My contribution to the school would be to bring up a practice based PhD or research area in landscape teachings . It will probably be hard to convince them! I was the last weekend at a research presentation, there was a presentation of COLTIVA it was a EU program about agriculture and ecology which is already to sciences too difficult to meet they can really be angry each other, and there were no landscape architects I thought it was a pity but ok I was there and funny to see that most of this researchers it took them three years to have a statement about what is the role of an hedgerow in the landscape for an agricultural landscape. We saw the point of view ecologists and agronomists. This is maybe really a chance when we are designers and we have this tacit knowledge, to be much faster, we don't need three years! To get to the same conclusions. Tacit knowledge helps you to go very fast and come back to look at on the more scientific knowledges and prove what we are doing.

So, the interpretation of ADAPT-r methodology... All these words are really important. I have not explored the ADAPT-r proposed process in a linear mode (Case Studies, Community of Practice, Tacit Knowledge ..) I explored it in a different order but at the moment all those notions did comes up . They have been very useful to decrypt my way of doing and write my method. The panel at PRS' and supervisors have helped me each time to go from one step to an other, for instead the Mentors' role and what they call the community of practice, SueAnne Ware was telling me: Can you do something about your community? This was a strange way of forcing me into this topic but I had her advice all the time in head until I finally did some think about this important topic. By the way a new community of practice was also created during the PhD process (show a picture of a nursery in Girona area). Marti Franch was the originator of this meetings. We call a pre-PRS or even the "landscape-summit".

About the community practice there are past communities and the ongoing communities In the diagram I draw on Mentors and imaginative mentors I also included groups of people: as colleagues from the European Master: EMILA as I learned so much by working with them.

So the question was: How do you think your PhD will affect your future work? This is maybe early to answer but one thing I would like to show others , and at the school of Versailles that they can also be "fertilised" by knowledges of others. It would be helpful to learn from this practice based PhD.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Eric Guibert - Sens



KU Leuven

## Candidate Profile:

Eric Guibert is an architect and a gardener. He studied at the Bartlett University College London and the Ecole d'Architecture de Nantes in France. He established the architectural practice Sens in 2003. Eric is a lecturer at the University of Westminster and an ADAPT-r fellow at KU Leuven in Brussels since March 2015. In parallel, he is developing a wild garden in France with Robin Pembroke.

## Interview edited transcription

Westminster University, London  
3rd February 2016

Key

**EG** Eric Guibert

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## AB / DO / CDM

Starting from the key-words that we sent you in order to have a series of points of reference or landmarks in our interview, we were wondering if these are representative or self-explanatory or if there is something missing. What is your reaction to such key-words? Do these keywords evoke to you?

**EG**

My first reaction to the keywords is that as my PhD is developing, the metaphor of the enfilade does not match my experience and it may lead candidate in the wrong direction.

The enfilade has three limitations. Firstly it indicates a succession of rooms, an order; you may be able to come back and forth but in the order given. Secondly, it represents them as separate exercises. Lastly, it gives a sense of a finite series of lenses.



*Fig. 1 Eric Guibert, PRS presentation Layout*

*Fig. 2 Eric Guibert, Unbuilt design for a house in France, Clay Model (2008)*

My experience is altogether more fluid, relational and varied. In my PRS1, I was using Case Studies with Communities of Practice and indicated a Transformative Trigger, there were the beginning of ideas about how I work (“Methods”) and some crumbs of Tacit Knowledge. The second PRS focussed on one project and also looked at CoP, TT, TK. In PRS4 I used an entirely different lens, that of how I designed time, and mentioned briefly some other (TK, TT, CoP).

I was not able to think of these lenses individually nor exclusively. This is because these various dimensions and others more specific to our work constantly interact; they are force fields that have more influence at some points than others.

What seems to have mattered most was defining a sense of the overall trajectory of the practice and a number of trajectories within this overall movement, understanding when and why the trajectory shifted, and which way of practicing this has led to today.

The enfilade gives the sense of a strict method that all must follow to end up with a solution at the end. The metaphor is too rigid.

If there was an enfilade metaphor in the PhD it is the scaffolding of the PRSs themselves, which is a structure that you have to go through, which supports you, and where you engage with peers. This is necessary. This is what we all seek: any PhD is long, so without the structure we would probably not finish. You can see the PRSs as rooms, and indeed they have an order, but we all do different things in them; they don’t have a definite function, a definite single lens.

So in a way the lenses ... I like the word lenses because there is this sense when you are using them that you focus more on one element, yet it doesn’t remove the interaction with the other ones.

There was a point when I tried to map all the communities of practice together. The resulting diagram in itself is not that useful [insert here image], because the way things work is much more relevant in a situation at a certain point in time “I need this” or “I discovered that person” then and there.

(...)

And it is in the act itself of designing something that the lenses gain clarity and value.

If you try to look at all my communities of practice extracted from the rest, you can make some generic comment that there are categories, which may be useful, but it is clearer to show precisely how within a project, the influence of another project or person alters the work and how concepts are transformed in this process. It is the interaction between dimensions – say a case study and the community of practice – that is rich in insight. It is there that the contribution to knowledge can be located.

(...)

I now see my practice methods as a wheel that turns to define trajectories.

The wheel is a way of designing with the agency of the world and is composed of rings of elements that can be acted upon: a repertoire of tools of patterns that I have used - Spatial Instruments and Ways of Caring - typologies and embodied

processes, ways of using these tools, and lastly principles that guide decisions. The rings are independent from each other, the various elements do not have fixed positions and take more importance at some points than others but they are all in some way present at all times.

The movement of the wheel is what I call the gardener iteration, a succession of looking/learning, altering the design, inhabitation. A rhythmic cycle.

The PhD is a scaffolding that supports each candidate to complete, be thorough, see further, take distance, and explicate, in a peer review process - through the structure of the PRSs and supervision. The methodology also includes a set of lenses that most will benefit from trying but which are not all as useful as each other. We alter them to suit our practice. It is not a complete set - candidates create others that are more useful to their case.

Through this process of explication - to oneself as well as others - the PhD alters the trajectory of the practice. By being conscious of how we work and why, we start practicing differently, at a deeper level. And the PhD is also a new surrounding where our way of practicing adjusts.

The other type of categories I have defined are what I call “series” which are the trajectories of each body of work which have similarities, such as “ruinations” (buildings that are decaying, or that have been invaded by nature). Another series is called “landscape gestures” which are more clearly about landscape art. The last is an Open Vernacular Language which is more specifically about homes. This is probably closest to the concept of Case Studies and how they interact that is shown in Richard Blythe’s video.

The ADAPT-r lenses are present but they are transformed in the process, spread within a structure that is more applicable to my practice, some more than others. (...)

These series are understood as trajectories. If you zoom into one of these, you see that each project / case study is also a trajectory. The practice is also understood as a trajectory composed of the series paths. Each trajectory is a journey through which various tools are used along the way, sometimes together. Sometimes you use the wrong one and change. The tools are always there at the back of your head. Maybe the better metaphor is that of the toolbox.

Another metaphor is that of gardening. If you wish to grow a plant you need soil, you need light, water, air (and whatever else); all these things have to be present. Sometime you take some elements for granted, you don’t think that much about the air, but actually if you plant certain species in a windy area it might thrive or not. All the lenses are thus like elements that work together within their own field and which also interact.

To describe the PhD methodology, I like the scaffolding and “toolbox” or “lens-box” metaphor because it is simple. You can tell someone joining the program, “you will go through this rhythm of peer reviewed event and here are some lenses

you can use. Some of these tools you will definitely use, others you might use less. And you may bring in new ones that are more applicable to your practice”.

I already mentioned the lens of time I have used. There is also the entrepreneurial lens. It surprises me how little this is mentioned at PRS.

The two explanations of PhD methodology that are closest to my experience are Richard’s video with the lines, the trajectories of Case Studies, which is in my mind the series trajectories. The other model is “Grounded Research Theory”. I am a PhD student in Brussels, Johan and Jo (my supervisors) have given me an article summarising the methodology which has been developed by sociologists. The method is that you start your research not by defining a hypothesis of what you are going to find, but defining where you are looking. The example in the article is nurses in a hospital and how they work. And you look at what is happening and gradually start to define concepts and elements that repeat in these events, this is called coding. The following stage is to categorise these. It is very similar to what we are doing with the key difference that we are an actor in the events and thus change how we work as we are analysing how we work. You end with defining a theory that explicates what is happening by bringing these categories together into a coherent whole.

The more abstract nature of the structure of the methodology of grounded theory seems to me easy to adapt to the variations between practices; it does not impose a predetermined view. The ADAPT-r methodology gives you a set of lenses that are generally useful to most design practitioners and concepts that are generally found within most designers’ practices.

## **DO / CDM**

Maybe we can talk about the supervision process and your relation with your supervisor.

What do you think is his role? How would describe the process?

## **EG**

I have two main supervisors that are Johan and Jo. They have some points in common, but they are also very different people. Johan does not come from an architectural background, Jo does. So I guess what I expect from Johan is that he reminds me of a lack of rigour, or clarity of process and methodology. He is also much more aware where this methodology fits within the broad landscape of design and other architectural and artistic methodologies available in Europe, in particular, or globally. What I particularly enjoy with him is having discussions of how this methodology compares to others and how we should understand it. Because originally it was not that clear to me and I felt we were making it up as we went along.

Jo, helps me to take distance from the work, see things that I overlook as I take them for granted. When I hit a wall, I send him something or meet him, and his

input makes me bounce again, see the next level. He has also been very useful in terms of methodology.

So the roles are that of ensuring rigour and helping me take distance from the work – see it differently – and go further in my analysis.

By the way I had other supervisors first, because I started at RMIT, Marcelo and Gretchen Wilkins. Gretchen pointed out that I was increasingly loosening my control as a designer, and I think she was the first person to highlight this key point.

Much supervision has also been given by other fellows and other candidates in Brussels or at the PRSs. All of which has been as valuable.

### **AB / DO**

It happens sometimes that supervisors go to visit the studios, and works of the fellows. It would be very interesting for us to assist to such a visit, if you are arranging a visit to the sites of your projects.

### **EG**

It could happen, it is in France, it takes sometimes to go there, but I don't see why not. The reason why it might be useful for the supervisors to go to the projects themselves is that much is not shown in representations. Sometimes it is because of the limitations of the medium used and sometimes it is that the designer is not aware of some aspects.

In this particular case, the experience of the place is actually much rawer than the photographs. Often people think that it all looks very pretty, but there is something a little bit harsher when you are there. And there are probably things I am not conscious of.

I am not sure whether it will happen or not; they are both very busy.

There must have been an intervention from the interviewers here...

(...)

## **Interview edited transcription**

KU Leuven, Ghent

April 2016

### **DO**

You mentioned the fact that you're staying in Brussels right now, can you tell us about the most relevant outcomes of your mobility of the fellowship? How is this displacement affecting your research? Also if you're using the commuting time as a mean for your research as well.

### **EG**

There are two dimensions to the question of location: the community of the ADAPT-r network and being half of the time away from the original location of practice.

The first has been hugely beneficial, both those in Belgium and those met at the PRS. Beneficial exchanges have happened with landscape designers, and architects, in relation to how you deal with chance, improvisation...

I have found the distance useful for taking a degree of distance from the practice, to see it with fresh eyes. It is key not to remove yourself from practice but you benefit from these moments of distance. The time of the fellowship has also allowed me to dig into key concepts such as improvisatory processes but this was not specific to the mobility dimension.

The commuting time – in the Eurostar – is an excellent time for reflection; very effective.

Being away from London so much was originally negative to the practice; I was not able to gain as much work – I am a sole practitioner so there is no-one networking when I am not around.

But the displacement has also had a positive effect in the last 6 months. Two new leads have appeared from me discussing the themes of the PhD: flexibility/agency and merging landscape and buildings. One is now a project.

So it may be that after a period when the displacement forced by the fellowship was seemingly killing slowly the original practice, this partial death is allowing another one to grow, one that is more ambitious in the scale of the projects, and with projects that combine the landscape and building dimensions and thus are increasingly relevant to the research.

Time will tell whether this continues.

The first part of the interview is reported in [Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2](#)



# Martí Franch Batllori - EMF Landscape Architects



Glasgow School of Art

## Candidate Profile:

Martí Franch Batllori is a Landscape Architect, and a Horticulturalist at ETSAB in Barcelona, where he has taught since 2001. He is founder & principal of 'EMF landscape architecture', an interdisciplinary practice of independent experts in the field of urban and environmental design. His work has been internationally published, and awarded with several international prizes. Currently he is enrolled as PhD candidate at RMIT Europe, and is ADAPT-r fellow at the Glasgow School of Art.

## Interview edited transcription

RMIT Europe, Barcelona

May 2016

## Key

**MF** Martí Franch Batllori

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

## CDM

What are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## MF

I think that what is good about the method is that it de-centers you. So it asks you all these bloody stupid questions, you know, that you never considered before, that make you shake a bit. I'm not sure if always are pertinent and the best questions, but they move the centre of your interrogation. That's very important. So for a while you have to kind of stop and take some distance and try to be critical about yourself. The other thing I think it's very good, although I've suffered a lot, I still suffer a lot, is this very short presentation format. That is, at the same time terrible and quite useful, because it really forces you to make a distillation of what is important, like having into account the length of this interview, it's clear that I still have to improve. But this recurrence as well, I think, it's important, this idea

of meeting the same people and getting to know each other. I don't give the same value to everyone's opinion because I know who this guy is. So this recurrency it's very important and to me, I would not highlight any particular thing about urges and fascinations, communities of practice, modes of practice. Maybe mode of practice, in particular, because as I said I'm a bit of a bowerbird. I'm not in this more theoretical frame, I pick up things. So within this general atmosphere of creativity, which I think it generated around the PhD and PRSs in singular, there's always fertile moments. So to me, it's a bit different the atmosphere around and the time you afford to it. Obviously you need questions to trigger this process, but to me it's a very much about being challenged by questions that you don't expect and that force you to be a bit critical about what you do, probably it's that.

### **CDM**

Who are your supervisors? How do you describe your relation with them?

### **MF**

My first supervisor is Mauro Baracco and my second supervisor is SueAnne Ware that started we could say, the other way around, but then SueAnne moved to Newcastle University, so we changed. I would say, I almost feel like a friend, I think there's a real friendship with both and they have a very different profile which I think it's very good for the PhD, because Sue Anne actually she invited me and showed me the process, she was the one who made me make the step, she has been beside me any time for the process and being very pragmatic at once and very demanding as well, so she really would say that I should keep a certain format. Mauro, in a way, he's more a theoretical and he is quite formal. So he gives when he talks to me, general reflections and also very about how this should be formally structured. I think they are quite complimentary, so I think that's good. I would like as well to mention Tom Holbrook that for a while was my second supervisor, that apart from inspiring the idea of the self-commission project, because he's really now a practice-based person, he also gave me some very practical insights about how to cope that with the practice. Well, if diagrams don't help, stop making diagrams, no? But also the diagrams have already helped me. I think it's actually very important to share the process of the PhD with as many people as possible. So, apart of them and apart of the PRSs, we do in-between the PRS what we call the "Landscape Summits", where we are not only landscape architects, but mostly. So we also critique, that we have a second crit and I obviously value the inputs from my supervisors, but I also listen to all my colleagues.

### **CDM**

How do you describe and experience the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, presentation itself, panel's feedback)?

### **MF**

I think it's a very clever format. It's first a challenge that you prepare with the supervisors. For me, it is usually a panic moment until the.. now, for the last two PRSs, I kind of got it, but normally were panic moments, the presentation themselves, always getting short of time and being messy and not providing the the panel with clear information so that they could react. So I would say PRS4 which was in Ghent, then I five, I did one in Melbourne and one in Barcelona, I kind of find an attitude that I was more relaxed and more receptive to the panel. I was probably being, I would not say honest because I always try to be honest, but I probably was more generous with information, more clear. But for me, it is this moment of intensity that you have to prepare and it's a big challenge. Also, I give importance and I said that before, is that it just takes you three or four days of complete isolation so you can really get focused and inspired by other people and this I think, it's very important that it takes a few days. For me, it's much nicer when they happen in Ghent or when they happen in Barcelona because then I go back home and I get more into the daily life. So this idea of almost isolation and cloud and this creative atmosphere around them, I think it's very positive.

### **CDM**

How do you think the PhD process will change your way of looking at your past practice, is affecting in the present your practice and will affect your future practice?

### **MF**

I think, looking at my past practice, it helped me to finally grasp what is still immature, what are kind of general modes of practice that we have. Looking at the current practice, it has been a trigger really to try new things, as I said I'm a kind of a bowerbird, so during the process of the PhD, I have stolen new material and because I'm a pragmatic person and empirical person, I have to test it. For me, as stolen material in itself it has no value, it has value when it's tested over a project and ideally it impacts reality. So for me, during it's a moment of testing and checking out things. And after, I think that by being more aware about the modes of practice and by challenging the way we do projects, I think it's already a fact that we are changing the way we make projects and also the kind of projects we work on. So I would say, if by looking at the back story of the practice, I could identify a number of moments of the practice, I think that within the period of the PhD, we have started a new period that probably could be called this "Response Ability" period. So, I think it has shaped, changed the way I think about design, the way I relate with my colleagues on the everyday basis. I always try to get everybody engaged. Now I spend a bit more time in discussing: why and what? Before, it was very much about how we would do something and it still is the central part of the practice; how we get things done,

how we test things and so. But now, there's more discussion than before about: what we do and why we do it. It's also because we are a bit more sometimes in the position of leading or proposing missions or having a position where we are more close to the decision-making, not only executing a public space, we try to do it as we can. So in all these senses, I think that the PhD process, or the PhD time, so at the end the PhD is time, it's time that you don't devote it to production or you do it a bit more in a reflection way, but at the same time, proactive. It's this area that, for me, I would say, if I go back to the metaphor of the bowerbird, the PhD, it's when I fly away and I find shiny objects, you know, and then I use the practice to arrange them in the garden of the bird in a position. So without the PhD, I would have not found probably new shiny objects, so I would keep having the same garden and by all these questions and all this time that I've been flying away, I could question whether the garden I was designing was interesting enough.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2

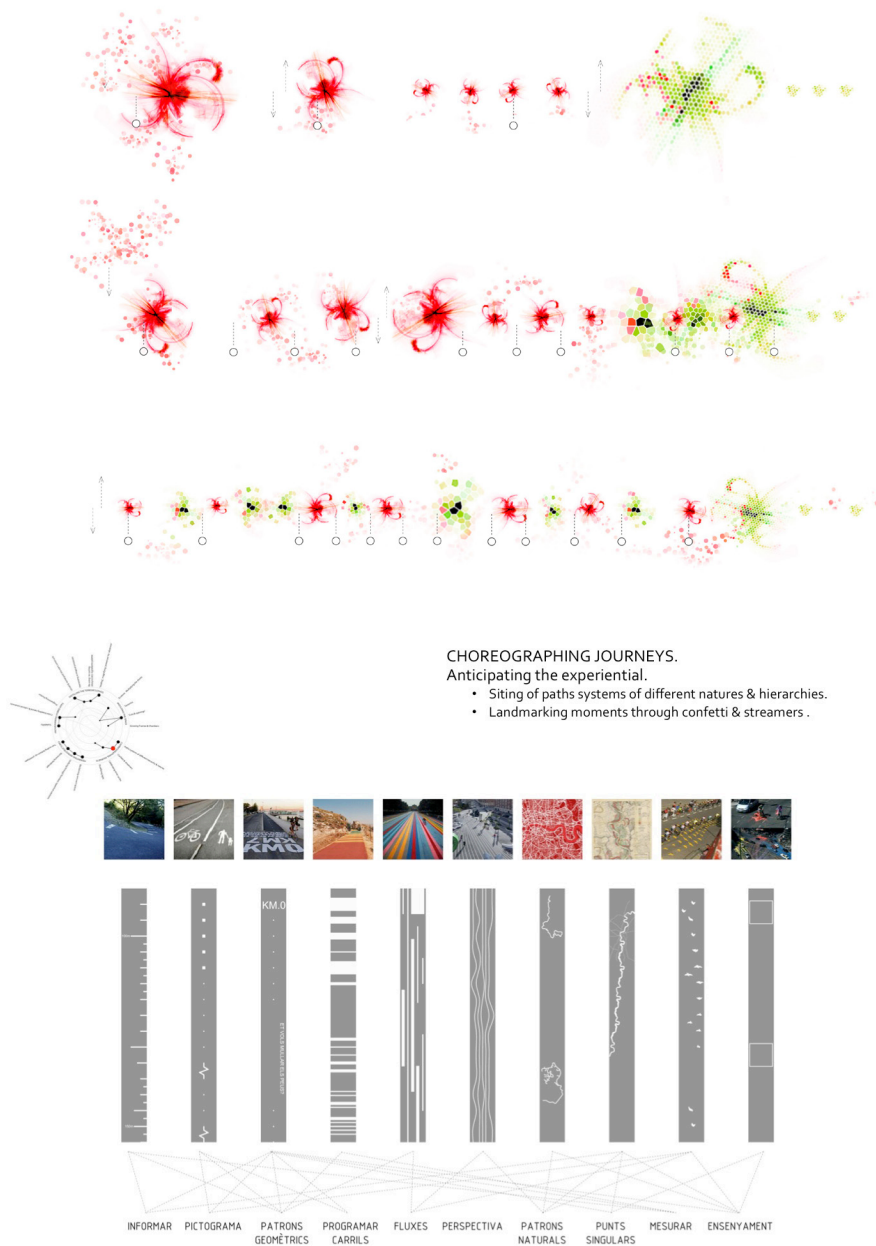


Fig. 1 Martí Franch Batllori, *Time Specificity ADAPT-r Scientific Autobiography Postcard submission*

Fig. 2 Martí Franch Batllori, *Choreographic Journeys*



# Karli Luik - Kontekst



University of Ljubljana

## Candidate Profile:

Karli Luik is an architect and urban planner. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2003 and was founder and partner of Salto architects from 2004-2014. Since 2014 he founded studio Kontekst in Tallinn. His work has been internationally published and awarded. He was an ADAPT-r fellow at the University of Ljubljana from March till November 2016.

## Interview edited transcription

Ljubljana University  
June 2016

## Key

**KL** Karli Luik  
**AB** Alice Buoli  
**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## AB

Which are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## KL

That's a really interesting question because, in a way, I haven't really hardly tried to follow this methodological process because I think there are critics that if you do it very step-by-step, also these PhDs kind of become too alike. So I don't think I have really found the main driver for my PhD, I'm looking for it, so. In a way, through these three PRSs that I've been in, I've been trying to get authorisations which are presented in these work packages, but somehow try to look for something else.

## AB

What are the most productive or critical elements of the displacement to Ljubljana?

**KL**

For me it's like a kind of practitioner who is at the moment constantly trying to work in different environments and different people. It's opened up some possibilities to collaborate with some local architects which I think is very interesting and very good. At the same time, coming here it definitely has an impact on the projects going on Estonia, I'm not really focused on this so much at the moment. You shift your focus about things that are going on here. In my case, also in home, travelling from family, it makes things pretty much harder, because the time you have for your practice and research is smaller because you lose all your background, like a vampire who thinks he can put his kids away. In this way, it's not good for the research, but at the same time you build somewhere else, so you develop a better look from outside, which is actually not something that should be.. also, when you do the research within the practice, you shouldn't look from outside, so maybe it's good actually. Also, while doing my masters in Budapest one of the reasons was the experience, the environment. So definitely it's good once in a while to live somewhere else.

**AB**

Who are your supervisors and your mentors? How would you describe your relationship with your PhD supervisors?

**KL**

My supervisors are both people who are more into research or public behaviours, but as they are also not really active designers or architects, I think actually I'm looking for some supervisors who would be more like me, who would be more helpful because I haven't really developed very, in this way, because I actually don't really know where I want to go. So I think they're good to help with some ADAPT-r methodology, but I think that actually, I could or should do it, some other way, I think I need some different support. But also, I think discussing about these issues with fellow ADAPT-r or PhD students has been helpful, so I think that's part of the community that is a help with how to go on.

**DO**

How do you describe the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, the presentation for itself, panel's feedback)?

**KL**

I think it's definitely to me is a very crucial element and it makes you do things because you have to present them. At the same moment, I think the PRS in this way it is also extremely important to look not only at your own presentation, but also the presentations of others. See how it works, see how this practice-based PhD as a whole process is developing. PRSs they always give some insights and

some moments that are really fascinating what's going on. I think they should happen more often because half a year you almost forget about the last one.

**DO**

Do you have any particular expectation for your next PRS?

**KL**

I'm not really sure what I'm going to do for the next PRS, but these work packages I should address the public behaviours which is a kind of interesting task, so I think also I need to more specifically position myself with that which would be very good. I'm looking forward.

**AB**

How do you think the PhD experience will change your way of working in the future?

**KL**

Maybe, but what I'm mostly interested in or what I would really hope that will happen is that the practice itself is not changing so much, but it's always something that you are developing your voice. I think that would be pretty good thing to have it very, to advance the voice, to find the voice or definitely, how you talk about things affects as a whole how you do the things. Definitely.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Michael Corr - SULT



Estonian Academy of Arts

## Candidate Profile:

Michael Corr is an architect with over 15 years experience in practice. Over this time he has been Founding Director of Pie architecture Ltd. a successful architecture/urban design/research practice in London and a senior urban designer/design advisor to the Mayor of London, as part of the Design for London team within the Greater London Authority (GLA). Michael is currently the director of PLACE, the Built Environment Centre for Northern Ireland, director of Sult, an architecture, urban design and research practice and is a Fellow of the Estonian Academy of Arts, undertaking a PhD by practice as part of the ADAPT-r programme. Michael has been teaching architecture for 10 years and currently leads a Master of Architecture studio in Queens University Belfast.

## Interview edited transcription

Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn  
April 2016

## Key

**MC** Michael Corr

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

Now we would like to talk about the methodologies of ADAPT-r. So the first question would be, what do you think are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## MC

It's quite interesting, I mean I don't know how it is for other people who are involved with the ADAPT-r program, with other fellows. We do chat about it, but I have found that.. Now I'm coming up to PRS3, I've just finished PRS2 and

PRS2 was focused around communities of practice. What was clear to me is that I only really understood what communities of practice was after I had done my PRS and what I had understood it to be, whenever I presented it, was not the case. Now the next one is focused around public behaviours and now I'm beginning to understand these components of the ADAPT-r process, I'm sure they're still going to be a kind of realization after my presentation of what public behaviours is really about. But I think what I'm trying to say is, it's by going through the process I'm understanding more about the components of ADAPT-r rather than me looking at the whole process and saying, "Yes, that's very influential for me at the moment."

Does that answer the question or is that fluffy? It's an evolving thing and I think that's the point of it, really. That's what I really enjoy about it. We were having a conversation yesterday about not setting up the research question at the beginning. I thought that was really interesting and the kind of the risk that's involved in an open-ended research question at this stage and then trying to find what the research question is through these different components or PRSs with different themes.

## **CDM**

In your presentation recently, you talked about the constellation of work. Would you describe to us the meaning and use of this constellation in your research? Is it a kind of method you use to understand your work?

## **MC**

I guess what I was trying to think about was how to look at my work. I was thinking about the things I am really fascinated by and I'm really interested in landscapes and communities and how all these pieces relate to each other and come together or don't come together. That just fascinates me in terms of different kinds of landscapes, and I don't mean grass. So I started to think of my work in a similar way and I was inspired by this book by David Brett, who is an explorer and how he went out to try and understand this body of water called the Irish Sea, in his book around the Irish Sea. So I started to think about my work as that body of water, if you like, and the constellation came through a conversation with Claus Peder Pedersen. I think it relates to this landscape where there are clusters of things that happen, there are overlaps, there are tensions within it and also the interesting thing about the constellations is that there are kind of jumps that can happen in different directions, that it's not in this linear direction. I think that's the way my practice does work and I'm not trying to go from A to B. I'm quite interested in how these things might cross each other in a constellation, rather than in a kind of linear, chronological way.

**CDM**

How the action of framing helps you in building your constellation?

**MC**

I'm not sure about framing just yet. Whenever we're teaching our students and we're looking at landscapes, I tell them always that I don't want the model to be the shape of the base of the model. I think that the model should take whatever direction or shape that it needs to, in order to describe what they're looking at. So it's a very loose frame, because you should be able to move in and out of it and beyond it. So I don't know if it's a frame or whether it's about working from the insides out, or multi-directional. Framing sounds slightly restricted somehow, closed.

**CDM**

The diagrams, the drawings that you did yesterday, is this a kind of method of research that helps you in creating the constellation?

**MC**

Yes, absolutely.

**AB**

How do you describe your relation with your PhD supervisors? Who are your supervisors who are important in terms of your research?

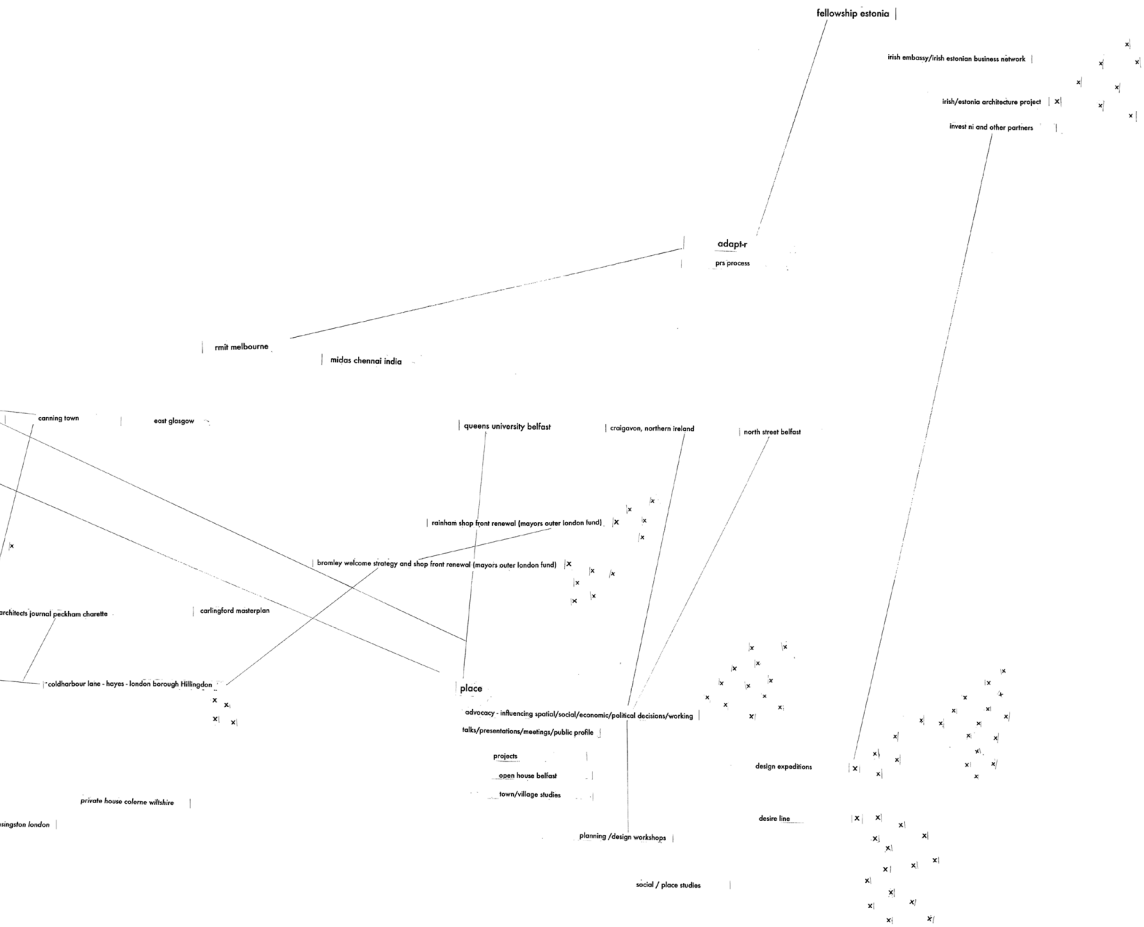
**MC**

I would say that whenever I presented initially to become part of the ADAPT-r program, I had a completely different idea about where I wanted to be and what I perceived the program to be and I guess, the location, everything. In terms of my main supervisor, who is Veronika Valk based in Estonia, there was a meeting of minds I would say in that initial presentation, where I think we kind of chose each other, through a conversation where I could see there were ways in which I could work really well with this person and that has absolutely been the key, I think. Veronika is a similar kind of animal, she's connected to various different things and that's really worked because it's opening up new possibilities for my work here in Estonia. It has been very fluid and it's been very supportive and critical at the same time. So I think that that's worked extremely well.

**DO**

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers?





## MC

Confrontation? Confrontation is a good word, I think. It is often confrontational actually. Absolutely, I would say that has affected the way I think, the way I work, because there are completely, very different ways of thinking about architecture right across: both in the ADAPT-r, in teaching practice and then the wider practice, especially now at the moment with architecture. It's incredible the diversity, so there is a confrontation I would say quite often which is healthy, I think, about understanding where other people are coming from as much as understanding what it is you're doing in this whole big world of what is called architecture, which is incredibly diverse and rich. And also I'm Irish, so I like a good argument.

## DO

Is your relation with clients and people you work with outside the studio changing throughout the process of the PhD?

## MC

Definitely. I think because I'm becoming more and more aware actually of my role in it, their role in it and that's something that's been incredibly useful, with the PhD process, by increasing that awareness. So I would say I'm almost reflecting in conversations now. Now that I can see them happening or being involved with them, I understand more clearly what my role is in it. What I might be trying to achieve in it, or what they are trying to achieve. Also I think in terms of practice, how I can work together with a team of people in a better way. So it has been really influential.

## CDM

How do you describe the moment of the PRS in terms of preparation for it, presentation itself, and feedback from the panel?

## MC

I would say from the moment that you have your first PRS and after it, you have a moment of.. it's elation, it's good that you've got through it, and it's been extremely interesting. I think from that moment in the lead up to the next six months, it's there constantly, and that's obviously difficult because you're having to think during those six months and question yourself in your work in a way that you might not have done previously. So it's intense, as I said, nobody said this process was going to be easy and you wouldn't want it to be. Let's say that you are constructing something over those six months in the lead up to it, there's an investigation that's going on. I've heard Richard Blythe talking about it as maybe having another project that's in the office and trying to treat it that way because you can compartmentalize it a little bit. I find that quite difficult to do. During those few days of the PRS you are under a lot of tension. But it's also a

very interesting and exciting few days, because there's so much that comes out of that process and then after, again, yes you have one day of relief or something before the build up again.

### **CDM**

How do you develop your performing narrative, like yesterday in your presentation?

### **MC**

I obviously spend quite a lot of time in a room talking to myself. I mean, it's interesting the way the PRSs are in Barcelona or in Ghent, these are beautiful places. But I find when I go there for the PRSs, I'm normally in a room talking to myself. At least until the presentation begins. So I spend a lot of time crafting that presentation, present it in front of others, so what I think I'm communicating is being communicated. That's one thing that I say to my students a lot as well; don't expect that they will understand what it is that you're trying to say. I mean, they read a lot into it, but I think it's also about trying to be explicit about some of the things that you are really trying to say, so that it is communicated. It's a crafting exercise and spending a lot of time then practicing, choosing the right words, choosing the right drawings. It's like, don't use the word theatrical or anything, but there's a performative aspect to it, as there is in any crit.

### **CDM**

What are your main expectations about the crucial moments of the PRS? For the next PRS, for example?

### **MC**

I don't have any expectations actually of the next PRS. I thought it was really good having the practice yesterday and to have a practice to try and communicate that work to an audience and to have a conversation to see how that was communicated. With the panel coming up, it will be a different panel, a different group of people and I hope that it's communicated as well to that group as it was yesterday. But there are also a lot of other voices in the room and I think I'll get lots of interesting feedback. I mean, listening back to the recordings always after the PRSs, it's quite amazing actually how architects from very diverse backgrounds, can pull these things out of your individual practice and see these things that may not be apparent, actually, to oneself.

### **DO**

Plural, public, political, subversive and contextual. Can you explain your positioning as a practitioner in relation to such dimensions and in relation to your communities of references (clients, students, civil society, etc..)?

**MC**

That's a big one, isn't it? God, you guys were really listen to what I was saying yesterday.

**DO**

It was really interesting for us.

**MC**

What was the second part of the question?

**DO**

Well, how do you position yourself as a practitioner in relation to your community of practice which can be your clients, students, civil society, peers, and so forth?

**MC**

I don't know if I have an answer for that. I'd say that how I position myself is changing. I think I'm aware that I also want that to change. In terms of communities of practice, I can see other people who are developing positions and I'm watching them quite closely to see how they manage to do that. I'm not sure if that answered the question, that's the best I can do.

**DO**

Is there any word from the ADAPT-r project that you're observing and adopting in your research?

**MC**

Do you mean words like communities of practice or public behaviour? Yeah, I think I'm absorbing them all. They're not words that I would have been previously familiar with. I'm absorbing each of them. I mean, I think it's very interesting to think about the next PRS coming up about public behaviour. I guess, I initially understood that as it's my public behaviour which, of course, is part of it, but actually public behaviours are more about how this work is perceived by the public, how it might change public behaviour and to begin to observe that. That's not something that I was really cognitive of before. And I wouldn't really have understood what that meant, I guess intuitively, I would have perceived that was going on, but not in the way that ADAPT-r is forcing me to think about it - or encouraging.

**DO**

Are there any new meanings that you see around such glossary?

**MC**

Yes, I think just from what I've just said. I think maybe also communities of practice, it's another one which is new for me. I don't know if I've put any additional meaning onto those words myself, but I definitely thought about them very carefully in reference to my work, my community of a practice and what my work specifically does in terms of public behaviours.

**DO**

How do you think the PhD process has changed the way of looking at your past practice? How is it affecting in the present your practice? How do you think this will affect your future practice?

**MC**

The first part, I guess, thinking back about previous work, it's probably the case with a lot of practitioners, that there's something very intuitive that goes on about how you choose to be involved in the next project or the one that you go after. It could continue on forever that way if you don't begin to reflect on it. I'm not sure everybody does need to reflect on it, but actually having reflected on it, I can see why there's a range of work that made sense, why we got involved with, and what the intention was, really the underlying consistency of that work. Also as I said yesterday, the inconsistencies of the work I did at that time, it just felt really wrong and I didn't want to do it. Reflecting back on that, I can understand the reasons now why that work didn't make sense at all, at the time and it was more difficult to do and really made you question the practice that you were you involved with.

I think being involved in it right now, I'm being much more precise about the projects that I get involved with and the intention behind getting involved in those types of projects. Actually, as I'm becoming more and more aware of how my role as a practitioner has changed from what I said yesterday, doing the projects, being in the projects, being the crafter of those projects and having a different kind of role as a practitioner. I'm much more aware of that. So I had a tension for quite a while about saying yes to everything. I think I'm beginning to see actually some projects that I don't need to be involved with because I have this new role and I have seen the potential of that. So I think it's given a bit of clarity to me. I think moving forward that's really beneficial because that tension would have probably continued for quite a while. Now it's clear to me to see the direction of travel that I want to move in and also what I need, these extra strings to the bow, in order to get to that position.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



*Fig. 2 Practices of Negotiation*



*Fig. 3 Practices of Negotiation*





# Petra Marguč - Polimorph



KU Leuven

## Candidate Profile:

Petra Marguč is an architect and urban designer trained in Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain. She is co-founder of Polimorph, a platform for applied research and design projects, based in Paris, France, whose role is to explore, implement and transmit integrative design methods and collaborative design tools in architecture and urbanism. The work of Polimorph is regularly published and presented at conferences and events, several projects gained prizes or have been published. Parallel to her work in practice, Petra has been teaching and lecturing in various architecture schools in Europe. Since April 2015, Petra is an ADAPT-r fellow at KU Leuven.

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven Sint-Lucas Campus, Ghent  
April, 2016

## Key

**PM** Petra Marguč

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

Now I would like to talk with you about the topic of methods. What do you think is the most interesting and relevant element of the ADAPT-r terminology for you?

## PM

Oh there are several, most interesting?

## CDM

Most relevant in your research.

**PM**

Well, first of all, that it is practice research, that is fundamental. Then, the methodology of case studies, community of practice and so forth. For me these categories are really useful frames to displace myself momentarily and to become somebody different, to enter my body of work through a different door that makes it look different. It makes me discover what I'm doing every day, it makes me discover or maybe get deeper into it. So it's really useful. And then of course, the format of the PRS moments, that we exchange with our research community in this particular way. Of course, there would be a big missing element if that would not be.

**AB**

So talking about the relationship with your supervisors, you mentioned just some minutes ago, that Johan Verbeke and Jo Van Den Berghe are your supervisors. How would you describe your relationship with them?

**PM**

Yesterday, Jo came to see me in the space where I was setting up for the presentation. Seeing us Carmen said to Jo, "Oh, you're like a father." It's not really that, but he is that kind and generous person. Actually despite the fact that we don't know each other very well yet and that we don't exchange so much, each exchange is were productive for me, it created very quickly a trust relationship. We don't need to exchange a lot, he triggers and inspires me quite quickly. For the content of my work, I'm exchanging more with Jo. Johan is very precise in questioning formulations and challenging a mastery of structural coherence and logic, which is helpful in another way. So the two are complementary, they are very different.

**DO**

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers within the ADAPT-r community of practice?

**PM**

Inspired? Influenced? Inspired, definitely. Stimulated, not influenced in the sense that it takes me away from where I need to go. I sense that actually the whole process and ADAPTr methodology helps me to come closer to who I am as a creative practitioner, despite the fact that I knew who I was. But definitely exchanging with the others is very stimulating - and sometimes accelerating. You're dwelling on a question for days or weeks, then you just exchange for five minutes with someone and there it is, then you just do! It goes like that.

When you'll transcribe the interview, I just said "do", how will you write that?

## **DO**

We will draw a picture of you doing that.

## **CDM**

Talking again about the PRS, how do you describe the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, presentation itself, panel's feedback)? Maybe you can give us insights from today?

## **PM**

Well, today was a bit stressful for me because I knew that I'm not in 25 minutes, I didn't manage to finish preparation to make sure I will finish in time. But even so, I still wouldn't want to miss it because I know that the feedback I will get will be worthwhile. In the frame of the PRS I dare to take that risk to not have complete control over mastery and achievement. Of course I try to convey in a comprehensive way what I believe I master and what is relevant. At the same time I put forward aspects where I am not so sure yet. In that sense the PRS is not like a lecture. For the PRS I want to take risks for testing and presenting things I don't feel sure about, to get reactions from a professional community I do acknowledge. So the preparation is conceiving a format to get reactions on issues I do question at that particular moment.

So today for me the overall process, I felt uncomfortable for not being explicit enough, with examples lacking to make it understandable. I had the table where I laid things out, I had the projection screen and the board to write. The three supports could have worked, but I there was a conflict between the projection screen and the board, the status of the objects on the table. Next time I'd like to make it more precise, to get more precise reactions.

## **AB**

Again talking about key elements of ADAPT-r, what do you think are the positive and negative outcomes and effects of displacement, of moving from one place to the another for a period of time?

## **PM**

Displacement is productive for me. What is difficult to organize in everyday life, is all the administrative stuff that comes with it. Moving professionally to another country for a rather short period of time whilst maintaining your practice in your country of origin is complicated. Administrative things we have to handle, sometimes take so much time and room, that it's out of balance. I needed and enjoy the territorial displacement in order to displace my mind, my thinking, to be displaced content-wise. But sometimes there's just so much organization that it takes too much away from this creative energy that the displacement produces.



Fig. 1 Petra Marguč, Trefoil mutations

Fig. 2 Petra Marguč, PRS layout at Ghent PRS April 2016 (Photo: Mun Films)

We discussed quite a lot amongst us about that disruption when scaling down the European framework and applying it into every country, which still has different regulations. Somehow there are things which seem to create quite a lot of obstacles for us. Administratively it should be less complicated.

## **DO**

How **do** you think, the PhD process has changed your way of looking at your past practice, on your present practice and how do you think the PhD will affect your future practice once you finish it?

## **PM**

Well, it affected already my past practice in the sense that my practice exploded. That also had to do with being ill, but not only. I think the coincidence of engaging in this practice research, moving away from Paris to Brussels, being less present on site, makes it not so easy to keep being proactive in on-going projects because they are following a very different timeframe, rhythm and demand a higher reactivity. So I lost some projects, I lost some contact. I don't mind so much, because I can consider changing my practice at the moment. but I am a bit anxious about that. If I had wanted to keep up my practice as it was when I enrolled, that would have been really tough. I have the impression, if you have a practice with several employees or partners and the team keeps the business running whilst you're doing what we're doing here with ADAPTr. But for me being a driving force in our practice makes me professionally more fragile to ensure a continuity despite disruption. However, I feel it being definitely the right thing to do and to continue this form of practice research.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Johannes Torpe - Johannes Torpe Studios



University of Westminster

## Candidate Profile:

From childhood Johannes Torpe has allowed his creative energy and intuition to guide him. With support from his freethinking parents, Torpe has pursued his ventures without any conventional training. His keen eye for emerging trends and a holistic approach to the business of design has been the driving force behind his creative consultancy expertise. This has given him the opportunity to surround himself with a team of multi-disciplinary experts from around the world, and the honour of being the first ever Creative Director for luxury design and sound brand Bang & Olufsen. Since July 2015, Johannes is an ADAPT-r fellow at the University of Westminster.

## Interview edited transcription

University of Westminster, London  
April 2016

## Key

**JT** Johannes Torpe  
**AB** Alice Buoli  
**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis  
**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## DO

Now we will talk a bit more about the methods of ADAPT-r. What do you think are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project?

## JT

Well, it is really, that you get the chance to dig into yourself and you dig all the way into questioning why you did what you did, from the very beginning. For my practice it is has been immensely helpful. We put out, we had like a room this size where we just put all the walls full of projects and for, not only for myself, just saying "What the fuck, did I really do that 20 years ago?". To letting the staff, where

the senior staff is 5 years old because it's such an old studio (and people move on in their life and that's how it is). For them to actually see the body of work, they had no idea. So that I think is the most important thing. But then also, actually to give your life and your ways of doing things, refurbishing your work life. I think it's a very, very, powerful tool.

And then third of all, as I've never been a part of academia, I thought it was a great opportunity to get to know people in academia and let them know that there's not only one way, there's many ways. The world is open to creativity and really creativity is what I do. It's not labeled, even though you have to for people to understand it. So that's really my point. Then of course, in the end are delivering, not delivering an academic judgment because I can't. Delivering something that people can read and enjoy and laugh and think and be inspired by. That's what I want to do and that's what I think is real contribution - in large for the masses (the commercial line, right?).

**DO**

Now I would like to ask you, who are your mentors?

**JT**

Well, it's very diverse. I would say, one mentor for me is a Buddhist monk, for instance. Another mentor is a musician, an architect, it's very random of personalities, psychologists.. and I think the interesting thing about having these kind of mentors is that they are not thinking like each other. They're all totally different. That's why when you go to them and you have questions in life and you will never get pity from them. It's not that, "Oh, I feel like my life is treating me bad." Like, "Pff.. get your shit together." Really and that by itself is also encouraging because you get people who have a body of experience with them, which I don't have. I have a different experience. I think this mentorship is a very, very important point. I don't think a mentor should be somebody who's in your field of work. I mean, you can kind of figure that out. But it's about life, it's not a work mentorship. I don't think that's interesting.

**DO**

What about your relationship you're having with your supervisor, with Kate? How does it work out? Can you describe a key element?

**JT**

It works extremely well and it does work extremely well because, first of all, because she's Kate. Number two because she understands where I'm coming from. She doesn't frame me because if you frame me, you'll be disappointed. If you accept that I'm a little bit like a clout with a solid core but a cloud around it, you will get the best out of me and she's really doing that. I think that is a very important part of it.

It might not be at the unwritten rules of academia, but you know, she's my advisor and mentor, so I think that's great.

**DO**

And about this "skipping stone" process you described before, how and when did you discover it? Was it a part of your process of the PhD or was it a metaphor you were using before that?

**JT**

It was a metaphor I used for to talk because I thought it was a very, very interesting way to look at your life. But I used it in a completely different way. But when I got into this and I went for the first two meetings and I heard other fellows talking about their projects. I was, put it this way, I was not disappointed (that's not the right word), but I was very confused because I thought that people were sitting and presenting something, all of them, was kind of talking in the direction of their.. - not what they would contribute. They did this for themselves and I think if you just do it for yourself then you don't contribute. I mean, I don't do it for myself. I do it because there's a lot of people who depend on what I get out of it. And there's a lot of people who can't get something great out of it and that should be the reasons. So in many ways, it was like the PRS examinations in Barcelona where I was one big question. I was like, "What? What are you talking about?" You know, very complicated. I think maybe, the persons before they did this, they came with a very straightforward approach but because it became academic. "It's a PhD, oh my god, it has to be big. I have to use, I have to find all the words." I have no idea, you know, maybe it was because I'm not educated, so I was like, sitting like, "What the fuck are you talking about? I mean, I don't understand it. Speak human language." Maybe a lot of academics sitting there were like, "That's a great word." But I don't think the word is necessarily the power when you are creative. Action speaks louder than words and I think the action is really what is important in this, the action of delivering something people understand.

**CDM**

We can continue talking about the PRS system. From your side, how do you describe this moment of the PRS preparation? The preparation for it, presentation itself and panel's feedback, how do you describe it?

**JT**

The one I had in Barcelona? I think it's great, I think it was great. I think it went well. I mean, if I should say something, it would be nicer to have more time, less tight program, where people like.. because you don't have the chance to see all them and it was great to see all of them. But on the other hand, it would be one week of sitting and that, you know, depends on your mood and so on.

But I think was great and I think people's reaction is very positive and their questions is amazing. I got one, an email for a woman called Pietra, who I've never met before and she just like (wrote) this email with advice that was so great. It was like, "Fuck yeah, exactly what you need." Because all these kinds of questions like, "I'm not sure.." Then you don't really get into it. But then someone who takes the effort to sit down and write to you what they mean. Fantastic! So that was extremely helpful. Then at the ADAPT-r Day at RMIT in Barcelona on the Monday where Richard and Marcel was going through their ideas of this, made it very clear for me, like, "Okay, I see it."

**DO**

About that, have you adopted any words of the ADAPT-r research?

**JT**

I haven't got to that yet, no. For me, unfortunately today I would have the total for the next PRS, but I simply can't because I have to now start not all over again, but I have to do a lot of work again before I can present in two weeks in Ghent which is highly irritating, but it's just the way it is, nothing you can do about it. So in many ways it's something I am in the process of doing it, also finding my words to do it. I think it's good to have advices but I don't necessarily see I should follow it strictly because otherwise it wouldn't be mine.

**DO**

Just to end, How do you think this PhD process is affecting the way you look at your past practice, is affecting your present practice and how do you think it will affect your future practice?

**JT**

You know, life is implicated in predictable, right? So, my past practice it can not influence, but it can make me take a second look at it and get inspiration from it and tell people about it because I think your body of work if you're very productive you kind of forget the past.

But in the process of being executive of Bang & Olufsen and looking at the work of that brand for the last 90 years, digging into it, using three months to do that, making the sign language that has never been in the company for the future Creative Directors or whoever. Leading the company has also put on the importance of the past.

Before I started this, I didn't look at the importance of my past because that was yesterday. But the reality is that it's like 20 years. You have to take that into consideration and that's only design, then you have all the years before that with companies. It's a pretty important step, I think and for me it's going to be a very important time to finish this off.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Anna Pla Català

PRS 1



University of Westminster

## Candidate Profile:

Anna Pla Català is a registered architect based in Barcelona. She graduated from the Architectural Association (AA Dipl) in London and has a Master of Science from Columbia University in New York. She has worked at Foster and Partners and Eisenman Architects. She is founder and principal of **APC\_Studio**, an architecture office focused on the research and development of models of higher integration between advanced digital technologies and everyday architectural production, from its conception to its construction on site. Anna has taught Design Studios at PennDesign-UPenn, Berlage Insitute, IaaC, ADDA-Elisava and at the Harvard Graduate School of Design amongst others. Anna is a fellow at the University of Westminster.

## Interview edited transcription

University of Westminster, London  
April 2016

## Key

**APC** Anna Pla Català

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

Talking about the ADAPT-r methods. We would like to ask you, what are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## APC

The format is the best, that's why I applied. It helps you continue with your own path. The fact that there are other practitioners that you see develop along the process is very important. The fact that there are those intense PRS moments where the work gets put into friction with different points of views and different

methods of doing. This is completely valuable, I think, it is key for everyone. I think it's very intense to have these encounters where you see a lot, you get exposed, you're forced to take decisions when perhaps in isolation you would just go on. It goes beyond the rather private one-to-one relationship with one's supervisor. You're put on the spot and you see other people within the same process also and how they're doing it.

**DO**

Can you explain us your social position as a practitioner and researcher in relation to your community of references? Your clients, your students, the society, how do you see yourself?

**APC**

I have a very small office. It's a micro practice which research-oriented although I do have an interest in building. I am very involved in academia teaching in a variety of contexts and scales. I most definitely need the kinds of debates with other practitioners and theorists that arise in certain academic circles.

**AB**

How do you think that being involved in such a PhD is changing your way of doing research or your practice? How do you expect it will maybe change?

**APC**

I think it can be very useful, especially in the middle of one's career, in order to redefine and reinvent one's practice specially after the great crisis from 2008 that has installed a new economic and productive regime. Usually when one gives a lecture, one might get questions, but they're not challenging your complete *modus operandi*. We all take many things for granted, so moments of intense questioning are necessary because they make you reconsider the basics.

**DO**

It was really nice for us to share this interview with you. We hope to do another.

**APC**

Yes, we'll do more along the way... Thank you very much.

The first part of the interview is reported in [Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2](#)





# Marco Poletto - ecoLogicStudio



Aarhus School of Architecture

## Candidate Profile:

Marco Poletto, co-founder and director of ecoLogicStudio, is an architect, author and educator. Marco has been Unit Master at the Architectural Association in London, Senior Tutor at the IAAC in Barcelona and Visiting critic at Cornell University. His projects have been published and exhibited internationally. He is author of “Systemic Architecture – Operating manual for the self-organizing city” published by Routledge in 2012. Since April 2015, he has been ADAPT-r research fellow at the Aarhus School of Architecture; his research focuses on the development of bio-digital design strategies and prototypes.

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven Sint-Lucas Campus, Ghent  
April, 2016

## Key

**MP** Marco Poletto

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

What is the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## MP

First of all, the PRS symposium moment it's definitely interesting. I guess, not only for the fact that you are forced to present, etc, because I think to be honest that we [did] quite a lot of presentations and I always take them as an opportunity. Claudia always laughs at me because she says, “You are the only one that every time does a new presentation.” But, it's true because for me when I'm invited to speak, I like to take that opportunity as a moment in which I'm forced to prepare something and then as I take it as a little moment of research, maybe I did a project

I never presented before, so I want to present it. I always do that effort. So, it's kind of nice to do it here. But I think here, what's nicer is the framework and the fact that you are with a bunch of people that for 3 days have nothing else to do, or maybe if they do, they don't do it. I think that is very important. Somehow it's a certain missing thing, even if you are part of an academic environment, it's your routine, everybody is always busy, blah, blah, blah. If you go to a symposium, yes maybe you do your bit, but then it's also a bit competitive, "What is the other doing?" etc. Here, it's nice because there is a framework in which people are not necessarily competing, at the same time they want to show nice stuff, but they are in a mindset in which they are open and they really want to discuss not only gossip, but real stuff. So for me, that's one of the elements that I like, I think that it's important because you need to create the environment to allow this level of exchange, it doesn't normally happen.

Then, there is the actual thing of the PhD by practice model in itself, which nobody seems to know what it is, so I'm doing my own version. I think that in itself is quite interesting.

## **DO**

How would you describe the relationship that you have with your PhD supervisors? Who are your mentors?

## **MP**

We can say that I have a very good relationship in the sense that we get along very well, but that is a little bit superficial answer, I understand that. I think, it's more about the kind of freedom of the format that I like, somehow, because one of the main problems for me in engaging in the PhD, as I said before already, it was the idea that the PhD comes with a very prescribed format. Whereas, it is a sort of format, and certainly also the attitude of my supervisor, has allowed a lot of freedom, but also a certain level of speculation about it. So, in that sense, I was really trying to interpret what, for me, could be a PhD by practice? How can the practice contribute and how can the research contribute? How can I create a more powerful form of exchange between the research and the practice from what I've been doing up until now. Which takes us to the next point, which is the displacement.

Well, I mean, again there is the banal answer, which is: all great, I can have a bit of quiet peace in a small village because London is crazy and you can not really focus. It's banal, but it's kind of true in a way, particularly if you're trying to make stuff or like, our practice is, in a way, quite hands-on, quite artistic. Typically architects don't get their hands dirty too much nowadays, it's more like you draw, you talk, somebody else does it, no? We do a lot of our stuff, like even bigger pavilions, they were produced by us, the Urban Algae Folly they were produced by us, of course we had help. So there is a lot of work that is about also actually figuring out how to do stuff and test and try, and in that sense, there is a very good culture of doing, of

making, a very good lab, more quiet, more space and so on. It is important, it's not just a silly thing. In London it's very, very hard to do certain types of experiments, to carry on a certain type of practice, of course there are other benefits.

So that was one benefit of the displacement. The other benefit is or maybe would be, my attempt to connect with the city and to somehow engage with a different context and test the sensibility of that context to the topics of the issues of my practice. Let's say, I go there obviously as a researcher, then I'm trying to connect with the city as a practitioner, also, bringing what I can do with the practice, bringing the stuff that we've done, my curriculum, my portfolio, and really trying to understand how the research can actually feed into the city. I think in that sense, of course the Danish culture and system is quite sophisticated, I would say, and also the city in that sense is an interesting environment to test that. So, I think there is a quite interesting element of being relocated in a place you don't know, so you're kind of curious about it, but also in a place which has some interesting affinity to the kind of research I'm doing. Basically, the possibility to explore that, it's nice. I think, in that sense, also the supervisor is quite open to that. There is interest in that sense in how the university itself, the school of architecture through this program may connect to the city more than it does now, because typically researchers are quite closed in the school. I think this is quite nice, again I don't know how it's going to end up, because it is really work in progress, but something is happening and I present a work to the city architects, we're going a workshop with a team there, with some big offices there that are doing nice stuff. So, there is a quite interesting dynamic that is happening. This is new and it's also for me interesting because it allows me to reflect on what I can bring as a practitioner and as a researcher and how the two things do hand in hand, this could also be my contribution to the format.

**AB**

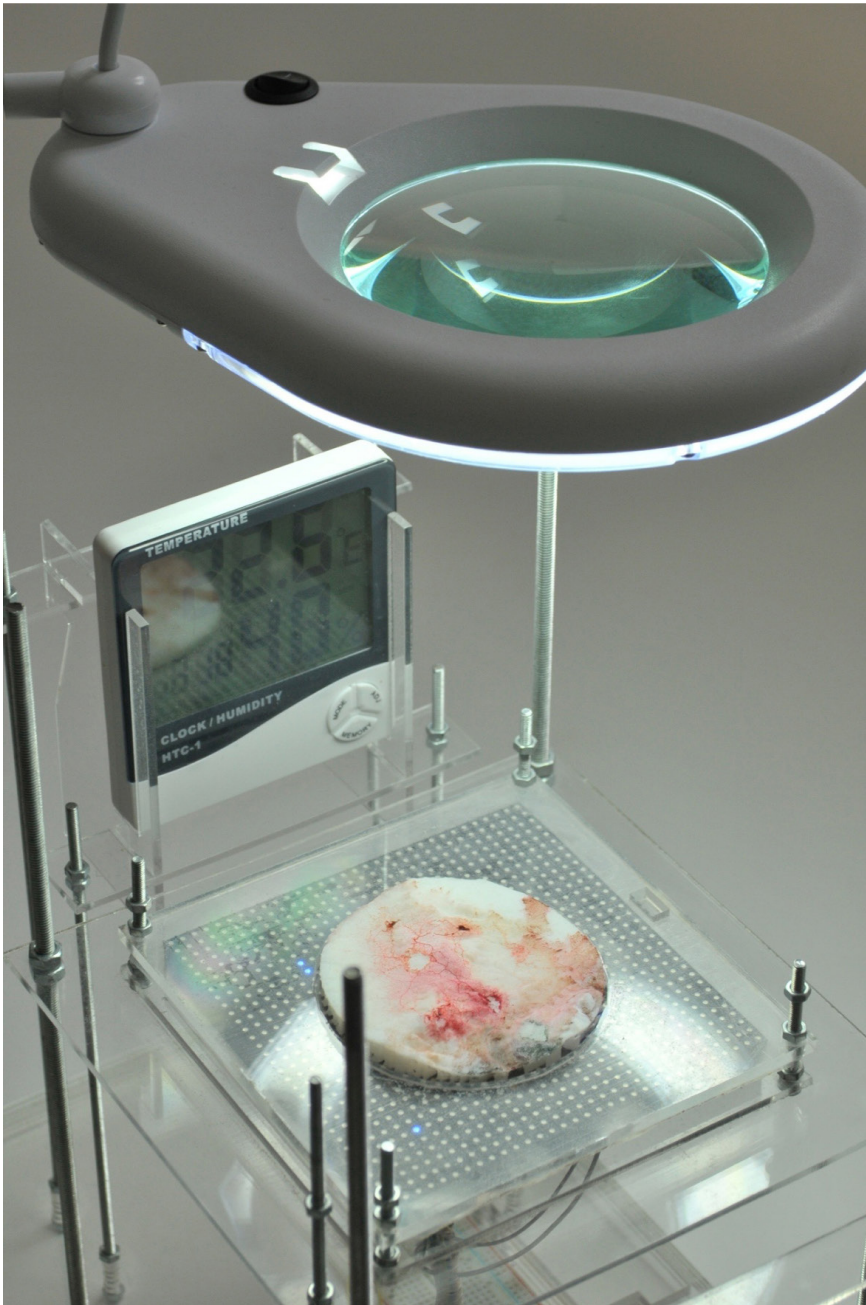
How do you think the PhD will affect your future practice?

**MP**

That is a good point. I don't know actually, because I came quite open-minded about that. I didn't come to the PhD with the idea, "Ok, I do this because I want this to have this." So, I'm open, at the moment it's difficult to tell what effect it's been having. I think, there are interesting dynamics that are happening. One, possibly being the relationship with my partner in the office because clearly we have been developing the practice and the teaching and everything is in a completely symbiotic manner, so we obviously understand each other without speaking and so one. But, I think it comes to a point in which it is also interesting to find some distance, because of course we have a different contribution to the practice, we are not just a clone of each other, we are very different. So, it was always obvious that we have a different contribution to the practice, but it is all so seamless, so it is hard

to tell. This is also one of the most important repercussions that it will or could have on the practice, to create that distance that sharpens the roles and clarifies the roles and it will only benefit the practice and help the practice mature and progress. I think that's the same for Claudia. She's also part of the program, but in a different country, a different place, a different context, is so obviously triggering different dynamics. I don't think this is actually pulling us apart, rather the opposite, it's the creating a productive tension. Again, I don't know how it's going to end up, but I can feel it's positive, I can feel that it's something happening because of the exposure to different environments and also the necessity to sharpen our contribution. That's also why I'm quite happy that she joined the program. Maybe that is one of the things that would benefit the practice most, to sharpen these contributions and create more of a dialectical relationship within the totally symbiotic life that we have been having so far.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



*Fig. 2 Marco Poletto / ecoLogicStudio*



# Sam Kebbell - KebbellDaish Architects



University of Westminster

## Candidate Profile

Sam Kebbell worked for architects in New York and Amsterdam before returning to New Zealand to start KebbellDaish Architects in 2002, with his former teacher, John Daish. Sam has also taught at the School of Architecture at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) since then. He graduated from VUW with a B.Arch (1st class honours) in 1998 which included an exchange to the Penn State University arts program and the Penn State architecture program in Rome. He completed his M.DesS History and Theory (Distinction) at the Harvard Graduate School of Design (Cambridge, USA) in 1999. Sam is currently a PhD Candidate at RMIT in Melbourne and an ADAPTr research fellow at the University of Westminster.

## Interview edited transcription

Melbourne, RMIT University

June 2016

## Key

**SK** Sam Kebbell

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

## CDM

Talking about the methods and the ADAPT-r project, what do you think are the key methodological elements of the model?

## SK

I wonder how that relates to the question before about building, writing, diagramming and talking because I think it is how these things come together. I was thinking when I read the question about the fellowship and I think, there was a great luxury of time last year, just really to be taken out of the practice and the kind of busyness of just, often quite literally running from one thing to another. The PRS being one of those things you run to, right? I think it was very nice to have time. For example, Colm and I, the day we met, I think we spent the whole day in West-

minster talking... literally the whole day! We just thought you know, here we are, let's just talk and we did. We went through all his work, and we went through all my work, we talked about the last PRSs that we did, and what we were thinking, and it took all day and it was a fantastic day and it was very helpful for me. I think it was helpful for Colm too, you have to ask him - maybe it was the worst day of his life! But it was good for me, and I think the some of the ADAPT-r days were particularly good. They were all good, but there was the one in September that was really productive. So I think this research requires time: you need to make space for it and I think that was a great benefit of the fellowship.

I guess the other part of the fellowship (I'm just gonna focus on the fellowship because it could be useful), but the other part of that for me was that a lot of my research became much more New Zealand focused once I was European-based. I realized that it was easier to see how New Zealand had affected my thinking from a distance. I think Kate was very good at that, she has quite good Kiwi-spotting eyes or Kiwi antennae (she's married to Kiwi). She knows a lot of those New Zealanders in John's generation too, so that was very useful to get some distance from New Zealand, but also knowledge of it. So those are two things I think about the fellowship.

I think the methods probably goes back to the building, talking, diagramming and writing. Of course, the PRS is crucial, certainly in the talking part of it, and the diagramming. Some of the methods that I am writing about have to do with speculation and deduction, or induction. There's a degree of speculation that we do, going: "I think it might be this", and then some of its much more - and I don't know if the correct term is 'deduction' or 'induction' or whatever, but it's more about looking at the data and pulling things out. Both research methods have been useful. There's a bit of a mixture between induction and speculation, kind of looking forward about how things might be working and then going into doing a project, for example, and going, "Is that a reasonable sort of way of describing what I do? Perhaps it's a bit more like this". That sort of speculative research method complements the induction methods: looking through drawings and the database of files, for example, looking at their dates, and trying to unravel what went on. I think that's it.

## **CDM**

I think you already answered to the question how you discovered your fascinations, but if you want to say something more..

## **SK**

I think that case study on Humbug was a really significant part of the research for me. The diagrams that came out of that and the things that Richard saw in those diagrams, Richard was really perceptive. I don't think I would have got as much out of that case study, if I didn't have Richard saying, "Look at that", you know, and then challenging me to articulate certain things or try and fill certain gaps.

That case study was my focus over a few months leading up to one PRS, whatever it was 3, I think.

### **CDM**

You talk about conversation as a tool which you have used with your clients and with yourself. Could you please tell me more about this tool? How it works and why it's so important for you?

### **SK**

I've talked already about the dialogue that I have with clients, but there's also a dialogue between modesty and ambition. I tend to enjoy the dialogues that that each project throws up or I find dialogue within it. Like, let's say, the dialogue between camouflage and sculptural objects at Great Barrier, or even more generally, the national parks and pathways and buildings. Dialogue is one of the things I enjoy, I guess, and it's not just in the process of teasing out a building, but it's also in the experience of it. Humbug captures the dialogue between painting and architecture. So, I think when I'm working through a project, whether it's on my own or with others, there is a kind of a hunt for dialogue: what is the dialogue in here? What is the dialogue that were burying in this project? Or opening up through this project? It's more than just a process and certainly not just about me and the client.

### **CDM**

And your supervisors are Richard Blythe and also Kate Heron?

### **SK**

And Paul Minifie, formally. But Paul, I haven't worked with very closely. I just talk with him informally at the PRSs when I'm here, and he hasn't been at the European ones. So I probably talked more with Martyn Hook who has been on all my panels, until last one. But Kate and Richard mostly. Richard has obviously been the primary supervisor and had the biggest impact on the direction of the research, there's no doubt about it. But Kate played an important role last year.

### **CDM**

How do you describe your relation with them?

### **SK**

It is a really good question. I think it depends on the stage that you're at. Part of it has been a bouncing board process, you know, like "I've got an idea, what do you think?" Richard is very good at talking straight. He doesn't beat around the bush, do you know the expression? He is very clear, if he thinks it's a stupid drawing, he'll tell you it's a stupid drawing. I have really appreciated that, he's saved me public humiliation by telling me what is stupid in private, I think that's really valuable!

I guess, the other thing that they have both done, is give some perspective to the work. So when I have been sitting there working through things, so close, there's a certain research drunkenness which they can spot. They have both just set me back up straight, you know, if I fell into a research stupor. Anyway, so that's part of it. I guess, the another big contribution they make is obviously advice on research methods. It's really just talking through what the processes might be, particularly early on, when some of those methods are a little hard to get going. Some of them didn't come very naturally to me. So I think Richard was particularly good with that, so has Kate, and in fact, Leon has also been very good with that. Of course so has Marcelo who has been another useful guiding hand, particularly through his research methods, courses, but he's also been on panels. Yes, so I think my relationship with my supervisors has often revolved around methods and perspective. I feel a bit like, to some extent, the project is a collaboration with Richard and Kate.

### **CDM**

One of your mentor has been John Daish. Could you please tell me more about this?

### **SK**

I could talk to you for a week about John Daish. It's quite unique, I guess, the relationship that I've had with them because he was first my teacher is my second year at architecture school and then he was a mentor as I did projects for Mum and Dad and then he became a collaborator and a business partner, a friend, and he is still a mentor in many ways. So, he's played lots of roles, but always as the steady hand, ironically he doesn't have a very steady hand, but he is the steady hand. So he's an incredibly generous man and he's also an incredibly gifted teacher. So he's never taken the role of trying to make me into a little mini John. In fact he's never tried to make me into anything in particular, he's just been brilliant in helping me be more me, which I think is an incredibly good thing for a teacher to do. But it requires a lot of generosity and a lot of patience and he's got both of those things in buckets.

### **CDM**

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the dialogue, comparison and discussion with your peers?

### **SK**

Yeah, sure I think so. I mean, the PRSs are great, the dinners and things like that, you know, where we end up swapping notes with each other: how are you doing that? Even the banal things about: How much are you writing? When do you write? How much are you drawing? How many projects do you have on? How do you handle in the office? How are you handling money? I mean, there's all this

kind of stuff and it's been fantastic to talk all those things through with my peers. It inevitably changes the way I do stuff. Drawing types, seeing everybody's exams and presentations, inevitably it becomes a part of the atmosphere, doesn't it? Pieces of it play out in own work, I'm sure.

### **CDM**

How is your relation with your clients and people you work with changing through the PhD process?

### **SK**

It might be too early to say. I don't know, but I think I feel more confident and clearer about what I do. I'm clearer and so I can communicate better which means that they can be a part of it more easily. I think that's a big thing.

### **CDM**

How do you describe and experience the moment on the PRS, in terms of the preparation for it, the presentation itself and also the feedback from the panel)?

### **SK**

Fun and yeah, I love the PRSs. I really enjoy presenting and I really enjoy listening to others and there's something about the thrill of performance which I quite enjoy. I've always kind of enjoyed that. That thrill has a lot to do with the challenge of crystallizing what you're doing because it's highly structured, you have 25 minutes and there's not a lot of flexibility around any of that. So you have your 25 minutes and you can pack as much as you can into that, as accurately and richly as you possibly can, and it's a phenomenal challenge. They haven't always worked, but there's a kind of excitement for me around the challenge of doing it and when it works, it's great fun, even when it doesn't work, it's quite fun!

### **CDM**

what are your main expectations about these crucial moments?

### **SK**

Expectation... I don't know if I have clear expectations, other than that I will just give it a good crack. That's another expression. You are learning some useful English expressions tonight, giving it a crack means having a try. Maybe it's a very Australian-New Zealand term, I'm not sure. I think that's the only expectation: that I will go in and I'll try to crystallize this work. I guess it's also become my expectation now, that the panel will be deeply engaged, committed, quick, and insightful. That wasn't the expectation at the beginning, but it's been the reality of each PRS. So I have every expectation that on Sunday, it will be the same. I think it's stunning, the performance of the panels is in many ways more impressive to

watch than the candidates presenting because they have also only got 25 minutes to digest an enormous amount of material, one after another, for two days. I think it's stunning. So I expect they will perform brilliantly again.

### **CDM**

Can you explain your social positioning as a practitioner and researcher in relation to your community of references?

### **SK**

Yeah, I can. I was thinking about this in terms of aspirations, maybe or heroes. My heroes, in the world of research, tend to be more on the side of the public intellectual, than the backroom intellectual. I think an architect is a pretty public intellectual because the buildings are so out there. Teaching is also a kind of public, it's a small public, in my case normally very small. But I like this idea that teaching and practicing is a kind of public activity and a sharing of ideas within the communities within which we practice. If that community can expand, include other small communities within Wellington or New Zealand that want to join that discussion, then that is something that I can aspire to. For example, the community around the Wellington City Gallery is a really great community, a lot of my friends are involved, and there are some overlaps there between the architecture and art worlds. It would be nice to get a bigger overlap in the future. Other architects at home are doing that really well, overlapping those things more. It would be really nice if I could contribute to that more.

### **CDM**

How do ADAPT-r methods and the PhD journey itself has fed you awareness about this position?

### **SK**

I could probably answer 11 and 12 together, because I've become much more aware of the storytelling components of my work, this narrative framework and how those stories. Of course, within that narrative framework there are many stories that can be told. But I feel very satisfied to have connected my interest in storytelling to my practice. Again, it was Richard really that identified it. I feel really great to be articulating that, explaining what it is, because it is something that I feel very comfortable with, historically. My History & Theory Master's degree had a big fictional component to it, where I was writing short stories, and I really enjoyed that. I think, it goes back further than that as well. I really like the idea that these stories become told to communities. It's a way of sometimes talking about quite complicated things. Sometimes we use academic language to make very simple things complicated. But, I enjoy telling stories about quite complicated things in ways that are maybe a little easier to understand. I try to do that in my teaching if

I can. I like the idea that those stories could have a bigger audience.

In terms of question 12 and the future practice, I think it's that whole topic of the public behaviours: I'm really looking forward to expanding and being more conscientious about those stories, how they link to the work, how they tie together. I think in the past it's been a little bit ad hoc. It's been a bit of this and a bit of that. There is a thread, there is a storytelling urge within there, but I probably haven't quite found the mode of doing it. I think through the PhD I'm starting to find a way that I'm going to be exploring after the PhD. So, I've already catalogued a few things for post-PhD, post-PhD thinking or research or work or whatever you want to call it.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Federico Del Vecchio



University of Ljubljana

## Candidate Profile:

Federico Del Vecchio, is co-curator of Flip Project Space and engaged in an independent artistic practice. After finishing his studies at the Academy of Fine Art in Naples, he attended the Städelschule in Frankfurt am Main, after which he completed the Master in Fine Art at The Glasgow School of Art. He then attended the HIAP – Helsinki International Artist residence Program, supported by Kulturamt Frankfurt am Main Referat Bildende Kunst and 2012 Movin'Up prize for the mobility of young Italian artists abroad. Since June 2015 he has been an ADAPT-r fellow at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture.

## Interview edited transcription

Ljubljana University  
June 2016

## Key

**FDV** Federico Del Vecchio

**AB** Alice Buoli

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## AB

What are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project which are relevant for you?

## FDV

My most valuable experience during my time here has mostly been the exchange with my supervisor, even though we come from two different subjects, but I learn and learn from another point of view how to analyse certain aspects. Also, we wrote an essay together, so this becomes a very strong discussion too. It was also interesting to learn from each other, it became a very long discussion that has to be published. This was a very interesting exchange. Then the teaching as well, has been also doing in the Faculty of Architecture, has given me some skills and

also, as a I said yesterday, before I was hiding myself in the back, now I was standing, exposing myself. This is something that has been valuable from my time here. Everyday I like this idea to come everyday to the office, give me a routine that I have always been escaping from. But this routine has also become an important structure to make your process going without having too long a break and lose the track, but getting in a constant process of thinking and making and developing your project.

## **AB**

You have already mentioned this topic which is about the mobility of the artist. Do you have any criticism about moving to Ljubljana from your own town?

## **FDV**

The mobility is something that exists and you can not escape from, from how the creative world has this structure nowadays. As an artist, now there are constant, many art events, like now was the Biennale of Berlin, Vienna, Zurich, Basel, of course, you can not take part in all these things. It's become a more practical part because it's important to be engaged and be present in those events because you make stronger and more international relationships which are valuable for your career and professional side. But besides the more practical aspect, it's also again you start many conversations with people that you could never think to start before. Since I've been for many years building to develop these events, one being very engaged in during this time you start to create some strong network and relationship that will continue in the time. This is a more practical aspect, but you also start to reflect from different points of view, in the way you get lost, you are not anymore in one place. The essay we wrote, also talks a little bit about this idea of a constant viewing around and the obsession of collecting. In my case, I have a strong fascination for the object. And this idea of lightness, that this mobility should reflect a lightness which is not really.. many are not responding to the reality, because you start collecting many things around, you start to produce, many of my things (objects, but also artwork at the same time) they are littered around, they're in Glasgow, in California, so there is a feeling of no place, even though you are part of different places. If you compare myself with other people, they already know where they want to be, what they want, I feel a little bit lost in this field because I don't know where I want to live, I don't know where I will live, I don't know where I will move after Ljubljana, but at the same time this makes my life very interesting because I've been moving around since 15 years and it's something that makes my personality and my knowledge and what I am. It's not been just passing briefly in one place, but I've been living for a few years in each place. From each of those places, you learn things with which you draw with you wherever you go and this makes you what you are.

## **DO**

Do you think in the ADAPT-r project you've been influenced in your research methods by the comparison with your peers?

## **FDV**

More it has been affecting my practice, I think it was really the PRSs they were interesting how to see other creatives and other colleagues they think and they engaged in the process because what we do it's trying to put on the table, in a most open way, what we are doing and our inquiries, our weaknesses, so it's something that makes you reflect on your own practice. You get what you want to get from different experiences. So mostly I think the PRS is quite an exciting moment for this sharing of knowledge and to know also different points of view of other creatives, that of course are engaged in different subjects.

## **DO**

Do you think that the relation you are building with people, in your work, is changing throughout this PhD experience?

## **FDV**

What is changing is how make me think about how I should develop my academic skills, so how you should learn what to.. like also during the discussion yesterday, how you really try to give a strong meaning, a sense to what you are doing and try to analyse what you have to expose yourself from that experience from what you are doing. So the most important is then learning this analytic way and the "ourness" of trying to learn how to express yourself, to try to put on the side the less relevant information, to reach the point that is more important from that experience, from that relationship, from that teaching, from that process. I hope it's something that I will learn even more with the time.

## **DO**

How do you describe the moment of the PRSs (preparation, presentation itself and the panel's feedback)?

## **FDV**

It's quite a long process. At the beginning you feel really lost and you really don't know from where to start. But then, once you start, you start to build and this is also important because also again you try how to enter means 25 minutes what is the most relevant information you can share with the people. Not just information, of course, information what is valuable for you and what is something you would like to hear answered from others and feedbacks. So you really try to, during the preparation to structure as better as you can this presentation. Even though you know that the next few PRSs, you will get better and also because travel together in

parallel with your research, so every time you have more information to talk about, more inquiries. Then, the PRS is the moment you are on stage and you're sharing this presentation and the feedback from the panel. This is a process that has always been going through during my education, but here I think, there are different kinds of feedbacks. When I was, for example, in Frankfurt, the feedbacks were coming from.. I feel they were different, I don't know how to explain. In some cases, here you find the more metaphysical point of view, but also you find the more pragmatic, how they are part of your PhD because the PhD is something that you have to try to find a specific inquiry and you have to be as much more specific you can. The other hand, the feedbacks that I was having, mainly they were more over the head, more abstract, but valid as well. So they are the two different aspects I found during my time here.

### **AB**

How do you feel the PhD process will change your way of looking at your past and present body of work?

### **FDV**

The PhD is something that makes you much more focused, understand, because it's a time when you are thinking mainly about this without getting lost in other distractions. Of course, there are other things to be involved in, but this becomes a few years just being involved in your research, all of the points we explained before. So I think this helps me to be more aware, more sure as well and comfortable about what you are doing, what you're saying, what you're exploring, gives you a bit more personal security.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



*Fig. 1 Federico Del Vecchio, Search Dogs \_ Stratification of Research \_ Aarhus*

*Fig. 2 Federico Del Vecchio, Mediating Landscape*



# Dermot Foley - DFLA



RMIT Europe

## Candidate Profile:

Dermot Foley is Director and Principal Landscape Architect with Dermot Foley Landscape Architects, established in 2001. He is a horticulturalist, having trained at the National Botanic Gardens before studying landscape architecture. He has received multiple awards for landscape design, research and conservation. He teaches at University College Dublin and lectures internationally. He is currently an ADAPT-r fellow with RMIT Europe.

## Interview edited transcription

RMIT Europe, Barcelona  
May 2016

## Key

**DF** Dermot Foley

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

## CDM

Now, let's go on to the next topic which is Explication and Refinement of Methods. The first question would be, what do you think are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project? What are the most important for you?

## DF

First and foremost, I'm obviously stating the obvious, I suppose, it's to be able to remain in practice and make the practice the PhD. So when I first came here as an observer, you know just to see what the process was like, I spoke to people and so on and the first question was: How do you do this? If you're busy in your practice, how do you do this PhD? And the answer was, well for the first while, that that was the case, they were wondering themselves, but after a while they realized that they just took it directly into their practice. So it wasn't like that they were practicing and then they were going in at the weekends to do their PhD. They were doing their PhD within their project work in the practice.

So I've started to do that. Again, it maybe took me six months before I could really think about doing that. But I started to do it and I think that's the key method-

ological aspect of the PRS/ADAPT-r, is to remain in practice and to remain busy in practice and to apply some of this in practice. Because it's not just about me doing a PhD, if the other people in the office know that I'm doing it then they get some benefit from it as well. Like I said, we have a couple of projects where I'm consciously trying to change our direction and there's two people in the office working on that particular project and they know that, they know that's happening for that reason. So I think that makes it a little more interesting for everybody involved.

The PRS itself, the symposiums are really useful. I said earlier, I think the atmosphere of the PRSs I've been at is collegiate and friendly.. You know, it's very positive. So I think they're very good and obviously they act as deadlines, you know, very strict deadlines which is very important because I need that. Also, my supervisor, Mauro Baracco is calling, arranging for phone calls quite frequently and I need that as well. I've kind of told him I needed that, you know, because six months can just evaporate. So I think that's very useful as well.

I suppose, the set up, the sequence that has been established by RMIT and Leon (van Schaik) and various other researchers and the people who have developed this over the years. That sequence where you know, you start with the reflection, then the community of practice and then you move on through this sequence of phases of the PhD. When you first see it, you think, "Well, do we all have to follow this? Or is this really the way?" But it actually is a useful, well worked out, method for proceeding through the process. So if I had never been prompted to basically, fundamentally think about who influences me, I might not have done that. I mean, there is a soup in your head of people who influence you. You're aware of, names, images you've seen and projects you've seen, things that other people have written, but to actually really focus and go, "Who are the important ones?" That's very useful. So all of those things are laid out in a way, it's the kind of sequence and I find that very useful as well.

## **CDM**

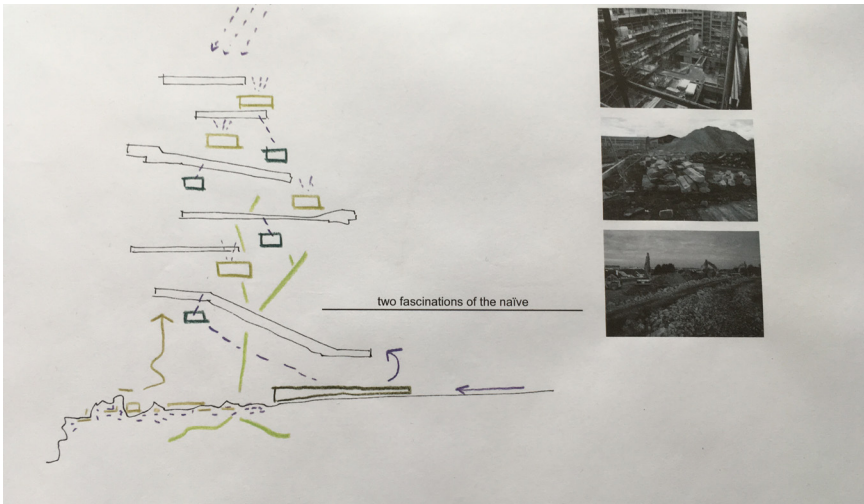
Do you have any other supervisors?

## **DF**

Yes, I have Tom Holbrook. So Mauro would be my senior supervisor and then Tom is also supervising. So I met him in London, he practices in London. So I have some work in London, so when I go to London, I meet Tom for a short meeting, that kind of stuff. Then I meet him at the PRSs as well. He's very useful as well. Obviously he gives a different (perspective).... to have two people..

## **CDM**

And how do you describe describe the relationship with these two different supervisors?



*Fig. 1 Dermot Foley, Moment from Glasgow ADAPT-r Day, October 2016*

*Fig. 2 Dermot Foley, Extract from Glasgow ADAPT-r Day, October 2016*

**DF**

I think, both of them, first of all, for them it seems to me like a lot of it is about listening, also they don't particularly force a direction, which I think is a good thing. I suppose. Mauro has to be more concerned about the process in a way as well. He's my senior supervisor so he would be very clear to me about the process and very clear also about common pitfalls, just things like, "Don't do this because it's going to..... as a process it won't work" because he's seen he's experienced enough to have seen people going in certain directions. For example, he's very clear to me about not trying to force a theoretical framework, from some other person or from some other type of practice or some other culture or whatever that might be, onto the practice work.

Then with Tom, as the second supervisor is probably a little bit free to just have a conversation. In a way maybe he has..... I wouldn't say his practice is the same as mine, but we have probably enough commonality between the two practices, so he probably understands a lot of what I might say to him, again indistinctively or intuitively, he understands when I say something, he knows very quickly what I'm talking about. But we're not identical by any means which is good as well. So he might say something to me and I go, "Well, I hadn't really thought about it that way before," because obviously I think if we were too alike, there would probably be a bit of a problem. So he has a practice and he's busy, he's going through all the pragmatic day-to-day stuff that I am at the moment, as well and so, therefore, I think we can have a conversation very easily. It can be a short conversation. The last time I met him in December in his practice it was a very short conversation but it was quite focused.

**CDM**

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the comparison or discussion with your peers?

**DF**

Oh yeah, there's no doubt about that. I suppose again, on the one hand, funnily enough, you don't really want to know too much about what your peers are doing within the PRS thing. But at the same time, some of them I've known, like Marti Franch, for example, I've known him for a long time, so I've known about this practice and I can see what his interests are. Sometimes you see something that he doesn't even see himself because he's too close to it, but it's very obvious to you, where you can see patterns emerging from his work. So I'm kind of assuming that he might see patterns emerging that I'm not aware of. So it's good to know that there are people there who might see things for you, just like you see things for them. Also, by and large, people are practitioners. If I'm talking about the landscape architects in the group that I'm aware of that are currently going through the process at the moment, they're all practitioners, busy in their practice, so they have very similar day-to-day issues in terms of my own issues. So when you have a

conversation it can be a very straight kind of conversation.

So I also see a lot of commonality between the practitioners. There's a kind of a theme going on at the moment in landscape architecture with grass cutting and that kind of stuff. You see that coming through a lot. The whole process of horticulture and gardening seems to be coming up. If you've been at some of the other PRSs that the landscape architects are talking about, the whole importance of acting, physically doing stuff, as if the architects were actually laying the bricks and doing things. That's what seems to be coming through with a lot of the landscape architects - acting on the ground and even using the process of gardening as the framework for their PhD. That's quite an interesting theme that's emerging that I'm curious about. Although I'm not saying I want to go in that direction.

### **CDM**

Could you explain your social position as a practitioner and researcher in relation to your community of references?

### **DF**

I'm not sure I understand that question.

### **CDM**

Well, how would you define your positioning within society in relation to your clients or your peers, your community of practice? How do you see your position?

### **DF**

It might be easier for me to describe how I think other people see my position. How I see my position, I'm not really sure. I don't know, I think I'm not so sure that people see that, let's say, the people that I provide a service to, for example, as a practitioner. I'm not so sure that they see me as an artist which is going back to what we mentioned earlier that it's a kind of art practice. I would say in Ireland a lot of what we do would be perceived as providing a technical service. Often amongst a very wide range of other technical service providers to deliver a building or just even a planning permission for a large development or adding value to a piece of land, literally. I think a lot of what we do would be perceived as a technical service. It might also be the case in Ireland and in Dublin that what we provide as a service will be seen to be optional. So it would be good to have the things that we do, but really if we can't afford them, we don't need them either. So having said that though, I think that's changed, that's possibly changing and maybe it's just to do with a societal change, all countries are on different trajectories, but in our economic system, we're more or less all on the same trajectory. So as Ireland gets more and more sophisticated, let's say, and as policy changes, what I do and what landscape architects do will become less optional and actually more normal and more part of the bigger picture.

So, for example, I could try to explain that. When I go to London to bid for a

project as a landscape architecture to try and promote myself, I'm very conscious that the clients are quite aware of the landscape architecture profession. They know it exists, they somehow would know who the best are, they want the best and they know the names and that kind of thing. So if you're entering that market, then it's very hard to actually succeed in that. Whereas in Ireland, a lot of clients are not really aware of the possibilities. A lot of our work is done in conjunction with architects, so if the architects recommend us or if our names are put forward, we still have to compete for that work, but it's not as rigorous a process. If we are acceptable on a certain number basic criteria, then we would sort of enter into that project and start working on the project. So that's a very pragmatic way of describing how one city or one region or one culture would view landscape architecture in a slightly different way to another.

From my own point of view, I think what we do is really important. I really do think that. I think it's hard for us to describe what we do. I think it's quite varied, it's not easy to show pictures and say this is what we do without that just being reduced to, "Oh, that's a nice-looking garden" or "That's a nice-looking tree." To me, it's very hard to actually describe succinctly what we do and, therefore, I don't blame people for not fully understanding what the possibilities are from a landscape architect, in terms of engaging with the landscape. Granted, it's partly to do with us but it's also partly to do with the process. At the same time I would say, well, I'm not going to tone it down. It's still, like I said at the start, it's an open-ended kind of thing, it's very broad in scope. I would hope to retain that broadness in practice. I also say that's when I'm teaching with my colleagues that we shouldn't be specializing. Landscape architecture should not be considered a specialist aspect of architectural design. It's actually a very generalist practice, it's a general approach to things and it should always be like that. Even though, there is more pressure academically, all the time, to specialize, to get funding..... So I would say that we certainly provide a very wide-ranging service to society. I don't see myself as preaching. I don't go out and see myself preaching with some kind of societal manifesto. I don't have a manifesto, I would like to just work away quietly. Hopefully based on good work, if the work is good and reflects a wide range of issues or solutions to issues and maybe reflects what people are thinking about or maybe what people have said to us from a client perspective, we can respond to that - in a way which just goes slightly above the norm, a small bit. I would rather get my message across that way rather than actually have a manifesto. So, I don't know, that's a very long-winded answer. That was a difficult question.

## **CDM**

Now let's go to the last question that is, how do you think this PhD process is affecting your way of looking at your past practice, your way of acting your present practice and your way of thinking into your future practice?

**DF**

Well, it certainly is having a strong influence. I mean, looking back at the past practice, we did a certain amount of that before I entered into the PhD process. We looked at..... we published some of the work and it was after the first 10 years of practice. In a way, that process proved that even after 10 years, with a lot of activity in practice, there was a lot of interesting work..... we thought it was interesting and other people did as well because we asked other people. There still was a kind of deficit as well and I really want to focus on built work, like designing to build something, to create something physically.

So when we published our work in 2011 a lot of it was theoretical, it was competition-based, it was drawings, it was about telling a story and so on, it was about all the stuff that lies behind. So a lot of the material..... essentially there weren't that many photographs of built work. There was some built work, but it wasn't as much as you'd hope. And that points in its own way to the difficulties of practice, that if you want to deliver something physical and build in a way which reflects a certain kind of innovation, it's proves to be very difficult. There are so many projects that just don't go to that level, for whatever reason.

But I suppose, looking at the present practice, the way that we're practicing and the influence that the PhD is having on it, even since 2011, that period when we published, we actually got some quite interesting material built, so that's coming through now and giving confidence in practice, to myself and to my colleagues. We've gone beyond a certain threshold, in terms of delivering things and building. Then, we're getting busy again in the practice, so it's working quite well at the moment. Anyway let's hope that it keeps going. that during this PhD process it will be a period where we're actually busy and hopefully actually developing things in the way that we want to build, so that work will actually be constructed.

So I'm more determined than ever to make sure that if we take something on site, it's going to go on site with something new. That the project will bring something new and that's what the PhD is all about, I think.

Then finally into the future.. I don't know to be honest, frankly, I don't know. I still have my overriding interest in actually constructing projects and again, I know that sounds like I'm stating the obvious, but a lot of practice doesn't lead to that or is actually not about that. Whereas I am really trying to focus on that and to make sure that the practice stays focused on that.

Other people, panel members for example, say things about you during this process because they're looking at your work and they make a statement and then you realize that..... they actually make a very direct statement about you or your work and you hadn't noticed that before and you realize that and you remember that and that forces you to focus on something about your work and then maybe, either get better at that, or change the way you work.

So there are examples, there's one example, I can think of anyway, which is something that I can't get it out of my mind now. SueAnne (Ware) in PRS2 said I was

“obsessed with form”. So that’s something you know, of course I’m interested in form in landscape architecture, but I’m more interested in just the fact that there are lots of three-dimensional or four dimensional aspects of our built world that it’s hard to actually describe it as form or describe what sort of form it is. Certainly it’s very hard to control it. Anyway that’s just one example of how the PhD process is helping me to reflect on possibly what the future might be. SueAnne, having said that, then is triggering something in me to try and work out, whether we can influence future projects. I don’t know what that is yet.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2

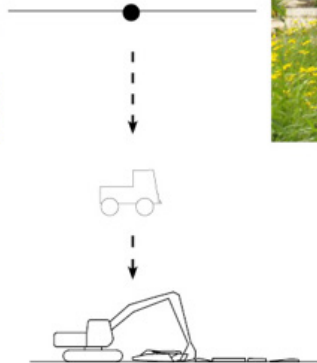
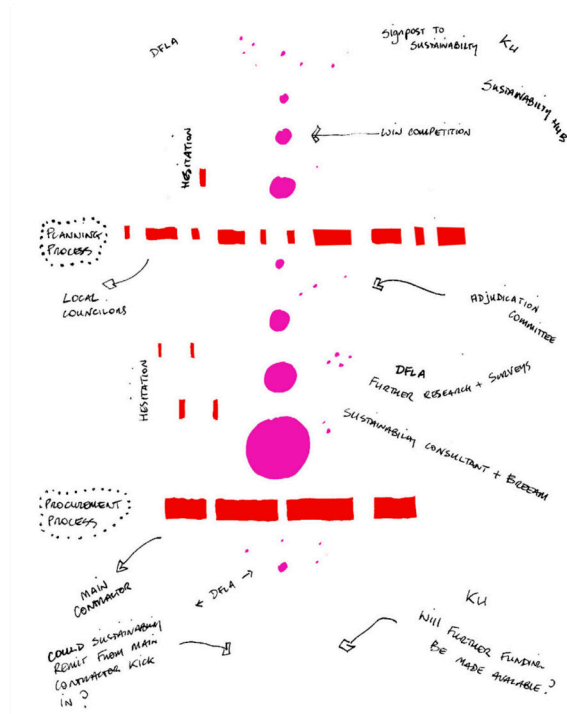


Fig. 3 Dermot Foley, Extract from PRS 2, Ghent, April 2016

Fig.4 Dermot Foley, Extract from PRS 2, Ghent, April 2016



# Siobhán Ní Éanaigh - McGarry Ní Éanaigh



RMIT Europe

## Candidate Profile:

Educated in Ireland and the USA, Siobhán Ní Éanaigh has more than 30 years of professional experience including in the IBA/Berlin'84. With roles of senior design tutor at University College Dublin, visiting critic, external examiner she was appointed by government to An Chomhairle Ealaíona/ The Arts Council of Ireland. With her partner, Michael McGarry she founded McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects a design based, award-winning architectural practice established in 1985. The practice has designed a range of projects from the individual room, conservation and protected structures, public and private buildings, public infrastructures and urban design, to strategic planning. They are passionate about providing architectural design solutions which are carefully considered, resonant, pragmatic, and creative. The practice is grounded on the principle of mutual respect and on the conviction that design is about supporting and enhancing human activity in all its complexities. Siobhán is currently an ADAPT-r fellow with RMIT Europe.

## Interview edited transcription

RMIT Europe, Barcelona  
May 2016

### Key

SNE Siobhán Ní Éanaigh  
CDM Cecilia De Marinis

### CDM

Now we're going to talk about the next topic of our research which is refinement and explication of methods. The first question I would like to ask you is, what are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

### SNE

I'm not sure if this is answering your question. Well, first of all, I find the PRS is fantastic, just fantastic. I remember going to the first one and within half an hour,

40 minutes, I said, really, this is how I want to do the PhD research. I'm just trying to work out what it is. I think it is that first of all, there are people from many different parts of the world, so culturally there's a difference. Yet as architects or design thinkers, we actually speak a language we can all understand.

Even, for example, as I said before, I'm not "techy" as I call it, at all. Yet I sit in on what somebody called the "nerd element", it's fascinating. I don't understand much of it, but I do understand the design intelligence of it. I certainly don't understand any of the particularities, but I understand that. Then, the landscape architects, there are differences. So then, just architects from different countries, you know that is fascinating.

The other thing that seems very significant is that the process is fundamentally a generous one. I mean, we were speaking about fear earlier in education. This is fundamentally a generous process. It is a positive process searching for knowledge and in the belief that knowledge will be revealed by people searching deeply into what it is they do in their practice, in their working lives and how it is that work is achieved. How do you get from a piece of paper with the list of rooms to a physical building on a site or a piece of infrastructure? How do you get to that? How do you choose the materials that make that bridge I spoke about in Cork? It had a timber deck for people to walk on and that was a choice. How do you get to that place? That is a fascinating process and much of it is Tacit, much of it is hidden.

But yet in the PRS forum, we can each recognise where something is surfaced or unearthed or where a question is asked and ok, we don't know the answer, fine, of course we don't know the answer, that's why we're here. To find the answer or an answer or some kind of insight that pushes the thing forward a bit more so we know more and we're somehow empowered by this further knowledge which is, as human beings what we are all seeking somehow. So I think the PRS thing is amazing, it's an amazing process. It is where things are voiced in an open way, but the fundamental thing is the sense of generosity and support. Very hard questions at times, where something is either asked or something is said. But that's in a constructive way, not at all a destructive way and that's the point.

Then there are people on panels who have a lot of knowledge. I mean, each of us doing this has knowledge, each human has a knowledge. So it's not a "them" and "us". There is the respect for people who have done work and people who have knowledge that is useful to your work being pulled forward, being the means whereby the benefit of the experience of people on the panel, a comment and an observation they would make that you don't see (before). But yes, you can say, "that is true". That's extremely, extremely useful at a very basic level.

## **CDM**

How is the discovery of the fantastic, the fantasy and the fields of fascinations happening in your research?

## SNE

This was something that, just in reading and listening to other earlier presentations by other people who were further along, I suppose the issue of a fascination, of pre-occupation. We all live in our heads really and we also live together and discuss and make work together. There are things very, very, deep and you know they're there. I suppose, it's because we are intelligent, we are emotional beings, we are sentient beings, we are human beings. We have this inner inner life.

So the business about trying to bring these things to the surface, that happened for me in PRS2. The term was the "field of fascinations" and when I heard this term, my immediate thing was actually to draw, to paint a field, an actual physical field. I made a painting of a field and then a painting of a patchwork of fields which is what there is in Ireland. And that's where I'm from, it's that connection to place and your mental space, your emotional life. Then the business about the section, the physical nature of ground, of land, of art. The fact there are roots in it for things to grow up from it and creatures who live in it. All that was urged by this term, "the field of fascinations". And then the actual fascinations are the things that are in our heads, in terms of the practice, of the work. So I tried to bring those forward by a series of images, there are about 200 images of different groupings, let's say. One of them would have been to do with "wonder", another one was to do with "society". Though it was only after PRS2 that I put the words on these collections. Then for PRS3, I connected these images, this overlay of fascinations. Fantasy and the fantastic came out of a conversation with Richard Blythe (1st supervisor) one of those Skype conversations with Richard which was a very good conversation. Having presented at PRS2, people on the panel said "well, how do you connect this to the work?" which is a very obvious question. So for PRS3, I thought to do that. It was fascinating to try and actually put words. And going back to language, in some cases there were words which came to mind that were very important in Gaelic. They all have English because English is the common language here in this process. Then there were also visual words. The one about books are very important. Books are about words, but also about images. So there are images which actually trigger and, for us, as architects, I mean, the power of the image, whether it's a photograph or a painting, in my case and in Michael's case we are very interested in paintings, just as experience. It's not that we will know the ins and outs of the history of the painting. That's not our interest. Our interest is the visual impact and trigger, the emotional connection to something which is physically there in terms of a painting. That is a great interest and fascination. So it's an intricate weave, but it was very useful to try and put words to it (Field of fascinations) and to actually see how in reality it connected to projects. That was very interesting and I think, a very useful thing to do.

## CDM

Now I would like to talk about the supervision process. I know your supervisor is Richard Blythe, do you have other supervisors?

## **SNE**

Yes, Kate Heron. Kate Heron is my second supervisor. So, they're both fantastic people, generous people, supportive. They are questioning people which is really good. I feel very lucky to be able to have conversations and to work with them.

## **CDM**

How do you describe your relationship with your PhD supervisors?

## **SNE**

I would describe it as positive in the best sense, constructive, supportive. I would say they're respectful and yet there is that underlying thing of, they want to learn too, as I want to learn, because they're also teachers. The business about shared knowledge and that continuing journey of trying to attain knowledge is a very collaborative thing. So I'm at a certain stage of trying to do a piece of research. They've already done theirs, but in order to achieve what they've achieved.. but it's an ongoing thing in life. It's just great who you happen to find yourself with. In this case I'm very lucky to be doing this piece of work with people who actually are interested, are interesting and seek to to find out more.

## **CDM**

Could you tell us more about the importance of the supervision moment when your supervisor came to visit your projects?

## **SNE**

That was quite recent actually, which was a fairly intense day and a half. It was very enjoyable, I hoped they enjoyed it. There's nothing like going physically to a place, even buildings that are built, in some cases they're built over 20 years, and then seeing the reaction to the Leisure Building in Ballyfermot. Kate, she mentioned about the generosity and in relation to the feeling in that school (Ratoath College). That was interesting that she said that because that building was the first large-scale school we had done. It was much bigger than those we had done before. That project produced a significant shift for us in form-making. Form is very important for us, but form-making, it produced a significant shift for us in the practice. And significant also was the business about space and the internal space.

Actually, it could be both( internal and external) when I think about it, because externally the whole scheme was about trying to form a south-facing courtyard garden in this field which had two existing trees which we tried to retain. But internally, it was about using our understanding of the brief we got from the Department. So instead of having say, for example, cloakrooms and what's called "social space" or "circulation space", we said because these spaces were actually quite small, not very generous, we said, "how about if we somehow try to put all those together, so we could make something more generous?" We could have spaces where if there



*Fig. 2 Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Coláiste Ailigh Irish – language secondary in Letterkenny, County Donegal*

*Fig. 3 Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Liffey Boardwalk, Dublin*

*(Credit: McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects)*

were lockers and a kid going to hang up their coat, they wouldn't be bullied, they felt that they were part of something bigger.

The point is, as architects, looking at the brief and saying, "What can I do with this? How can I(we), by putting this and this together, can I make something more than the sum of the bits?" So that was the expression of the social space of the building, the public space internally of the building. That was so important to us and Kate read that immediately. That was very nice, that she made that observation.

Then with Richard, I remember when we went to the school in Co. Donegal (Coláiste Ailigh). I think he was fascinated because of a connection with one of his own projects in Tasmania. We're both islanders now that I think about it. I don't know the project, I can't give you the title of it. But he had a picture and there was a serious connection actually between the internal space we were standing in, in the school and this picture he had of the space in this particular project he's made in Tasmania. So the business about the form of the building and the landscape on the island in Tasmania and that for us was a very key issue in terms of the form of this building (Coláiste Ailigh) in this particular site in Co. Donegal. That connection, even though we're on another side of the world, that instinct of architects, that is somehow important. The way the light comes in, the way the fenestration happens, there was a serious connection there (between the two buildings) Yet, it (Richard's) was from a different time, different place and somehow as architects these motivating things we held in common. That was a very nice moment.

## CDM

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers?

## SNE

I don't know that "confrontation" is the right word. I think, it probably isn't. Not confrontation in an adversarial sense.

I think there's undoubtedly, there is absolutely no question (and this is back to the PRS) there is no question in my mind of the incredible value that that forum has for empowering you as an architect. I remember, say going to the first one and, I just immediately felt we are speaking the same language. Even though, there were different projects I didn't know anything about, somehow I understood that this forum was an empowering forum that could help me to surface questions that I have, to try and find out and therefore, to contribute to some kind of further understanding of what it is to be an architect. And what it is to have a design intelligence and what contribution can be made to the discipline, which I think is a very complex one, and how you get from a piece of paper (Schedule of accommodation) to the choice of materials to the physical manifestation of an idea which hopefully is a good proposition for the reason (the purpose for which) you're asked to do this piece of work in the first place. So that forum where people unearth those things

and then explain them, or at least surface them, then through conversation and a discussion, something is pushed forward or something is realised.

There was a moment I remember, during the presentations of Tanya and James (McAdams Architects), their respective presentations. I'm not sure which of the them said it, maybe Tanya, she and James, they "licensed" each other because they are two individual people, they have a practice together, they also share their lives together. So their relationship is both a professional and a personal one. For myself and Michael McGarry, we are in exactly the same way: our relationship (it's a very long now), is both personal and professional. That business about negotiating that space as two individuals, but also realizing the, the positive thing that that is, that we each have talents and abilities and capacities, respecting it and supporting it towards the betterment of the work that we try and make. The penny just dropped there, in that word "license", that issue of license to be different, to be who you are within a practice and yet, to have that goal of trying to do the best piece of work that you can for the particular project in hand. The penny dropped and that was really good, you know. An example, I suppose of a very early thing at the PRS, but there have been many since.

## CDM

Let's go to the last question about the influence of the PhD in your present practice and your past and future practice. How do you think the PhD process will change your way of looking at your past practice? Is affecting in your current practice? And will affect your future practice?

## SNE

They're difficult questions. Where to start? I suppose, the fact that I wanted to study more in a focused way, that came to me in 2012 and the means whereby I could do it, that it was meaningful for me as somebody who spent 30 years in practice. To try and unearth and to try and have some kind of an understanding of the work, the projects we have done and how fundamental things are somehow, always there.

I think it was David Chipperfield, he had that exhibition on the little book "Form Matters". I mean, for us, form matters, physical architecture. That's something to do with the presence of a piece of work. This is probably not answering your question in the way you put it, anyway this is how my mind is, so let's just see where it leads.

In first year of college, we has a number of teachers, but the most significant one was Shane de Blacam and he had also studied at UCD. But after that he had gone to study in the States and he had worked with Louis Kahn. With Louis Kahn, the issue of architectural form was something very fundamental, the other issue I remember very clearly from first year university, was "what the building wanted to be". For both Michael and I, that just has always been there somehow. The issue of

form and the issue of the nature of something and the presence that is has in the place. That is of huge interest and importance.. To get from the form of something to the material, physical thing it's actually made of, to the presence that it has in the place, that is somehow hugely important. Trying to understand that and unravel that, then in the context of the particular briefs we have chosen. The business about mental space, which is something again as a term is new to me, and yet when I look at it and think about it, we live in our minds, at least I live in my mind. So our mental space is such an extraordinary territory.

That business of eidetic recall, a term again I didn't know about, but again has just surfaced for me doing this research. That description that I made earlier of school of that classroom that I can record so precisely, the significance of that in terms of my mental space. And the business about what was modern architecture in Ireland that I described as like a boat. All those things, they're part of the landscape that you get in your mind. Yet, that term (eidetic recall) I didn't know of. So it's very empowering to actually have language that structures something. Memory is part of this mental space, very much so.

There's a painter Hughie O'Donoghue who refers to memory as "the truth as it is felt". I think, that's very significant and important. For me it absolutely resonates because it's very personal. It might not be absolutely accurate, but is absolutely how you feel it and that is what is in your memory. About that the classroom, for example, that is how I felt, so that is the emotional response of me in that space at that age (c. 7 years old) . It's absolutely imprinted in my mind and it will be. But that, in turn, has affected the way I think about windows and the way I think about how you see through a window. I'm not saying I dislike tall windows or windows that are high. I don't. In fact there's a room at home where the windowsill is at about 1500(mm) and the windows go very high to the ceiling and there are three windows in this room and it's actually a really nice room. So it's not that I dislike high windows, I don't. But it is the connection of the window in the space, somehow, maybe, and the kind of window that you place in particular places for particular reasons. The height of the sill, the depth of that window, these things connect back, they are in your mental space. They are your reference.

That's that thing about Tacit Knowledge, you know. I was at a crit about two or three weeks ago at one of the schools of architecture in Dublin. A second year student, they (students) had actually, had been given a very complex brief and this student had made quite a good fist of it now. I remember we were having a conversation about his proposition. He had drawn this room which he was describing as a restaurant. In it there were tables drawn, a table and four chairs. Then there was another one and they were kind of pushed onto the space. I remember saying to him, "you actually have your own Tacit Knowledge as a person". There was a mismatch between the space and the table (placement), but anyway, I was saying, "you know you have this Tacit Knowledge yourself of the size of a table, of a chair for four people to sit at comfortably and the kind of space you might

like in a restaurant between you and the next (table and chairs), but what you've drawn has absolutely no connection with that knowledge, that knowledge that you actually have because you sit on chairs every day, you sit at a table." And your body, in the imperial system there's feet and inches, let's say, a foot is a shoe, okay, a big man's shoe. You have some measure of the dimension of something (foot) and you have some measure of your hand. What I'm trying to say is, your body is a means whereby you can measure things and have knowledge and that is Tacit Knowledge. I remember when we were doing the Boardwalk and the bench, the shape we made of the bench. We actually mocked it up, 1:1, to try and get a bench that was comfortable. We wanted the bench at a certain height, for a certain kind of comfort and a certain feeling that you could relax for a moment or a little bit longer. So the business about your body and this knowledge you have, we, all of us as human beings, have this knowledge. But maybe because it isn't something that is some kind of computation that's written down, we don't actually have the respect for it (that) we should have. We have this knowledge. We have it by how we move, by the kind of choreography where two people pass and there is a kind of distance. I know that can also be affected by culture, but it's mostly affected by our own Tacit Knowledge of our movement and the flow that we need as human beings to negotiate the world in some enjoyable way.

As an architect that becomes absolutely more developed because it is knowledge that we have without verbalizing it. You will know certain things instinctively, intuitively and from experience. That is quite a skill, that is a serious skill. But again, I think it's not something that's especially respected or understood. Maybe that's part of the research, that it is.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Claudia Pasquero - ecoLogicStudio

PRS 1



Estonian Academy of Arts

## Candidate Profile:

Claudia Pasquero (ecoLogicStudio, London) is an architect, author and educator. Claudia is co-founder and director of ecoLogicStudio ltd, teaching fellow and Director of the Urban Morphogenesis Lab at The Bartlett UCL, Senior Tutor at the IAAC in Barcelona. She is an ADAPT-r fellow and a PhD candidate at the Estonian Academy of Arts. ecoLogicStudio is an architectural and urban design studio involved in digital design and architecture research for the definition of a new “ecology” of space and behaviour.

## Interview edited transcription

ecoLogicStudio, London

June 2016

## Key

**CP** Claudia Pasquero

**AB** Alice Buoli

## AB

What are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you? (How would you describe those elements?)

## CP

How the ADAPT-r can help? Possibly helps in structuring better this relationship which is quite conscious at the moment, but could be structured better and we are also trying to redesign the office in this sense following the second PRS. How this relationship between different entities, some of which are research ones, some other are more commercial, could really become a model, a clear, economical, cultural model of research practice. That is something that is sort of intuition but maybe is not being studied so much and that is something that possible the ADAPT-r method could help in unfolding further.

**AB**

Maybe we can go to the supervising process. So, how do you describe your relation with your PhD supervisor(s)? Who are your supervisors and mentors?

**CP**

Ok, on the mentors, I need to think because I don't like the word "mentor" somehow. I think that in a teaching relationship there is somehow always a sort of continuous exchange. I think, I still need to map out this part a little bit in the PhD. For me, as I said, the role of the supervisor is somebody who is somehow external to my work, who can help in a structure (being what I said before), to instruct to be clearer model of practice, that until now was intuition, but maybe can be structured more consciously and then could be instrumented and enabled this type of structure. So for me, this is the role of the type of relationship that I'm trying to establish with my supervisor. In terms of mentor, I still need to understand and as I said, I rarely had people that I would consider mentors in my life, but I had a network of relevant people that have been influencing my work, and maybe it's an presumption, but I always had the impression that I would influence their work as well, so it's a question of creating a dialogue, it's almost like I'm working on a more sort of mathematical aspect of the work and somebody else has been working on the structure and it's a subtle exchange of that.

**AB**

Maybe we can talk about your first PRS and how would you describe and experience the moment of the PRS (preparation, the presentation moment itself, panel's feedback)? And also your expectations about the PRS?

**CP**

I think the difference between the PRS presentation and the usual presentation that I give is that it was more about trying to frame what this type of design research practice is. The feedback from the jury in that sense, I think, I've been quite lucky, I had a very good jury, they were quite instrumental in trying to frame this and also the way we are now redesigning. Someone in the jury suggested to maybe, I think it was Richard, suggested to design the office in a way that represents this aspect of reframing the office, what is the relationship between different components. At the moment, we are exactly redesigning the office and we took that advice and restructured the office so that our different components and research interests are represented by different parts of the office in a way.

My expectations in the long term, I still don't know them so clearly. I'm quite a ecological person in a way, not only because I'm interested in collective intelligence, but because usually when I start something I have an intuition that I'm interested in something, but it's very difficult for me at the beginning to clearly know what it is. So, I think I'm more in that phase. I still don't know clearly, I don't have a clear

answer to this or more structured answer. Probably Marco Poletto would have a more structured answer, not only because he's further in his PhD, but because he always has a sort of clearly intelligible hypothesis of what he wants to do, while I tend to form my hypothesis halfway through the work.

#### **AB**

This also has to do with tacit knowledge in a way, the thing that you were saying before that intuition is the first trigger that maybe you can not explain. So maybe if we are running out of time we can move to the mobility. Can you explain about the most relevant outcomes of your mobility / fellowship in Tallinn? How does displacement is affecting your research? How are you using the “commuting” time?

#### **CP**

Well, for me mobility is interesting not only as a mobility but as the possibility to expand the network of the practice and to create a new possibility to discuss what the practice is and where it operates. So, somehow the possibility, the fact that both Marco and myself are involved in this and we started to create a more stable relationship with Tallinn and with Denmark. For me, it's a way of discussing a sort of trans-European dimension of the practice and possibly at a certain point, also global, but a way of discussing how the practice is located in London as a sort of European, global city. The fact that we had to effectively travel and physically go in Tallinn was important to try and understand what practicing across points could mean.

#### **AB**

How do you think being involved in a practice based research is affecting in the present your practice? How do you think the PhD will affect your future practice?

#### **CP**

Well, I wish there were more.. How it affects, I said before, there is this restructuring and this possibility of creating a network. I wish the ADAPT-r could, maybe I'm just at the beginning and that's why I didn't feel that, but I felt somehow there is this moment of the PRS that is very nice, but I had the impression that maybe the relationship between the practices involved could be even stronger. Rather than doing just the PRS, there could be another element of collaboration, network formation, discussion that could emerge between the different practices involved. That I think for me could be an interesting evolution of the model or something that the model could contribute to my practice, that for the moment it didn't but it's something that could be interesting.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Ana Kreč - SVET VMES

PRS 1



KU Leuven

## Candidate Profile:

Ana Kreč is an architect trained from Ljubljana Slovenia, Denmark and Australia. In 2010 she co-founded SVET VMES architectural office that specializes in transformation of educational buildings. In-between spaces are the main point of interest and research in their practice that promotes spatial sensitivity among people and challenges their day to day behavioural patterns. From 2012 to 2015 she worked as an assistant to assoc. prof. Jurij Sadar at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, Faculty of Architecture. Since July 2015 she has been an ADAPT-r fellow at KU Leuven in Brussels, Belgium.

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven, Ghent  
March 2016

## Key

**AK** Ana Kreč  
**AB** Alice Buoli  
**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis  
**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## DO

Talking about the methods of the ADAPT-r and practice-based PhD, which key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project prompt you to become part of it and make a PhD practice-based?

## AK

I think, the whole idea that there is this embedded, tacit knowledge within your practice is brilliant. The methodologies of practitioners are often overlooked or never explicitly written down. Practitioners are struggling to describe the way how they design, it is somehow “within them”. They rarely stop and look back and reflect upon what they do and ask themselves where are they going in the future. It’s a really hard thing to do - to think about your own practice, also to put everything

explicitly in words. There is also the subjective factor to think about. Do I see things clearly? Is the work that I'm producing venturous enough? For me finding work through self-initiative actions, using bottom-up approach is something super random. It is the way how we were taught in schools, walk around with open eyes, architect should contribute to the society, etc. This sort of working was always part of me, the way how I operate, or perhaps this is part of our generation that seems to struggle a bit more to get some decent projects?

I like the idea of analysing past case studies, observing what you're doing in the current projects and to constantly ask yourself which path we're taking in the future. So I think for a young practice like SVET VMES, this is really crucial.

## DO

We were intrigued by the fact that your practice work is on a really small scale, but with a huge impact, so we were wondering if in your research you see some kind of similarity in "acupuncture" and studying your own practice or it's completely random?

## AK

I mean, doing small projects also reflects the time in which we live. I'm from Ljubljana, Slovenia. The country has two million people and the architecture scene is really small but of high quality. In 2009, Jure and I were both working for Sadar+Vuga, working on the biggest project in the country, Sports Park Stožice. After experiencing two mega scale projects, I quit. I felt the need to have more personal control over projects, over my own efforts. I really disliked how two projects ended. I wanted to do good, have some social impact, especially on our youngest citizens. But to open an office in 2010, was a crazy idea and even specializing in one particular topic and typology seemed an even crazier one. But it worked, people now put us in a certain box from which it will be really hard to climb.

What I found interesting is that you take the city and some sort of urban condition, urban situations and try to implement that in the interior. I don't see our work as interior design, I see it as pure architecture because we do not have the budget to choose super designer lamps and chairs. We basically design and draw everything by ourselves and we are inspired by situations that we see in public space and we want to generate them in the interior as well.

So I don't know how this relates to the whole PhD by working in a particular way, but to tell you honestly, I also directly contacted a duo in London who had a very similar project that we had. And they had similar urges. So again I was being direct, I was trying to find someone who had a similar approach and we talked for two hours over skype, so maybe this will somehow generate a very specific research as well. I'm still quite on the beginning, trying to understand everything and how it works.

**AB**

We'd like to talk a bit about the supervisors and the supervising process. Who are your supervisors at the moment?

**AK**

The main supervisor is prof. dr. Johan Verbeke, co-supervisor is prof. Dr., architect Jo Van Den Berghe, who always has valuable and sharp comments. He's also one of the "Belgian 9", the first generation of architects who followed practiced based PhD within the RMIT model. I have three assessors, assoc. prof. Bostjan Vuga, who is a leading architect and practitioner from Slovenia, founder and director of Sadar+Vuga office. I worked in their office for 3 years and assisted their studio. They know me well and have valuable insight into my practice and I into theirs. Recently I added two more, prof. Dr. Marjan Hocevar, urban sociologist from University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences and assoc. prof. dr. Fredie Flore, who's teaches interior design at Sint Lucas Architecture School in Ghent. I would talk with all of them separately on several occasions, with Johan and Jo, there are common meetings, presentations and discussions when I'm in Brussels. When I'm in Ljubljana, I talk more with Boštjan and Marjan.

**CDM**

How do you describe your relationship with the different supervisors?

**AK**

With Johan there is a bit more formal relationship, he's strict, he knows the practice based research process really well and therefore keeps you going in the right direction. With Jo I was surprised how intensely he listens to what you have to say, he writes down everything you say and always opens up a critical debate.

Bostjan Vuga (and Jurij Sadar)...this relationship is growing from 2009 as I came back from Sydney. I graduated and then immediately got a job at Sadar+Vuga where I had a bit of a rough start but then I seemed to find my way around. They gave me huge responsibilities, and open up new horizons. Looking back it was a crazy time, but for sure I learned so much. After being their employee, I became Jurij's assistant at the Faculty, and now Boštjan is supervising this PhD...I think the relationship is ongoing...

Marian Hocevar is someone I met through Bostjan Vuga, he thought that he would be a good asset to the team, but otherwise I don't know him that well. And Fredie Flore is someone who I still don't know, I have a first meeting on the 11th April, so I hope it will be a fruitful collaboration, we'll see.

**DO**

Do you think you have been influenced so far in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers, the fellow practitioners in the program?

**AK**

For sure. Eric Guibert is my closest friend in the ADAPT-r program. I see him as another mentor, supervisor, who goes through everything before me, so I learn a lot from him. Eric was the one who really provided direct guidance for me in Brussels when I arrived and gave me the first feedback (I unlike others, haven't attended previous PRS-es). Then of course, there are others: Alicia, Petra, Michael and Marlies - our program coordinator. I think the community in Brussels is very well-connected and we all benefit from working it. I was super surprised that Siv Helene is on the program. I am a huge fan of her work since my studies in Denmark. Besides Dorte Mandrup she is one of the leading Scandinavian female architects.

**AB**

As you mentioned the preparation work and outcomes of the first PRS, can you explain to us how the preparation went, the expectations you had before the presentation, how the feedback from the panel helped you in your later work?

**AK**

I was super afraid because I never went to any PRS before. Luckily I had a lot of time to prepare, almost six months, so I think I researched a lot in that time. I had a lot of supervision from the other fellows and from supervisors. So I think the most valuable preparation came three weeks before the PRS 1, which is something we do in Brussels. We all get together, present to each other and then have a critical debate. Three weeks before hand gives you just enough time to tweak certain things and be more prepared for the PRS panel. Perhaps being too prepared is also not too good.

But in general for my first PRS I got more or less positive responses. There was one, in particular, interesting from Belfast, from Prof. MCGarry. He said that it is actually not about the in-between space at all, it is about the appropriation of space. At the PRS, I was explaining the in-betweenness through urban acupuncture in Venice. I was explaining the horizontal and the vertical layer of the pedestrian city, which Venice essentially is. I was saying that, for example, Oslo Opera House is a great example of such architecture where you actually get a brief for an opera house, but the roof itself becomes this added value that in the end makes the project, that just brings it out to the public and gives this public beach to the city. I was using Rotterdam Market Hall which is this giant curve. So I was asking them is it about the curve or is it about avoid where people actually meet; what is more important? I was explaining our work through basically acupuncture itself, how one needle has the capacity to heal the body and how we could see the school as a sick body and you can do that on all scales. You can also have a sick city but then you need to acupuncture with different buildings. So, something like that. I think it worked.

**DO**

How do you perceive your role within society as an architect, especially specialising in educational architecture?

**AK**

I feel a great social responsibility as a human being, as an architect and as potential educator of future generations of architects. I believe that architecture is a life-style and not an eight-to-five job. I'm always willing to give numerous hours in. I strongly believe in Aldo Van Eyck's saying that architect should be in the service of people. So, great responsibility and always trying to intervene in a very smart way and I like to see the feedback. That's why I like these small interventions because they happen quickly in a two months frame, maybe in between the Summer holidays and you see, you get this reaction from the people, from the students, you see how they change their behavior and I think this is the best reward I can get as an architect. But, yeah, huge responsibility and I have also high ethical values. I wouldn't just accept any project just because the client thinks I should do it.

**DO**

Talking about ADAPT-r project, is there any part of the lexicon that is affecting your research, that you've adopted in your own research and practice?

**AK**

Well, for sure these seven stages. I have never thought about practicing this seventh framework ways. For now they seem very reasonable and very well-thought, but beforehand I have never thought about it in this way, that you could structure it around: who you are, what is your past, how does that influence the way you design, who are your educators, where you were, who are you talking to.. And I find it quite interesting because you look at your practice from all these different angles. I don't know in the future, because I'm only in stage two, I will know more about it but right now these seven stages fascinate me in a way.

**CDM**

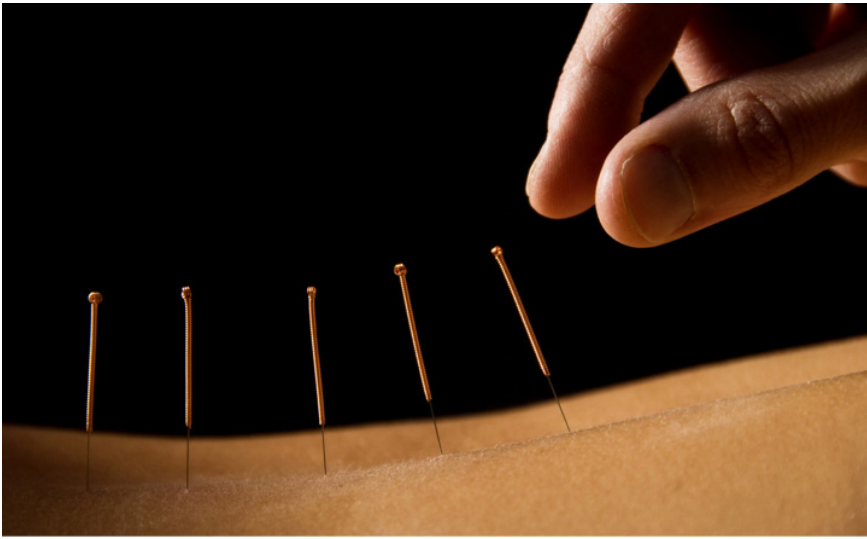
How do you think being involved in a practice-based research is affecting in the present your practice? How do you think the PhD will affect your future practice?

**AK**

I mean, for sure the biggest asset is that you expose your work to this community, that it's hyper international, coming from all parts of the world, but this is probably something that everyone says, that you have this huge network of fellows who are going through the same thing. Of course, you get some sort of international recognition. You know where you sit in the world. I think it is important to contextualise your practice among other members that are current practitioners. I think

this is the biggest asset of this program and after it ends, you know everyone is asking what's going to happen after December 2016. I think we should all really stay in contact and I hope that I was to be part of this community. I don't know maybe through panels, maybe I will be this satellite for practice-based research in Slovenia. I don't know what. I think this is something that is still yet to come. The network, for sure, you don't feel you're alone like this lonely researcher in a room reading books, it's far more than that, it's super exhausting when the PRS happens you need to present, you can choose to many others, then you mingle and you discuss everything again and it's intense. But you learn so much, it's an amazing experience.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



*Fig. 4 Ana Kreč, Extract PRS 1, Ghent, April 2016, Acupuncture as Method*

*Fig. 5 Ana Kreč, Extract PRS 1, Ghent, April 2016, SVET VMES Office*



# Koen Broucke - Atelier Broucke



Glasgow School of Art

## Candidate Profile:

Koen Broucke is an artist, researcher and performer. He knows how to give shape to his unique universe through image, text and music and the result is incredibly fascinating. Alternating between reality and imagination, historical facts and fantasy, a self-written scenario in which historical figures and fictional characters is brought to life in his work. He is a PhD student at KU Leuven and has been an ADAPT-r fellow at the Glasgow School of Art.

## Interview edited transcription

Atelier Broucke, Antwerp  
April 2016

## Key

**KB** Koen Broucke

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

What are the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project for you?

## KB

In the first place, of course, the system of the PRS and that's a very good system. I think it's very good that every six months you have to put things together and to put it in a presentation and also the moment of the PRS is a very effective moment. You meet people, you meet colleagues, you really have to explain what you're doing to your colleagues and in my case, I'm not the only, but I'm one of the few visual artists in the project, so I really have to make it understandable for architects, landscape architects and designers. But for me this is just very interesting because I used to talk about my research with historians and with visual artists, mostly with museum people, with museum directors, creators, but here I really have to explain myself in in the ADAPT-r network. So it's a very

good exercise. Also the comments and the discussions afterwards, they are really very important for me because you will see my second presentation now is really on what I had as comments and output from the first PRS. But at the same time, I also have to say, because you have a kind of ADAPT-r framework also in researching framework, and then for me to important that this becomes and this is more generally spoken, that this becomes not too rigid, I think methods they, even in my big ambition to write a new historical method, at the same time, I want to have it fluid and if you're going to work with it, I want that you can add something and that you can change it completely or that you can disagree completely with it. I think that's more important than just: we have a method, because then you are entering an academic system and I think that's just the big value of the practice-based research, that it's fluid and that it can change and that you can discuss about it. I hope that if one day I can publish my methods that people will immediately disagree with it and that I will have reactions. That's very important, that's more important than that people start following you.

## **AB**

How do you describe your relation with your PhD supervisor(s)?

## **KB**

So I have three supervisors, there's also a board. So the main supervisors, Johan Tollebeek, historian at the University of Leuven, then I have Thierry Lagrange, who is an architect at LUCA School of Arts Ghent, then there's Tom Van Imschoot he's a philologist, also at LUCA. Our approach, it's not always possible because we all have agenda full of meetings and other stuff, so the the idea is that we work at least once a year on a battlefield and during that work, afterwards we go for dinner together, we talk about about the battlefields, the actual battlefields, we talk about research and that's how we work together. Of course, I also see them in the meantime because for the Waterloo exhibition, in the catalog I made an article with Johan Tollebeek on the methods, on the historical sensation, on the historical research which is for me very important. The importance also is that it's already mentioned in other articles, like historical articles, so there's a knowledge that's not only going to my field of contemporary art, of where I show my paintings, where I have people who like my painting or dislike my paintings, but this is like a kind of new way where the knowledge finds also a way to enter like a completely new and unknown space. It's very important to me. Then of course, there's Sally Stewart who is the local supervisor, but that's more about very practical matters. But at the same time, we have very good talks and she said me to go to see if Scapa Flow and I'm very very happy that she advised me to go there.



*Fig. 1 Koen Broucke in the battlefield*

*Fig. 2 Koen Broucke in his studio in Antwerp*

**DO**

Do you think you have been influenced in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers?

**KB**

Of course because I already said about the boundaries of the research, it all has to do about conversations, meetings, opportunities, because after the Scapa Flow research, I'm now putting it in an artist's book, a kind of graphic novel. I will have a kind of presentation, a PRS, but I also will have a presentation together with an exhibition, it's not very clear when, because there are several exhibitions now I'm preparing. But after that, so that will be next year, I'm already working on smaller battles, smaller battlefields, mainly in Belgium and they're all linked to exhibitions I will have not in that place, but sometime in Belgium because of that battle because of an anniversary, because of a lot of reasons, but so now my agenda is really full with exhibitions from now until the very end, so it's two or three years, and all the exhibitions are linked with smaller research on smaller battlefields, but I hope in the end to put it all together and to see the relation, and of course the most important relation will be the methods because it gives me insight into my methods, but at the same time, the inside is also influencing the method and it is also changing the method, so in the end I will have something completely different than what I'm talking about now.

**DO**

Do you think that during your PhD you are changing your relation with the people you are working with?

**KB**

Yes, I think so. I think I'm much more aware of what I'm doing, so if I have meetings with people from the museums and it's the same thing with the galleries, I know much, much better what I'm doing and the value of what I'm doing. It's not just like "Oh, I will have a show." So it can be about whatever, it can be about flowers and it can be about rabbits, but it can be also maybe about the sky. There's a kind of direction and I go into that direction and if I talk with people to have opportunities to have exhibitions then it's in that direction. Of course I still have some projects that are not really in the centre, that are a bit in the periphery. If you see it from the point of view of the PhD research, but that's very important to me because if life would just be the PhD, I think that would be too narrow. So the projects I'm doing that are not really linked to the PhD are more my cooperation with musicians. I'm working on a Debussy project because there is an anniversary, so I will have a talk and I will have to leave also one of the presentations in Ghent because I have talked with the pianist on a project we're doing next year that's important because music is so important in my life, is so important also in my

research. My former research before the PhD was mostly based on biographies. I did some biographical research, but I am also very linked to music and also the lives of some famous or some less known composers.

### **CDM**

How do you describe and experience the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, presentation itself, panel's feedback)?

### **KB**

As everything I do, I prepare things from very long before. So in a certain way, my second presentation I started working on the hours after the comments I received. I will not give you too much theoretical explanation about that, but maybe something very concrete. It is Kate Heron, she said after the first PRS, so it's good because I was talking about my research and Scapa Flow and the Orkney Island that I only can go there and then do that research if I start also researching the artists, mainly the visual artist, painters like Sylvia Wishart for example, who were there before, because I feel stupid if I just go there and make a landscape and then after a year you discover in the museum that there was another artist who made the same landscape and may be much better than you did. So I went to see in the local collections everywhere in Scotland and also online, of course, in books, about those artists and at the same time, that was what I was already saying during my presentation, I'm also reading the authors, like George Mackay Brown, it's very important also and then these strange things that these two artists Brown and Sylvia Wishart became really very important to me, not just because of the curiosity of Orkney, but in a certain way, their methods and their way of working, I learned a lot of boats. Then Kate Heron said, "Yeah, then maybe also you said you went to see some Wishart, some Cursiters, George Mackay Brown but maybe you also can go to read Eric Linklater," of course, I already did. I bought books because I want to have the books myself that I can really destroy them reading them and I don't have to take care because they aren't from the library. "And Eric Linklater, you have to read Eric Linklater." I never heard of that man so I start reading Eric Linklater on the Orkneys, that was not really fascinating for me, what he was writing on the Orkneys, but then I read a very strange story about what happened with a man in the First World War in Flanders. So he was hit by a bullet. The bullet went through his helmet and then hit his skull and went out the helmet. It is a very strange story; he describes it in his autobiography. Then the strange thing that his family went back to that place where he was hit with the same helmet and now the helmet is showcase in a museum in Kirkwall. So I went to the museum and asked to show me the helmet and to see inside from the helmet. So I took pictures and made drawings. The focus now in my second PRS is on that helmet because that helmet thought me a lot also about my methods, it is not that I'm going to tell the other ADAPT-r

fellows about helmet because I'm not really interested in the helmet, but it's a very good case to demonstrate and to talk about my methods. And that's thanks to Kate who said me, "Oh, you have to read Linklater."

## **AB**

How do you think your social role is evolving since you are involved in a practice-based PhD?

## **KB**

I think it's very serious and I take it more serious than before. I also use social media, I try to have a relation with colleagues, with my audience, with the fields I'm working in, but at the same time and that's maybe more interesting and that's something that became very clear with the Waterloo exhibition, that after making that exhibition that it was very clear to me that it was not about Waterloo, it was not about military history, not about heroism. But it was all about the manipulation of images. For example, we had several phases of the battle and of course, there was also my work, my actual drawings of the actual battlefield and also of the costumes that I found in the museums that were worn 200 years ago. But at the same time, there was a lot of what I found in the collections, mainly in the collection of the Royal Library, beautiful graphic work, and for every moment of the battle, we found, let's say, I make it simple, an English version, a Prussian/German version and a French version. So you could easily compare those three versions and they were completely different. That's so strange because, no it's not strange, it's easy because it's 200 years ago and you know the story and it's in book, so you can easily say, what's wrong in the images and in all versions are things going wrong, but then you realize also and of course, we know that, in the actual information we have and that's merely based on images and it's really massive because we have those images every day like hundreds and hundreds, that there's so much manipulation in the images. For example, the refugees now in Europe. If you see the images, only see the images, then you think that all the Mediterranean Sea is full of boats coming to Europe. If you see that wherever in Italy, or in France and you see the sea, you see no boats. But in our head, it's like full of refugees and Africans and people coming from Iraq and Syria. Of course, there are a lot of refugees, but it's not what the image tries to believe you.

That's was a bit stupid in the Royal Library because the exhibition was, of course, because of the anniversary of the battle, the battle was fought in June 1815, so that was also the opening of the exhibition, so it was running during the Summer months. They asked me to come there and as a guide one day and in the group were several people from schools, direct from school, and teaching history and "Sir, that's so interesting. You really have to do it again, but then for the students." That was a bit of a shame because the exhibition ended in September and so we had few occasions to show that to schools. That something now with my

negotiation with museums, this is integrated, I ask them, “I can’t do it myself because I’m not a guide, I’m the artist, I’m also the researcher,” but I ask them that together with the exhibition that we will also have a focus on that part. To try to explain how easy it is to manipulate by images.

## **DO**

Have you adopted any words of the ADAPT-r project in your research?

## **KB**

Of course, maybe we can talk about the tacit knowledge because for me that’s the most important concept. But then also, I have to make the difference between the academic knowledge and the tacit knowledge. For me, it’s very important that besides the tacit knowledge there’s also the intellectual and academic knowledge. As I already said for the Waterloo project the title of the book was already mentioned in news articles, so it’s really a contribution of academic history and that’s for me, as an artist (not as a historian) that is very important because I achieve a kind of knowledge that those academic historians don’t achieve. By using their methods they don’t achieve that kind of knowledge, concepts, so that’s very important to me. Tacit knowledge is something even more important, but this is tacit and therefore, I have to say something about the miracle of painting. The thing is, in painting I start from images and I produce images. But I start from images. For example, a beautiful landscape I had seen in Orkney, or it can be also a picture or a photograph found in a book or on the internet, so there’s a start and there’s also an output. But in-between there’s a transformation and the transformation is something completely unknown. That’s also very linked, of course, to the methods I use. But in my opinion that is really the most important thing in the PhD research that as an artist, of course, the transformation is a fact and the miracle of the transformation is a fact. But as a PhD researcher, I try to have it come to put it in a conscious way, to have it more clear, to understand what is happening in that moment. The only thing I can say now about that moment, again it’s a kind of miracle because if I’m painting and I’m transforming an image into another image, I really have the impression that it’s not myself anymore who is painting, it’s something like in me that that is making the painting. For example, I use in a painting layers, small layers and if I finish a layer, then there’s a kind of inner voice saying, “For now next day, you’re going to do that,” and I know that the painting is better and the painting also a process is going better if I’m more listening to that inner voice and not the ego, the artist who wants to be become someone and thinks that he’s deciding. That’s for me the tacit knowledge; it’s knowledge that’s more universal than the ego. But the strange thing is, of course, you have to start as an ego. For example, in the morning I don’t put paint on my palates, the inner voice will not come. The inner voice doesn’t come if you lie in your bed, you say “Shall I start my day with a cappuccino or shall I just stay in my

bed,” then the inner voices doesn’t come, doesn’t appear. Maybe it also appears in walking and that’s also a very important thing. In my research there’s a relation between walking and drawing and both are very related. I really found out in the research on Scapa Flow, how much both are related. In a certain way, I walk to places to find inspiration for drawing. So that’s already a relation. But at the same time, the walk is a drawing in a landscape, it’s a line, so you can also see it on the map, the nice thing (and I use it nowadays) you have big applications that you use, runners are using this, you start it and you start to walk and after you have a drawing of your walk, and the maximum speed and everything. In my situation is completely stupid because my speed is very slow because I stop all the time to make pictures, but I have a drawing and I have a strange drawing of something I was doing on that battlefield. So that’s also a relation. Also you can put on that drawing on the map, you can put the places where you stopped to make a drawing or you can start making a more lyrical drawing from the scientific or the drawing of the app.

But let’s return to the that point of the miracle of the transformation. That’s really, I think the goal of everything, to try to have it. I think, an art critic or an art historian, he or she can’t do it in your place, that’s something you really have to do as a practitioner and as a researcher and that’s the big difference between theory and and practice. You really have to do it as a living artist, to integrate yourself and to try to find out and therefore, I’m very grateful and therefore the ADAPT-r system is such a great system because my way and how I negotiated it with Sally Stewart, I work several weeks in the studio, I paint and then I go to Glasgow and in the office but already in the airport, in planes, I start reflecting on what I did and then this is so wonderful because, of course, the reflections were there before I did a PhD. But I never found time to write it down and if you start write down, new reflections are coming. It’s a bit the same like the inner voice, the reflections are not coming if you’re just staying in your bed and you’re longing for your cappuccino in the morning. You really have to work.

And it’s maybe very interesting and that’s something we already talked about, that before going to Glasgow, after working for a couple of weeks in the studio and, of course, the work is very related, I mean, or there’s the traveling and the walking, but walking again it’s not only physical walking, it is also walking in books, reading, because I discovered a lot of my information also in going through books. Then I have my paintings and before going to Glasgow, let’s say the last days before my departure, I start scanning everything to have it in my laptop because I can’t take all the paintings in my bag, especially now with everything that that’s going on, I prefer to travel only with hand luggage and so, as light as possible, so everything is in the laptop. The moment of scanning which is a very boring moment and I already in the past I was thinking that I should ask that an assistant to do that for me or somebody who can do that for me, but now I found out and that’s also in the process of the PRS, that is a very special moment

because it's a kind of slow down, it takes time, but every image, every painting I made, again is going through my hands and I have a look at it and I have to turn it down in the machine and then again I see it and sometimes I just stand still and then, "Now, I understand why I was painting this or why I chose to paint that image," so that's a very important moment, the moment of scanning. Scanning is not isolated because I have to prepare it, because a lot of the work is on paper, so the paper because of the acrylic is going like that, so I have to flatten it again, so that's the preparation to scan it, so I make it wet then I press it, so that's also a moment, that I'm manipulating the physical world, but it's a very good moment where I can really think of when I was making that painting these were my reflections and that's interesting because the moment of painting, as I described, is such a mystical moment where in a certain way there's an absence of thoughts. Absence because it's like an inner voice thinking in your place, but then when you start scanning it's so interesting because then you realize what was happening there, the kind of dialogue that was happening at that moment and so that's the first moment you really realize. Then of course, if you have those reflections, you really want to hurry to the plane and then start writing it down and then in the office, of course, in the Glasgow School of Arts, that's the perfect situation where you can put everything in order and then it's good that you can have a presentation, a PRS, that you can also try to make it understandable to other researches. There's also something linked to the scanning process, it's not just scanning, but afterwards, I use Photoshop also, to adjust a bit colors and sizes and that's also a moment and then you have everything in your browser and that's also magical because then you see all the paintings together, you can start putting them in collections and sub-collections, collections in space, collections in time, collections in whatever, colour.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



# Alicia Velázquez

PRS 1



KU Leuven

## Candidate Profile:

Having studied Architecture at ETSA Madrid, Alicia Velázquez work explores materiality as 3-dimensional interface, embodying an in-between position to explore intimacy between human and non-human as well as carrying out consulting on texture design and interior branding. She hosts the Swiss chapter for Design & Emotion Society, and has taught at TU Delft, University of Calgary and Universidad Europea in Madrid. Alicia is an ADAPT-r fellow at KU Leuven in Brussels since September 2015.

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven, Ghent  
March 2016

## Key

**AV** Alicia Velázquez  
**AB** Alice Buoli  
**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis  
**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## DO

What is the difference for you between your projects and your exercises?

## AV

I think project is.. actually I call them less and less projects anymore because I consider a project more like there is a brief and then I do something following the brief. There are very little times now where I consider an exercise a project. So sometimes I call it a challenge, sometimes I call it an exercise because I don't really know where it's going to take me and it is not a project yet. Maybe a project I consider more where I would do from a brief, like a Muji box, it's a brief, so I consider that a project - actually a project and an exercise because there I also set this a challenge to do this. So I have a brief, but at the same time I use the brief to make a challenge out of it, but it's a project because I have a guideline and I have to deliver a certain thing.

## **CDM**

What do you find interesting and most relevant in the kind of practice-based research?

## **AV**

Since I haven't gone into almost any of them yet, you know, I have only done the projects looking at the past projects and I haven't started to look at the communities of practice, so it is difficult to say what are important. I think that they all have their weights in the practice and I look forward to look at all of them, I think they will all bring valuable information. Right now, the community of practices is like the projects, like the first step, was something perhaps more obvious to me and therefore, for me it was a little bit more of a task to complete. I got very good information from there, but I am very interested, for example, now in this type of communities of practice because I'm discovering what that could mean which I didn't have any expectations from and the other one was perhaps more expected what to do and not what I would unveil through that process, but what was the process of looking at it. This second one for me it's more discovering what it actually means and and how do I do it already without being conscious of it.

## **DO**

Do you find any relation between the in-between of your practice and your research? Is staying in-between also a method of research?

## **AV**

I think the embodiment is both a way of practicing and also a method for research. Having to have this physical connection as well, it is in both ways, so I need to bring something material to be able to find something immaterial, both in the practice and in the research.

## **AB**

So to a certain extent, you can say your practice methods are on the same level as your practice-research methods?

## **AV**

I think they are quite comparable, yes. I still use a lot of mapping, sketching, to get ideas, reflections clear. So I may still be more graphic, I'm definitely more 2D in the research versus the practice and there are things that I use in the practical that I don't in the research, but it is getting more and more and I'm getting more interested in the idea of using more of this practice methods to actually do the research. It feels somehow more natural and I'm also intrigued by the tool. So it will also bring a different information or information that somehow broader than when I only use the 2D reflective method.

## CDM

How do you describe your relation with your supervisor(s)? Do you only have Johan, or do you also have a second one?

## AV

I have a second supervisor, Arnaud Hendrickx and then I have a supervising team. It is not fully closed yet, but I have two other people who are pretty much, I mean, one is confirmed, the other one is almost confirmed. The first one is also part of KU Leuven, it is Petra Pferdmeniges and then I have an architect who is the Head of Research and Interaction Design in Zürich Hochschule für der Künste, so the School of Art and Design in Zürich, so she has a background in architecture but she's also a personal working with dynamic materials and a practitioner herself and everything is also around. So I have this mix of Johan Verbeke, Arnaud Hendrickx (who has also interactive study architecture, but also mixed), Petra (who is an architect, but working with more social relationships and has also another angle of viewing), and Karmen Franinović, the name of the other person in the supervising team and she has the materiality understanding and practice and at the same time, she has a strong research background, theoretical background and so she's able to also navigate within a hybrid kind of practice and research. There's another person, but it's not confirmed yet, so I shouldn't talk about it.

I think the one I know the most is Johan, I know for the longest time and I had quite some meetings with him and I know a little bit more now how his way of reacting. So I like his support, for me it's a very strong trust I can have in the way that he's helping to guide the PhD and conceptually, but also to navigate through all the things that that needs to have in order to be part of the university, so kind of official needs. Then Arnaud, we had one meeting together so far and I know a little bit of what he does, but for me I have heard him in panels. We don't have a relationship yet because it's very recent, but I like very much the way that he reacts and the opinions that he has, it's very open and at the same time, very sharp and I find it very helpful, very respectful as well. Then with Petra, actually I know this program because of Petra because I know her already for quite some time, so she's a friend then I knew the program when she was part of the RMIT PhD herself. I came to Ghent and she introduced me to Johan, so she's the one who has given me the knowledge of this program. So I am very happy that I can kind of close the circle and having her involved in my own research. And with Carmen, I met Carmen when I arrived to Zurich and I applied and I contacted someone in the school and he saw my profile and he send it to Carmen and then from there, we started to have a conversation and she introduced me to a person from her department, who is Verena Ziegler who is the architect/designer who I collaborated with. So she has been always there, like you know, kind of around, following what we were doing, I'm not officially part of the school, but we have regular contact and I respect her also and I like very much how she thinks as a professional.

## **AB**

How do you describe and experience the moment of the PRS (preparation for it, presentation itself, panel's feedback)? What are your expectations?

## **AV**

My first PRS was a very different experience and when I was in PRS, without being part of PRS officially, even though I presented, even I did like a pre-application and so on, but it was very different because this was like my official first PRS, so it was a different segment, timeframe and everything. I think I knew what to expect, I knew where I was going, I knew most of the people there, so I was not afraid or waiting to be surprised. So it was more, for me, what is the best I can bring there to get the most out of that? What I decided to do was, since it was my first PRS, was to bring my practice, like "This is my practice," and as much as possible, so I tried to build a space that was inviting to come into my practice that was all about creating a more intimate setting and having fabrics and maps that were made of a lot of pictures that actually fell off on the way there. So the set-up was a challenging. The digital set up was also challenging like when people were entering, my panel was coming in, one of my projections was not loaded in the computer, was not working. But all, I did a very stage presentation, I rehearsed and I had a script and I had two projection facing each other, so I had a very clear idea of what was the setting I wanted to bring people in, so I was like a DJ and I had two screens and I had two laptops and I had a background with a big sheet full of photos which in the end I didn't mention really at all, and then I have some text type things that I left over the space, and I was wearing a necklace and I was passing it around. So I wanted people, audience and also my panel members, to experience as much as possible what is my experience about the practice. It was also quite performative, like I also pushed that performative side, so I was acting quite a lot, I was not only describing my practice and I really liked that, it was the first time that I did something like that, definitely for my practice as a presentation of my work.

## **DO**

How did you react to the panel's feedback? What were the results of this PRS?

## **AV**

I was very pleased with the comments. I thought that they were very diverse and they were tackling different things. Some of them were very insightful and surprisingly precise. I'm always a bit afraid of the questions because it's the part that I don't control and since I'm not in control, I'm not prepared and I also have this feeling that I have to say the right thing. I mean, it is more about just get the question and sometimes you don't really need to answer. But it's more about making you think, okay, what about this topic, and you can work with it, I mean, it's for you to work with it later on, it's not that you need to make a statement right there on

the spot because you haven't figure out everything yet. But to allow that to happen it is a bit confronting and I was super pleased with a very varied panel and questions that were tackling many things. I recorded and I transcribed every everything and then I take this to the next step.

**DO**

So the PRS is part of your community of practice. How do you perceive your role in society and inside your community of practice?

**AV**

In PRS, I feel like a very small part of this big community, so I know most of the faces, I have spoken already along the years with most of the people, there are always new people coming, so there are always different dynamics. I see myself as a presence that able to connect with some of the people whom I know already and maybe every time, open up to get to know someone a little bit better, or to connect with someone I didn't speak with before, so it's a combination of being in an environment that I know a little bit and at the same time, I don't. So it's always like this position of uneasiness, but in a kind of way that like, "Oh, I know how this works and I know most of these people," so it's not that I'm coming for the first time. But at the same time, it's always a little bit like, every time I have to find my position with whom I speak and whom of these new people, who are they and do we have anything in common?

**AB**

It might be too early to ask, but how much do the ADAPT-r methods affect your research and these words affect the way you're looking at your practice?

**AV**

Like you mean when we talk about communities of practice or tacit knowledge? I think, they make it present, they become actual entities. So it's like tools. So since I know they existed and they have a name, then I can refer to them and I feel more supported. Otherwise I would be floating with this information, but I wouldn't know where to place it, so they give me a ground and also I'm able to communicate to myself, to my practice, to other people.

**DO**

How do you think being involved in a practice based research is affecting in the present your practice? How will it affect your future practice upon completion?

**AV**

My current practice is definitely affected, I mean, especially because an ADAPT-r fellowship, I have a quite different practice because of the mobility and having the

interactions with other fellows and being in different locations, having two working places, even three working places, so that has changed in the dynamics, in how I spend my time as well, in what do I choose to do. It has simplified and at the same time, it's also more complex. What it has given me is the knowledge and the co-habitation of the researcher which is new to me. So before I might reflect on the things I was doing, but probably when I was having the opportunity to give a presentation or there was something going on, that was asking me to reflect and to package my practice, but through this, it is like if I can kind of call the researcher to come and sometimes when I am doing something or in a practice or I'm making something, then I already kind of start looking at it like spinning forward, it's like, "Okay, why am I doing this? Why did I choose this photo and not the other?" Like I find myself already bringing that researcher which I was different in the way before simultaneously and I think that is also something that I'm going to carry with me, like one day you open that door, I think, it doesn't close.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



*Fig. 1 Alicia Velázquez, Postit body-map*

*Fig. 2 Alicia Velázquez, PRS Ghent Layout*



# Steve Larkin - Steve Larkin Architects



RMIT Europe

## Candidate Profile

Steve Larkin is a musician and architect. He studied architecture at University College Dublin and graduated in 2002. He established Steve Larkin Architects in 2007. Steve Larkin is an ADAPT-r fellow at RMIT Europe since June 2014.

## Interview edited transcription

Dublin

April 2016

## Key

**SL** Steve Larkin

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## CDM

What do you think the key methodological elements of the ADAPT-r project that are most relevant for you?

## SL

I was an ADAPT-r fellow on Work Packages, Case Studies and Communities of Practice. I found these categories helpful in developing the research. I found that while I naturally tended to concentrate on these categories I also made observations that relate to other Work-packages, like Transformative Triggers, Tacit Knowledge etc. These could have been fleshed out more.

I think the framework generally is very good and maps the PhD framework very well. However I think it is important that they are only used as guides and that they don't solidify the process or become formulaic. The fluidity and adaptability of the RMIT research model is very important and I think this must continue to exist alongside the categorisation used for the ADAPT-r project. The RMIT model places a responsibility for each researcher to develop personal research methodologies and I think this is important. The ADAPT-r project is very valuable support

identifying accurate and important milestones and categories that individual research methodologies can sit into.

In directly answering the question I think that the full range of methodological elements in the ADAPT-r project relate well to the RMIT research model. I have found all of the described work packages described quite equal in importance despite having responsibility to deliver on the Case Studies and Communities of Practice work pages.

## **AB**

About this idea of your own methodology, yesterday we had a nice interview with Marcelo and actually he was talking about the idea of the lens or the lenses that practitioners use to look at their own work. Have you recognised or have you discovered your own lenses?

## **SL**

Yes, very much so. In developing research that examined practice in music and architecture I needed to develop very particular lenses. This was especially the case with music as the practice was so engrained in tacit knowledge that I had to find ways to step out of the normative processes of daily practice. The method, or lens, developed was a drawings process where I visually represented the characteristics of particular musical case studies. In translating these to drawing format I was able to consider musical case studies with fresh eyes used to the nuance of drawings in architecture practice. The drawings don't seek to represent the music in any way. They simply force me to consider the tunes again from first principles, through a new lens.

Each individual practitioner or researcher is definitely in the best position to develop lenses appropriate to the research. It is a difficult and challenging process that also requires much creativity. The general structure of the RMIT research program and ADAPT-r program supports this process of identifying and positioning the various lenses that allow us to look into the work from a number of perspectives; to take various slices through the work. Lenses need to be positioned. For example, it would be very different for me, looking at the practice of architecture and music, than say somebody else who might have a large commercial practice and the frameworks a practice that makes larger scale buildings. I can't see how the same lens can do both jobs. For me, my lens developed and matured slowly over the course of the PhD. Every refinement of those lenses contributed further to the transformative triggers. A refinement of one process led to another process, another process, eventually getting to the point where you make another discovery. It was really a personal and intuitive process that needed my personal input, my personal associations with the work, in order to make those discoveries.

## **CDM**

Do you use the same lens for your research and architecture as music? Or do you use different lenses?

## **SL**

Different and the same. You bring certain tendencies to the lenses used but they develop depending on what they are examining. In order to minimise the affect of personal tendencies I tried to develop a number of lenses for each element of the research in order to minimise bias. The feedback at the PRS session is especially helpful in challenging those lenses and seeing past personal tendencies.

Sometimes I start with a lens that might offer insight into a practice tendency that operates across both fields. You find that a particular lens is more successful in one practice than the other. Sometimes not as you would expect. Then sometimes you apply different lenses and you might find that draw together practice tendencies. I think it's very linked to the research. It points to the importance of an open mind in developing the research, figuring out similarities and shared tendencies and or moment of distinction within each practice. It's like anything: you start out particular lenses and they develop over time, sometimes further apart, sometimes closer together.

## **AB**

How would you describe your relation with your supervisors? What are for you the key elements/moments of this supervision process?

## **SL**

I think they're remarkable and have been a remarkable help. They are so experienced with this type of research that they are very prescient with regards to the problems and challenges. The PRS sessions definitely lead the discussions with supervisors and have been very, very informative. Supervisor sessions are very helpful, like today with Richard and Leon, where there is very clear and concise instruction in sometimes ambiguous waters. This is also continually working in the background also and is contributed very substantially by my second supervisor Jo Van Den Berghe. There is ongoing communicating by email and by Skype.

They're very precisely tuned to what stage you're at in your research, whether its the PRS sessions, post PRS or research development. They can often help you make observations that are right in front of your nose and can help pinpoint the important nature of certain observations. This has occurred countless times for me. Observations made by Richard with regard to music and landscape have been very significant. Jo has made observations with regard to oral music and architecture, 'from the wrist' as he has said. Leon has helped me understand the role of practice processes and intelligence. To name just a few off the top of my head. Also they are an incredible support in the challenging moments of the research.



*Fig. 2 Supervision moment with Richard Blythe and Leon van Schaik*

**DO**

So since the PRS has just finished, we'd like to know if you have been inspired or influenced in some way by the confrontation with your peers.

**SL**

Yes, I think so. The PRS session especially is always inspiring and challenging. I enjoy listening back to the comments and understanding them in more depth. Also the PRS session of others are particularly inspiring. You see others experiencing and overcoming similar challenges in the research and this helps build enthusiasm for overcoming challenges in the research. Back room conversations are also thoroughly helpful.

We also have a very healthy debate culture in Dublin anyway. As you know a lot of my peers live in the same building. The PhD process was an opportunity to widen this sphere of peers which has been very helpful and insightful experience. I feel personally as though I've got a lot of excellent feedback. That's why the PRSs are so good, it's (a) public forum where everybody is communicating during the presentations and afterwards.

**DO**

Do you think your relation with clients and people you work with has changed since you started the PhD?

**SL**

Yes, I think it has. I think I'm becoming more precise in the communication of ideas and the types of projects I take on. I started the research to explore the interests that drive the work and I have certainly made a number of key observations. I can see more clearly potential future directions and where they might lead, so I think it has.

**CDM**

How do you describe the experience of the PRS in terms of preparation for it, the presentation itself and the feedback from the panel?

**SL**

Busy. The PRS will make you bring your information down to very concise points. You have 20 to 25 minutes to present your research. During the PRS program you do a lot of thinking and a lot of reflection on the research from the previous 6 months. After the PRS session there is an opportunity to push the research on to another stage. So, I think it's very helpful. The structure of the research is very carefully defined to support the various tranches of research that merge in the process. It supports you in the process.

## **CDM**

What are the main expectations about the moment that you had?

## **SL**

I think you get extremely good critical feedback in PRS session, supervisor meetings and from the peer community generally. The opportunity to present your research and see it robustly considered is very generously organised. Obviously there's ups and downs, some better than others. Sometimes you are on the right track and are making progress, and other times you realise that you're not. You understand that anyway because of subjective critical reflection processes but the feedback is helpful in finding new research methodologies to redirect research when appropriate. Sometimes you are helped with key insights that you wouldn't have otherwise observed as they may be too close to practice.

The evolution of the structure of the practice based PhD research outlined in the pink book was surprisingly clear in the end. I had thought that the research would evolve more distinctively but I find that I have moved through all of the stages that are described in the RMIT model pretty clearly. I couldn't foresee that kind of trajectory at the beginning of the process. I think, you don't really understand what it's going to be like, how clear this is, until you're engaged in the process. In some ways the evolution of the research occurs quite naturally and allows you to move to research areas that you would not have expected at the beginning of that process. I think that's quite an important help to new practice based researchers to know how well developed the model really is.

## **AB**

How do you think the PhD process will change your way of looking at your practice? How do you think the PhD will affect your future practice?

## **SL**

Yes, it has already affected the practice. So, in terms of how we see ourselves moving forward, we have a much clearer picture of what we are interested in and we can develop based on those interests. It also allows us to reflect on the practicalities of the type of practice we will have into the future. Whether we stay a small practice or grow if opportunities allow. Those kinds of decisions, very practical business decisions, are influenced by the process in a positive way. We are very clear about what we're interested in and can develop the practice based on this rather than following a more standard model of business development.

It also makes the work more precise. It allows us to take the research, embed it back into the practice. We can then, in turn, develop research areas further. I think that there's quite a lot of other research to be done in some of the areas in the research. I would be interested in developing these areas further and developing this research with other educators, practitioners, researchers or interest groups.

It has also made positive contributions to my teaching practice. Many of the research findings have been brought to undergraduate level courses, especially practice based design and technology studio modules. It is leading the development of specific units within these modules where new work is also emerging.

It has also affected my music practice. There is significant scope for research here also especially into a branch of aesthetics associated with oral musical cultures. It helps that I can develop lenses from music into architecture and vice versa. Also it allows the development of cross disciplinary groups that can look into oral cultural aesthetics from a number of disciplines. This would provide for interesting future practice and research in my view.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 9 / Chapter 2



## CHAPTER 3

### *Conversations with Supervisors and Co-supervisors on Methods*



# Leon van Schaik

RMIT University

## Supervisor Profile

Professor Leon van Schaik, Innovation Professor of Architecture at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, promotes local and international architectural culture. His research focuses on creating and sustaining innovative communities of practice. His practice-based research programme for architects and designers has become a ground breaking innovation in architectural education worldwide and an important template for research institutions. This approach considers innovative architectural practice as research in of itself, and has far-reaching consequences for how we view architectural practice in an academic context. van Schaik was awarded the inaugural Neville Quarry Prize for Architectural Education and has been recognised an Officer (AO) in the General Division of the Order of Australia for his services to both architecture and education.

His writings include monographs compiled on Edmond and Corrigan, Ushida Findlay, Guilford Bell, Tom Kovac, Poetics in Architecture, The Guthrie Pavilion, The Practice of Practice, and Sean Godsell. Publications include Mastering Architecture (2005), Design City Melbourne (2006) and Spatial Intelligence (2008), Procuring Innovative Architecture with Geoffrey London and Beth George (2010), By Practice By Design: 'Design Practice Research at RMIT (2011) and Meaning in Space: Housing the visual arts, or Architectures for Private Collections (2012). His most recent book, Practical Poetics in Architecture, was published by Wiley in April 2015.

## Interview to be done

Westminster University, London

*November 2016*

## Key

**LvS** Leon van Schaik

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

## AB

We would like to talk to you about the relationship between the supervisory activities and tacit knowledge. Starting from your experience and your work we would like to ask you first: what do you think is the supervisor role?

## LvS

I don't think you can answer that question without referring to the overall framework of our research approach – sometimes called the research scaffold. Because unless there is an overall framework a supervisor has no idea what to do. The overall framework which has been expressed many times. This is research in the medium of architecture itself, it is not a remedial programme. It is a way of enabling people to become more conscious of what they do when they do it well. Forming this scaffold there are various tools that we have developed which any supervisor can use, depending on the situation in which candidates find themselves. The scaffold begins with the idea of integrated scholarship because it is often necessary to break down the mental assumption that research and practice are different activities. The fundamental research behind integrated scholarship comes from the work of Ernest L. Boyer and his team in the 1980s and 1990s in the USA. All of us, they discovered, are involved in four scholarships: discovery, integration, application and dissemination. Unless the supervisor has that understanding then their candidates can confuse the location of their research. Even yesterday, despite the efforts of his supervisor who knows this better than anyone, one candidate in their completion seminar was still thinking that there is a separation between research and practice. So they made a really problematic completion seminar getting everything back to front. You see this quite often when supervisors come from traditional PhD supervision. They located all of their research questions not in the practice but in what they thought was the theoretical framework for spatial cognition. But their PhD is not about spatial cognition, it is about their practice.

Another fundamental in the framework is understanding the natural history of the creative individual. In the early days when I was working on this, I began to find certain patterns in the evolution of practices. Then I discovered that I was not the first person to find these patterns and that Howard Gardner had found the same patterns through his, now 30-40 years, research at Harvard. These patterns are termed the “natural history of the creative individual” and this is something the supervisor must know about otherwise they can't help when candidates feel isolated or alone; or that they are the only people who have ever struggled with these issues. It is important to be able to point out the fact that all highly creative people seem to go through the same oscillation between seeking isolation and seeking recognition, so you need to understand that to be a good supervisor.

Another crucial part of our research scaffold concerns the behaviours that sustain creativity. And quite often especially in the previous years, people used to think that the only thing that mattered was recognition from the centre of the architectural discourse and therefore they did not value very highly their own contribution to the discourse. So supervisors have to understand that all architects either inhabit or create public behaviours that support their creativity.

We started picking up those behaviours in the programme many years ago. Sometimes they were informal clubs where people met to discuss their work on a Friday night in smoke-filled rooms (people used to smoke indoors. The famous one in Melbourne was called “The half time club”, because it was the half time between graduation and having your own practice. This was a really nice example of a created public behavior in which people came together to support each other creative ambitions. As I mentioned in the book “Mastering Architecture”, there are many such. Very early candidates who went through the programme a duo called Wood Marsh (Roger Wood and Randal Marsh) invented a public behaviour where while they had no architectural work they made an exhibition of enormous furniture. This appealed to an audience who wanted to see furniture but also an audience who looked and thought: “Oh those could be buildings!” And then they got a job to do a building, and then when that was completed they reconceived the building as pieces of furniture to make another exhibition which then got another job. Thus they created their own kind of public behaviour which was a way of building an interest in the community in their work. Curiously enough who made such a bad presentation yesterday does the same thing. When in 2008 when their practice shrunk dramatically in size they thought: “What can we do?” And they turned the empty space into gallery, and I thought ‘That’s exciting! I wonder what they put on?’ and what they put on was really boring; it was like ‘tourism in Ireland’, so lots of photograph of beautiful places and I said why are you making such a boring exhibition? “Ah you’ll see” they said “now we invited the minister of tourism, and we invited all these developers and we had a big opening’ and six weeks later the firm received a call ‘Would you like to design a hotel?’ So that’s another example, that’s what his PhD should be focusing on because they are a genius at that. I mean he is also a very good architect, but he understands how to use his space to create a public behavior that recognizes his practice’s work. So the thing about the public behaviour is that it is not usually something the architects know they are doing or they don’t know nor that they know they can do it. Too many architects just wait for something to happen, but the successful ones create these opportunities.

Intellectually speaking in the public behaviours area there is another body of research pre-existing what we are doing relates to and this is the research by Randall Collins, also Harvard, the book that came out was called ‘The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change’ (Collins, 1988) and through analysing the History of Philosophy (eastern and western) he came up with certain observations which seems to me to be completely validated by our experience, so this is where tripolarity comes from. He says that when philosophy is most successful, there are three very different positions being argued for at the same time. When there are two, it’s boringly dualistic, left / right, black / white.

When there are three people, they are not threatened by the other arguments; they observe the other arguments, and they say “well that’s interesting, I don’t agree, but that helps me to find my position”. So one of the things that a good supervisor

does is get the candidate to think ‘what are the other positions that all my worthy opponents (opponents is a good word I think, because you don’t want enemies, you want an opposition that you can sharpen your own position against, a challenger). This is why in the scaffold there is an emphasis on trying to get people to describe what Collins calls ‘enchainment’ and which we are calling enchainment too.

We ask: who are the people you are with, who are the people you admire that you don’t necessarily agree with? We ask candidates to map their mentors, their peers, and their challengers and that quite often enables people to understand what their position is and why their position is different to somebody else’s position.

From the above comes another key part of the scaffold: the process of understanding differentiation; that is all the ways in which a practice differs from another. There are political differences, ideological differences; there are modes and manners of practicing design. So to be a supervisor you have to have an understanding of that framework and when I gave the lecture in Barcelona about that framework some years ago, which I think is on tape, architect John Tuomey in the audience said ‘it’s not so much a framework, more a scaffold’, and I think that’s a useful idea because a scaffold is something that enables you to do things, but you can take it down and put it away, it’s not permanent. And the scaffold gets more bits as we learn more. We keep finding new tools to add to it. So to be supervisors is not just a relationship between you and the candidate, it is a relationship between you and our understanding of the scaffold and the candidate.

## **AB**

How does the supervisor support the candidate in the discovery of their tacit knowledge?

## **LvS**

I think one of the most undervalued knowledges that candidates have is their spatial intelligence, something we all have. Every human being has an amazing spatial intelligence but in the area we work in that spatial intelligence is the key tool for thinking and if you assume your spatial intelligence is simply a given thing, the same as everybody else’s you don’t understand the nature of your own knowledge. From this comes the emphasis on understanding our histories in space, how an individual’s spatial intelligence has unfolded in space.

Becoming aware of the fact that people have very different histories in space and for you to fully command your own spatial history is to gain insight into your intuitions (which I take to be another name for tacit knowledge). To understand your own intuition, you need to understand its deep structure and you can only do that by making some conscious investigations.

Two examples: yesterday there was the presentation by Kieran McGonagall. It was his first presentation, he inhabits such a hermetic and sealed world: a Protestant

Lutheran Northern Europe in which everything is clean and precise. His work is exquisite but looking at it it is like looking at something with the glass cover on it - you can't get into it. At first - if you have a different spatial history - you can't see into it, you will but at the beginning it's a world apart. But to him it's like fish in water and fish can't describe water. But then I was thinking about Siv Stangeland's presentation. I am not really her supervisor but her PhD hinged on one moment of recognition between us. Because she used Prezi, which I hate because everything floats, she was talking about mapping the management of the firm making three dimensional drawings with collages, many drawings of the office, and then the Prezi swept sideways, and I saw something very interesting, and I said 'Stop, what's that?' and there was this extraordinary drawing. I said 'What is that drawing?' and 'Oh' she said 'that's just something I do' and I've discovered over the years that whenever people say that 'this is just something I do' it's often where there is a treasure. So she pulled the drawing back, and we began to look at it, and it was a multi layered drawing. On one level it was a drawing of a rock pool, on another level it was the drawing of a landscape on another level it was the drawing of her thinking about design projects. We became mutually excited. And so she diverted the rest of her investigation into these drawings and then began to invest them with more and more explicit awareness of how she combines details, landscapes and verbal thinking and particular design solutions all in these map-like drawings. At her exam you saw that amazing presentation where she walked in stockinged feet through the drawings pointing out their features with a laser. In a supervisory sense that panel episode was the moment where she was able to surface her mental space and her spatial history thanks to one quick glimpse of the drawings. And she and her supervisory team realized that.

Again this reveals the difficulties of being a supervisor if you don't understand the scaffold, I don't think supervisor training should consist of saying this is what happens in PRS 1, this is what happened in PRS 2... I think supervisor training should be about understanding the scaffold because you never know when you are going to find that hidden treasure.

I was working with some New Zealand architects some years ago and it is difficult to work in New Zealand because the budgets are very small and they were doing these beautiful schools and they hit upon the way of making these schools quite wonderful by pulling the central corridors apart to make expansive internal streets. The winter is very wet and so they made these beautiful internal spaces with very little money and the spatial thinking was quite exceptional and I said to them 'do you do other work, do you do just schools?' and they said 'oh yes we do, this work for the banks but you don't want to look at that it's just bread and butter' and I said 'no, I want to look at it, so let's go and look at some banks' and we did. These were banking halls - they didn't design the buildings, they just designed the banking halls. What emerged was that the banking halls all use spatial thinking to

reveal how they should be used. They didn't need signage, people could enter and automatically know where to go. So the same spatial thinking that was so brilliant in the schools was evident even in these bread and butter things I think this is my main belief about supervision: that you have to be alert to the overall picture and constantly bring people back to their practice which is basis of that their own scholarship. University administrations ask for 'research questions'. This in our context is a terrible mistake because people end up getting completely the wrong end of the stick. Richard Blythe makes this point over and over again: 'the research is in the practice'; I wish we could just say 'the scholarship is in the practice' because in the practice there are moments of discovery, moments of integration, lots of application, lots of dissemination. That framework was established quite early on, a long time before we went to Europe. The main thing that has been added in recent times is being more precise about the differentiation factors between practices, and our work on differentiation is another tool supervisors can use to help people understand the mental space that houses their designing.

## DO

We were interested in what you said during Tom Holbrook's book presentation. You said that you were not sure about how the supervisor changes at the end of the completion of the PhD of their candidate. Could you tell us more about that?

## LvS

Well, obviously the supervisor is learning as much as the candidate as you go through the PhD, not just at the end. And there are sparks all the way through, and the candidate would do or say something and often you go: 'Aha, I haven't thought or seen it like that before!' Clearly the supervisor is gaining a lot from this process. Even if only in supervising, the supervisor has a practice and reflecting on this two-way transmission of knowledge is important. As a supervisor in these exchanges your own tacit knowledge becomes more evident to you and this heightened awareness also enables you to be a useful supervisor, because if you expose your own position it helps candidates to expose their positions. When I was talking to candidate Kieran McGonigle, I said to him: 'This is what I see in your work, because I studied architecture in a place similar to the one in which you practice.' McGonigle works in a very beautiful part of a beautiful country and the buildings are really simple. He would take a rectangle and shift it just a little out of line and everything pops into tension, and I said 'I studied architecture in a landscape like that, and if I stayed there I would have hoped that I would have been that kind of architect, but I had, for historical reason, I had no way to staying in that landscape. So I am not that kind of architect.' But in his first presentation in the pre-application he was asked a question about the intentionality of the line but because I had worked in that landscape I knew that the lines were not only his lines but the lines of the landscape and in the British system, the British Ordnance

Survey, there are those extraordinary maps capturing every field, every path, every edge, every tree, every line! When you work in this landscape in Britain, including Ireland because the whole island was mapped, when you place something in that landscape you are placing it into an existing mesh of the known lines and that's what makes the subtle placement of two things so powerful. This reminded me of Ignasi de Solà-Morales who was looking at work by Australians and Singaporeans and as to many Europeans the work is too striving, it is large, it is exaggerated and annoying! But he was a very thoughtful man and after a while he said: 'I am beginning to realize that your work is like that because you are in a diaspora, so you have to shout loudly to making everyone listen. Whereas in Barcelona if I change the shape of a window all the other architects notice.' Talking to McGonigle I was trying to picture the difference and awareness you need if you are looking at work with a spatial context, a spatial history that differs from my own. Here working with somebody from Northern Ireland you somehow you need to have an awareness, a deep awareness, of what that context is. If you are working with somebody from Singapore, you have to become engaged in Chinese spatial history otherwise you can't ask the right questions. Otherwise you become a dismissing critic, and you just say: 'Oh what you're doing is the same as everybody else does.' But there are very distinct differences in Chinese cultural expectations of space and possibly it changes from province to province I haven't done enough work in that area to know of that.

## **AB**

How does the panel's collective intelligence / knowledge work according to your experience?

## **LvS**

It's a crucial part of our process because you can be working intimately with the candidate and then you come to a panel presentation. Then you and the candidate say, in effect: 'Panel, what do you think of this?' because this is what we think.' The panel presentation is a moment of disruption, and it is often extremely creative because you suddenly get a different angle on the research. It is an absolutely crucial part of the process. Pia Ednie-Brown once said to me: 'The most innovative thing about the whole programme is the biannual research symposium', which of course is a created public behaviour. This symposium is now known as the PRS, and it is this event that in many ways is different from what happens in other PhD systems. I think if you are lucky you have very good relationship with your candidate and the two of you could get very excited about something and then the candidate presents it, and the panel goes 'uh' so it is a crucial part of it. I think it is important to exercise judgment about these disruptions however. The panels make many suggestions, not all of them are useful. With the recording of everything there is a danger of turning every panel suggestion into a list of things to do. When

a candidate makes lists of question from a PRS I think it is important that they choose those that matter to them. They shouldn't spend their time worrying about the ones they think that are irrelevant, so it's a moment of choice as well. It is almost as if you throw people into a tripolar situation. The best panel is one which is tripolar in its composition so that you get somebody who's completely in tune with the candidate, and two people who are not so in tune, and then the discussion becomes energised. So it is an energising moment, it's a disruptive moment, but you have to be careful you don't get locked into it. Some candidates give it too much weight. They treat a panel presentation like an exam, that to pass they must answer all the questions that arise. But it is a bit more like what Felicity Scott said in John Brown's exam, where she spoke, and she kept saying 'you don't have to answer all of these; you can answer the bits you want to answer.' I think that's the spirit in which panel discussions should be taken. I think one of the dangers with what's happening with the RMIT system is because the milestones require a panel of a certain kind you get unipolar panels. It's just three RMIT people who have been talking to each other for a long time. Ideally, the panel only has one RMIT person and two from somewhere else that can give a different perspective.

## **DO**

Is this tripolar system a tool that you are using to structure the panels?

## **LvS**

Before they put this strait jacket on us, we used to look very hard to try to get the different views in the panel. It is not disruptive if you don't have tripolarity. Which is why now it's very good if a chair can leave enough time to get the questions from the audience because often the disruptive view comes from the audience. Over the years one of the best things that can happen at a panel presentation is when someone in the audience says 'well you said you are doing this but don't you think you are doing that?' it is usually somebody else of the same age and the same kind of experience as the candidate who says that because they confront the same kind of issues. That's another really wonderful thing when that happens.

# Tom Holbrook

RMIT Europe

## Supervisor Profile

Dr. Tom Holbrook came to architecture tangentially, co-founding 5th Studio in 1997 as a spatial design agency, working across the fields of architecture, urban design, infrastructure and landscape.

Tom completed a PhD by practice at RMIT in 2014. His thesis defending a generalist approach to architectural practice will be published by Routledge in late 2016. Tom is Professor of Architecture and Industry Fellow at RMIT University and he leads Urban Studies teaching at the London School of Architecture. He has been an external examiner at London Metropolitan University and the MARCH school, Moscow, and contributes to teaching at the London School of Economics Cities Programme. Tom regularly contributes critical writing and opinion to a variety of media; he is a member of the Design Panel for High Speed Two, the Quality Panel for the Olympic Legacy Development Corporation and is a design advisor to the Greater London Authority.

## Interview edited transcription

Westminster University, London

February 2016

### Key

**TH** Tom Holbrook

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

### CDM

How would you describe your relation with your supervisor? How do you see him (as guide, as a mentor, etc...)?

### TH

Leon is a very experienced supervisor, so he seems to do it very gently, almost effortlessly, it seems from the outside. But quite often just a few words were enough every 6 months to open up the next 6 months, and I suppose that's what we need, just a signpost or a validation of what it is you are doing.

I think Leon knows that the practitioner doesn't need huge amount of third party input: he just enables you make the next jump. It's very subtle.

## **AB**

We know that often supervisors are coming to visit the studio or the works of their fellows: what was your experience of this meeting with Leon in your own office, going to visit your work?

## **TH**

That was an important thing to do, first of all we as a studio in Cambridge put together a lot of work - models and drawings and so on - into an exhibition so that when he turned up in the studio there was work on the walls to talk through about the process, the way we work, the way we make design decisions, the sorts of drawings, the culture of drawing and modeling [we use] in the studio. So, that was pretty key: as much the process of drawing that together as the talking about it.

We spent time in the studio and then we went out to visit a couple of projects and that was quite daunting, but it is a useful thing to kind of walk around with somebody else. It is quite rare to go to 3 different projects with somebody else in sequence. Everyone is used to taking journalists, judging panels and so on around newly finished buildings, but to go back to a number of projects in one day is a new experience. And I think for the supervisor that is really critical. I started to do some supervision myself, it is really difficult to engage with until you see the work, you know, you walk around the work. It is something you have to take in, in time and space, so that's really critical.

It is also useful to see what's happened to projects because the way I work is not really about the finished project as a kind of end state: I am more interested in the way things have unravelled and not worked, been used in a different way than it was anticipated. Certainly the case in some of the buildings we went to.

## **DO**

You mentioned that you are a supervisor yourself, so could you tell us how do you perceive your role as a supervisor? How would you like to be as a supervisor?

## **TH**

Learning what I can from Leon! My instinct is always to direct attention back to the work itself: that for me was the most revealing thing, that the research is there: it is sited in the work I'm doing. So just giving hope back to practitioners and confidence to look back at what they are doing in practice and to see how that could be a sort of vehicle for how the research develops, rather than a kind of disengagement.

**AB**

Considering your (new) role as second supervisor and panel member at the PRS, how would describe the experience of the PRS session from the other side?

**TH**

As a panel member it is incredibly engaging: it brings a real attention to (the PRS). I have found the PRS sessions to be increasingly stimulating sites. I think this dialogue that goes on there is very generous, very open and incredibly positive. And the experience of being on the panel kind of adds to that attention, because you really have to focus on practitioners' work in a way that in an audience sometimes you have the feeling (that) you're tired because you're worried about your own presentation, you're sort of dipping in and out.

But actually, if you've got to reflect on somebody else's work, you have to pay attention to what they present. That's something I am quite used to doing through teaching, it is a recognizable process of engaging in somebody's work, and having to engage constructively with it. But more than that I think it is just fascinating to see how somebody puts a problem together for themselves to unpack. So it is a real privilege to be able to enter that role, it is a very intimate world, I suppose between practitioner and mentor. Sometimes that's been a great moment to see some of those moves that people make in 6 months.

**CDM**

About your viva presentation: for us it is the perfect example of the performance, also in relation to the city (of Ghent).

Could you tell us something about the preparation of the viva presentation, not only about the work you presented, but also the performance itself?

**TH**

Until the research catalogue was sent off to RMIT, I couldn't really see beyond that, and I couldn't really picture how this exhibition would take place. As soon as I got the document out of the way, I turned my attention towards the exhibition and how I was going to defend the Phd. And it was actually very, very clear. One thing that was really important for me was to situate it somewhere. I found it hard to think about generic exhibition space and then to think my way through some panels, that didn't really work for me.

Once I knew that it was going to be in Ghent, I could imagine what it was going to be like. I had reviewed the Market Hall for the Architectural Review, as a piece of work I admired. And from that it really came together as a proposition that would be that indeterminate space in the city.

And then it became a practical operation of how to assemble the props that I needed (going back to my theatre days of driving around in s and bits of scenery, props..) and that just came back to an organisational problem that I really liked.

So, then getting consents and working out all the details and talking to the city authorities to get permissions, making sure we had the right fire extinguishers, permission to use the electrical supply, the camera and was the lighting going to work? and the microphone: is it going to be too cold? (which it was) and gathering firewood for the fire, all this sort of stuff. Just nice little problems and solving those problems were the thing that took the most rehearsal. And the delivery just came between those points of focus: to find a place to frame the big drawing: it was really nice not having a projection, I wanted something more permanent behind me.

## **DO**

Right now you are on this other side of the PRS, how would you describe your journey? Did you make some kind of interpretation that went distant from the methodology? Does the practitioner go straight on or does he change according to triggers?

## **TH**

You mean, how would I deal with that additional layer of infrastructure? I was quite pleased that I didn't have to deal with it. I would have found it another layer of stuff between me and the work. Personally, I'm very suspicious of methodologies, so I wouldn't have found it helpful, really. I found it useful to hear from people like Sue-Anne Ware who is very good at what other people have done and techniques other practitioners have used to help them get out of particular dead-ends or whatever. But that overlay introduces something that could be quite counter-productive, that's my impression. I mean, sometimes it just doesn't happen in that sequential way.

## **CDM**

How would you describe your method, your way of approaching research? How would you define your research period during the PhD?

## **TH**

I think the process has evolved over quite a long period of time, very, very carefully and, looking back, I really appreciate the pace of it. The 6 monthly PRS rhythm is really useful because it allow you to surface issues in time for the next public presentation. It's also useful to let things sink in into the depth in between those. There's also a rhythm with the kind of work you're dealing with in practice: some of that will be taking off and it's got it's own trajectory, other projects are just being cancelled or not going anywhere. There's all sorts of coincidental ups and downs, rhythms. There's the whole process of recording the PRS and just spending time on train journeys listening back to what was said and how people responded. Then, contact with the supervisor before and after the PRS, you know, to say what I was thinking about saying and getting some steer on that, refining it. Then, trying to

deconstruct why the panel reacted in the way they did, picking out sometimes some quite minor comments that were made.

In the final six months of writing the research catalogue. I started writing, and assembling drawings as well. And then I started taking Friday, where I could, Fridays in a room out of the practice where I could just write up. I was lucky to get a college room in Cambridge where I could just disappear, take the phone of the hook. I mean, actually I could never achieve a whole day out of the practice and eventually email got through which I had to deal with, but it was enough space to focus, and that was really good!

Fridays are (laughs) a key point!

I really miss that. It was great, it was absolutely great. I would get up really early, try and write a certain number of words before going for a coffee. It was very productive, very tiring. So, that was a good way to do it.

## **DO**

It was kind of your own space to work and concentrate.

Yeah, yeah, exactly.

## **CDM**

We would like to ask which projects we can visit of yours. You suggested the park, but we would like to know where we have to go, it's quite huge the project.

## **TH**

Yeah, that's right. Only a bit of it is built, the point of going is to see why it needs to happen. I mean, I spent 10 years trying to get this thing made, but not very much is on the ground yet. Apart from coming up to Cambridge or Norwich, or somewhere like that, it would be the best thing to see I suppose. If you wanted to do that, go to Stratford and walk through the Olympic Park, then go south through Three Mills Green.

The Lea River park is the last bit of landscape down to the River Thames. So, you could walk through Three Mills, that island, that's a little bit of park that's actually finished and follow that river down.

It's really 10 years?

Yeah, and overcoming these big bits of infrastructure. These two yellow roads are really urban motorways and then the river is a big disconnection. It was the edge of London, so it's an administrative border. There are different political organisations either side of it, so it's a very difficult kind of world. Then, it's really chocked up in places with railways and all sorts of things.

Here is Robin Hood Gardens?

Yeah, well it's still there. There's also Erno Goldfinger's Balfour Tower, that's here, in pretty amazing state.

**AB**

How do you see your social/political position, in this project and in general?

**TH**

It's really interesting walking around East London and seeing bits of social housing, so by the Smithsons or Goldfinger.. the idea of the architect as a social improver clearly has got a problematic connection now very much criticised, but nevertheless comparing that to what architects in London do now and who their clients are, it's like a different world. The kind of duty of care in terms of how people live is not something that's very big in our architecture discourse in the UK. Also, I think trying to find clients who have a commitment to civic duty or the idea of human dignity, that's also quite hard to find. It feels like culturally we've lost the ability to talk about making places to improve people's lives. That is seen as a bit kind of fuzzy, liberal.

London particularly is so driven by money at the moment that it's pushed out all those other conversations about things that used to be key drivers in the intention of architecture. I don't know what you do about that, but it is a real concern. You can see there's a lack of generosity. The housing that's going up in the Lea Valley which is now more valuable than it was when the Smithsons were building public gardens and the profit motivation is so strong. Everything gets smaller, less generous and it is unaffordable to most people.

As the profession, it's really important to keep restating that your duty of care: your professional duty is not just to the client for that project. However, I think a lot of clients do get really pissed off with architects who remind them there is something they should be doing with cultural value, not just value for the balance sheet. I think that is a cultural problem. I'm not sure if that's quite so extreme in other parts of Europe. I'm certainly aware that in Germany it is still seen that the state needs to provide certain things, there's a certain level of expectation in terms of public spaces, schools, social infrastructure that we're rapidly forgetting to talk about in the UK.

I guess one thing that came through the research was that what we do is quite political and I've always wondered if that should be kept separate from my practice, but I think it's indivisible.

It's a significant part of your work..

It's very hard to keep it out and pretend not (to be) shocked by what someone has just asked you to do.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 11 / Chapter 3

# Jo Van Den Berghe

KU Leuven

## Supervisor Profile

Jo Van Den Berghe (1961)

Architect, Sint-Lucas School of Architecture, Ghent, Belgium (1984)

Ph.D, RMIT University, Melbourne, Australia (2012)

Teaches experimental architectural design (Master 1 and Master 2) at KU Leuven University Faculty of Architecture Sint-Lucas, Belgium.

Researcher at KU Leuven University Department of Architecture. His research is situated in the field of Technè and Poiesis through drawing and making.

Part-time professor of architecture at Politecnico di Milano, Italy.

Adjunct professor of architecture at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, campus Barcelona, Spain.

Guest professor at EPF Lausanne, Switzerland.

Guest professor at Queens University Belfast, UK.

Has run a critical reflective practice in Belgium since 1987.

johan.vandenbergh@kuleuven.be

ship@jovandenbergh.be

www.jovandenbergh.be

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven, Ghent

April 2016

### Key

**JVDB** Jo Van Den Berghe

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

### CDM

So the first question is, who do you think should supervise a doctoral thesis in a Creative Practice Research PhD? (A creative practitioner? An academic? A critic? A philosopher? A scientist? An engineer? etc..)

## JVDB

That's a difficult question. Of course, everybody would expect me to say a practitioner. But I'm not going to say that automatically. It's good to have several people there. It should not become a mono-cultural thing. I think creative practice PhDs have grown out of the ambition to not have something like that as a mono-cultural thing. So, by definition, it should include that awareness from the start. It's good to have a practitioner in there, of course. Maybe this is the main part of that, but it is most necessary to have other people around, people that are making sense and then I don't know if it should be a philosopher or an engineer. That's depending on the subject itself, the PhD subject itself, or the specificities of the PhD candidate. Then one can see if it should be a philosopher, or an engineer or a politician even. Whoever can contribute to the content of the PhD itself. So I would not stick to hard definitions about that. The only hard definition is the content of the PhD itself and all the rest is at the service of that. So if you need a medical doctor for a PhD in architecture then you have to ask, or a psychiatrist maybe. I think every practice-based PhD needs a psychiatrist. I needed one for the content of my PhD, for the regression procedure to my grandmother's house. It was very helpful. So I did not need to explain too much to him about the real content of the PhD efforts, I just had to explain that this was something I needed as information, as data and I asked him if he could help me in that, and then he did.

It's not something that should be decided on the institutional level at all. Otherwise it's not empirical research anymore. I think the empirical aspect is crucial and then, of course, there's the negotiation, the conversation between the PhD candidate and the supervisor, first supervisor, second supervisor, about well: who else do we need? Then it's up to the supervisor to be versatile and open to the needs of the candidate. It's an inclusive model. Yet if I would need Lance Armstrong (I don't need him, but just as an example), then he should be called in. If I should need a bicycle, yeah..

## CDM

So, what do you think is the supervisor role in this creative practice-based research PhD?

## JVDB

The capacity to include. The capacity to see what it's about, even if the candidate himself or herself does not see what is necessary there. That's very important to see through layers that apparently or seemingly are important, but maybe they are not. It's about seeing through that and it's about defining, situating and defining the important layers in the process. Maybe it's not the first layer, the second or fifth layer. The capacity to see and identify that layer and explain why it is that layer and bringing that layer to the foreground. You can not do this without the consent of the candidate himself or herself. So you have to explain why this is the important

layer. Positions of layers can shift, so layers can change positions, the first layer can become the fourth layer, and it's about a versatile agility of what is going on there. That's important. Also, it's not about you as a supervisor. The supervisor is the servant, the candidate is the queen or the king, without all the kapsones (airs), it's not about that. It's not about being a diva or something. That's something else. If the candidate begins to behave like that, as a supervisor you should say, "Who do you think you are?" But everything else is being the servant, the humble servant. "I have something for you." Maybe you have to read this, it's about that.. and discreetly disappear into the background.

## **DO**

The next questions are more related to the ADAPT-r project itself and especially on the training methods. What are the elements of innovation of the ADAPT-r training and supervision models/tools in relation to other Creative Practice PhD Programs?

## **JVDB**

That's difficult. I don't know about all the other programs. I even don't know everything about ADAPT-r of course, although I'm participating in it. The ADAPT-r program is an attempt to bring together people from different institutions and backgrounds. So it's important on a cultural level. I'm not aware of the ambitions of the other programs. But in my perception, many of the other programs rather tend to come forth from one institution with a very specific profile. So what the ADAPT-r program is doing, is on another level, it's about different profiles and how can they communicate on a mental level. And I think this is the importance of it. I think it's not by coincidence that the ADAPT-r program has a stronghold in Belgium because we have this tradition of bringing cultural profiles together in a peaceful way. For that reason, Belgium is also the cradle of European ID. It's the border land between the Latin culture and Germanic culture and the Anglo-saxon culture. From that perspective, I think I understand the ambitions of the ADAPT-r program. It's not always that simple, of course. Latin culture, then all of a sudden you have to talk with people from Denmark and Norway. It's completely different, it's even difficult for us. I'm Flemish and I'm supposed to be Catholic and then people from Norway look at us like, "What is that?" We are not too noble in all this, no we're just dealing with everything. So I think this is the specificity about the ADAPT-r program. It's on a mental level and I think it's necessary. It's, of course, about competing models. It is about bringing together competing models and it's about finding common ground for the sake of the long term.

## **DO**

What do you think are the responsibilities and expectations of the PhD as a PRS panel member?

## JVDB

Don't tell me. I've been on 10 panels over the past weekend. It's a huge responsibility because it's about people who are exposing themselves in a very vulnerable way. It's about very personal topics. It's not about distance, a classical, scientific approach that starts from: I am here and I am the observer and this is the observed. It's about the engagement between the observer and the observed, the intimate engagement, and it's about knowledge brought to the surface through this, that otherwise would never be brought to the surface. It's most useful and most necessary for the discipline because every discipline can benefit from every kind of knowledge about a discipline that is drawn to the surface. But that relationship between the observer and the observed is so intimate and personal that you can hurt people. Of course, you can also hurt people in the more classic, scientific approach, because I will never underestimate the other doctoral programs or profiles, not at all. But I think people in this model are even more vulnerable and this is our responsibility; to pay attention to that, to say what it is about, to say the truth (if it's not good, it's not good, if it doesn't make sense, it doesn't make sense). How do you perceive that and how do you communicate that in a constructive way, I think this is the first responsibility. In an instance like this, how can you be helpful very directly, in a very personal way without destroying people. This is what I try to do and that's a huge responsibility, I'm aware of that.

I've seen some candidates over the weekend, a couple of them in panels I have attended, I've seen them close to a breaking point. And I'm concerned about that. So you try to express that and that expression is not necessary at the moment of the presentation itself. It's after that, during coffee drinks or the farewell drinks that you can talk to somebody and say: "I'm watching you, take care of yourself." It's part of the responsibility, so the farewell drink is responsibility, it certainly is.

## AB

Talking about another moment of the supervision process, which is the one-to-one relationship with the practitioners, how would you say describe this moment of the personal interrelation, apart from the PRS?

## JVDB

It can be very energy consuming. These moments are full of awareness. The candidates, of course, come to see me in a very prepared way, have a specific set of questions and more importantly, they have uncertainties, fundamental uncertainties and they try to tease out as much information as they can. So I'm fairly aware of the fact that if I go to such a meeting that I will come out very tired, exhausted. I'm not in the possibility to do more than three meetings like that in a day, given the fact that each of those meetings takes at least two hours without a break because a break is not useful and literally breaks the intensity of the conversation. You have to choose whether you are tired or not, the break is just breaking and splitting

up a conversation in a 'before' and an 'after' the break. Whereas the consistency of the dialogue and the process of reasoning can not stand a break, so you have to go through as long as it takes. Of course after two hours, two hours and a half, you come to a point that you say: "We have to stop here," and that's a break of course between that session and the next session with the same candidate, which may be three months later. It's very energy consuming, yes, it's going very deep. Perhaps you have experience in that, being or having been in PhD process. It's not something for free, it's again something personal.

You want to go home with a clear conscience as a supervisor, you do not want to send somebody away for a number of weeks with the feeling that things have remained unsolved, which does not mean that the candidate goes away with the feeling "I don't have to work anymore," that's something else. But you try to set out some clear lines on some strategies that can work. You try to do that in a way that feels right. You want that this person can go on with this for a number of weeks.

## **AB**

Shifting a little bit the focus on the team of practice, creative practice research methods. We know that you were enrolled in a PhD and you did your PhD with a similar model. Do you think you have been inspired in your research methods by the confrontation with your peers?

## **JVDB**

Yes, certainly. Maybe this has been the most informing part of it all. I had a very good supervision team and I could benefit from very constructive comments during the Practice Research Symposium, back then it was still called Graduate Research Conference. But the intermediary conversations with peers also at the PRSs, just witnessing the presentations and the comments of other people. I could project so much of that onto my research. Even the vocabulary, use of words, specific kinds of photography, then conversations, the interchange of information, things like that have been extremely important. References, books, examples, yes, most certainly. People are watching each other, listening, looking.

## **DO**

Can you explain your social positioning as practitioner / researcher / trainer and in relation to your communities of references (clients, students, civil society, etc..)? And if this perception of yourself has changed after the completion of your PhD?

## **JVDB**

Yes, of course. As I said at the end of the Belgian 9, I was the last one to present in the row, if it doesn't change anything, it doesn't make any sense at all. The change, of course, is in your contribution to knowledge like in every PhD, but there is also change on the personal level. I think, if you are in a PhD or have finished a PhD,

it has changed you and the way you are dealing with things forever.

The perception of oneself, I don't know if I'm looking that often at myself, I don't think I do. But there is a shift in perception by other people. Of course, part of that is the optimistic side of people who say: "Oh, we have to be respectful with him because he's a doctor now." But that's not important, I don't care about that. But people ask you questions because they think you know better and because they think that you can help them and maybe that's more important. So it's about dealing with that, like you deal with the questions of your PhD candidates. If people ask you questions it is because they think you can help them. Then you have the obligation to do so. You have duties and the perception is more on the level of duties than on the the perception of profit. Yes, we have responsibilities. So if you are the expert in that field, people will perceive you as such and then you try to be helpful as such, which also means that if you don't know, you just say you don't know. "I'm sorry, I don't know that. I'm not an expert in that." "Oh, we would have expected you to be the expert" Then I'm sorry, then I will disappoint you. I don't know. It's about that, I think.

## **AB**

How do you think, the PhD process has changed your practice? Also in terms of your relation with clients, students and other people you work with. How has this changed?

## **JVDB**

I am more relaxed. Even if practice is very often about serious problems, certainly in architecture, it's about huge responsibilities. But I deal with them in a more relaxed way. I don't necessarily talk about the PhD with clients. I think most of them don't even know, because I think it would be counterproductive if I would say. Because people quite often think they have to challenge you, you have to tease out things which they might say afterwards, "Hahaha, so you think you are Mr. Something because you have a PhD," so I try to avoid all this. I just try to improve my work through my new insights. They don't necessarily have to know how I came to the new insights. The most important thing is what you do and make for them. If you improve as an architect because of the PhD, well that's good. That's the way I try to deal with it. I'm not walking around with "PhD Arch" on my t-shirt. God bless you. I'm not in the Army where it's important to say: "Well, I am the general, not you." I would like to say I'm doing a good job, first of all, to myself. When somebody would ask then: "Did you do a good job?", I might answer: "Well, it could have been better." Another PhD, who knows? That's the real importance of it. It's always about the work, it's not about us. Although I know that many people think differently. It's about the work - that's important, the quality of the work is important. That's what I enjoy. If people say: "Oh, this is a good piece of work," then I say "thank you". It's about that.

# Arnaud Hendrickx

KU Leuven

## Supervisor Profile

Arnaud Hendrickx has worked as an architect at Xaveer De Geyter architects and co-founded Rauw Architecten with Thierry Berlemont and Bart Callens. His current spatial artistic practice focusses more on artist collaborations, artefacts, installations and exhibitions than buildings. He teaches and researches the overlapping field of art and architecture as assistant professor at the Faculty of Architecture, KU Leuven, Campus Sint-Lucas, Brussels, Belgium and adjunct professor at the RMIT University, School of Architecture and Design, Melbourne, Australia. He is head of the research unit Architecture and Arts of the Department of Architecture of the KU Leuven and a member of their research group Radical Materiality. He obtained a doctoral degree at the RMIT University, School of Architecture and Design, Melbourne, Australia with his dissertation and exhibition 'Substantiating Displacement'.

## Interview edited transcription

KU Leuven, Ghent

April 2016

### Key

**AH** Arnaud Hendrickx

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

### AB

We would like to ask you about the relationship with your supervisors and mentors. How would they have influenced your current role as a supervisor yourself?

### AH

I think, it's often that things develop parallel or it was like we were discussing before, that you think you've somehow discovered something yourself or constructed something yourself and then it seems that your mentor was probably already pushing you that way for a long time. So I think some of those things, probably will have happened in a sense that I was working very hard on this idea of the "auton-

omous action” because I really insisted on working with the artists and not bothering them with research. They had to be artists and just do their thing. So there was this opportunity that we can have an exhibition there or we can collaborate, that we just did whatever we wanted to do, what we call the “autonomous action”. Then, there was this more reflective thing of, afterwards or sometimes even at the same time, that you notice that you were talking a lot about this or that aspect and you somehow try to capture these by putting a name on it. Suddenly, you can compare it to other people’s work, to your own work, maybe to theoretical elements and it’s able to somehow, you get a grip on the thing because you have given it a name for a while. You, at least, you already know what it somehow should mean and then you could make new work or experiments with it - to learn more about how it could work. These different layers, for me, somehow they completely relate to Richard’s reflection on reflection; what Jo just said. I’ve forgot them, the in and for meaning that the autonomous action is really reflecting while you’re doing it. It’s just a way of thinking and doing is a way of thinking, in a sense. Then, you need to become aware that it is reflecting on that with the heuristics. Then reflecting for is what can I do with it and then you just experiment with it. For example, I made for myself the exercise of architectural one-liners, to just have to give yourself a few hours, I made a quick design, a competition design or whatever, and try to finish it to some point that it can become a piece of information for the next step. Or this kind of things that you would normally not really take the time for, just do, make a drawing, make a film, make an experiment and then suddenly this becomes a resource for the next exhibition, where suddenly you say, “I can use this element, I can make six of them and put them there and I have an exhibition,” which is very interesting to see that this become then for because they really inform your work.

I can only say that I felt, probably, I was already aware of what Richard said when I was doing this, but at that time, it didn’t have this very clear separation either, so it developed in the same time. I’m not trying to insist that I, and please don’t put that, in some way that I informed him. It’s just that these things seem to build up at the same time and I was really happy with this kind of input or this environment where these kinds of difficult concepts, like as a designer: what are you doing? what is research? all this. This helps because it’s so clear to do research for and then you say, “Okay, I want to inform new work, I have to look to the future, I have to reflect on where did I come from, where are the inputs, my sort of like mother’s house, where are my influence is coming from,” and the through is, of course, the thing I really believed in is that there are a lot of ways of thinking, but doing is also a way of thinking clearly.

Could you disagree with that?

## **AB**

We were also interested in your role. What do you feel is your role in terms of supervising the fellows?

**AH**

So I have now two, RMIT, so I'm lucky, maybe you don't know this, I'm lucky to be accepted as a professor for the RMIT, it means that I'm part of the program of RMIT, but it's an honorary position, sounds fancy it's just a word that you don't get paid for it. But it's interesting for me because I have to vary, I'm kind of new at it, only one PRS, the last one, it was the first time that I was aware that these two people I had to follow them and they were already quite far in their trajectory. There was this question after having two new now, so probably there will be more in the future and these are people who start. But that's probably the schizophrenic thing for me now, people in the other models, like in our school, I have one person with a research group, we got a funding for one research student who with somebody who's just finished school, like not a mid-career, like in RMIT, where you have 10 years of experience as a sort of norm or a few years of experience. There's somebody who's quite young and it cannot really talk about a practice or a small practice. So that's a challenge, something completely new for me. Then there are colleagues of mine too, that are actually just colleagues, I have no superiority over them and anyway it's never the case with supervision, but to some extent it's also awkward to say, "I'm your supervisor," but at the same time we're just friends, so that's a different situation. So I mean all these situations are different and I can only say that I think that it's good to have some examples. But I feel very insecure about being able to address these three, for example, very different models. I don't feel adequately armed, but at the same time, I feel that by coming to these PRSs and once again sounds may be corny, but the fact that you feel that you can, in the panel's you comment and your remarks are valued, somehow you feel like maybe I'm up to the task. I don't know, it's in that sense and that you now understand that probably your mentors didn't know exactly everything about you also, but somehow you projected their rest on your problem and it felt like they were in control and you try to do the same now. I shouldn't say that because it's maybe giving a bad impression that we.. but you understand what I mean probably.

**AB**

We are also interested in the glossary of ADAPT-r , can you trace the evolution of your lexicon throughout your PhD journey?

**AH**

Well, that's one of the things that maybe steered me today not to really talk about the PhD itself because.. that's the joke I made with the second PhD, it stopped at a point where it was becoming interesting. I think, I felt like doing two more PRSs, I didn't have much sense, so I felt like it is the time to finish and everybody agreed, so you can finish. But then I started writing and we talked about this today a lot. I didn't write a lot before, so it was all limited to the end in a sense. I have the feeling that, for me, the glossary was a very good mediator as a good format

because the concept where there quite soon, before the writing, so I only had to make the framework and I think it helped me a lot. But at the same time, it feels now when I read them that it's only scratching at the surface, it's just a first step. I really would like to go deeper into this. The freedom that it gives because it's a sort of self-defining thing that you try to put as closely as possible to something identifying a work, it's a sort of active thing, but then you can describe it in many different ways and I probably didn't have enough time to really go into detail to develop it to a level where it becomes really precise or in a sense, it's like a general term because it is clear for me what it's about, but then it falls in like 20 or 30 categories. I take two or three that I think are important. I go one step and then it stops and I think it could go further and more specific, especially in diversity. But, I think it's for me, it's something I use now, also quite automatically for papers or things like that, to have some kind of base point of references and concepts because I think that it helps a lot to talk about things that are difficult to understand, to stay with a few well-defined concepts. They are not well defined, but the few concept because, I used to, and we are all trained like this, if you make a sentence and you repeat the word, use another one, because it's not good to repeat words, but for the sake of clarity, if you use work effect, it's very, very difficult word for many people, but at least keep the same word, all the time, because otherwise it becomes very confusing. So in that sense a glossary, I think, helps with that, to say this kind of aspect of my work I will talk about in that way.

I think the strongest thing I found for myself which I didn't use at all yet, was the definition of the "promenade architectural" by Le Corbusier. It was a picture and a title which I didn't dare to do yet and I think I'm doing it more and more now to use more different media than only text as a definition, like a pattern to do this, I think you have the mode of expressing. You have the drawing where you somehow define how the thing is constructed, the title which is a sort of general trying to be descriptive, then you have the description of how to make it, how it's constructed and then you have the fourth part where you say what it's actually doing: how does it operate or what's special about it, what makes it unique. If you think about this, it is much more interesting than to have a small dictionary definition of a word. Actually in the catalogue, it was meant to come together, of course, the references, the mediators, but for clarity, I kept them separate. So they are now small pieces of text that if you didn't read the whole book, I don't think you get anything out of it. But in that sense they evolved all the time because they were used, often from early on, when I was talking about the project and specific products for a promotion came from the exhibition promotion that was very quickly defined, only a few days after the exhibition already. But then what it actually meant and how it's connected with affordances and with all this kind of stuff, it took a lot longer. But then it kept on growing, but it didn't really grow to a fully-fledged glossary, So that's a pity. but I think the whole PhD is not really finished. It's like a cloud of ideas and it's a problem that I feel now that I want to rewrite in a very simple way.

The first part of the interview is reported in Deliverable 11 / Chapter 3

# Toomas Tammis

Estonian Academy of Arts

## Supervisor Profile

Toomas Tammis is an architect and currently the dean of the Faculty of Architecture of the Estonian Academy of Arts. He studied architecture at the Estonian Academy of Arts in Tallinn and the Architectural Association School of Architecture in London. He is the founding partner of Arhitektuuriagentuur and Allianss Arhitektid. Toomas tutors first year and master studios in the EAA, has exhibited his works internationally, curated and designed exhibitions, lectured and written on architecture education, the changing position of an architect and public space as the part of built environment most flexible and open to change. He has most recently been involved in establishing a design practice research and PhD programme in the EAA. His most prominent works include holiday village in Vamråk, Norway (with Paco Ulman), Spa Hotel in Kuressaare, Estonia (with Tarmo Teedumäe and Inga Raukas) and several apartment buildings and private residences in and around Tallinn.

## Interview edited transcription

Estonian Academy of Arts, Tallinn

April 2016

### Key

**TT** Toomas Tammis

**AB** Alice Buoli

**CDM** Cecilia De Marinis

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

### CDM

We would like to ask you about the practice-based PhD in this institution: how has it been adopted in the Estonian Academy of Art? What are the possible implementations of this type of model?

### TT

We adopted that, I think, two or three years ago which coincided with the beginning of the ADAPT-r program. This was a complete restructuring of the PhD

program we had before which was the very traditional doctoral philosophy which meant reading and writing a lot and basically coming out of your office, out of your practice - and most probably, not going back anymore. So, we have really felt and seen the change being very clear because with the previous PhD program which we had run for 10 years, we had perhaps 5 PhD candidates who never graduated and who never presented a thesis, even, which is a very typical thing which happens to a person within architect's education which is a very hard student-based education with a very little training in writing and also in reading.

Now with the creative practice-based research model, we really have managed to get the interest of some of the most interesting young practices and I think this is a very crucial moment. This is what we really want to do and want to have. We want to have the best practitioners here in the Academy on one hand, and on the other hand, to have them, to provide them the time and the framework to look back at their own practice and generating that on a different kind of level or different kind of reflection on it. Well, we haven't seen any results, in the sense that we haven't had a thesis defended within that system. But we have within these two years now 7 very active and dedicated PhD candidates who are actually very good architects. They are doing it within their own work and within their own practice. I'm very enthusiastic about what comes from that.

## **CDM**

We would like to ask you also your opinion on the methodology of such a kind of PhD.

## **TT**

It is also not very difficult to be very critical and to see that as a kind of self-centred psychoanalysis project. But then again, perhaps it is more difficult, but much more fruitful to go on from that and actually, really take a look on the work: what you do and the way in which you do and have done that for some time. I think this actually opens up a different kind of platform for discussion in the architecture schools where the discussions so far have been rather focused and perhaps even exclusive of different kinds of things. When we talk about one specific way of working or one specific design question, then in a way, we are inclusive of all information we can get about that specific way of working or that specific problem. But at the same time, being rather exclusive of other kinds of problems and other kinds of working. Whereas, this is actually bringing very different kinds of working methods, design decisions and design outcomes around the same table within the same discussion, which I dare to say has not happened before. I think this is very, very valuable. This is something we saw yesterday: extremely different practitioners who would perhaps in their normal world in an architecture school or office, never happened to talked together. Yet, the ways in which they work as a creative practice is actually not so different at all. I think this is a very important part of that program and that

methodology. In a way it opens up the architecture world in a way that it has not been opened for a long time.

### **CDM**

We would also like to ask your opinion about the PRS as an external observer.

### **TT**

I think it's a very good tool to actually bring people together and generate discussion. One important part of the PRS is the traditional roles of the presenters and the table of critique or critics, it is, in a way, still there but there is a huge effort to distort that. I think that's a very important thing. This refers also to your previous question, what is important in the PRSs is that you have, and within this kind of program, that you have more or less experienced practitioners. So, you don't have people straight from the Master program, you have people who have actually had their own practices or worked in the academia for longer time, so they have the track record or the body of experience and knowledge is different and that is very fruitful for a round of discussion.

### **AB**

Which difficulties you have faced in introducing this kind of model in the Estonian academic system?

### **TT**

I think it was not very difficult because in the Estonian Art Academy there had been a long discussion prior to that of allowing and generating the framework for doing research within the fields of art, architecture and design which is different from many natural or human sciences. Then again, I think we are perhaps facing yet one more round of discussions when we will have the first graduates. The discussions around what is or has been the input or (I would rather say) the output as the new knowledge and how is it disseminated. As an institutional instruction for how to do the work and where and how it should be finished, we have described that and that's ok. I think when it comes to real life, we will have another round of arguments. But I don't think this is going to be too difficult, but I believe this is still something that will come.

But I would have thought it would be more difficult to start this and it was not really. But we had serious support because it differs from different schools. We had very good and big support from within the school from directorat. So we didn't have to prove it from within to our own people. From there, we had good support from the Ministry, so in this sense it was easier, than perhaps in other cases.



# Boštjan Vuga

University of Ljubljana

## Supervisor Profile

Assoc. Prof. Boštjan Vuga, u.d.i.a., Grad.Dip. (AA)

Boštjan Vuga cofounded the architectural office SADAR+VUGA in 1996. The office has been driven by a quest for quality, with a strong belief that forward-leaping architectural production contributes to our well-being and generates a sensitive and responsive development of the physical context. Office's best renowned built works are Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia, New entrance hall of the National Gallery of Slovenia, Football stadium and Multi-purpose sports hall Stožice, Air traffic control center Ljubljana and Cultural Center of EU Space Technologies Vitanje. Boštjan Vuga regularly lectures at architectural schools, conferences, and symposia, he tutored a studio at the Berlage Institute in Rotterdam and was a guest professor at the University of Applied Sciences Münster and TU Berlin. He was appointed a visiting professor and head of the Design and Interior Planning department within the Architecture Design Innovation (ADIP) programme from 2011 to 2013.

## Interview edited transcription

Ljubljana  
June 2016

### Key

**BV** Boštjan Vuga

**AB** Alice Buoli

**DO** Dorotea Ottaviani

### DO

At the moment and so far which kind of candidates are you supervising at a PhD level?

### BV

I'm supervising Ana Kreč, who is my first student. I've known her for a long time: she used to work in our office and I was really happy when she decided to continue to pursue her studies, exploring this subject.

**DO**

Who should supervise a doctoral thesis in a Creative Practice Research PhD? (A creative practitioner? An academic? A critic? A philosopher? A scientist? An engineer? etc..)

**BV**

Ana is my first PhD student within the ADAPT-r program, but before I was supervising another PhD student at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana. It was a program conducted by the Ministry of Education in Slovenia, where a PhD candidate got a scholarship in order to spend some time working for a company. So I was actually a supervisor from the practice to a PhD student, while he had another supervisor, a professor at the School. His research was about applicable geometries, so what he or we developed together in the office was then taken as a source for his thesis. This combination between practice and a canon, between a practitioner and non-practitioner (if we use this word) in a program like that, I'd say is necessary.

**DO**

What is the supervisor's role?

**BV**

I can't describe it. I would say that for each student or each thesis, we need a different strategy or approach to supervising. So I cannot generalize. I mean, if I am supervisor to a master student, I would actually work with him or her in a different way because he or she is within a school-defined problem. But with a PhD student or a doctorate student it's rather different because it's more like an interaction, it's more like a discussion where I, as a supervisor, need to trigger interest and I expect the same from the other side.

On the other hand, as a supervisor, I can't say, "Ok, do that and that and that." I can only set up the guidance, a tool or a direction and act as a very flexible control device, flexible enough to see where the thesis or the work is heading to.

**AB**

What are the responsibilities of the supervisors and the panel members at the PRS according to your experience so far?

**BV**

I attended just one panel, a few months ago in Ghent. Since I hadn't been acquainted with the structure or the aim of the panel, at that time I felt quite free, quite unloaded. I said what I thought was good for them. I attended 4 or 5 panels and due to the very heterogeneous nature of the works or thesis, the critique was also really diverse.

I think that it's really necessary that the supervisor and the candidate prepare a really stimulating presentation. This is very different to a Masters thesis presentation, or a very academic presentation. I really dislike to use these analogies, but it's kind of like selling a product: you don't just present it, you need a narrative to wrap your presentation. It shouldn't just be a power point presentation of what you have done, it needs dramaturgy. This is something should become a part of the project: communicating what you're doing. The best presentations in Ghent were those which highlighted the one thing which the candidate thought to be the most interesting point of the thesis, the most important for him or for her, or to be developed further.

#### **AB**

From your perspective what are the elements of innovation of the ADAPT-r training and supervision models / tools in relation to other Creative Practice PhD Programs?

#### **BV**

I think the program is really interesting and very close to me. It's more a horizontal development, or a field approach than a strict, linear approach, usually developed in a PhD or doctorate. Actually, if your goal is a production of knowledge in a very focused and disciplined way; then teamwork / integral work is necessary and this, I would say, refers both to candidates and to the supervisor. Having a continuous critical process embedded in the process of the PhD program is really important. It's like a matrix – a structure, that is quite established, but also flexible, capable of adapting to very different sources and influences and comments and opinions. I would say the one thing which I find really interesting so far, is that the process of ADAPT-r should be established in a way that it also creates frictions and surprises. So that it's not a very straightforward process, but more like a laboratory experiment. So if ADAPT-r is a laboratory, and you have a tool box, you have hardware and equipment, then you are to produce.

#### **AB**

Do you think you have been inspired in your supervising methods by the encounter with other supervisors?

#### **BV**

I'm actually really looking forward to that, you know. As you as you just mentioned, just one encounter is probably not enough because I felt like falling into more or less a set environment which I found stimulating, but I would like to learn more. I liked a very good encounter with Johan and Jo, where we discussed future tendencies. As I said, I'm very much looking forward to having these possibilities to degroup.

**AB**

About your personal and professional position, in relation to your communities of references (clients, students, civil society, etc..) how do you think your relationships would be affected by the fact that you're supervising?

**BV**

The way we work in the office, which is a chronical subject, is different than working within the frame of a great institution. But to employ research as a base of production has always been a part of the office. What I'm doing with Ana in this case isn't very different. When I teach, the logic is also very similar to the approach we take when developing a competition proposal in the office. So what I mean to say is that these aren't completely detached fields - practice, research, teaching - but it's a common field where I see myself maneuvering, having different encounters within different micro-environments.





## CHAPTER 4

### *Reports and other documents*

ESTONIAN ACADEMY OF ARTS  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE  
DOCTORATE SCHOOL  
ADAPT-r ITN



ESTONIAN  
ACADEMY OF ARTS



# CREATIVE PRACTICE RESEARCH METHODS

THE ADAPT-r PHD MODEL



12.00 Welcome and introduction Veronika Valk and Toomas Tamme > 12.30 Alice Buoli, Isabella De Marinis and Dorotée Ottaviani >  
13.00 Michael Corr > 13.30 Toomas Paaver > 14.00 Light lunch >  
14.30 Eik Hermann > 15.00 Jean Tiidemann > 15.30 Claudia Pasquero > 16.00 Roundtable / Panel discussion > 17.00 Drinks

Estonian Academy of Arts / Faculty of Architecture (20 Pikk Street, Tallinn) 7 April 2016 [www.adapt-r.eu](http://www.adapt-r.eu) / [www.artun.ee](http://www.artun.ee) / [www.facebook.com/events/887807837986878](https://www.facebook.com/events/887807837986878)

*ADAPT-r Day Tallinn, 7 April 2016*

## 4.1 REPORT / ADAPT-r Day Tallinn

### CREATIVE PRACTICE = RESEARCH METHODS

#### The ADAPT-r PhD Model

7 April 2016

Estonian Academy of Arts / Faculty of Architecture / 20 Pikk Street, Tallinn

After the first ADAPT-r Day in Tallinn (“Building a Community of Practice” / 23 April 2014), the second ADAPT-r Day at the Estonian Academy of Arts (EAA), aimed to give an insight into practitioners’ diverse methodologies in conducting their PhDs, related challenges and discoveries.

“Creative Practice = Research Methods” urged the presenters to reveal how the practice methods are the same as (not differ from) research methods: what are the key elements of creative practice research methods?

Contributions by both ADAPT-r fellows and the Faculty’s doctoral candidates aimed to trigger debate with local practitioners, PhD candidates from other fields (arts, design, technology, engineering, social sciences and humanities in general, etc).

The seminar kicked off with a short introduction by Veronika Valk, Head of Research at the EAA, on the ADAPT-r project institutional framework and by Toomas Tammiss, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, who presented some of the most recent projects from EAA students: a series of wooden pavilions designed and built by students themselves under the supervision of Academy professors and researchers.

The presentation “The PhD Journey within the ADAPT-r Model” by ADAPT-r ERs Alice Buoli (EAA), Cecilia De Marinis (RMIT Barcelona) and Dorotea Ottaviani (Glasgow School of Art) introduced the ADAPT-r PhD model, the main topics and program of the seminar and a series of questions aiming to give some points of reference for the debate with the presenters and local practitioners:

*What are the key elements of creative practice research methods?*

*What were the prompts / reasons why practitioners decide to apply for a Creative Practice-based PhD?*

*Why is it important that practitioners unveil their mode of practice?*

*Why should they reflect on their practice?*

A first presentation by **Michael Corr** (founder of Place, Belfast and ADAPT-r Fellow at the Estonian Academy of Arts) titled “The act or process of negotiating: a dialogue to craft outcomes” focused on the main methodological tools developed and refined by Michael from his last PRS. In particular he first presented a printed drawing, a constellation of work which depicted the different realms of his practice, key projects and places and his communities of reference.

He suggested that the constellation, with many clusters, overlaps and jumps, has the potential to move loosely between ‘making projects happen’ and ‘doing the projects’, crossing the social, the political and the public realms. Looking at his fascinations, his background and his body of work, Michael suggested that one of the consistencies that binds the work together is the act or process of negotiating. In the second half of his presentation, he used negotiation as a lens to look at his projects, distilling the constellation of work down to projects where negotiation has been used as a tool to affect change and public behaviours.

Michaels gave evidence to this key dimension of his practice, through a selection of projects:

- Borough High Street, South London, with East architecture, landscape, urban design ltd.
- Bromley bus stop, South East London, with Pie architecture
- Desire Line, project east to west Belfast, with PLACE

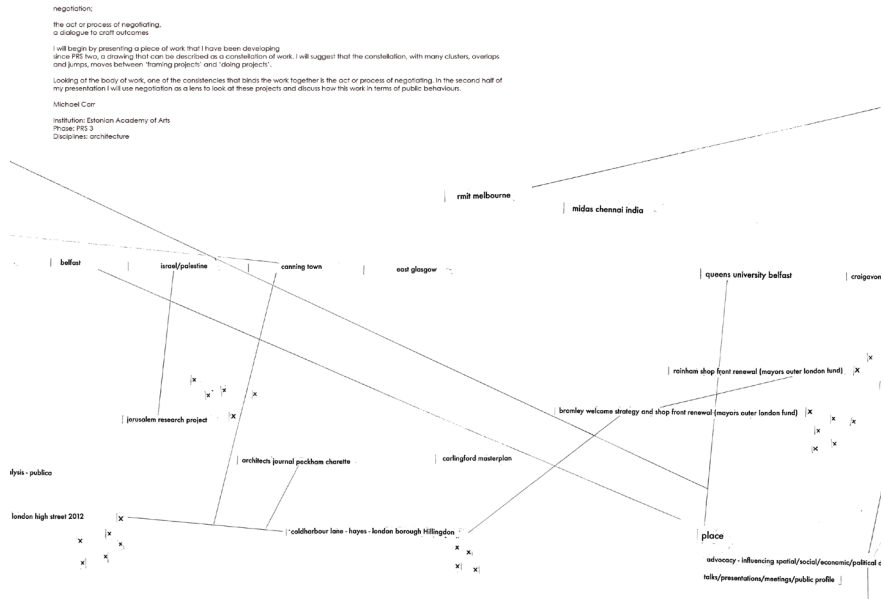
A second contribution was made by **Toomas Paaver** (PAIK Arhitektid, Tallinn and PhD candidate at the EAA).

“A Public Architect” presented the manifold professional activities carried out by Toomas in the last 20 years: city architect of Kuressaare, consultant at the Ministry of Interior Affairs, teacher and community activist. Toomas focused on the idea of “improvisation” as main methodological and thematic feature of his practice: how to deal with the different actors and interests involved in urban planning and public architecture?

Toomas suggested that the practice of improvisation can be called the practice of ‘a public architect’. Interviewing his Estonian colleagues, architects working with public space issues, he further articulated the essence of the work of a public architect.

A third presentation was made by **Eik Hermann** (Philosopher, professor and PhD Candidate at the EAA). “The Practice of Theory-for-Practice: Towards the Toolbox of Dynamic Contextualism” focused on Eik’s role, as a philosopher, inside design processes and educational programs inside an architecture school.

He specifically focused on the question of what theory really has to offer to architectural projects as a key urge for and inside his research trajectory. Following the EAA’s teaching tradition and amplifying it with a thought-toolbox developed from Deleuze, Foucault, Latour and Jullien, he started to build a practice-oriented framework for generating new ideas called dynamic contextualism.



*Michael Corr Poster (Credit Michael Corr)*



*Toomas Paaver Poster (Credit: Toomas Paaver)*

**Jaan Tiidemann** (Ninja Studio, Tallinn, professor and PhD Candidate at the EAA) presented “With or without tiger – the practice and (or) research” outlining the key elements of his research across teaching and practice.

He presented and explained a timeline / chronology of the main projects by his architectural studio, and the tutoring at the Estonian Academy of Arts focusing in particular on “Shelter”, a construction workshop for the first year architecture students that he has been curating for 10 years so far.

He further focused on ‘cartography by design’ as his main tool of research.

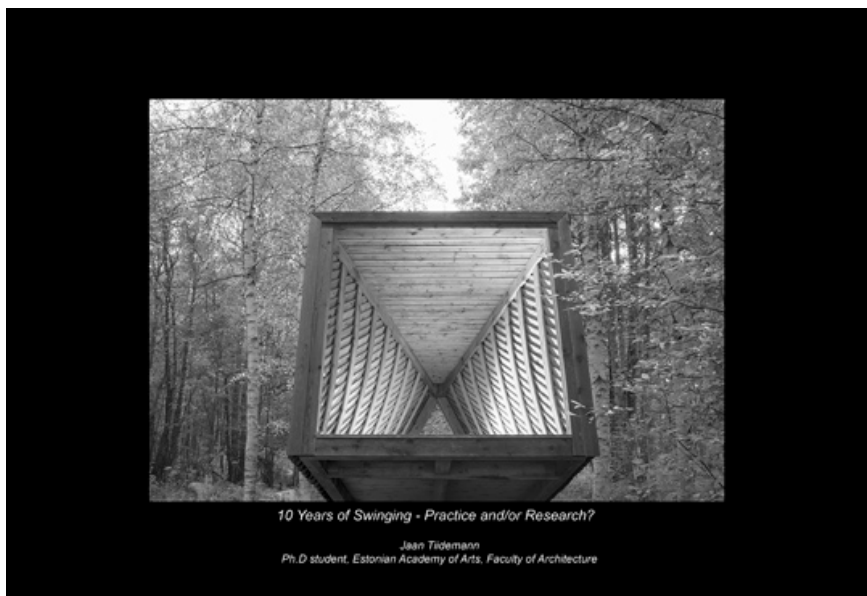
Jaan finally highlighted the need to find where are the meaningful crossing points between those three realms of his practice.

The final presentation was by **Claudia Pasquero** (ecoLogicStudio, London / ADAPT-r fellow at EAA) “b(I/O)logic. On the relevance of bio-computation in Architecture and Urban Design”. She focused on the main body of work of Claudia’s practice, her key research topics and possible research trails. Claudia presented some key projects (pavilions / follies) by ecoLogicStudio as main devices through which her practice has developed its main research trajectories as well main methodological apparatus. These are interpreted as synthetic organisms “as means of interacting with the production of the city in one-to-one” from a non-anthropocentric perspective. Claudia further outlined her future perspectives of research through the PhD: exploring new models able to articulate the behavior of the “Urbansphere” and define new terms for its sustainable co-evolution with the “Biosphere”. The issue of which scale to look at has been highlighted as a critical point to develop further.

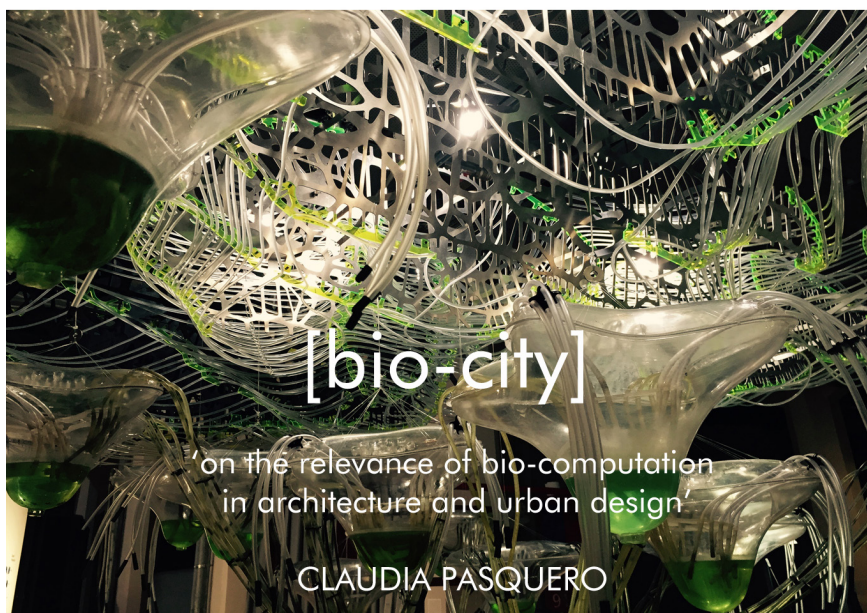
The final **Round Table** which took place in a more informal environment, saw different interventions from the presenters, the discussants and the public (hereby reported as edited transcriptions).

Some relevant topics, emerged during the conversation, are reported hereby synthetically:

1. *Research methods across scientific and design disciplines*
2. *Research is (actually) happening inside the practitioner’s studio*
3. *Design as Research*
4. *Sharing knowledge: the challenges of the PRS system*



*Jaan Tiidemann Poster (Credit Jaan Tiidemann)*



*Claudia Pasquero Poster (Credit: Claudia Pasquero)*



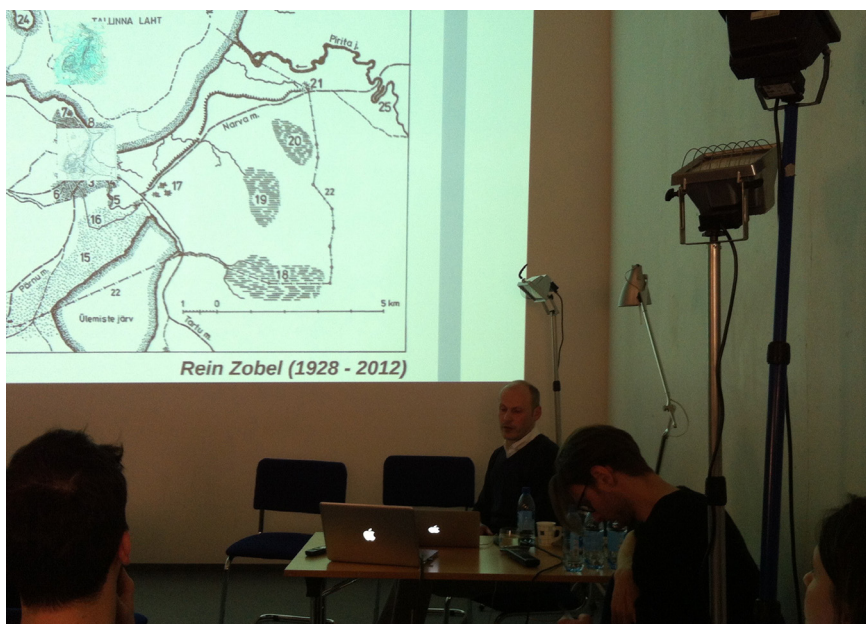
*Michael Corr (Photo: Alice Buoli)*



*Toomas Paaver (Photo: Alice Buoli)*



*Eik Hermann (Photo: Alice Buoli)*



*Jaak Tiideman (Photo: Alice Buoli)*



## 4.2 REPORT / Workshop Test Barcelona

### **Mapping the PhD Journey(s)**

*Wandering through Tacit Knowledge and Methods: discoveries, failures and interpretations*

RMIT Europe, Barcelona

10 February 2016

The workshop test was held in Barcelona at RMIT Europe on the 10th of February 2016. The participants to this workshop were the three ERs and three ADAPT-r fellows: Karin Helms (RMIT), Alice Casey (RMIT) and Martí Franch Batllori (GSA).

This was a test for a larger planned workshop at the PRS in Ghent 2016 and it allowed us to have a better understanding of the modalities in which communicate with the fellows, the time scheduled for every activity and the response to them from the participants. The following report is a documentation of the 1 hour and a half long work session which ended with a moment of feedback from the fellows.

To kick off the workshop we start explaining the theme of our research theme and the operational tools we are planning to use to lead it. Those tools are a fellows workshop and the supervisor's roundtable to be held in Ghent at the following PRS, and a series of focused interviews distributed over the year.

The outcomes we expected to have from this workshop were: an insight on discoveries and missteps (during this workshop were called "failures" but we realised that the word could mislead from the real meaning we wanted to give to it) during the PhD journey, an idea of the personal and collective tacit knowledge and to trigger a debate about this two topics.

We made a powerpoint presentation explaining our research. This was divided in three parts: first part was about Tacit Knowledge, the second part was on the methods and in the third we displayed a selection of images and mental maps that would help to give an idea of the work we were expecting to do during the workshop. (This part of the session lasted nearly 20 minutes).

In the first part of the presentation it was explained the open definition of Tacit Knowledge that we have investigated so far with an overview of the questions that led us to this definition and the lenses that we are using to discover and investigating Tacit Knowledge. Along with the explanation of the Tacit Knowledge it was briefly described what would have been the work to do during the part of the workshop related with it.

The presentation proceeded with the explication of our research on the refinement of the methods and we highlighted how we are focusing on the development of each fellow methods of research within the methodology framework of ADAPT-r project; the supervising process and the role of the supervisor; the community of practice in the ADAPT-r project and the glossary shared among it.

It was explained that on this part of the workshop would have been based on mapping their PhD journey through the discoveries and the missteps faced during that experience. Each fellow would have described to the others their point of view and the map and diagrams they would have drawn about it.

After individual contributions, a short finale debate concluded the session.

After explicating how the workshop would have been conducted the fellows started to draw their diagrams (5/10 minutes).

The first task asked fellows to draw their PhD Journey through their obstacles and discoveries.

Karin started explicating her mental map focusing on how she felt stuck after the PRS 3 and how she perceived it like a failure in her trajectory. She said that she only felt capable to be back on tracks after watching Marti's PRS and borrowing from him the idea of a self commissioned project. Once she started doing it she understood what to do next.

Alice pointed out that her point of impasse were also related the PRS. She understood that the PRS 2 wasn't such insightful as she would have thought it would be. She said that she felt the titles of the ADAPT-r project too abstract to help her overcome the situation of stalemate after the PRS 2 and that it was helpful for her to watch Jo van den Berghe's PRS presentation in which he drew simple sketches of his works and he asked himself simple questions about (i.e. what are the clients etc) the projects. This brought her the description of the window in her Muji box project through the details that she did for her 3 PRS presentation. She said that having something less abstract helped her in focusing on her work. Another difficult moment she passed was when she had to join back her work with Cian's research. They were both disoriented (it was at the time of her 4 PRS) and she found useful to make a list of her insights until that moment and to add it to the list made by Cian. They submitted it to Leon van Schaik who told them that doing a matrix with their insights and the effects those were having on their practice it might have helped them in founding their personal contribution to the knowledge. Marti linked his stalemate to the moment in which he had to start writing. For him understanding that this is a really challenging moment, helped him understanding that it is also really useful especially because it is not his normal meaning of expression.

After this moment of sharing between the practitioners it was asked them to start the second part of the workshop.

The task was to produce the “constellar taxonomy”<sup>1</sup> drawn by the group. We explained that this was an open and ongoing structure in which we were organizing what we had recognized as Tacit Knowledge that far and they would have been free to intervene on the diagram to explain what they think is the position of their Tacit Knowledge in their own experience as practitioners and researchers.

The practitioners drew for 5 minutes.

Martí started to explain what were the crucial concepts for him in the Tacit Knowledge diagrams. He especially focused on the way in which he communicates with his team and with the clients. He highlighted how the conversation and dialogue is a key element in building and transferring informations and Tacit Knowledge in his community of practice. Furthermore he included the walking practice as a moment of nonverbal absorption of knowledge from outside and of communication of it.

For Alice the cultural background the Tacit Knowledge dimension mostly influences her practice. She described it as geographical background. She added then the word ‘serendipity’, a keyword that was missing in the diagram according to her experience. She explained that for them the reason of something happening was not just some ‘happy accidents’ but an chain of events enabled one after the other by the actions of drawings and by being part of the process.

Martí was quite positively impressed by this definition since he said that he would have described it with the word ‘creativity’.

For Karin the cultural background was the starting step of the PhD process and she said she wasn’t that aware of it before. She pointed out that another important aspect of her Tacit Knowledge would be the one related to the nonverbal realm of Tacit Knowledge. She said that she has a vast amount of images (eidetic archive) in her mind and that she uses most of the time her visual memory to recall things, a skill that she thinks is a compensation to her difficulties in the writing areas. She says that she recalls spaces and the scales of the spaces and they are usually mixed between the several experiences she had in different countries.

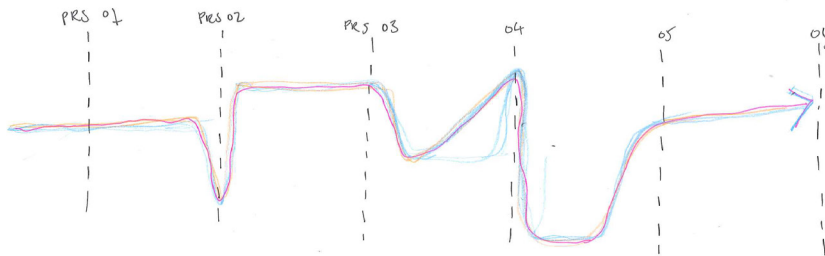
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1 After this workshop we realized that the approach on the explication and depiction of the Tacit Knowledge should have been changed. Our idea of asking the practitioners to draw on the “constellar taxonomy” we designed was misleading and confusing for them. We realized that we should make a step back and submit them what we called then a “constellation of meaning” (in fact a better depiction of our ‘open and early definition’ of the Tacit Knowledge) and ask them to draw a constellation of their personal perception of the Tacit Knowledge on it.

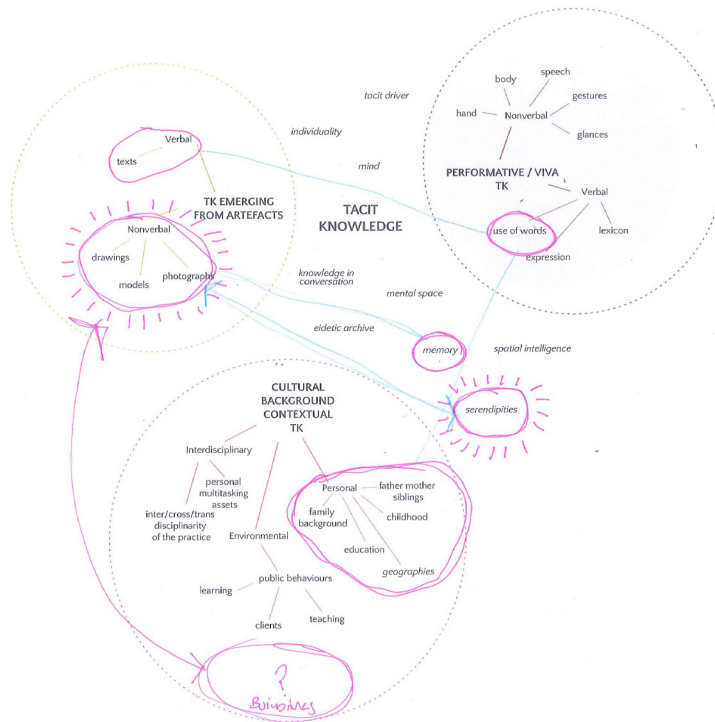
As a third element she inserts her Tacit Knowledge in the interdisciplinarity category as she found a profound relation with the fact that the profession of landscape architect is an hybrid of different disciplines and this situation it affects her deeply. After this first round of personal statements about the recognition of the personal Tacit Knowledge in the given constellar taxonomy, the practitioners continued debating especially about the role of the conversation as a moment of confrontation and sharing of Tacit Knowledge which should come along with the use of mixed tools to express it in the artifacts. Martí and Karin agreed that this use of mixed tools is fundamental both in the practice and in the teaching aspects of sharing and express Tacit Knowledge.

At the end of this confrontation we asked for feed-back about the workshop session, a point that emerged was that would be useful to focus on the possible outcomes of the PhD process and about the shareability of these outcomes as a contribution to the knowledge, as highlighted by Martí also in terms of disciplinary and professional knowledge, and societal change.

## Workshop Documentation



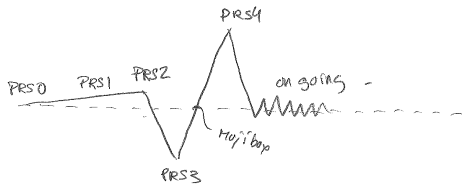
*Alice Casey "PhD Journey" Map*



*Alice Casey "(Personal) Constellar Taxonomy"*

1. Map of Discoveries and Failures in the PhD journey - Helms

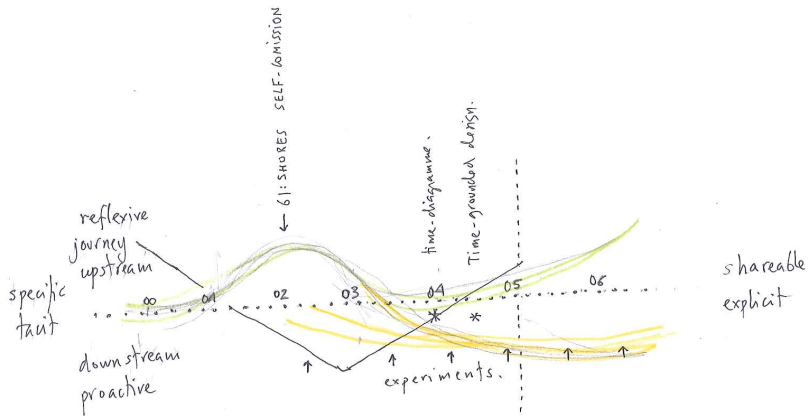
Up to now I have been through 4 Prs -



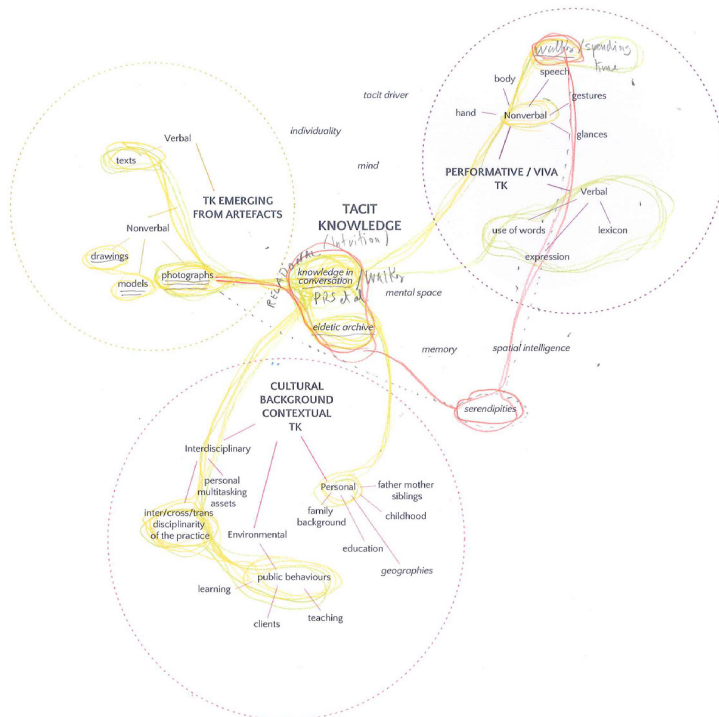
Karin Helms "PhD Journey" Map



Karin Helms "(Personal) Constellar Taxonomy"



*Marti Franch Batllori "PhD Journey" Map*



*Marti Franch Batllori "(Personal) Constellar Taxonomy"*



## 4.3 REPORT / Supervisors Round Table

### Exploring ADAPT-r Training: the supervisors' (collective) voice

PRS Ghent 2016 / Sint-Lucas KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture  
25th of April

#### EDITED TRANSCRIPTION

On Monday 25th of April, at the Ghent PRS 2016, a Round Table with the ADAPT-r supervisors and partners was run and facilitated by Alice Buoli, Cecilia De Marinis and Dorotea Ottaviani, ADAPT-r ERs.

The participants include: Sally Stewart (**SS**) / GSA, Richard Blythe (**RB**) / RMIT, Marcelo Stamm (**MS**) / RMIT, Mauro Baracco (**MB**) / RMIT, Tadeja Zupancic (**TZ**) / LU, Claus Peder Pedersen (**CPP**) / AAA, Johan Verbeke (**JV**) / KUL, Michael McGarry (MM) / Queen's University Belfast, Veronika Valk (**VV**) / EAA. The RT was organised into 2 main parts: a one-directional presentation by the ERs, followed by three rounds of questions and opinions in shape of a collective dialogue.

The presentation introduced the main topics at stake and in particular the “ADAPT-r” Training model with a focus on ADAPT-r “Social body” of supervisors.

The presentation highlighted also the methodological approach adopted during the RT: the “Focus Group” which has been conceived as a conversation among a selected group of experts aiming to capture deeper information about the topics at stake. Data has been collected through a semi-structured group interview process.

The presentation further stressed the main aims of the RT:

1. Involve ADAPT-r partners and supervisors in the debate on ADAPT-r Training activities and methods
2. Unfold “Training” in its dimensions and moments through the voices and the debates among the supervisors
3. Understand the supervisors' roles and interactions during the key moments of the Training activities (PRS and Research Methods Training): the role of the supervisor during PRS
4. Highlight the key elements of innovation of ADAPT-r Training in the arena of creative practice research PhD programs supervision methods.
5. Draft some “horizons of change” in Training and Supervision Methods.

The second part of the RT focused on a series of questions proposed as background for the discussion among the participants. These have been organised into:

1. Engagement questions
2. Triggering / Exploration questions
3. Future-oriented questions

## ROUND 1 / ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

The first set of questions and opinions focused on the supervisor's role in Practice-based research, by addressing the following questions:

- a. *Who should supervise a doctoral thesis in a Creative Practice Research PhD? (A creative practitioner? An academic? A critic? A philosopher? A scientist? An engineer? etc..)*
- b. *What is the supervisor's role?*

The first round of opinions brought to the discussion the following positions / ideas by each participant.

**SS:** All these people in the list (creative practitioners, academics, critics, philosophers, scientists, engineers, etc..) should probably be able to supervise a PhD thesis or be included in the supervisory pool, which is not what happens in traditional PhD models, where pure academics are usually involved. The question is how to get them involved and how to get them aware of what their contribution can be? And how to involve their knowledge and expertise in the (supervision) process to support the candidate.

**RB:** Equally you could say none of those people should supervise. I have seen - in some panels - creative practitioners giving the worst advices to candidates because they themselves are sitting in a strange space in terms of understanding what research is and not seeing research "in" the practice at all, despite the fact that they might be creative practitioners. Not every creative practitioner can see that. And we have philosophers who are able to see what creative practice is and talk within the creative practice.

So those kinds of labels don't really get to the core of what we are doing, which is "how do you extract research or how do you research through creative practice?" Who should supervise them? Who is doing this kind of research? It is those kind of practitioners who are interested in how new knowledge comes, through the doing of the practice? Forgetting all the rubbish bureaucratic nonsense about what research is and what is not, (a supervisor) should just recognize and understand when something new is coming into being through the making of the practice and

then being able to explain that to a broader community. This should be the driving question, not where do they [supervisors] come from or who they are.

**MS:** So rather than asking “who should supervise [a PhD] ... a scientist, an engineer, etc...?”, the question should be “is somebody particularly helpful in this process, as a philosopher, in his capacity “as a philosopher”, or “as a scientist?”. And if you address them “please give us input as a scientist” they potentially can do two things: either they mislead you, or bring you into a space where you could say “this is exactly the type of scientist or scientific approach that is extraordinary unhelpful in order to get even closer to what I am doing” for many of the practitioners.

It could be that, for a moment, in time that somebody even responding “as a philosopher” could be instrumental, but not because he is pushing somebody into a philosophical space, but because it could trigger and generate some counter-response and say: “yes, I understand that philosophical invitation, but now I have something else to bring back to it”. So if these people come with their own expertises and frameworks, they need to be fully aware that to roll them out in ideological terms, and cover up what is going on ( in the creative process) , is the worst that can happen.

So, to some extent, whatever their mental space is, whether they have socio-political considerations or aesthetic architectural considerations, etc... they could all be interesting from the perspective of their own professional concerns, but what they have to do here is first of all to tune in and understand what is the main idea about practice based research and if they cannot do that, then all of them are excluded, including practitioners themselves.

**MB:** Sharing my own personal experience, on the one hand, I agree with Sally when she says “all of them”, but also I am totally with Richard [when he says “none of them”]. There is a responsibility for the supervisors to “curate” the type of expertise you want to bring to the table, and this is what I do. Call me a control freak, but I really like, for the research I do with my candidates, to work with different kinds of practitioners, ecologists and scientists. When my students at the level of the Master, at the end of the review - where there were many architects, many designers and one ecologist - they say “the ecologist was the sharpest of all because it is a unique figure, and I am still working with that ecologist” it’s fantastic. But then very often I meet with other ecologists who really don’t understand anything about what we do . So there is a responsibility on the supervisor who is involved in practice-based research to really make the call and curate this [the process].

**TZ:** I can build on the idea of the supervisory group. I am in favor of supervisory groups to complement the abilities Sally was talking about and to bridge these du-

alities we have, to fight with or against something or somebody and then to have a kind of a balanced response to what you want to do. Or maybe not the supervisors at all, but the critics, so there is another question.

**RB:** That brings up an interesting point, because there are a couple of things going on at PRS weekends like this one, and one role of the supervisor is to see “the end point”. They are the person who are trying to take [candidates] on a journey and to guarantee that, when they get to the end point, the examination is successful: that’s one of the roles of the supervisor. But this is a little bit different from a panel, who can sit there, like the ecologist, put a little comment in there that is particularly directed at the work itself. So there are these two layers of supervisory advice coming in: one is about the nature and quality of the work itself and the second layer is about how it is structured and how it is positioned in communicating back out as a PhD.

That’s what I really like about this shared model which is what you [**MB**] were saying, where one of the biggest advantages is that you are not just working with one supervisor all the time, the supervisor can “curate” different voices on the panel, which at times might seem strange.

I remember being in the process myself (as a PhD candidate) and not really getting it. Suddenly I had a fashion designer in the panel and I was very unsure about it, (and a mathematician at one point), but the fashion designer I remember particularly, because I thought “what could this person even say into the space of architecture that could be interesting to me?” I was had understood this process as being about the architecture only. And she made this comment about the drawing and cutting of patterns, which was as if she’d been working in our architecture studio. And that was a moment, for me, where I completely re-understood what this kind of research was, and why it works between these different disciplines we work with. Those kind of examples are terrific at answering the question, and the different purposes of the panels and the way they are constructed. But the panel is extended in this whole room, because it is not just the panel, but also the others in the space.

**MS:** But there is also a completely different way to respond to the question, which is that none of these perspectives are particularly relevant to the capacities and possibilities of the situation. First of all, the role of the supervisor is probably slightly overstated, because if you have the feudal model of the supervisor: Here is the “doctor father” - which is how it is called in Germany - the mentor such as the Sanskrit scholar, who has found that one document, on which the PhD student would work for the next four-five years under his tutelage -- and if you don’t like his colour, you’re not his doctoral student. This kind of model, which is interesting

in other cases and could be still very productive in History and Humanities, is in not very interesting within this [practice-based PhD] model.

So the question “is it a specific expertise – in a certain disciplinary realm – that the supervisor has to have in order to be particularly productive in this supervisory role?” is slightly misplaced. And there are very different skills, capacities and even sensitivities and intelligences that supervisors, and the whole ecology that is operating here [has to have]. This is a supervisory model – whether you call it a “social model”, a “collective model”, a “diversified intelligence” – that is coming to the table at the PRS: it all comes together in three or four days at the PRS. We have to curate this kind of influx of intelligent impulses and the supervisor plays only some role in it: he has a curating role and he has this kind of role to see “towards the end” and anticipate things, but it is much more a stewardship, a navigation tool. So if you tone down the role of Supervisor bring to the table as an artist, an ecologist... you say no, he needs to bring something else to the table.

And there is another question “what does the PhD candidate brings to the table as a supervisor?”. The student himself being part of the supervisor ecology themselves. In other models, that kind of feudal model, where you have master students stepping into the PhD at 24, you need that kind of authoritarian style. Here when I joined this model and became fascinated by it, one of the things that impressed me the most was to some degree these people have hunches and ideas how they could go into this. We need to find the right balance of not over-painting what they are trying to find in it through our “supervisory arrogance”.

**CPP:** That underlies one of the central qualities I would expect of a supervisor: a curiosity, not only an interest in venturesome practices, but also the curiosity, and within a research framework the ability to operate without a hypothesis to direct the PhD student, which is implicit in what Marcelo said about the “doctor father”, but in a more contemporary version, it might be the PhD student says “I made a brief: this is what I want to explore, here is a gap in our knowledge”... and then the supervisory role might be to say “you said you are going to examine this and now you are examining something else”...

But here it is quite different because PhDs are engaged in this journey on the basis of a body of work, where everybody has a hunch there is something going on. There is usually, and hopefully, some kind of recognition already, but it has not really been stated what this is about. So the ability [of the supervisor] is engaged with the curiosity without to answer “what it is about?” while also steering it.

One of the early training sessions for supervisors that Leon conducted was very much a transfer of experience. In certain moments PhD students tend to be inter-

ested in underpinning their work theoretically and, in that understandable interest, they might get too far away from what they were engaging with. And based on Leon's experience having many candidates, often these types of things might occur and you should try to be aware of it in your curiosity. And that's another aspect of this shared supervisory model. Some of us - I have been following this program for 6 or 7 years -- but it is only now that the first the candidates that I supervised are getting close to completion and it is a quite different process to supervising other candidates might have design exploration elements but not in model like this. How do you react when it is appropriate to say things, and how do you balance this curiosity with the curatorship? I think this is another aspect of the shared supervisory model.

**RB:** One of the things that makes endlessly enjoyable being a supervisor - it doesn't matter how many candidates you have - the next candidate will do it differently from the last one. When I say one of the role of the supervisor is to be able to see the end, what the supervisor can see is some some the characteristics that it will need to have but you know that every single candidate will find their own way to getting there and build their own methods. There's no prescriptive map of how to get from here to there, there is just some waypoints and advice that you might pass on.

[Intervention from the audience]

**Claudia Pasquero:** This idea is not only true at the PhD level, but also at other level of tutorship, because when academia was founded certain kinds of knowledge (like philosophy, engineering, science) were difficult to access if you were not in the academia. But now some contents are easier to access for a student, at multiple levels. For a tutor it becomes relevant to understand how to develop a method to bring this knowledge together to point. A tutor becomes a sort of "Socratic machine" that tries to bring up a certain point that he thinks is relevant. Students can bring a lot to a specific content of that point - if they are good students. This is changing in other levels of education because it is easier for students to approach a scientist or a philosopher and get knowledge from them. But then how this knowledge comes together is a topic that needs to be discussed.

**MS:** In terms of curatorship and inception, we can maybe talk more about where are interesting supervisory moments? Whether there are a few examples we could discuss in terms of "this is not because we need people who upset people, or these people who are sensitive; we need these kind of softies": it's not about that at all. We could have this kind of moments like this kind of Socratic figure, in which some sort of inquiring which could lead to some kind of aporetic moment when people come to say "I don't know where to go from here!"

**RB:** And that happens!

**MS:** And that happens, and there are these kinds of frustration moments.

And there, for example is something to discuss: what do good supervisors do in “frustration moments”? What do people do in moments -- the other part of which is “overconfidence”? (“I know where this is going; I can roll it out” and the supervisor says what if it’s nothing to do with that?...) These kinds of strategic maneuvers and interventions of the supervisor are just as much as enjoying the extraordinary diversity, meaning and absolute uniqueness of each PhD.

The other side of it, these moments change the course through some sort of intervention that cannot be planned, it is not strategised, it grows out of the next observation. We, as supervisors, through this kind of PRS ecology, skill up every time: I hope I am becoming a better supervisor every time I attend theses. So for us, as supervisors, every PRS is also an absolute training ground and for that reason the diagram showing the training converging in the PRS, is where the supervisors train themselves.

**RB:** Picking up the socratic idea and the key supervisory moments, my intervention would be that if you put all the most important supervisory moments together it is when the supervisor or supervisory situation, holds back mirror back to the candidate, so that the candidate can see more clearly that what they are seeing in their work - what they are saying they are seeing in the work - is not exactly how the rest of us see it. When someone is insisting that their work is like “this” and the supervisory situation allows them to reflect back on what supervisors see: that shift seems to be one of the most important and productive things you see happening.

**JV:** For that to happen it is terribly important that from both sides there is this huge openness so that you can put everything on the table that is visible and can be discussed by the supervising team and by the panel. But for that you need to provide in a very open way whatever is there [in the practice] and they have to look at it in a very open minded way to what is on the table.

**RB:** To get a reflection you have to put something, which means it is coming from the candidate, not from the supervisor. When working in “history situations” like this with historians, the art of the moment was to having heard the presentation and to put the questions to the presenter that would allow you tell your story. Then I saw also this (cultural) theorist saying “thank you the presentation, your point is really elegant...but now I am going to tell you what my position is...”

I have never see that in this [ADAPT-r] kind of panels. So there is something about generosity to actually put your position there and to really try and see here

what is coming from a fascinating practice - as a supervisor you need to be fascinated - and then you are able to reflect back rather than to push on to someone something that tells them about their work. And what people say all the time they enjoy about the experience [of the PRS] is the generosity of the situation. I think it is where generosity comes from. The generosity about giving and revealing [the practice] in details, and the generosity [of the supervisors] to not to push on that practice.

**JV:** Generosity works in both direction.

**CPP:** In that openness - talking about supervisory roles - a very important thing is also to ask for the things which are not on the table because candidates think that are not important, things that might be hidden in the practice or suppressed.

**RB:** Steve Larkin's fiddle playing now becoming an equal part of the practice could be an example of that.

**MS:** I have observed two different characters, meaning two different approaches in that regard: namely does the supervisor play an interesting role when he asks to bring forth things that - for whatever reasons - that are undercover or subliminal, not really spoken about? The supervisor who tries to ask for more.

There are some supervisors who have this kind of approach. What the practitioner brings forth is absolutely seminal and central. And if the practitioner is satisfied with pushing it that far, the supervisor would necessarily not push it further. Because everybody, he or she, has this kind of limitation of enthusiasm, etc... But then there are other supervisors seeing (...) that the practitioner could to a little bit more, go a little bit further, seeing the potential (...). And there is an unresolved issue: "how far do you go with this?" in terms of, you sometimes see possibilities that the practitioner does not necessarily see. Sometimes the answer will be case by case, individual by individual. Sometimes it will perhaps be extraordinary to "play the card" and say "I see you operating at 40% here: there is much more in this".

Sometimes it might be that to do that can "overpaint" an extraordinarily interesting moment where if you had had as a supervisor the guts to say "here you stop and do go further because you will lose the main thing" (...) So again where does this skill reside? Where are these "instincts" of the collective to say "this is where the contribution is, and now really comes to the fore and is extraordinarily valuable and not further, because then you are making another contribution, (...) because the original contribution gets lost"? And this all is about "what is the supervisor's role?" and then we realise that it is extraordinarily situational. Where do you push, where do you leave it, etc?.

## ROUND 2 / TRIGGERING & EXPLORATION QUESTIONS

The second round set of questions focused on the innovative features of ADAPT-r Training Methods and its extended “social body” of supervisors and mentors

- a. *What are the elements of innovation of the ADAPT-r training and supervision models / tools in relation to other Creative Practice PhD Programs?*
- b. *What are the responsibilities and expectations of the extended “social body” of ADAPT-r community of supervisors? What are the responsibilities and expectations of the PRS panel?*

**RB:** There is a fantastic moment in Jo Van Den Berghe’s presentation at the “Belgian 9”<sup>1</sup> that goes directly to heart of this question. He talked about going through the supervisory process and reported about Leon -- which was not related directly to the supervision process, Leon was not one of his supervisors -- to whom he sent his PRS text which he hasn’t sent yet to Marcelo (Stamm) or Johan (Verbeke) who were his supervisors. And Leon looked at it and responded “you must make a change immediately” and so Jo did and Leon said “this is terrible, you have to probably go back and completely re-do your PRS presentation for tomorrow”.

What interested me about that (that go straight to what the model is) was: how could Leon do that as not the supervisor? The reason he could is because he has been at all the PRS at all the presentations, either as a panel member and or just part of the public, and he visited one of Jo’s buildings: so this is the kind of broader intelligence about the work that is being done on every candidate that we all share and enable us to say very precise things about the work itself. I thought it was a really great example of that.

**MS:** About the dynamics of the panels and responsibilities and what’s the thinking, the preparation around these panels. Just to trigger it off with a modest observation: what the PRS model with its twice yearly events does is that you get these shifting panels for each candidate, which sometimes means that new fresh eyes come in, but the presentation has moved on and evolved in which sometimes these fresh eyes ask for something that has been laboured over in previous PRSs at length. Somebody is putting out the PRS focusing on some interests and then you get this as it were almost a backstory (...)

I think all the candidates know about or have experienced this: part of what needs always to be discussed and we have to work on is that when these presentations occur then there’s a mode in which the panel within 2-3 minutes is brought where is the focal interest, what is the main target “where am I trying to get out of it”

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(meaning the candidate asking this) “what am I trying to do here?”. It could happen that they are showing again the same stuff because maybe something else will be picked up, but sometimes what these panels do is that they don’t go as productively forward as they could if the candidate and the supervisor don’t communicate about “where is it in this moment” and as if it is starting right from the beginning again. Panels are often of extraordinary quality when someone says “I don’t care that many things have happened, this what you are now presenting” and they are able to respond to that situation in interesting and productive ways.

**TZ:** I point out the newcomers’ fresh eye at the PRS and then in the situation of the panel: the newcomer is able to immerse into the situation through the dialogue and this how he or she touches the tacitness of the panel, through situation: the dialogue and the relations spoken and unspoken all together. This was my own experience some years ago.

**SS:** There are panels where you come into where you have some previous knowledge either being in another panel with the same candidate, or being in the audience before. You are tapping into that prior knowledge or the prior awareness of the discussion. In certain panels you haven’t seen the candidate before, you have no knowledge at all and as a panel member you are conscious that you are trying to work out what the situation at that moment is in that panel and what kind of moment is in their journey. And the journey quite often loops back and it is not always a traditional linear journey where you can evidence and you are sometimes aware that it is not helpful to see all the background, sometimes it is. Sometimes even with candidates you know before, you cannot pre-plan what your conversation is going to be at the PRS. It has to be in that situation and with the other panel members: in that sense it is quite dynamic, but it has to keep that fascination and curiosity. In creative practice there is not this kind of didactic process but it does come as a wonderful revelation, and I suspect that this is what keeps everyone else engaged even if you are not on the panel but you were there in a previous panel. You want to see what is going to happen next in the discussion.

**CPP:** Maybe part of the supervisory role in relation to the candidate is to contextualize where they are. Part of this is the consequence of the curiosity: if you ask open questions, you will sometimes find that what stimulates other panel members’ curiosities is a little surprising, maybe you don’t even feel that is always helpful, but this is a way of exploring a wider field, even if the comment is something that you or you candidate might not find particularly relevant might point to something that it is not well enough explained. Other time it points out what you have might become blind to because you established a dialogue around things. I experienced both and especially Leon’s uncanny ability to point out just something very small in the corner of the presentation and everything starts to evolve around that and

it makes things fall in place. I also experienced the opposite that I've been a little concerned where panel members are taking the discussion, but that's also part of sharing this that we open up wider field. Sometimes might be not the right field, but it is a consequence of the way of doing it. It gets better with experience, but still part of it is probably also the quite heterogeneous field where people come with different views on what is important.

**TZ:** I would like to point out the idea of the training here, because we are all trainers and also we are trained. In order to achieve a goal in sport training you need a quite rigid rhythm usually. But here it is a completely different rhythm, so it is a very dynamic rhythm and as supervisor you need to identify the rhythm from the beginning to start the research “mode of the machine” (how it is called), but then these PRSs have specific rhythm and then you have condensed rhythm before and after, and how these rhythm correspond to the practice... This is the ability of the supervisor to situate, to try to develop and stimulate the specific rhythm of training with the candidate.

**MS:** If we ask about expectations let's shift the camera again to the ecology in its entirety - to the group. Part of an expectation in supervisory terms could be (...) for me as a supervisor to get better and be more helpful, the best trainers I have are the candidates. The candidates in this indirect space: that's where my training happens. This is why I need to be at as many of these situations and as many of these panels as possible. So that means that everybody should - over this PRS event - be totally present at as much as possible what is going on.

The worst attitude for all of us is to say “there are these people in parametricism and I am the guru, so these are my people and I am going to them, and this is us”. No, it could be Alicia Velazquez, it could Johannes Torpe ... they are doing something actually different and yet there I am going to. This is where things start to take off. In supervisory terms, if this is about the communal and shared supervision, then you as candidates have to go the other panels also in terms of... “there are my peers”, these people who are presenting are in that situation also, not only my fellow candidates, but also my supervisors.

And it happens in subliminal ways, it happens in indirect ways: somebody brings up something and says “this is an extraordinary move that's Siv (Stangeland) been made” and that's so brilliant, more than that all the panel members (...). That has to occur like this otherwise the whole model is completely artificial. To bring that to a very straightforward recommendation another extraordinary failure in the programs would be that if people prepare the presentations, they try to built them up until the last moment, they haven't been to any single other presentation before they present because they are “oh so nervous” and then after they have done the

presentation they walk away because they are “oh so tired” ... Then the idea of communal and shared, the whole thing falls apart.

**RB:** (...) in terms of demarcation of the groups there are “the geeks”, there are “the Irish”, there are “the Australians”, there are “the landscapers”, so I am not sure this is an entirely bad thing: there is a kind of natural attraction that happens when there are common interests ...

*(comments and laughs from the public)*

I think what’s important is this level (...) of participation (...) see around the edges of what you are doing things that are different.

**MB:** There are of course “the Italians” ...

*(laughs from the public)*

The Italians who have left; they are not in Italy any more.

I have already said in a couple of presentations - and I would like to go beyond the PRS model - all this comes from a very interesting conversation I had two weeks ago in Milano with Yoshi Tsukamoto of atelier Bow-Wow and there was a panel of practitioners who are in-between the “big guns” - Renzo Piano, Frank Gehry, and all the people who wouldn’t never consider a PhD like this - or totally young and un-experienced practitioners who are just fresh from Master graduation. It seems that, in the realm of this middle-ground, there are interesting practitioners who are trying to be effective in the world and having a voice in the world, although they are not celebrated stars a la Renzo Piano and Herzog and De Meuron.

What we were saying with Yoshi is “how can we be effective in these important times where lots of the topics that are researched upon here are about the necessity at many different levels of doing research on topics which are relevant to the practice?”. This is just a preamble to say, when Tadeja talks about the complex rhythm, I think that there is a rhythm, which is the rhythm of the practice, it is a rhythm that cannot be determined by the typical conventional academic deadlines, etc... (...) When you run a practice, and at RMIT I feel I am running a second practice.

I had another interesting conversation few days ago with a prominent architecture magazine. They were looking at the work I am doing at RMIT and the work I am doing myself, and they said it is amazing to see a continuity between what you are doing in research and what you are doing in your practice and that was a surprise to hear that, but then I realized when I am talking with other architects and academics - I am finding myself out of RMIT, teaching for few months in another school - I can see there is not this continuity. I think that the continuity is something that can help us in being effective and the fact that I am supervising people who are already practitioners and who are already working through this complex

“rhythm” - the one mentioned by Tadeja - is something which is all very welcome. We are really practitioners in our own very different way, but we are dealing with certain aspects that are so relevant to our communities, and therefore my responsibility as supervisor when I speak with my candidates, but also my learning from the candidates - is how can we join up and start to go even beyond the PRS thing. I mean I am involved at the moment with Tom Holbrook and Martí Franch Batllori, not only as supervisor or co-supervisor, but because together we have created something that to me is an extension, but is also working in parallel with the PRS, and this is happening because of this PhD method.

This is really what I realized when this magazine was telling me “this is incredible to see this! Very often we don’t see this, we see academics who come and talk about their research and then we see their work is completely different”. This is because of this method and this format we are running. And there is a responsibility, I feel, because we are all practitioners, how to be really effective with our communities in the world.

**RB:** You mean that the role and the expectations of the supervisory process is to continually bring you back to your practice?

**MB:** Yes, definitely and maybe the supervisor can act also as a mentor, as a colleague, as a peer, to start to see -- specifically for a PhD to see an end of the research -- but also to start to go beyond that and be a strategic figure that could operate at a parallel level and at different levels.

**MS:** What has ADAPT-r brought to this, in the terms you were discussing it? What’s the ADAPT-r purchase, the added value?

**RB:** How has ADAPT-r adapted? One observation I would make is that before ADAPT-r, we had a single institution model operating with a great level of suspicion of what the rest of the world would do to it, and recognizing on the one hand the value of practice and trying to feel for ways to take that possibility and bring it into a life in research without ruining or destroying the practice, or forcing a separation of the practice from the research. And I had this even last week a review in an university where someone was advising a practice-based candidate saying “you should not design anything until you finish the research” -- a remarkable claim.

So there was a nervousness within the RMIT model to do with admitting even, that there was a method, or being prepared to say there is a methodology here, or to even say things like “we should engage candidates in research methods training so they understand the kind of methods they might use”. So to me one of the remarkable things we are seeing with these guys, the early career researchers (Cecilia,

Dorotea, Alice) thrown into the walls, in a way; asked to do this thing, to research into what we are all doing, and to work with the candidates across the program to articulate what the methods are. And what we are going to see in the exhibition in London is the completed version of that.

So what I am seeing that's very different now is a balance between being more conscious of the ways in which we operate collectively at the meta-level, at the group level and the ways in which we operate at the individual level of the practice, of the research - there is a much better balance. Before was much more invested in what the individual did and the rest was a little bit like "you should know how to be a supervisor, you should know what it's all about", but no one will ever really say it or write it down with any great clarity. What amazed me is seeing when the experienced researchers, these wonderful people here that got fascinated by what we were doing rather than doing their own research, I have to say that many people that applied for this position said "this is the research I am going to do" and the ones who were appointed were the ones who were really fascinated to know what everyone else was doing.

What really shocked me was in fact the response that the candidates who were in the process had when they started to work with some of you, how useful they found it. For me is the really fantastic aspect and to hear a lot of voices talking about what the methodology might mean and using terms myself and suddenly see them come back to me in ways I never expected, but also very valuable ways. From my perspective it has been the big shift.

**VV:** picking on the many voices, because I joined the program in 2010 (during the crossover phase), I think what ADAPT-r has brought along is intensifying this variety of academic institutions that are interested in the model. There were people from pretty much all over Europe at GRCs in 2010, but then what ADAPT-r made these partner institutions to do is really engaging in looking closer at how we can build around this model as this kind of impact tool or as a driver to reconsider our own current systems. Slowly, but surely all the institutions have started to reflect practically on their models that they have in operation so far. What we can do is to really question and challenge that model and to ask "what else we can do when do PhD level research?".

**SS:** Going back to the model, it does not only influence what you think in your institution about PhD in creative practice research, but it also influences what you see as everything you are doing. It starts to get you to question the traditional PHD model that is prevalent in other areas of your institution.

It cannot be a separate thing and that's what's fascinating. It is amazing that different institutions recognize that this is what we need to support creative practice. It has much more potential than even we imagined.

**VV:** In fact the grass-root way ... when we try to think about the long term impact we are really reconfiguring the academic scene in all of Europe, because of this little changes almost subtle gradual shifts that are taking place in all these institutions that might lead to a much larger rethinking.

**JV:** There are not only Italians, but also Belgians, but you mentioned this kind of synergy between research and practice: I take from the Belgian 9, because they are also teaching in the design studio at Sint-Lucas School of Architecture, so there are like synergies between the research they practice and their teaching in the design studio, there is always a synergy and an interaction in the same direction, and that also is impacting the teaching, as Sally was saying, and the master and the bachelor education in the School. So it is really creating a shift which is going beyond the shift in research alone. And of course it also impacts on the practice and on the teaching. ADAPT-r probably in the next generation will create like another kind of master students which at a certain moment will fit again into this program.

**SS:** Also when it is not doing that, when it doesn't create the synergies, you see the limitations and future limitations on practices and teaching. It offers lots of insights on the problems we have.

**RB:** One of the things we heard a lot from candidate presentations and in the examinations of these candidates is that doing the PhD is completely changed the way they work in the studio (...). In Australia there were government reviews of the PhDs. One of the critiques that the government did through the reviews was that the PhD, generally speaking, was no longer relevant in any kind of pedagogical sense. (...) That was put out as a big governmental question in Australia. Now we have got a new governmental grant which is called DAP\_r, which will in some ways extend ADAPT-r in Australia again, but one of the core elements of that grant is to look at the pedagogical aspects of this kind of PhDs, so to try to look at why doing a PhD like this could have an impact in pedagogical practice. This is a real strength of the program.

### PART 3 / FUTURE-ORIENTED QUESTIONS

The third set of questions focused on the future implementations / “horizons of change” in Practice-based PhD Training

- a. *What further implementations, “horizons of change”, perspectives and evolutions do you see in the ADAPT-r Training methodology and Practice-based PhD supervision models?*

**SS:** One thing which is a future direction is the supervisory portal and the idea - as Richard was saying before - that a lot of this explicit knowledge about how supervisors develop supervisory skills and some of the sources we made available at much more people: this is an amazing generous outcome.

**RB:** Practically speaking in this kind of PhD, but also in this kind of research, when we work with institutions there is a lot of resistance. The resistances got slightly less through ADAPT-r. It is now taken seriously at certain level, but if you spoke to every single person who is any kind of role in the university they would know exactly what I am saying that when you even go to enroll a candidate when a new institution is saying “we have seen this and we would like to do this” even with ADAPT-r there have been institutional partners said to the vice-chancellor signing the agreement they accepted this model, but actually in reality, politically a number of institutions have been quite frustrated in terms of how candidates can be enrolled or can be examined, which are all part of the funding grant. There is incredible institutional resistance, but if we stop thinking about research and PhD as an institutional activity, and we start to think about it as a disciplinary activity, we can see the possibilities of a creative commons, which is the idea of the portal and the PRS now is more like that open to many institutions and some of them are ADAPT-r partners and some are not ADAPT-r partners, but also they are participating now. So what you see there is if you like the ownership of the methodology or of the community being extended across more institutions, then what happens is that you have a disciplinary base from which you can speak. You can speak with the authority base of the institution, so when the institution says “we don’t think that’s a PhD”, then you can say “that’s interesting, because I am speaking with your authority of now over 20 institutions globally: what you think about that?”. In terms of future horizons where we could go, is that we start to see the PRS as a shared laboratory, a shared networked entity that we all participating. The challenge, institutionally, would be getting institutions to then bind with that. So if we can approach that from a disciplinary perspective, and from the perspective of what is good creative practice and where we see practice then we are in good move. And then we see lots of these in Europe, because it is getting big, at a certain point it might not work, because we have too many of this. So that we might have 3 or 4 PRS operating with the model with share among multiple institutions. This is one of horizon.

**VV:** what is happening is also the value of this kind of disciplinary base, not only for architects, but also for artistic research that’s been implemented in quite a few institutions around Europe. What they do is not necessarily suitable for designers or architects. But what is happening here with ADAPT-r and this model, even though is largely run by architects, is actually suitable for artists and designers.

**MS:** I can add another horizon. So these horizons are how disciplines and in terms of methodology would it be easy to add a plus plasticity in its self-understanding so that it can move into something that can work also for other fields of inquiry. In terms of futurology part of what ADAPT-r is evidencing (and it had to do it institutionally, in terms of locality) and showing that research that was a privilege of academy - meaning that research has to happen inside the confines of the academy: the universities have the privilege to grant a PhD, that's how the system worked as a "medieval privilege". But now the idea is that academia - yes it has the PhD privilege, as this kind of ritual who hand over a PhD degree: where is research happening? And the idea is that there is all this research outside academy, potentially happening so there are all these practitioners, this field - the private sector, the public sector - these people that are practitioners outside working decades on something. And some of these practitioners are "on to something", they are while practicing over years and years are inquiring something and through these inquiries they are shifting, they have preoccupations, they have urges and fascinations that are driving them (...). If you take that field so seriously and say "there are these practitioners out there and we need to find a way to reconnect them with the academy and bring back their expertise into the academy and invite them to share that kind of knowledge (...). These practitioners have not only embodied, embedded, experiential knowledge, but these people are doing extraordinary things. Why would the academy deserve to have this knowledge back (from the practitioners)? So there is a generosity of the practitioners to say "we have extraordinary contributions to make".

In terms of horizons there is the idea that if you take to that level of universality that is beyond architectural practices, art practices, creative practices, there are other practices where people are waiting for something else: in that sense a business practitioner - if you talk about business PhDs there is not a single practice-based business PhD, but there are some practitioners in the economic and financial field that say "if I could do that kind of research, through my practice and I am this kind of entrepreneurial figure". There are some emerging scenarios within our ecology where there are this kind of entrepreneurial skills, that is definitely of how they do it and what they are doing. It would be research from what practitioners always say: "this is what we really do" and to take that seriously and and say "there is a field of inquiries which is extraordinary, because these practitioners if they are serious about what they really do they, [their practices] are testing grounds and benchmarks that are telling them what works and what doesn't, what is giving them indications about what is relevant and what is not relevant. If you do this in orthodox research terms you get completely different kind of experiential scenarios. There is an extraordinary potential to say in methodological terms: how can that model be such (bringing back the idea of plasticity) that can be adopted and adapted by other disciplines. I can think of many other areas where a few could start practice-based research in other disciplines and maybe get them started

through creative practice, there is also a responsibility of these disciplines to share and tell other disciplines to start to barrel into that.

**RB:** one example would be Education. I had conversation with colleagues in education who say “we already do practice-based PhD”, and what they mean by that is that the teacher leaves the classroom and go to the university and study some areas of cognitive science and develops a theory about that and then comes back and brings it into the classroom. I had a conversation with a researcher like that who was trying to get out of architecture school and we was an expert in children with learning disorders and says that: “we have to re-think what the classroom looks like so that children can play in that situation and so you can help us by researching into how we could design spaces like that”. Most classroom teachers have 15 to 25 children, they might have 15 to 25 different conditions. So the problem for the practitioner is that he got 20 other personalities and what he has to do is through intuition, through judgment and if that person were in a practice-based PhDs, where he could reflect in practice what works, he might find entirely new insights into all those conditions and how people learn in real situation, where the research instead of being done in the institution is done in practice in the classroom. And the institutions might have a different role, like they do here: there is no longer one university, but a network [of practitioners] that come together at a certain point and bring from their studios the knowledge and their all views for sharing and exchange, which is also knowledge-building.

**TZ:** Maybe there could be stronger connections with music because we are talking more about music through music now (...) or maybe other performing arts.

**SS:** In my mind I have a candidate in our institution who is doing exactly what you are talking about. Within the education of the practitioner revelations come from these insights which in turn surface during the PHD, and which in turn increase confidence and increase confidence and self awareness in their practice.

## KEY TOPICS AND EXTRACTS

### 1 / The supervisor's role in Practice-based research

#### A. Curatorship & Stewardship / Self-consciousness & curiosity

- “recognize and understand when something new is coming into being through the making of the practice.” (RB)
- “how to get them involved and how to get them aware of what their contribution can be?” (SS)
- “what they have to do here is first of all to tune in and understand what is the main idea about practice based research” (MS)
- “There is a responsibility for the supervisors to “curate” the type of expertise you want to bring to the table.” (MB)
- “(...) the role of the supervisor is to see the end.” (RB)

#### B. Supervisors as an ‘ecology’ / PRS panel as an extended ‘social body’

- “The panel is extended in this whole room, because it is not just the panel, but the panel is the others in this space.” (RB)
- “The student himself being part of the supervisor ecology themselves.” (MS)

#### C. ‘Supervisory moments’: surfacing the unspoken / when to ask for more & asking to stop

- “What do good supervisors do in a “frustration moments”? What do people do in moments (the other part of it) of ‘overconfidence’?” (MS)
- “(...) to ask for the things which are not on the table.” (CPP)
- “how far do you go with this?” (MS)

#### D. The PRS as a knowledge production and supervisors training moment / ‘Socratic machines’

- “We, as supervisors, through this kind of PRS ecology, scale up every time.” / “the best trainers I have are the candidates.” (MS)

### 2 / The innovative features of ADAPT-r Training Methods and its extended “social body”

#### A. Collective intelligence / The ‘fresh eyes’ of each PRS panel

- There is a “kind of broader intelligence about the work is being done on every candidate that we all share and enable to say very precise things about the work”. (RB)
- “the new comer is able to immerse into the situation through the dialogue and this how he or she touches the tacitness of the panel, through the

- dialogue and the relations spoken and unspoken all together.” (TZ)
- “you cannot pre-plan what your conversation is going to be at the PRS” (SS)
- “Opening up wider (...) the heterogeneous field where people come with different views on what is important.” (CPP)

#### **B. The different ‘rhythm(s)’ of the supervisory process**

- “This is the ability of the supervisor to situate, develop and stimulate the specific rhythm of training with the candidate.” (TZ)
- “the rhythm of the practice, it is a rhythm that cannot be determined by the conventional academic deadlines.” (MB)

#### **C. Beyond disciplinary ‘clusters’ / Participation in the PRS as moment of mutual learning & training**

- “The worst attitude for all of us is to say “there are these people in parametricism and I am the guru, so these are my people and I am going to see them”. (MS)
- “I think what’s important is (...) participation and see around the edges of what you are doing things that are different.” (RB)
- “my responsibility as supervisor when I speak with my candidates, but also my learning from the candidates - is how can we join up and start to go even beyond the PRS thing.” (MB)

#### **D. ADAPT-r innovative features / Pedagogical outcomes**

- “being more conscious of the ways in which we operate collectively at the meta-level, at the group level and the ways in which we operate at the individual level of the practice” (RB)
- “what ADAPT-r made these institutions to do is really engaging in looking closer at how we can build around this model as this kind of impact tool or as a driver to reconsider our own current systems” (VV)
- “It is amazing how different institutions understand “that’s what we need”, because this affects not just this, but also this, etc.. It has much more bigger potential that we even imagined.” (SS)
- “there are like synergies between the research they practice and their teaching in the design studio, there is always a synergy and an interaction in the same direction, and that also is impacting the teaching, as Sally was saying, and the Master and the Bachelor education in the School.” (JV)
- “the core elements of that grant is to look at the pedagogical aspects of this kind of PhDs, so to try to look at why doing a PhD like this could have an impact in pedagogical practice.” (RB)

### 3 / Future implementations and “horizons of change” in Practice-based PhD Training

#### A. From institutional to disciplinary: ADAPT-r shared knowledge / ADAPT-r a “common”

- “a lot of this explicit knowledge about how supervisors develop supervisory skills and some of the sources we made available to many more people: this is an amazing generous outcome.” (SS)
- “if we stop thinking about research and PhD as an institutional activity, and we start to think about it as a disciplinary activity, we can see the possibilities of a creative commons.” (RB)

#### B. Other disciplinary fields as new horizons

- “the value of this kind of disciplinary base, not only for architects, but also for artistic research.” (VV)
- “if you take to that level of universality that is beyond architectural practices, art practices, creative practices, there are other practices where people are waiting for something else.” (MS)
- Education field
- Performing arts field
- Economics, business practices and the economics of the practice



## 4.4 REPORT / Fellows Workshop PRS Ghent 2016

### **Map of Discoveries and Missteps (in the PhD Journey) & Tacit Knowledge Constellar Cloud and Personal Constellations**

PRS Ghent 2016 / Sint-Lucas KU Leuven Faculty of Architecture  
25th of April

On Monday 25th of April, in occasion on the Ghent PRS 2016, as part of the PRS training system, a workshop with the ADAPT-r fellows was run and facilitated by Alice Buoli, Cecilia De Marinis and Dorotea Ottaviani, ADAPT-r ERs.

Fifteen ADAPT-r fellows were present: Karin Helms, Koen Broucke, Ana Kreč, Hseng Tai Lintner, Petra Marguč, Irene Prieler, Michael Wildmann, Karli Luik, Federico Del Vecchio, Anna Pla Catala, Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Eric Guibert, Michael Corr, Alicia Velázquez, Chris Johnstone.

In addition Eik Hermann and Mark Raymond, two external PhD candidates not directly involved in the project participated in the workshop.

We first made a presentation explaining to the people the topics of our research, the Tacit Knowledge and the refinement of the Methods, in which we explained also the activities that we planned for that session.

This workshop has been slightly revisited after the Barcelona test carried out in February 2016, according to some observation and evaluation highlighted in that occasion.

When explaining the idea behind this activity we quoted some references that could be helpful in understanding it:

Glanville stated that “taking error on board as a fact of life rather than something to bemoan and curse” (Glanville, 2007, p. 1191) and quoting himself Samuel Beckett, he stated again “Ever tried. Ever failed. No Matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better”. While ADAPT-r fellow, Rosanne Van Klaveren adds that “Skills can be taught in practice, by trial and error and by watching others” (Van Klaveren, 2014, p. 101).

The workshop was divided into two parts.

The first part was dedicated the PhD Journey and Creative Research Methods.

The fellows were asked to depict their PhD journey on a A3 paper, focusing especially on the missteps, the failures and the setbacks encountered along it.

They had around 10 minutes to draw it and then they were asked to present it to the audience.

During the following round of opinions in which every participant explained their diagram some fellow stated that they doubted and didn't agree with the use of missteps and failures. At the completion of the activity thirteen maps were collected out of the fifteen participants.

## EDITED TRANSCRIPTION

(in blue some notes from the ERs)

### PART 2

#### Map of Discoveries and Missteps (in the PhD Journey)

##### Karin Helms

“During this PRS journey are we asking what is that we learn, what is the main shift or what are the discoveries, maybe this is the best word. For me the thing was to compare that to a lobster. We are lobsters, but we have to go through the molt to change our skin to be even bigger. So for me the PhD or the PRS journey was that. We are a bit fragile when we leave our skin, we expose our way of doing to others, which is very different from exposing a project to others and to clients because we are describing the project which is less personal. We are going through the process and becoming bigger maybe, growing a bigger skin but we still are the same lobster as before just become bigger. On the other hand for me the comparison was also, because I come from biology, that in evolution there are lots of animals who have adapted themselves, for instance a reptile with four legs has adapted itself in time when geological times were different. It began to live under the earth to adapt to climate reasons and after the evolution it came out as snake without the legs so there’s an evolution but this is maybe a bit pity because it lost its legs but it is maybe more adapted to the new world but on the contrary this type of practice-based PhD for me was more the lobster where you are a bit fragile without the skin but you are growing and growing and learning more and more, also about yourself”.

The lobster metaphor: Karin explains a metaphor she had shown to us during the interview held in Barcelona in February 2016.

The map she draws depicts the “lobster complex” a theory formed by the psychiatrist Françoise Dolto referring to the adolescence:

“We are a bit fragile when we leave our skin, that is what the PRS is about, because we have to grow bigger and passing through the moult.”

##### Koen Broucke

“This is improvising since I never drew a journey of my PhD. Those are three levels: yellow is more about administrations, I had to prepare for the PhD, start the PhD with the commissions, also the PRS are in yellow, in the map. In the centre there is the studio, my studio in Belgium, so here there is Glasgow, here there’s Barcelona and Ghent. And then I started the journey or the trips in functions of the real research in my case these are different battlefields. so there is Waterloo, Scapa Flow, locks, Bannockburn in Scotland, lot of battlefields in the low countries, Belgium and this is not a straight way, it makes all kind of sideways and missteps, I think the missteps are more in this layer and then I started thinking that this is a kind of



chronology in time of PhD situated in the 21st century but of course all of those battlefields are like in the several centuries and in a certain way I started my research, my practice 25 years ago when I decided, I had an education as a historian at university of Brussels and Antwerp, now I'm doing my PhD in Leuven and then I decided to become an artist. so I also started to study at the high institute of fine arts in Antwerp and then my practice started. so it is 25 years so it stated in the 20th century, so there is also that layer of time on the map".

"The trips are in relation with the real research. Those are they mistake and the missteps." There is also the component of the time on the map because this PhD is situated in the 21st century but the battlefields he is travelling to are in several different centuries.

### **Ana Kreč**

"Hello everyone I'm Ana Kreč. I come from Ljubljana, Slovenia, and I'm currently doing my PhD in Brussels. My map is drawn through this avocado plant that I ate and kind of planted when I arrived in Brussels in July and it seems that it is constantly growing and this is in a way a metaphor of the growing knowledge or, let's say me. I had a really hard time letting go the previous environment. I had no pre-PRS experience. You are basically plunged into this new environment, which was not my first choice so I didn't like in the beginning and I think my body was going against it. I think I was even throwing up and I was having huge emotional issues. So I didn't know what I was actually doing and I think that Eric, Johan, Marco (the previous Marlies) and Jo and Petra, helped me a lot to start looking into my community of practice. Of course then trouble started because I was very insecure about my work as being too small perhaps. My practice is only 5 to 6 years old. So I was like 'what am I doing here?' everyone is so much older. Johan was pushing me to write a PhD proposal for which I had absolutely no base. And then I think the first PRS checked that was on November 3rd, I will never forget that I started to look at my work as a sum, not as a particular project and this is where Alicia and Eric were very helpful because they had such a different insights to what am I doing and what I was seeing. So this is where the first shift happened so I am going from one side to another and I was feeling very comfortable by presenting in Barcelona where we started to talk about my work as acupuncture and started talk about [...] so I think this is also where the avocado tree kind of opened up and started growing and since then I think the time is really flying. It has been 9 months and it has been a really fruitful experience so far and I am seeing stuff that I haven't seen before. So I'm loving Brussels now and there is this quote that I just read in the magazine 'I don't have a problem with Brussels, it is a dirty beauty.' This is in a way how this PhD process it is also. Beautiful and hard at the same time."

The avocado metaphor. The map is constructed in time and space in relation to this avocado plant that she planted when arrived in Brussels in July. The plant is growing and in this sense is a metaphor of her PhD, with the knowledge and herself

growing in time. The experience has been quite shocking and she felt like plunged in a new environment and activity without previous experience about PRS. “There is a quotation I just read: ‘I don’t have a problem with Brussels, it is a dirty beauty.’ This is in a way how this PhD process it is also. Beautiful and hard at the same time.”

### **Hseng Tai Lintner**

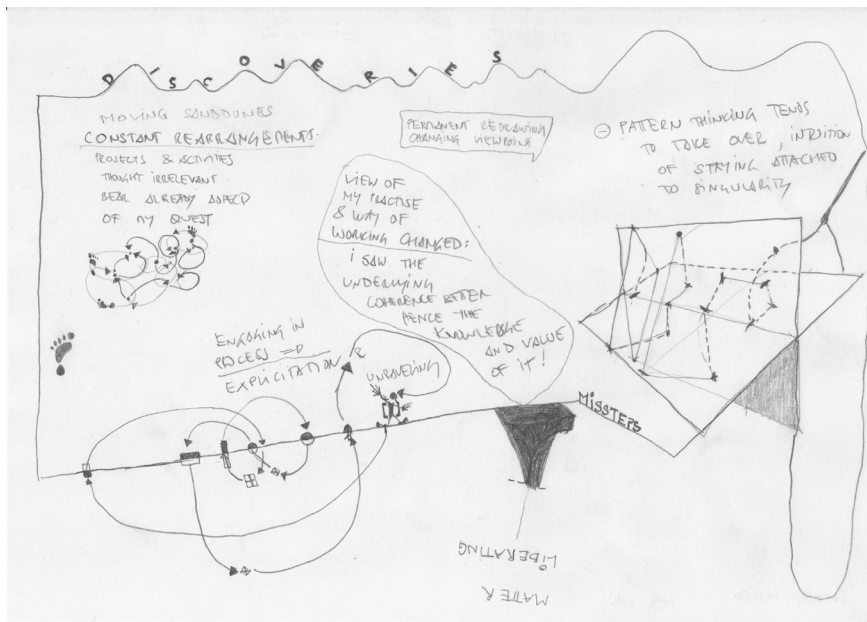
“I just have my PRS one so I think I just have impressions right now. I think that something I was grappling with was this relation between research of the practice and research that is done by the practice, which I think are two modes of operation. I think there was a little of misunderstanding in the beginning I thought that most of the research would have been centred around the research that the practice does not research of the practice, but then through that it started to look at different modes of operation that is done through the practice and just looked at academic world, clients world and kind of mapping where this lies and how that interacts with the community of practice that we are positioning us in... there are basically just a lots of questions now!”

### **Petra Marguč**

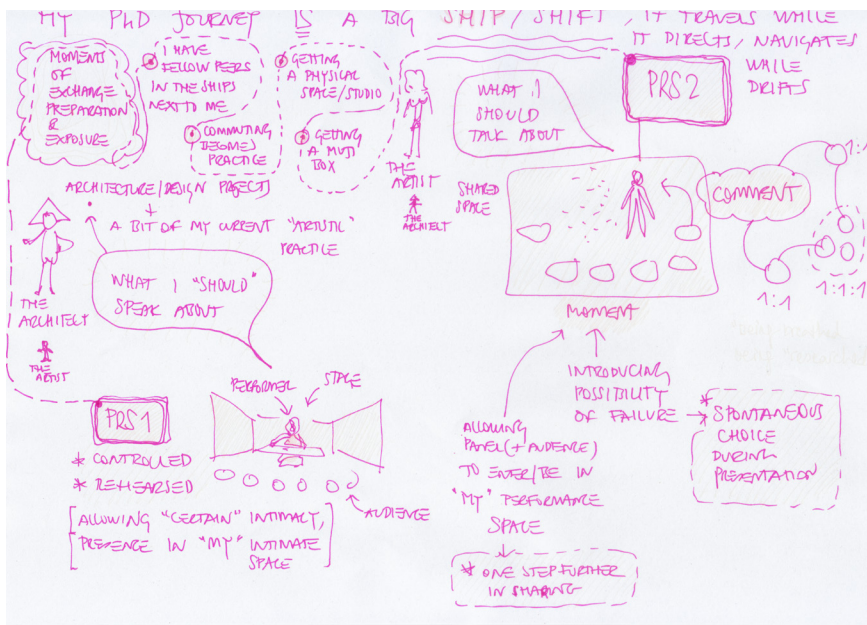
“I’m Petra and this was my second PRS. I’m based in Brussels with Ana, Eric and Alicia.

The discoveries which I intuited already but still is always a discovery when it’s becoming explicit [...] constantly rearranging things and you think or it thought for instance my case studies in the first PRS as soon as it was finished I realised that how quick things happens and this keeps moving. I keep rearranging, discovering things by simply changing the view point. So I don’t know how to call it because it is not to rediscovery because it was already there but I see it differently. Then also maybe the relevance of the body, how the body, how I can use my body and its extensions and how I can use this. Now I am in PRS 2 and I think I really have to use the extremities of my body, hands, feet and mind, to link the practice and the research better together. Maybe the missteps but also saying missteps it is like discoveries I feel that I already know that somehow but I can’t... so it is not really a discovery. I have tendency to draw patterns and to do patterns and see patterns I could constantly draw different patterns and so as soon as you have a pattern I have an empty spot, oh I have to search where I can put something into this. I want to find a way to attach myself longer to a singularity of a moment of a project of a situation and find a way to put the patterns aside and to stay attached to the moment, to a project, to something material”.

Petra claimed that one of the major discoveries she has during the PhD journey has been to understand “The relevance of my body and its extensions and how i can use this, hands, feet and mind, to link the practice and the research.”



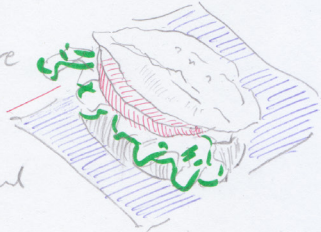
Petra Marguč / "PhD Journey" Map



Alicia Velázquez / “PhD Journey” Map

~ DISCOVERY ~~DISCOVERY~~ - Discovery discovery ~

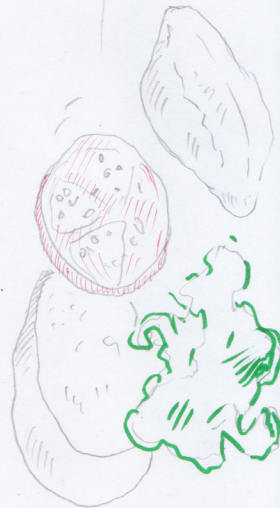
- A new thinking model
- A very well organized structure
- A good way to be focused on research and practice and



Share it with other creatives/thinkers (PRS) etc.

• even though sometimes I hate deadlines and structures, those are good for me to learn to get a final focus and understanding the way..

be surprised about new directions.



### **Irene Prieler**

“Hi, I’m Irene and I’m ADAPT-r fellow from Aarhus. I saw this all ADAPT-r as a kind of parallel to all these pics. So when I studied the first case studies, second community of practice so I was looking onto all of these topics within my practice and just like to have a notion of my practice and then to jump in so I didn’t produce or stuff like that because also I didn’t want to use the way of working I use as an architect for this way of experiencing the practice and then I came to the point where I was kind of forced by the supervisor to have output to be explicit to be clear . and so I just thought how can I do that, I cannot be clear while I’m doing the research so it is like, I can be clear afterward but not during the process but nevertheless I have to decide now if I want to go and look to all of this points at the same time or if I restructure myself”.

She was at her second PRS in Ghent 2016, Irene claimed that this was the moment that she needed to understand how to do the next steps, especially related to the six steps of the ADAPT-r project.

### **Michael Wildmann**

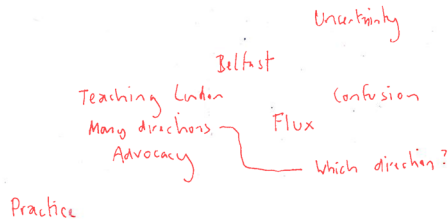
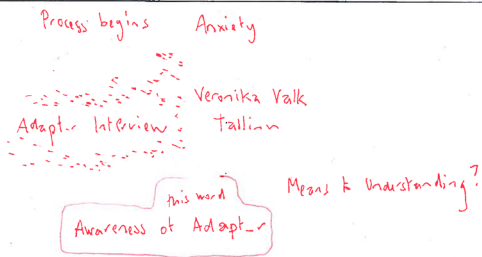
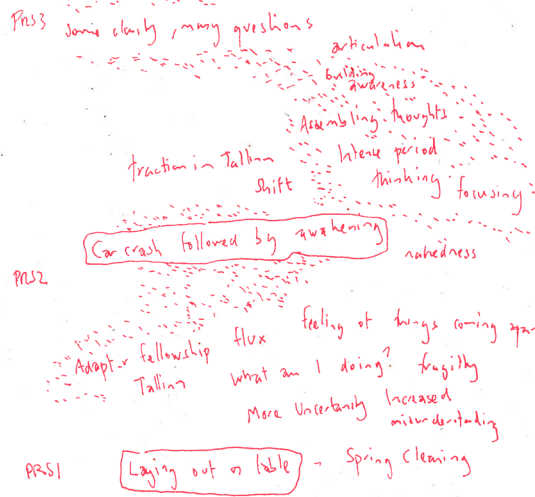
“I’m Michael, I’m based in Brussels. My peers are Ana, Petra, Eric and Alicia. I’m just after my first PRS so I just have I am just looking back and collecting all the tips from the works I have done besides things like administration stuff which are also. what I discovered in this looking at what I did and to memories and to some things you even don’t remember, project and ideas. I noticed my changing points. that is also something that is maligning me now very ambitious to be dislocating again. so the mistakes and the mistakes are something that I noticed they always happen to me to explain myself in a short time”.

### **Karli Luik**

“I’m Karli from Estonia, this was my PRS 3. I just started my fellowship in Ljubljana just last year before that I sold part of my company so that was kind of a big change for me. (...) so I started a new practice before starting the PhD (...) now I see much more (...) I think I started this PhD as a part of my practice I really think this is not that separated (...)”.

### **Eik Hermann**

“I’m Eik and I’m from Estonia. this is my first PRS. I am not an architect, I am a philosopher so it is extremely, it adds another layer of difficulty (...) I’m quite slow so it is just sitting there and not (...) this program I have this format to compress and force into 20 minutes time, I guess we all know this (...) this is incredibly hard, especially the devil is in the detail. I also teach philosophy (...) a detail or a series of details. in the scale I have been (...) in school I have one an an half hour for presenting and it is still difficult (...)”.



Pre PhD

### **Federico Del Vecchio**

"I am Federico from Italy and from the university of Ljubljana and this is my second PRS (...) for me I have been trained as an artist in Italy and in Frankfurt and in Glasgow. Just in Glasgow I found some structure, some deadlines, before my training was very open and free of structure. The PhD is a well organised structure, which helps to focus at the same time even if I hate deadlines but I'm good to learn to focus on something, you can also discover something that is also unexpected. (...) most are architects, just me and Koen are artists so you know what I am talking about specifically (...) so I am getting from this experience some specific parts and it is not from the discussion that I am learning from this experience and I am extending my core discussion, like in Ljubljana".

The PhD with its well organised modules helps to focus and on the same time even if I hate deadlines those are a good way to learn how to focus and you discover also something unexpected. It is not from the discussion that I am learning in this experience

### **Anna Pla Catala**

"My name is Anna From Barcelona I am at the PRS 1 I still have a fully new, I haven't still discovered much. The first discovery was the discovery of the program itself in terms of discovery the PhD which is more a projective tool rather than something historical that looks backwards. Kind of manufacture a document which, I am not gonna say is useless because it is not but I was looking for something which would help me push my work and my (...) giving me tools to continue to do it, so perhaps in a different way or perhaps reaffirming my own way of doing things. Another aspect I think is (...) this kind of unfolding about the research in terms of disciplines and research, constructing new types of new knowledge per se and then the research on my own way of doing my own practice and the relationship between the two I think this is when the key seems to be. I don't have it fully clear at all. so what I am saying it's not yet a discovery it is perhaps a kind of intuition of what is surrounding me. Interesting I am going to see different ways of doing practice that certainly helps finding your own niche, so I don't know if I am very clear but I think projective PhD is a very useful and very radically challenging way of understanding some research which at the end of the day is three or four years gap of your life which is something that at my age at this stage I couldn't see myself looked in a library and then looking backwards".

"I'm at my first PRS so I haven't done many discoveries yet, but the first discovery was the one about this kind of PhD itself.

### **Siobhán Ní Éanaigh**

"I'm Siobhán and I'm from Ireland and I just finished PRS 3 and I am an ADAPT-r fellow with RMIT. these are some words and I am going to read it, it's not very long. it starts with 'Nà teip' which I translated in 'don't fail!' with an exclamation

mark

"I have lived long enough now to know that the notion of failure as something you try and erase/ rub out/ pretend did not happen is not useful and therefore I have not found it in this process. I have found potential. Let me see where it takes me. Find."

The continuous looping line is showing the potential as a opposite to failure and mistakes.

### **Eric Guibert**

"I am Eric Guibert I have just done my PRS, here at KU Leuven, I am not repeating all the names, I also don't like the word missteps. in my case, maybe this is the most interesting is that I used at the beginning the metaphor of the garden, very strong in a way that was the dominant for 3 PRS and it was simultaneously very useful because I discovered things in terms of methods I discover about my practice that I was not conscious of, why I am doing it. and also about certain ways of conceiving space which is probably different to others, and then, at the same time it also became a (..) to be able to see other things, maybe it became too strong maybe because it worked too well. and I guess the thing that took me a while to learn is how to leave it and use other tools. it was in PRS 4 when I used the tool of looking at time, how I use time. but interestly I am now reconsidering it as well. So I think this special about not being too attached, being able to leave it, but not also dig it away because it may be also useful again".

Eric claimed that he doesn't like the word "failures". He realised that something really hard was to leave some tools he used to explains his research, as the one of the gardener. Just at the stage of the PRS 4 he added a new tool, the use of the time in his practice "which interestly I am reconsidering again." It is important to learn how to leave and not be too attached to the tools, but also not to throw them away because they might be helpful again.

### **Michael Corr**

"My name is Michael and I am an ADAPT-r fellow in Tallinn in Estonia. Just made my PRS 3 and what I have is just is just random words. so I am gonna fill them really quickly. so I'm gonna do that: pre-PhD - practice - advocacy - teaching - London - Belfast - many directions - which direction - flux - confusion - uncertainty - awareness of this world - ADAPT-r - means to understanding? - Veronica Valk - Tallinn - process begins - anxiety

PRS 1 - laying out on table - spring cleaning - more uncertainty - increasing understanding - what am I doing - ADAPT-r fellowship - Tallinn - flux

PRS 2 - car crash followed by awaking - nakedness - shift - traction in Tallinn - intense period - thinking focusing - assembling thoughts - building awareness - articulation

PRS 3 - some clarity - many questions"

After listing a series of words related to his PhD journey he stated: “Many directions. Which direction?”

### **Mark Raymond**

“I’m Mark Raymond and I’m from Trinidad and this is my PRS 2 and I think in terms of discovery I think I don’t know if it happens to everybody else but sometimes in my practice I have thought about at the time I was at school I went to the architectural association at the very interesting time and sometimes I wish I had taken greater advantage of that time. so in a way this feels like in one way an opportunity in the sense to expand on that because I feel that since that time I’ve been immersed in very much practice of building buildings, which I have enjoyed, but you know it seems like a separate activity the nature of the I have when I was a student and the nature of creative enquiry in which I was engaging at that time. and I feel that This experience is liberating that fantasising that I have been doing when I am not producing buildings about research or about reading or about the experiential, is not separate to my practice, it is part of my practice. This process is helping me in assimilating that, reconciling that. It is doing really rapidly and I am starting seeing my work and practice as this linear progression, with this orbital, expansive arrangement”.

The nature of the experience had as a student was felt as different from what he has been practicing as architect, the building building experience. “This experience (the PhD ndr) is liberating that, is making me realize that this is not separated to my practice, this is part of my practice. This process is helping me in assimilating it, reconciling it. It is going really rapidly and I am starting looking at my work as this linear progression, with this orbital, expansive arrangement.”

### **Alicia Velázquez**

“My name is Alicia and I did PRS 2 and I am an adapter fellow at KU Leuven here in Brussels I describe what I did, my journey. I titled it “my PhD journey as a big ship- it travels in many directions, it navigates while it drifts” I started with my PRS 2 then I went backwards all the way to my PRS 1 and then I went back to not to the port where this ship writing or directing. I don’t know when one happens or the other. In PRS 1 I was trying to do something very controlled and give out what I thought I should talk about, and then all the way to PRS 2 when I think I started showing what I really should talk about the insecurities and the things that make me feel uncomfortable about. I left spontaneous choice for (...) in the presentation and things that I didn’t allow myself or I try to make space where I invited also the audience in my space, which I didn’t do in my first one. and the ports that I noted going backwards was getting the Muji box, getting a physical space, a studio space to work in Brussels, commuting becomes practice, I have fellow peers in the ships next to me and they are also driving their own ships and we talk to each other, also the PRS of course but specially with my fellow colleagues and these moments, are

more like an ocean or like storms, moments of exchange separation and exposure, I think they are also crucial and something that came to me was there is this American woman who once had this physical experience, she says that she was not breathing, she was breathed, that is what I start to feel like: I'm not researching, I'm being researched!"

The metaphor of the ship: in the PRS 2 she started talking about "the insecurities and the things that make me feel uncomfortable about.[...] I made space for people to come into my space, which I didn't do in the previous one.. [...] Commuting becomes practice and I have fellow peers in the ship next to me, travelling their own ships" "there are moments like storms, moments of preparation and exposure which are also crucial.[...] there is this american woman who once had this physical experience, she says that she was not breathing, she was breathed, that is what I start to feel like: I'm not researching, I'm being researched!"

### **Chris Johnstone**

My name is Chris Johnstone and I'm from Australia. I am doing my ADAPT-r fellowship in Aarhus with Irene. My experience with PRS has been for a lot of years, I've been watching this for quite a some time in Australia and I wanted to find a way to be able to get involved in what it is. Recently I've moved where I live to another state in Australia so a couple of thousand kilometers and I started to do this and I opened my own firm so I've thrown everything I've been in a sense I tried to find a way, strangely enough (...) they helped my put it back together again but happily I am really enjoying this stuff, I've looking though the way I've practiced in the past to try to find a way for my practice in the future, of course this is what everyone is trying to do. and I like the way Anna say, a projective kind of method of doing that. I am really looking forward to getting incredibly messy about what this is because I think my other co- landscape architects cause I am one of those people has been absolutely instrumental about how to see a way though what this is and how the collective experience of what adapter and these PRSs can really carry with you and how you can actually share with what somebody else is doing and going through and from a way of representing and also from a way of thinking and a way of operating and I think it's incredibly special to be able to be in this room with you guys and to trying and generate something out of what this might be, from a personal level but also from a collective level.

"I am really looking forward about getting about what this is!"

## **FINAL REMARKS**

### **Dorotea Ottaviani**

We are done with this workshop, we are really happy with it, and we thank you so much for it.

If you have any feedback, if you want to give us your opinion, if you have some suggestions, to add something, we would really happy with that.

### **Mark Raymond**

What are you going to do with these?

### **Dorotea Ottaviani**

We will collect them, so we would like to ask you to write your name on it, and then scan them and send them to you. And those for us are elements in which we would like to analyse all the issue that came out during this session. And they will be helpful for us to use the tools that we showed you in the presentation. So this will be material for us to collect the information that we are looking for.

### **Cecilia De Marinis**

And also compare the different outcomes, to understand similarities and differences to go through your work.

### **Dorotea Ottaviani**

If any of you want to improve your diagrams and want to show them to us further on we will love it.

### **Ana Kreč**

But maybe this is not the point, maybe the point is if they stay as they were done here.

### **Dorotea Ottaviani**

Everyone can choose to do it or not.

### **Alicia Velázquez**

It would maybe interesting to repeat it maybe in one year.  
and see what are the difference and the part that are more prominents through time

### **Mark Raymond**

I'm curious since everybody are creative people, there is also something about I think when you look at this things that is a kind of intrinsic value in it in terms of how somebody has constructed, the relationships, but there is also an aesthetic

in terms of how people choose to represent. how do you assimilate that in your analysis or was it not relevant?

**Cecilia De Marinis**

It is relevant, I think. Everyone has a personal aesthetic and we try to look in that looking for the way of thinking, we try to compare the way of writing and of drawing the way of sketching trying to understand a kind of thread.

**Alice Buoli**

We really thought that this kind of activity could be helpful for you within your PhD journey. for us one of the outcomes and our aims was really to encourage kind of discussion and maybe to exchange new ideas in the future or to give feedback among us as a community of people. A further improve of our research in the next months. whenever you feel like to communicate with us or to the other people maybe could be great to have your.

Actually it is really different if you. it is a kind of an intimate work because I do it not in order to give it outside because it's within and if I do it in order to communicate with others I do the things in a different ways in that way you cannot use it for serious research because it would have been done differently if I had to use it to a proper communication outside. there are different layers.

“a pillow talk”

**Cecilia De Marinis**

For this reason, if you want you can change it.

**Alice Buoli**

We are of course communicating to everybody when we are using this materials. where is going to be used, or published. and if you don't want this materials to be published or made public, then it will be of course up to you to say no.



## 4.5 REPORT / Supervisors' Trip to Ireland

### **Ireland**

26th - 29th April

### **Participants**

Visitors /Supervisors

Leon van Schaik, Richard Blythe, Katherine Heron, Kester Rattenbury

Alice Buoli, Cecilia De Marinis, Dorotea Ottaviani

Visited / PhD Candidates

Cian Degaan, Alice Casey, Steve Larkin, Andrew Clancy, Colm Moore, Siobhán Ní Éanaigh, Michael Corr

### **Program**

#### 26th April

Place: Shared office TAKA + Steve Larkin + ClancyMoore

Activity/01 : Supervision by Leon van Schaik and Richard Blythe with Alice Casey and Cian Degaan

Activity/02 : Supervision by Leon van Schaik and Richard Blythe with Steve Larkin

Activity/03 : Interview with Steve Larkin

#### 27th April / morning

Place: Shared office TAKA + Steve Larkin + ClancyMoore

Activity/04 : PRS presentation by Clancy and Moore

Panel: Leon van Schaik, Richard Blythe, Kate Heron, Kester Rattenbury

#### 27th April / afternoon

Activity/05 : Visit to McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects' projects in Dublin, by van.

#### 28th April

Activity/05 : Visit to McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects' projects outside Dublin, by van.

Lunch in Derry

Conversation with Michael Corr in Belfast

## Activities related to the Supervision Process

### **Activity/01 : Supervision by Leon van Schaik and Richard Blythe with Alice Casey and Cian Degaan**

Focus on communication and contribution to knowledge

The supervision was focused on the performance that Alice and Cian had at the PRS 6 (Ghent, April 2016) and the impression they had that they need to understand how to communicate better their work and research, especially towards the final exhibition of the PhD, which will be their next step.

Richard Blythe suggested to clarify their specific focuses: Alice on concrete and Cian on decorum, exotica, and vestiges.

He suggested that they need to think about where the PhD began and what condition of the practice were at the beginning and what shifts have happened in the practice.

Leon van Schaik suggested then that they have to say in their presentation what they discovered, they have to tell what is the scope of the practice.

Furthermore, Alice and Cian questioned about the contribution to knowledge of their research. The supervisors referred to the political and ideological position of the practice, suggesting that they have to understand what is their ideal client body. They then suggested to extract the PhD from the work, both for the exhibition and the examination. Saying also that they have to design both exhibition and examination rather than drawing them.

Talking about the exhibition, the supervisors gave them a first structure by steps for the exhibition, saying that firstly they have to present their project crossed by their urges and fascinations: from one side showing the Cian's sensibility towards decorum, and from the other side pushing the Alice's materiality sensibility. Secondly, they need to do a contextualization, defining the perimetral and the field of knowledge, so their community of practice. The following step regarded stepping outside and beginning to notice key moments in which sensibility become aware, step away again from the PRS process and thinking about how explicating those things and how doing the exhibition. Then look at the PRS collectively and looking at the different voices and trying to define threads.

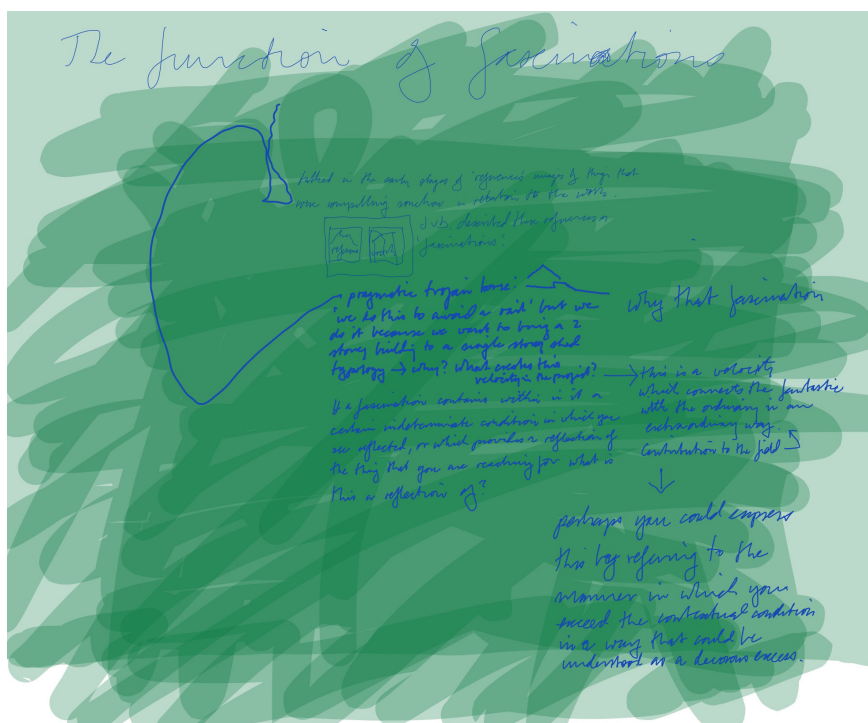
### **Activity/02 : Supervision by Leon van Schaik and Richard Blythe with Steve Larkin**

Focus on showing originality and storytelling of the PhD

The supervision moment was focused on the Steve's final exhibition and examination. The supervisors suggested to show what he discovered during his PhD journey, to situate his research in the broader field, as his Community of Practice is very small internationally speaking.



*Supervision moment at TAKA Architects office, Dublin - April 2016*



*Diagram by Richard Blythe, interpreting the supervision moment with Alice Casey and Cian Degan*

They suggested to focus on originality, and the production of new knowledge, articulating the connection between two topics and two practices, that has not been before. They also suggested to show the dialogue between diagrams/ analysis and what has been analysed.

Richard claimed the importance of diagrams to elaborate process in Steve's practice, saying that part of the PhD deals with methods and the discovery that music was connected to architecture, so reflecting on the connection between object and compositional.

Richard said also then the definition of two rooms, as Steve proposed for his final exhibition, was a very powerful image, depicting two interior spaces, representing interiority. The exhibition is a storytelling of the PhD, and in Steve's case can be a summary of the evolution of the diagrams, defining what he discovered.

Richard suggested then that the focus can be on interiority, so music played in small spaces and small interiorities, giving intimacy of those spaces.

Afterword, Steve suggested to push back into landscape, visually and acoustically. At this comment Richard answered saying Steve to be very careful because he is not presenting landscape, nor researching in the landscape, reminding Steve that the focus is on the work itself.

Leon suggested to define this intimate spaces for the exhibition, through the use of three key elements: sound, world, and reverberation.

So the reflection focused on the idea of soundscape that can change the speed and have repetition and key slow moments.

### **Activity/03 : Interview with Steve Larkin**

### **Activity/04 : PRS presentation by Clancy and Moore**

**Panel: Leon van Schaik, Richard Blythe, Kate Heron, Kester Rattenbury**

### **Activity/05 : Visit to McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects' projects in and outside Dublin, by van.**

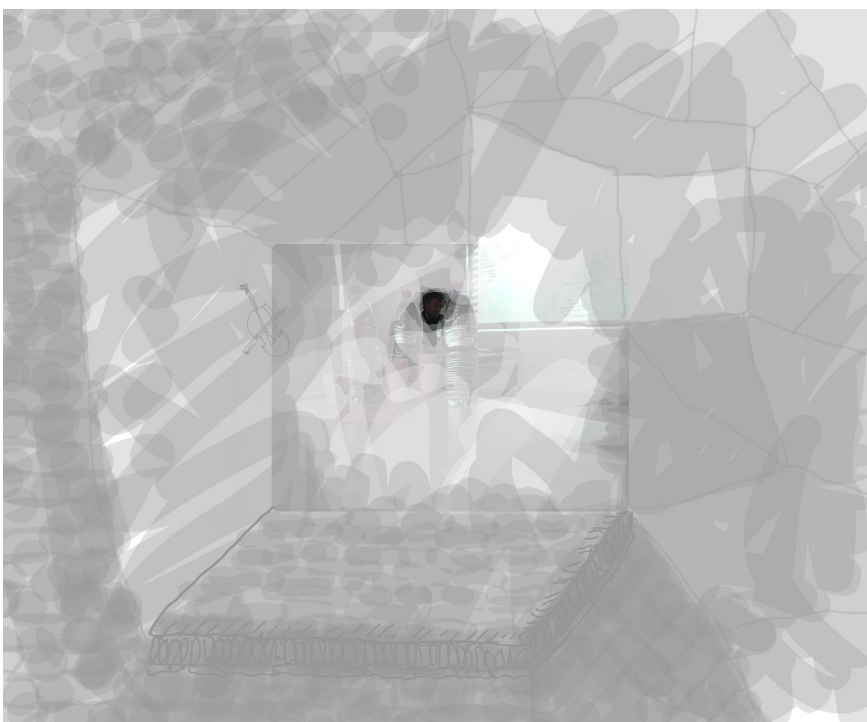
The visit to the project of the PhD candidate by the supervisor is an important moment of the supervisory process. The dialogue between the supervisor and the candidate is increased and supported by the supervisor having a direct experience of the candidate's projects. So the supervisor acquires information and insights not only from the words of the practitioner/researcher, but also from the artifacts themselves.

Richard Blythe as Siobhán Ní Éanaigh's supervisor went to visit her projects together with Leon van Schaik, Katherine Heron and Kester Rattenbury. Michael McGarry, Siobhán's professional and life partner, joined them to the visit.

The visit to the McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects' projects was a continuous conversation between Siobhán and the group of supervisors. The visit moment of each



*Supervision moment with Steve Larkin, Dublin - April 2016*



*Diagram by Richard Blythe, interpreting the supervision moment with Steve Larkin*



*PRS session at Clancy Moore Architects, Dublin – April 2016*



*Diagram by Richard Blythe, interpreting the PRS presentation*

project consisted in Siobhán giving a storytelling of the project, leading the group through the spaces, and showing relevant elements. The supervisors followed her giving comments and answering questions.

Once they were visiting her family house in Termonfeckin, she also showed to the supervisors a drawing of the project. So it was a multilayer reading and experiencing of the project, giving to the supervisors more elements to understand and to think about.

Furthermore, the visit to her house is a way to show an intimate space in which evidences of her interests and fascinations are stored/concentrated/visible.

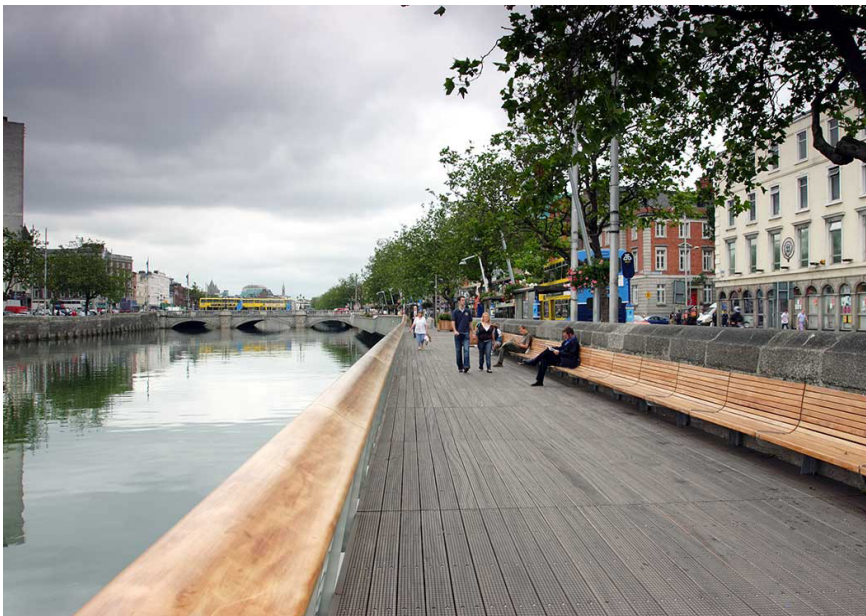
The times of displacement by van from a place to another have been moments for conversation, reflection, and comment in regards to the visited projects.

### **Visited projects in Dublin:**

- Liffey Boardwalk: Public boardwalk along the River Liffey extending in phase 1 from Grattan Bridge to O'Connell Bridge and in phase II from O'Connell Bridge to Butt Bridge all located in central Dublin City.
- McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects' office: 23 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1
- Ballyfermot Leisure Centre and "The Base" Youth Centre: Community sports and leisure facility (25m swimming pool, sports hall, fitness gym, multi-use rooms, meeting rooms, offices and Youth facility - performance space, youth café, recording studio, multimedia lab, art /health /education rooms and creche) Located in Ballyfermot, Dublin 10
- Shangan 2C/ Whiteacre Housing: Courtyard family social housing and apartment living. Located in Ballymun, Dublin 1
- "The Cobblestone" Irish pub: the place where Steve Larkin usually plays. Located at 77 King Street North Smithfield, Dublin.

### **Visited projects outside Dublin:**

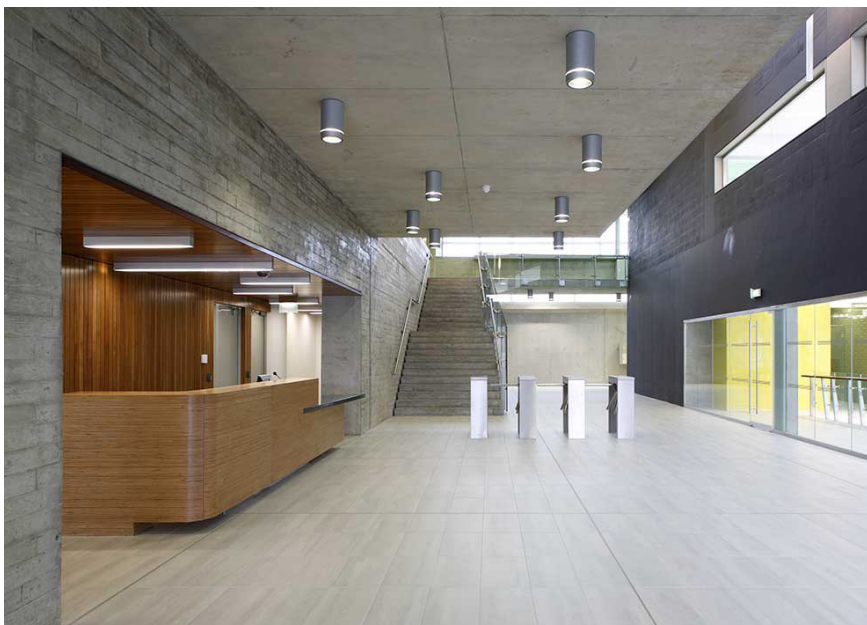
- Family House: located in Termonfechin, County Louth, Province of Leinster.
- Coláiste Ailigh: Irish Language Secondary School located in Letterkenny, County Donegal, Province of Ulster.
- Ratoath College Second level community college. Located in Ratoath, County Meath, Province of Leinster.
- Dunshaughlin Culmullen Pastoral Centre: Community pastoral resource centre - lecture hall, café /social space, youth room, pastoral rooms/offices. Located in Dunshaughlin, County Meath, Province of Leinster.



*Liffey Boardwalk, Dublin (Credit McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects)*



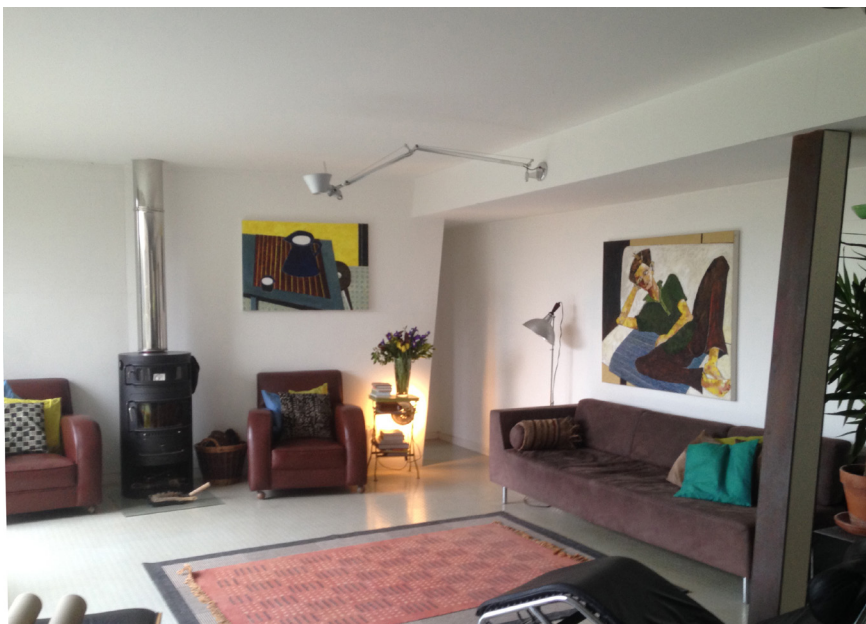
*McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects Office, Dublin (Photo: ADAPT-r ERs)*



*Ballyfermot Leisure Centre (Credit McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects)*



*Shangan 2C/ Whiteacre Housing (Credit McGarry Ní Éanaigh Architects)*



*Family House: Termonfeckin, County Louth (Credit ADAPT-r ERs)*



*Coláiste Ailigh, Letterkenny, County Donegal (Photo: ADAPT-r ERs)*



*Dunshaughlin Culmullen Pastoral Centre (Photo: ADAPT-r ERs)*



*Ratoath College, Ratoath, County Meath (Photo: ADAPT-r ERs)*

## **Emerged relevant topics in relation to the supervision process:**

### **The importance of the direct experience / being on the site**

Visiting the projects for the supervisors, means understanding not only from the words of the practitioner but also from the direct experience of the artifact. Being on the site, adds a new layer to the conversation between the supervisor and the practitioner/researcher.

### **The connection between the supervisor and the practitioner/researcher**

Such connection in terms of interests and fascinations, helps the process of communication and mutual understanding. An example is Richard being at the Coláiste Ailigh Irish School and having an epiphany. Once there he recognized in the space the same shape of the ceiling of one of his project in Tasmania (Terroir practice) and shown to Siobhán the images.

### **Supervision process as a conversation**

The supervision process happens in the (ADAPT-r) practice-based PhD model as a continuous conversation between the supervisor and the practitioner/researcher: the practitioner explains and shows their work to the supervisor not in a definitive way, but in a questioning way, exposing insights but also doubts. The supervisor challenges the practitioner, giving them questions and offering them new perspectives to look at their work.

### **Supervisor as a silent listener and observer**

Before guiding the practitioner, the supervisor needs first to be a silent listener and an observer to understand the practitioner's work and their way to communicate it. The supervisor has to be open to embrace/welcome (engage with) and understand different perspectives.

### **The supervisor "alerting" the researcher/practitioner**

The supervisor listen to the practitioner's words and observe the work itself, looking for possible divergences between what the practitioner says and what they actually do. So the supervisor alerts the practitioner when sees such divergences. An example is the supervision of Steve Larking by Richard Blythe and Leon van Schaik. In that occasion, Richard suggested Steve to be careful when thinking about landscape in preparation of his exhibition. Richard reminded Steve that the focus should be on his work itself.

### **Supervision process as a mutual process of learning**

The supervisor process in the practice-based PhD model is not an uni-directional process of learning, in which the supervisor is the one who knows and the practi-

tioner is the one who learns, but instead it is a mutual and circular process of learning in which the supervisor too can learn from the practitioner and their practice.

### **The supervisor as a guide for the PhD steps**

The supervisor is a guide who leads the practitioner through the PhD path and its steps. An example is the supervision of Alice Casey and Cian Degaan by Richard Blythe and Leon van Schaik. In that occasion Richard gave them a list of steps they should think about in designing their final exhibition.

### **An environment of trust**

A crucial element for the functioning/success of the practice-based PhD model is the building of an environment of trust, in which welcoming and generosity are the base of each relationship. The effort that the supervisor addresses to understand the practitioner's work demonstrates such generosity.

## 4.6 REPORT / Visit to Orkney

### **Orkney**

2nd - 4th May

### **Participants**

Koen Broucke, Dorotea Ottaviani, Sally Stewart

### **Program**

#### Monday 2nd May

Kirkwall

Orkney Museum

taxi to Marwick Head

name of driver: Scott?

Kitchener Memorial

walk to Birsay

Earl's Palace

bus route 6 to Kirkwall

name of driver: Euan?

#### Tuesday 3rd May

Orkney Library

bus Route 2 to Houton

name of driver: Bruce?

Ferry to Lyness

Scapa Flow Visitor Centre & Museum

Ferry back to Houton

Bus Route 2 back to Kirkwall

name of diver: another Scott?

#### Wednesday 4th May

Kirkwall, Earl's & Bishop's Palace

On the morning of the 2nd of May 2016 the airplane from the Glasgow International Airport to Kirkwall Airport, Orkney, took off around 11.00. The plane is a small vehicle, with just one row of seats on the the right side of the aisle and two on the left one. That also means that it is much more affected by the wind and the turbulences, and this looks like the proper way to entering in the mindset of what the Orkney landscape can bring. The airplane flies quite low and it allows to read the orography of scotland in the way to the north. Green gentle uplands are inlaid

by long dark lakes, the colours from above are bright and deep.

From the window of the plane the islands seem pieces of moss laid on the surface of the sea, the outlines are remarked by the white of the sea foam.

Shortly after we landed at Kirkwall. It is hard to call it an airport, it recalls more of a diner in the middle of nowhere. And yet again this is another smooth step towards the unexpected that the islands are going to show.

The day is clear, the sky is blue with puffy clouds. We wait for the bus to reach the main city of the Orkney Islands, Kirkwall, a small town of 9.000 inhabitants.

The landscape in the small journey on the bus already gives the idea of the images that will fill the eyes in during the journey, the view is a dominated by the contraposition between the sky indulging on the line of the land. This line carries a particular and contrasting feature, it is a the same time really gentle and it is the heritage of the massive winds that blow on this land. There are no trees in sight, this will be in every place we will visit, the only ones you can find are those who struggle behind the shelter of some cottages and buildings. Some kind of survivors, weird and exceptional elements in the panorama.

In this scenario the first stop with Koen Broucke was at the Orkney Museum in the centre of Kirkwall. This used to be a house, Tankerness House, and now, at the side of the entrance, in the inner yard, stands a cannon. This gives even a more particular background for what Koen wants to see and study in the museum. There are objects, pieces of art or daily life from different epoques and it is no surprise, when we enter in a tiny room dedicated to the first world war, to find a miscellanea of elements, from photographs and portraits, letters and maps. In a showcase sits the item the artist is searching. It is the tin helmet of Eric Robert Russell Linklater, a Welsh-born Scottish writer of novels and short stories, military history, and travel books. Linklater wrote about what happened to him during the First World War in Flanders when he was hit by a German bullet from a machine gun.

Koen spends some time looking at it, sketching and taking pictures, meanwhile is telling me the story of this helmet and why it is important in his research. The object per se is in fact of not major relevance but it is, as other objects we will see during these two days of exploration of Orkney, in its nature of detail, of element part of a larger and gigantic event such the World War that it gains importance and energy. In a process of metonymy, the artist is able to feel and report through the contact with the object the historical sensation he is searching for and it is like putting your “finger into history, into that small hole, a bullet hole, but it’s also like a hole in time.” as he told in the interview that we made during the visit at the museum.<sup>1</sup>

Koen Broucke sketching the helmet of Linklater at the Orkney Museum, Orkney Islands - May 2016

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1 See complete transcription of the interview in Deliverable 9 and 11, Chapter 2.



*Koen Broucke sketching the helmet of Linklater at the Orkney Museum  
Orkney Islands – May 2016 (Photo: Dorotea Ottaviani)*



*Edited image from Google map*

After the museum we took a taxi and crossed the mainland to arrive to the Kitchener Memorial at Marwick Head. This is 15 meters high tower right next to a cliff. It was built in 1926 by the people of the islands in memory of Field Marshal Earl Kitchener of Khartoum, who died, in June 1916, together with nearly all the men on the HMS Hampshire, an armoured cruisers employed in the first World War by the Royal Navy.

The place is magnificent and impressive, the architecture of the building is simply and powerful and the contrast with the landscape creates strong and deep sensations and it fosters the mind to try to think about that event and at the tragedy of the war itself.

From the memorial we took a long walk along the cliff, the wind was really strong, although for the local was considered quite mild and soft, the sky was clear. While we were walking the artist told me the story of the memorial, of that area and the meaning it was having in his research.

During the walking Koen he was taking pictures and stopping from time to time, especially to look at the rabbits, which are many in the island, and somehow have become a part of its research, especially after found the dead bodies of many of them in his previous journey (he used a painting he made of these dead rabbits as the opening image for his presentation at the PRS in Ghent 2016).

The destination of the walk was Birsay and its Earl's Palace, both for a pragmatic reason, the stop of the bus is there, and for having a look at it and at a small church, St Magnus<sup>2</sup>, with a graveyard that faces the sea.

The day after the morning began with a visit to the local library where the greater part of the interview with Koen was set. In this small but rich library he had found a lot of the information on the history of the Orkney, especially related with the two world wars, and a lot of the authors he is referring to in its research, such as Linklater or George Mackay Brown, and he also bought some vintage pictures of the island that they were selling at the counter. The library is an environment in which you can see that Koen finds himself at home, a sort of link to a part of his life and experience, the one of the studies of history before deciding to become an artist. During this hour spent in the library we got back to the helmet and the story of Linklater also because of the presence, in the room, of a bust of the writer where it is possible to see the dented skull in the area where the bullet hit him. The story of Linklater is once again for him the occasion of reflection about the historical

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2 This place is particularly relevant for Koen Broucke in the island and it gained importance in his research during time. More info on the church [www.birsay.org.uk/heritage.htm#stmagnus](http://www.birsay.org.uk/heritage.htm#stmagnus).



*Kitchener Memorial – Orkney Islands – May 2016*



*Way to Birsay – Orkney Islands – May 2016*



*St. Magnus Church - Birsay - Orkney Island May 2016*



*Orkney Library, Kirkwall - Orkney Islands May 2016*

sensation, a concept developed the the Dutch historian Huizinga which describe the “immediate contact you can have with the past through objects, through small objects, it can be a book, it can be an artwork, it can be a helmet, it can be a bust. By combining those things you have a certain experience of the past that can inspire you as an artist, but of course also as a historian.”<sup>3</sup>

The following step in the trip was the Scapa Flow Visitor Centre & Museum in the island of Lyness. To arrive there we took a bus to reach Houton, where the ferry departs. The journey in the ferry is really interesting, there are no many passenger in this period of the year, which is still off-peak tourist season. Most of our fellow passengers are people who use this link between the island as their daily commuting and this enhance the contrast with the purpose of our visit. During the fairly brisk crossing Koen talked about the traveling as a part of his research and working experience. This concept was investigated both in its broader meaning of making a journey and searching for something and under the lense of the mobility as a part of the ADAPT-r fellowship. The mobility in the program allows him to reflect with a certain distance from his daily practice<sup>4</sup> and, at the same time, it permits to broaden the experience of the practice and to make new possible connections, opening to a wider audience than the Belgian one.

Lyness was the main base of the Royal Navy during the wars, therefore the Visitor Centre was located there. The Centre is focused around the former fuel oil pumping station, there are displayed a large selection of evidences and objects belonging from the ships and the Lyness Naval Base. The attention of the artist is indeed attracted by some little objects in the cases, like light bulbs or dishes. This was the occasion to talk more in depth about the relation of the everyday objects and the factor of the scale<sup>5</sup>, with their fragility and micro scale in relation with the gigantic and terrible events of the two wars, and how, in the distance and relation between the tangible reality of the object and the imagination (or maybe just intuition) of scale of the war, resides the concept of the historical sensation. Somehow this sensation is both the trigger and the scope of the research of Koen Broucke. The role of the detail has been the leitmotiv and the core theme during these two days of exploration about the artist work.

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3 See complete transcription of the interview in Deliverable 9 and 11, Chapter 2.

4 In another interview Koen narrates how he started to acquire a new method because of the mobility. The duty to be every month in Scotland required him to start scanning his work before leaving. This process, at first boring and seemly dull, start acquiring new power and meaning. It is a moment of reflection and distance and “objectivity” from his work.  
See complete transcription of the interview in Deliverable 9 and 11, Chapter 2.

5 During his second presentation at the PRS in Ghent 2016, Broucke has been asked by Prof. Ken Neil, a member of his panel, which was the role between the detail and his research, how the scale influences and what does it mean in his research about battlefields.



*RMIT Design Hub (Photo: Cecilia De Marinis)*

## 4.7 REPORT / PRS Melbourne

### **Practice Research Symposium Melbourne**

2nd - 5th June

@RMIT Design Hub

### **PRS program**

4 Final Examinations

80 Presentations

1 Keynote speaker: Carlo Ratti - MIT Sensible City lab

### **Attended Events**

4 Final Examinations

10 Presentations

1 Keynote speech

Social events

### **A comparison between the European and the Australian PRS**

Attending the PRS in Melbourne has been useful to better understand the European PRS. It has provided a broader perspective and an acknowledgment/understanding of the origins of the system. The Australian PRS has been indeed the reference for building the European one. The knowledge embedded in the PRS as a framework and its structure have been transferred from a geographical context to another, and the European PRS has been established on the model of the original one. In comparing the two PRSs it is interesting to point out elements that diverge, others that have been maintained identical, new elements that have been developed.

An immediately visible divergence is the scale of the event: the Australian PRS is on a much greater scale to the European PRS. It determines a bigger number of final examination and up to eight parallel sessions/presentations, which are double the number of the parallel sessions at the European PRS. The wider scale generates greater diversity and critical mass, whereas a smaller scale brings more intimacy and familiarity.

Both the PRSs surface diversity in the practitioners/researchers design strategies and research methods. Such diversity takes then different developments in the two systems: the Australian PRS shows a wide range of diversity in terms of research and practice fields. The presenters indeed come from the fields of fashion and textiles, architecture, landscape architecture, art, and industrial design. The European

PRS shows instead a wide range of diversity in terms of outcomes of the research and practice, especially looking at the work of architects and landscape architects. The scarcity of investments in new construction in Europe leads to new way of practicing, more focused in transformation processes and active involvement in the social realm.

Observing and comparing the Communities of Practice narrated by the researchers/practitioners, a first evidence is that in the Australian PRS the CoP seem wider/broader and more internationally connected, so not only confined in Australia but connected with Asia, India, New Zealand and Europe. The European PRS is more related to European communities, except for the Australian connection.

Another relevant element is the environment of trust that is perceptible at the Australian PRS, people appear very confident in the system and trust has been effectively established among peers, and between supervisors and candidates. The European PRS seems to have already established an environment of trust among people involved, but the understanding of the system in its features is still in process. The process of appropriation of the already established and defined Australian PRS system in Europe requires an adaptation to the specific environment, so the model is shaped by the people making use of it.

The Australian system is a “wise and experienced” system, whereas the European system is young and in an in-progress establishment, it is in expansion and it is defining its boundaries and its new challenges/paths/directions.

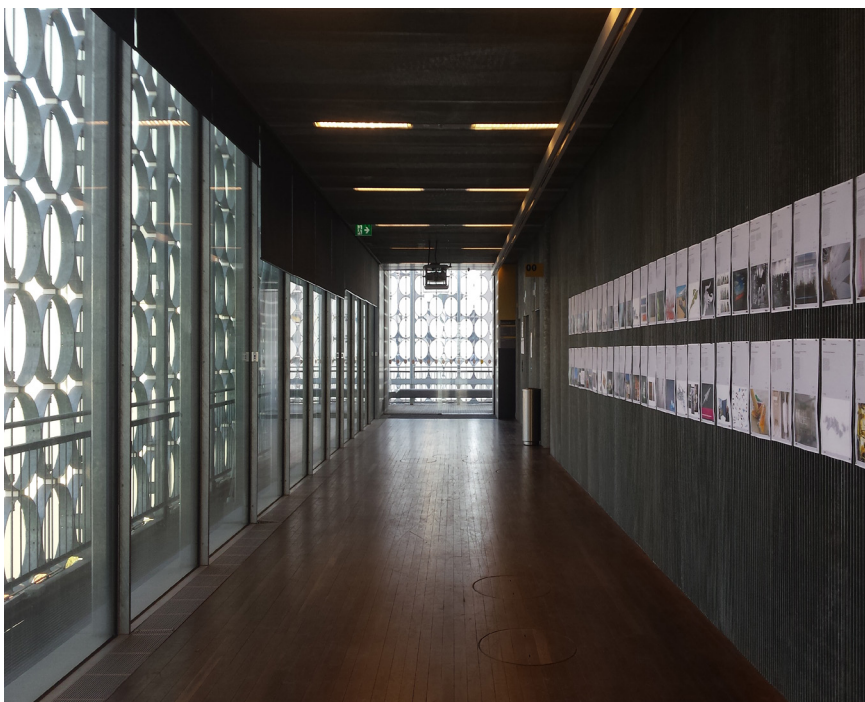
### **A narrative of 3 Presentations**

Three among many interesting presentations have been selected and narrate, to show the connection between the Australian and the European PRSs, in terms of Communities of Practice, as well as in terms of explored research journeys and research methods. The PRS model offers a framework which simultaneously guides the practitioners through a structured path, and allows them to interpret the path, introducing and discovering their specificity in it.

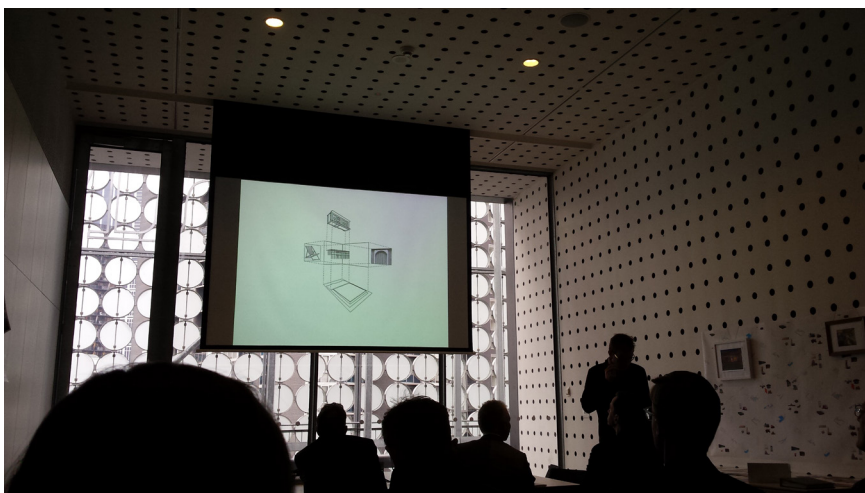
#### **Sam Kebbell’s Presentation: a storytelling of the practice through the projects**

Sam Kebbell is a New Zealand architect and an ADAPT-r fellow enrolled at the University of Westminster, London (UK).

Sam’s presentation revealed a parallel discourse, one related to the interests, urges and fascinations of the architect, and the other related to the artifacts: the projects. The presentation has been a fluid storytelling passing from a project to another to give evidence of a series of topics dear to the architect. The projects were the tools that he used to demonstrate and strengthen his insights and words.



*RMIT Design Hub (Photo: Cecilia De Marinis)*



*Sam Kebbell's Presentation: a storytelling of the practice through the projects  
(Photo: Cecilia De Marinis)*

The practitioners started his performance with a series of images from popular culture, explaining the tension between individual and collective dimensions. Through showing images of his project for a painter's home he explained his fascination for everydayness, and the connection between modest elements and more universal Ideas.

Talking about influences, he mentioned as one of his mentor John Daish, his former partner of the office, and in his references he included also Christopher Alexander and his interest to give power to people in design processes.

Referring to the past, he mentioned how farmer has been a big part of his life, being there where mostly his urges and fascinations come from. He referred to the idiosyncrasy of architecture in New Zealand, to the suburb of New Zealand, and Casualness of its culture.

He then defined the “frameworks for dialogue” as the main tools for his research and practice. Frameworks are intended in different ways, they can be geometric, and conversational, they allow people to be part, but at the same time they clear the perimeters in which people are involved, protecting the action of the architect. Showing the Satchi&Satchi project, he explained the presence of the geometrical framework. Repetition and strong geometry are big fascinations for his work.

Regular geometry and simplicity were visible also in another project for the White House, immersed in the landscape.

The interest to geometrical design and rigorous composition comes also from the fascination of the practitioner for facades and surfaces from which he was impressed during an academic exchange in Rome.

The last project he presented was a multifunctional wall for an office, an interior space that allows multiple uses and shapes. It could be use for domestic, commercial, and exhibition uses. This project revealed again the presence of a geometric framework, and the interest in the simultaneous presence of modest elements and more universal concepts.

The presentation ended with a reflection on the contribution to knowledge that the research can provide. The practitioner mentioned first the use of framework for dialogue allowing and limiting participation and secondly the relationship between idiosyncratic and universality .

### **Corbett Lyon's Presentation: drawing the mental space**

Corbett Lyon is an Australian architect enrolled as PhD candidate at RMIT University in Melbourne.

The focus of his presentation has been on the role of drawing as an explorative tool. He has been making use of drawing along his PhD journey, with the aim to explore and understand his mental space.

The practitioner shown a selection of drawings, describing them and explaining their meanings.

He mentioned that one of the aims of the research has been to make a diary of his mental space, exploring the framing, the mental and venturous attitude.

Among others, he shown the drawing of his Conceptual Room, able to narrate his mental space, and what he is and does as an architect. He described it as a room with flattened walls and a large door, that looks like a mental terrain of infinite extension.

Explaining this drawing, he mentioned his reference to Aldo Rossi's drawings.

Another relevant topic for his research was the theme of the double, being it in his mental space. To explain this fascination, he mentioned the church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome (It) and the Godiva House in Cascais, Portugal.

### **Cecilia Heffer's Presentation: learning by making**

Cecilia Heffer is a textile designer, enrolled as PhD candidate at RMIT University within the School of Fashion and Textile.

Cecilia's research is focused on the contemporary narrative through the lace, reflecting on the connection between lace and space.

The lace is seen as a cultural narrative tool, and as a place. Lace design is a sort of place making, in which distances and geographies are involved.

The story of a place can be told through textile, expressing imagination and expectations.

The material assumes a very important role, and being Cecilia in search of a contemporary narrative, an added value is given by digital technology. So lace textile and digital technology work together in a multidisciplinary collaboration, toward the contemporary lace storytelling.

Showing images of her design process, Cecilia explained in detail the process of making, trying and testing with her hands. Importance is given to time, as the process of making is a slow process, compared with the speed of velocity of the society.

In her research, textile is a tool to explore and understand the environment and vice versa. She gives a parallel between landscape/environment and textile: as landscape, textile is continuous transformation, so it is an ephemeral experience.

The relation between textile and environment goes beyond a reflection on what the environment actually is, towards imagination of something different. It is a process of transformation more than description, in search for a contemporary lace making tool.

## Other presentations

### Robert Simeoni's Presentation

Focus of the research on the observation of the elements. Observation of existing building, materialization on site of detail drawings. Claiming the importance of being on site with construction people like the carpenters, it is part of the sense of community, in which one shares discussion and enthusiasm.

Comments from the panel:

Mauro Baracco: suggestion to look at Umberto Riva's work and Robin Boyle's work. Suggests that the researcher/practitioner needs a consistent graphic device to explain and tell the research. Suggestion to look at the work of Atelier Bow-wow (Japan) that focuses of the everydayness in Japan, to take inspiration and reference for representation.

Graham Crist: Refers to the sense of unseen and something behind.

Richard Blythe: Suggests the importance of giving access into the project. The very carefully observed moments, the capture of the atmosphere of these moments and how something finds its place in the projects. It is about intimate engagement. The questions are: when do you stop with it? How to describe that revelation? The revelation that we as architects have in our intuition. Reference to an archaeological exposition of the fragments, bringing objects into the exhibition. Bynomy complexity/simplicity: the simplicity of the container allows the complexity of the contents.

### Simone Twose's Presentation

He talked about his work "Time and space existence" exhibited at Architecture Biennale 2016 in Venice at Palazzo Mora, and already exhibited at Adam Art Gallery in Wellington, NZ. The research is focused on the relation between concrete, drawing, and detail.

Reflection on the circular relationship between drawing and building: how drawing can have a presence in building. Questioning how to record presences, how to correspond in drawing the spatial atmosphere.

The work "Time and space existence" is a concrete drawing, recording spatiality of making. Materiality, sequences, spaces and patterns are involved. Reference is the "Cretto" by Burri in Sicily (It)

At the Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2012 he exhibited the work "Family Cloud".

Comments from the panel:

Questioning about what he means by dreaming and building, claiming the importance of pointing out such meanings.

Suggesting a reflection on drawing, building and occupying.

**Other presentation attended:**

John Doyle  
Emma Jackson  
Lucinda McLean  
Simon Whibley



*Cecilia Heffer's Presentation: learning by making*  
(Photo: Cecilia De Marinis)



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## **ADAPT-R CONFERENCES PROCEEDINGS**

- “Knowing (by) Designing”, Conference Proceedings LUCA, Sint-Lucas School of Architecture, KU Leuven, Faculty of Architecture, Ghent, Belgium
- “Making Research | Researching Making”, Conference Proceedings / Arkitektskolen Aarhus, 10-12 September 2015



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