# ORDER AND CONSTRUCTION IN CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER: EXPLORING THE LIVING BUILDING PROCESS

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#### Abstract

The research tackles the crisis of architecture in its two main areas of operation: education and profession. It starts with identifying the themes of the crisis and it first causes, which are found in the separation of the self from the outer world, a defining character of modernity. It then progresses to uncovering the most important manifestations of such separation in everyday design practice, to focus on reintegrating the self in a different design process.

The researcher is guided in this voyage by a profound exploration of Christopher Alexander's work, conducted with Alexander himself, his wife and co-author Maggie Moore Alexander, and his inner circle of life-long collaborators. From Alexander, the research embarked in short extra-disciplinary explorations in areas such as psychomotricity, art-therapy and disciplines of the body-mind. The method is however far from pure secondary investigation. The research starts from practice to distill the questions that the literature review is called to help answering, in a proper Project-Based Learning approach.

The backbone of the research is in fact four real-world projects undertaken both in educational and professional contexts. Located in a sequence of successive experiences, each of these projects led to the definition of a "model process" of design, which allowed to systematize and enrich, step-by-step, a consistent body of knowledge based on actual practice.

Eventually, the research comes to formalize a "final" model-process around the for basic modules of "Land Exploration", "Pattern Language", "Composition" and "Conception and Construction", with a clear understanding that such synthesis is "final" only as long as the PhD study is concerned, but it is essentially one of the many steps of an "unfolding" pathway towards the radical refoundation of architectural practice in the XXIst century.

## **Declaration of Originality**

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All materials produced by third parties are utilized in this thesis under permission. In particular, permission to use all materials produced by staff, parents, children and other stakeholders in the Rodari project was devolved to Comune di Scandiano.

To my children, for me source of all beauty.  $\,$ 

To Chris and Maggie, for their lessons of life.

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## **Previously Published Work**

- Construction and Therapy: an integrated approach to design build. By Sergio
  Porta, Peter Russel, Ombretta Romice, Mariapia Vidoli. paper presented at the
  ACSA Conference in Halifax, NS, Dalhousie University, in October 2014.
- The Production of cities: Christopher Alexander and the problem of 'System A' at large scale. By Yoda Rofè, Sergio Porta, Mariapia Vidoli. published in the Proceedings of PURPLSOC Conference 2015.
- The city and the grid: building beauty at large scale. By Yoda Rofè, Sergio Porta,
   Mariapia Vidoli. chapter of "The City is not a Tree: 50th Anniversary Edition"
   edited by Micheal Mehaffy and published in 2016.
- The Timeless Way of Educating Architects: A New Master in "Building Beauty" in Naples, Italy Maggie Moore—Alexander; Enzo Zecchi,; Peter Russel; Mariapia Vidoli; Sergio Porta; Ombretta Romice; Antonio Caperna. presented at the PUARL Conference 2016 in San Francisco, CA.

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## **Abbreviations**

- · Construction and Therapy: C&T
- · Land Exploratio: L.E.
- · Pattern Language: P.L.
- · Conception and Construction: C.&C.
- The Nature of Order: NoO
- A Pattern Language (book): APL
- Building beauty: BB
- Project Based Learning: PBL

## Glossary

CENTRE: A "spot of living beauty in the land": a physical place, which occupies a volume in the real space and at the same time in the emotional space of those who experience it. It is an area of space spontaneously organised, with a degree of internal coherence and a specific relationship with its surroundings. It exerts a positive and enabling vital influence on actions towards beauty. In order to identify and acknowledge the centres which sit in the experienced space, techniques and methods of art-therapy, psychomotricity, dance and yoga are needed.

FEELINGS: Sensations or instincts which allow the rise of awareness of the reality outside us. These mostly sit in the personal unconscious, but can become conscious parts of our being through a work of exploration of our body-mind. The awareness of our feelings leads to a healthy satisfaction of our profound needs at the individual and collective level. Feelings, in fact, must be viewed in both personal terms and with reference to the collective unconscious: the main reference is the Jungian theory of the dreams and the collective unconscious.

EMOTION: The most immediate expression and perception of feelings from a human being, a superficial and not profoundly processed construct. From it reactions are generated, not live actions which are constructive or artistic. In order to work with emotions processes of psychiatry and psychology must be used.

REGION or land: the place where centres are, with their intensity pf strength, and at he same time the place where feelings are. Regions are present in the places that are experienced daily, hence they need to be recognised in the Land Exploration phase, looking forward to design and construction.

SUBREGION: spots of the land which are coherent/consistent according to one or more feelings, themselves having a centre.

COHERENCE: the capacity of centres of configuring the space together harmoniously. The degree of coherence of centres in a space determines the Wholeness as a structure made of parts, themselves generated by the Wholeness. Coherence can also be described as the set of a place's synergies.

WHOLENESS: Balance and functionality of an entity that has life, which we perceive

the beauty of. It exists at large and small scale; some examples are: the planetary system, the living organism, the rhythmic movement of the body that is harmonious (dance) in all its expressions.

LAND EXPLORATION: The process of mapping a place on the ground of the interaction between space and the body-mind. This process begins with the exploration of the inner space of the person through the achievement of a degree of awareness of one's own feelings and emotions. This is obtained through specific workshops of art-therapy, psychomotricity and dance. The focus is the body and the experience of feelings and emotions in it. In a second moment, the exploration progresses from the self to the recognition of how the inner space expands into the outer and visible one, where our thoughts, intentions, emotions (etc.) generate a specific manifestation through/in the body and its movement. Such movement expand in the space and occupy it, and by doing so qualify it. Finally, the characters of the space itself are linked up with the personal/collective space, made accessible and legible.

BODY-MIND: The unavoidable relationship that connects body and mind in a unique, integrated entity. Body and mind collaborate within an organic unit that aims at life. All the living building process that this research explores is based on this reality.

OLISTIC: Etymologically, from the Greek "olus", whole. In my research the term expresses how a system, a process or a living being cannot be known if merely considered as the sum of their parts.

PROCESS: The term is used in the widest possible sense of proceeding, meaning the way one progresses in the actions aimed at the achievement of a goal or a project. Here it links to the description of the advancements along the course of those actions, in terms of time and place.

LIVING PROCESS: A permanently developing process that contains life-related elements, which along its development generate new life. As such, at each cycle it generates a circle, while across time it takes the form of a spiral, rather than linear. The spiral as a shape is frequently present in nature, and has held symbolic meanings, especially by Indian cultures and Oriental in general. Jung identified the spiral as a symbol of revivification of life, as well as the process of individuation through which the "I" learns to revolve around the "Self".

THERAPY: The term in this research identifies an approach which is centred on the person, which is based on the assumption that each individual person possesses the ability to understand her/himself, getting better and find solutions to her/his own problems. The approach recognizes the fundamental value of the human experience, and spurs every person to take responsibility of their own choices and experiences. It

refers to the concept of non-directivity, developed around the I940s by the American psychotherapist Carl Rogers: he did not only referred to psychology, but rather to a point of view, a philosophy, an approach to life, a way of being which is appropriate to any situation in which the growth of a person, a group or a community is comprised in the goal itself of the therapy.

MODERNITY: A long period of human western civilization that emerged from the understanding of labour, knowledge and ultimately the same human experience as the sum of separated parts, with the assumption that the functioning and comprehension of the whole would have come from that of each of its individual parts.

PARTICIPATORY CONSTRUCTION. In the Construction and Therapy model process, and in particular in its Conception and Construction phase, it identifies an approach to building that entails the hands-on presence and involvement of all subjects. Inhabitants, end-users, professionals, staff of teachers and crafters, all actively participate to the construction of the building. Subjects that in the preliminary phases had various tasks and commitments are all engaged in physical efforts and the use of the hands to build what they themselves had wanted, envisioned and designed.

TEACHING METHOD: "Didactics for skills" is the teaching method that I have both adopted and supported in the research, as proposed by Enzo Zecchi. This teaching method allows to develop the skills and requires a change of paradigm from traditional "transmissive" didactics to an active, "constructionist" one.

PEDAGOGIC APPROACH: in the context of this research, the pedagogic approach associated with all the proposed construction experiences is the Project/Problem-Based Learning (PBL). This aims at developing the learning by engaging students in the realization of real-world projects.

## **Synopsis**

I look at the problem of architecture from outside. My own personal story and educational background led me to look at the relationship between the process of building (in space), the interior of the self, and the body.

The problem of architecture manifests itself in many ways, from the occupational crisis to that of the architect's professional liability and credibility, to the failure of people's processes of place identity and wellness, to the wider climate and ecology collapse. It is, it seems, a structural crisis, or even one of civilization that reaches out far beyond the case of architecture, and yet fully involves all aspects of architecture.

This crisis emerges in architectural education as well, where it is the relationship between building process and body-mind that fails in the first place. We need to go back to the living beings and their experiential integrity to get to the heart of this crisis, and in order to do so we need to revert the conventional research model, starting with practice and exploring theory only when practice requires it.

The objective of the thesis is therefore the identification of a building model process in which the collective experience of making fully includes the body-mind, and is therefore "therapeutic" both towards those who make and the place where such making occurs (the "land"). As a foundational ground to start from with my exploration, I chose to deepen the practical experience and building legacy of Christopher Alexander.

The review of the literature directly produced by Alexander as well as the personal interaction with him and the inner circle of his life-long collaborators, together with extra-disciplinary detours in areas such as psychology, art-therapy and philosophical anthropology, allowed me to see several foundational principles of the process model, which I can shortly summarize as follows:

- · Crucial relevance of direct construction.
- · Research of empirical evidence.
- · Objective nature of feelings
- · Objective nature of the structure of centers in the land (Wholeness)
- Recomposition of the split between construction and creation in a creative construction practice.

Out of this preliminary theoretical exploration, a first building model process emerges to start with (Draft Model Process): that does identify and articulates the two phases of Pattern Language and Land Exploration, but leaves the phase of Construction completely undetermined.

This first model is then applied and amended through a one-year long work

conducted at University of Strathclyde in 2013, which led students of the purposefully designed VIP class "Construction and Therapy" to the construction of a small temporary pavilion in the University Rottenrow Gardens in Glasgow, and the community design of the extension of the village of St. Kizito in Rwanda, Africa. These experiences are later discussed and consolidated theoretically through several seminars that involved scholars from outside the University of Strathclyde.

The resulting "Revised Model Process" completes the three-steps cycle with the articulation of a last phase, named Conception and Construction. This second model is further tested in two real-world building projects, one professional that involves the community design and construction of a new atelier in a primary school in Italy, and the second educational as part of the Post Graduate Specialist program in Architecture "Building Beauty" in Sorrento, Italy. It is particularly in these latest experiences that the difference between the invariable (structural) and case-specific (super-structural) components of the process are detailed. Here, new knowledge also is included in particular with regards to the synthesis between Dream map and Land Center map in a new document named Project Language, which is preliminary to the mocking-up and the final construction.

The third and final Building Model Process includes and integrates the evolution of all these components, a sequence of operations that condenses and detailed three years of practice-based research and concludes this thesis.



#### 1.1. FROM THE BODY-MIND TO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

My high school background is in studies of human sciences, architecture and landscape; I then graduated in art with a specialization in Cultural and Landscape Heritage. This school, named "Biennio Unitario Sperimentale" (BUS) was the attempt at combining humanistic and scientific knowledge via experimental education, a unique case in Italy. The teaching followed the "project-based" approach, and constituted an extraordinary anticipation of the international pedagogical debate. This will be further discussed in point 1.3 entitled "Project-Based Learning and Practice-Based Research". This model was also applied in the Vertically Integrated Project (VIP) "Construction and Therapy", a specific version of Project Based Learning (PBL), I will refer to in Chapter 3. That experimental educational program was the attempt to radically change the conventional model of the 70's, because of the severe crisis in which they were involved. The innovation included the implementation of a two-year training and orientation course able to provide students with both a valid basic education and adequate guidance tools for subsequent school paths. The "BUS" was also a laboratory of educational experimentation in which the teamwork between teachers was pivotal. They used to have a total of 14 teaching hours, instead of 18, where four were dedicated to research carried out in teams, in order to coordinate the teaching activities. Staff were selected by an internal commission. Furthermore, the number of students was "closed" and initially the selection was not necessarily "meritocratic". The school space had been designed in a functional way to facilitate the interaction between students and teachers: there was a large central area (called "the tub") that represented the square where the whole school used to gather. This design aimed at overcoming the concept of a closed class and pursued the idea of school as a community. This vision was also put into practice through the choice of the three-year timetable (or rather the years of study following the two-year period, which contemplated the selection of a learning area by the student) that sought to go over the idea of class by the creation of groups of students which joined and disjoined in the course of the activities carried out during the day. The team work also had a strong didactic value, so the we had the task to train teachers on how to set up groups in the classroom. Their formation was the result of a deep analysis and the intent was not to create small ghettos - or gangs - but of breaking up too solid combinations, inserting in each group at least one "weaker" student and one instead with leadership skills and so on. In addition, it was given to students, parents and also to the "economic and political stakeholders "...the possibility to intervene in the choices of the school through delegated decrees, which included their representation in school councils, as well as the possibility of implementing areas of innovative teaching experimentation.

A lot has been theorized on this topic. A magazine called "Sensate Esperienze" (meaningful experiences), collected the educational experiences of similar maxiexperimentations carried out in Italy, which was published for the first time. There were also occasions for recurrences: in 1994, twenty years after the BUS creation, a large conference was held with published acts, etc.

My fondest memories of this marvellous experience are the ones related to the excursions (to Rome, to Ravenna or to the workshops, in Botticino): in them I found on one side the rigor of the programming (or rather trips organized within a course of study combined with the presentation of reports in front of the monuments as a moment of personal performance, as well as the result of a group work) and on the other, the desire to have fun learning.

It was fundamental for the school to be able to convey a strong sense of motivation to the students; the teachers themselves were generally very motivated, and this was fully transmitted to us students. The motivation and the sense of belonging to a shared experience were the two elements that we perceived the most.

I decided to describe in detail my experience at this school because it was a crucial part of my education, both personally and cognitively, in terms of contents and methods of study. The skills and community experience achieved during my BUS period form the basis of my entire subsequent education, including the PhD research condensed in this thesis.

The ideas and skills developed in order to conceive a people-based living building process and the ability to create life and beauty, come from a context where an experimental education aimed at creating a sense of belonging and respect for people, developing the capacity to go beyond the conventional roles in the teacher/pupil as well as student/school relationships.

Furthermore, the strongest lesson I learned during those years, transferred to my research, is to always strive to enhance the potential of the individual in relation to the community in which she or he lives. This can only be achieved by pursuing the love for knowing and learning. It is only through this path that it is possible to build oneself, one's own space and the life relationships that come from acting and living within a community.

After the fundamental education that I received at the high school, I progressed into Higher Education attending the program in Literature and Philosophy at the University of Parma where I graduated in 1997 with a thesis in philosophy titled "The Man in Ernst Cassirer - An Active Metaphysics". The thesis covered areas such as anthropology and philosophy.

Cassirer's analysis answered the questions that at that point most intrigued me: why has the human being always felt the need to "seek", to "act", to "think"? What led Man to, rather than settling in a state of survival, continuously search deeper meanings beyond physiological life? Cassirer's philosophy deems essential the research that Man performs on himself, placing the human being at the centre of philosophical anthropology. According to the German author, Man has always been searching for his own identity in the world, he has always been looking for a reason to give meaning to his life and his own actions; this is why the space he occupies and the time he takes must be significant and not accidental. Consequently, for the human being it is pivotal to find a meaning to the aspects of one's own concrete life, since he feels the need to express himself precisely in taking practical actions. Cassirer believes that Man lives "always looking" and, at the

same time, "continuously expressing" what he perceives as understood and made his own. The core of my degree thesis revolved around Man's ability to "find again", namely his capacity to always give new meanings to things. Therefore, the thesis talks about a "dynamic truth", that is to say, ready to submit to the sense that comes from the action itself. Man recognizes and expresses himself in acting just as much as in the result of his own work. All this is part of a process of liberation and transformation that finds its identity in concrete life and in its multiple manifestations. The thesis theorizes an active metaphysics, also called "vital", or rather, a metaphysics that even though transcending matter, finds its true meaning in doing and building one's own form and space within the concrete matter of life itself.

In this, I found my first understanding, albeit embryonic, of the close connection between mind and body, between thoughts/feelings and actions. In my thesis I wrote about a first intuition of the complementarity between body and mind and between them and the true meaning of human actions. From all this my PhD research followed in evident continuity, as we will see, where I outline and test the concept of body-mind, a holistic conception of the human being that finds in the entirety body-mind the potentialities to get to an awareness of the self, individual and collective. The conception of the human being in terms of body-mind has, as a direct consequence, the necessity to express this vision in concrete reality and in constructing the space and things in which to fully live one's own life: this is what leads to the built environment.

During my studies, I had various opportunities to work with disciplines related to the motor expression of emotions and life experiences, such as dance in particular, and psychomotricity and art therapy. Moreover, I took part in projects of accompaniment and growth of autistic children and adolescents, promoted by the social services of my own Regional authority in Italy. I worked as a professional educator at the OSEA facility in Reggio Emilia, which offers services to minors and their families; they are about welcoming and hospitality interventions in residential and semi-residential educational communities, in family-type communities and in day-care centres for disabled minors and for adults. It was during this time that I approached specific areas of therapy, such as psychology, psychiatry and counseling. Living and working in close contact with people, who for various reasons had hardships and different ways of relating to others and with their own internal and external spaces, led me to seek for a vision of perceived reality that is to some degree different from the conventional.

In my dissertation I considered extremely important the involvement of a therapeutic section in a construction process that commences with the body-mind and the built environment in order to focus on the body's feeling, and its expressions in movement, as a means of healing.

The experiences carried out in the field of psychomotricity, art therapy and existential distress led me to consider the psychic and bodily perception as an indispensable tool to find the right spaces where the different mental and physical dimensions of each individual can find appropriate expression. As a consequence, in the model of construction I have been investigating in this research, the body expression as a creative

and liberating experience is pivotal, complementary and decisive, when considered along other forms of expression. In fact, unlike pre-established forms of expression, the body is free from the rigid rules laid down by morality and habit, and has a strong impact on the individual's inner self as well as collective consciousness. The free body expression, which is capable of acting within a practical area of doing, must however be understood as an expert-led process; for this reason, the construction process I have been looking for takes advantage of the involvement of tutors specialized in the fields of psychomotricity and art therapy, as mediators between the expression of the body-mind and the built environment.

# 1.2. CRISIS OF ARCHITECTURE AND BODY-MIND: THE "GREAT RETHINK"

In these years we witness a level of urbanization that, by scale and rapidity of development, is unprecedented. This urban development will involve in the future not as much our territories, as mainly Asia, Latin America, Africa, or other areas that are "weak" from the point of view of the planning system. It will also involve mainly poor population groups, estimated in the range of one billion six hundred thousand new poor inhabitants in the next twenty/thirty years. All this causes problems to disciplines such as architecture and urban planning. The administrative response that is conventionally given to these needs, excludes the needs themselves, or rather considers poverty by not including it and treating it as an essential precondition for exogenous interventions. This provokes a crisis on the planet at various levels (social, economic, political, etc.). It is no longer possible to respond to the problem of large-scale urbanization with the same answers given in the 50s and 60s, when the same phenomena, though at much smaller scale, occurred in Europe. That is to say, it is no longer possible to produce unsustainable cities by providing models, images and organizations that reinforce and action the conventional construction process that is mainstream in our own "advanced" system of production. The professional figures that are involved in the production of the city are much more a product of this system than a critical factor in it, and that fully includes designers: in fact, the history of architectural and urban design is not that of a heroic struggle lost against the overwhelming forces of the market, or the adverse powers that have built unsustainable cities, but rather one of continuous and often enthusiastic support of those forces. We are facing an evident and indisputable crisis of the city, and an equally or even greater crisis of the design disciplines as a constituent, integral part of it.

This crisis can be dealt with at an even higher level, just as Christopher Alexander did, by speaking of "civilization". The architecture of the last fifty years has forgotten the value of civilization, or better it has been forgotten that the act of building is not simply the answer to a material need, but also the response to our spiritual necessity of being human. Not to consider this means to alienate a substantial part of our existence as human beings and this implies a series of serious consequences not only at the individual

level (in psychological and identity terms) but also at the level of social and welfare ones. It is necessary to strive in order to reconstruct a different type of house production process, a process that puts sensitivity and emotions to the foreground. In order to do that, it is essential to have the courage to be naive, and get rid of superstructures that hinder the simple conception of individuals as living beings. It must be admitted that the construction of houses in cities is something that concerns us as human beings first and foremost, albeit passing through the difficult series of bureaucratic and institutional obligations and constraints that go with it. If it is not possible to rethink the urban process in such a way that really mirrors the people with all their sensitivity, then it means that something important and irrecoverable has been lost and that this process will not be able to meet, profoundly, the idea of a sustainable city. Going to the roots of the problem, it needs to be acknowledged that the crisis of design is, paradoxically, not a problem of design as a product, but rather one of the process of design itself. The quality that makes spaces liveable by communities, the quality that is able to build the community itself by constructing spaces, is not something that can be sketched, it simply cannot be designed. That quality cannot happen by designing the identity of an urban community, but rather it comes from the continuous effort of the communities themselves over time. It is necessary to shift the focus from the product of the processes to the processes themselves: in order to achieve this quality, we must start to design the processes better, rather than drawing better products, and one of the ways to do this is to include the inhabitants in the processes themselves at a level that very rarely, if ever, we have come to witness in recent times.

There is, therefore, a great need for experimenting innovative processes capable of including individuals and communities in the practical construction of things at a different, much deeper and authentic level. Experimenting the processes means facing some very important, but at the same time very critical, elements. For instance, the authorizations' dynamics: how do we authorize a process rather than a product? How can a public authority authorize not a design, but rather a process regardless of the final design?

This is very significant because it represents the keystone that makes it possible to construct truly habitable spaces, which are those endowed with the ability to change over time, certainly through the formal participation of local communities, but also, and this is the whole point, the informal one. Such informal participation to the adaptation of the built environment, is the one that occurs ordinarily in the daily dimension of the inhabitants' lives, that emerges from their practices of living and using "their" spaces. It is not by chance that, historically, the emergence of centralized forms of formal participation practices ("participatory design", "community engagement", "consensus building"...) occurred at the same time when the informal ones were made impossible: informal participation has been now entirely replaced in all its forms by a more complex and wholly mechanistic organization, and finally outlawed.

The difficulties in soliciting the personal commitment of the inhabitants in the current models of housing production are well known and widely discussed. These include the impossibility of generating dynamics of place belonging, community cohesion and of local prosperity at the same time.

Community and participatory design strategies have long been supported in order to solve the most urgent issues, that is to fill the gaps deriving from the application of conventional design and financial systems that inevitably influence the construction process, and in particular the uprooting of locals from their "right to build"; which, on the contrary, must be considered as a fundamental human right and a profound expression of collective and individual identity.

However, conventional participatory practices revealed serious limitations in political terms and, generally speaking, in human depth: they only marginally touch the sphere where human values really and concretely reside, and—crucially—are shared by most of us. In fact, participatory design models are usually looking at obtaining information about the inhabitants, rather than transforming the entire construction process into a deep and holistic experience for them, both at a collective and individual level.

When the problem of community and participatory design is reframed to reach the deepest levels of the human being, we are immediately faced with a vast gap of knowledge, the one that I set out to explore with this thesis: how can we design a construction process around feelings? And, after that, how can we design, test and validate practices directed at the self? Finally, within the construction process, how can we express and deal with feelings that can make the process work properly?

In this respect, when we question the discipline of architecture about the relationship between construction and the body-mind we hardly get any answer at all. Due to this fact, the professional, the architect, is compelled to work on industrial products over which people have no control and at the same time architecture increasingly witnesses the development of hugely expanding informal settlements, or rather of informal performances confined in spaces of social unease, enormous even if circumscribed, of which there is no real understanding whatsoever.

We can therefore speak of a crisis of architecture, coupled with an architecture in crisis as unable to give adequate responses. All this, manifests itself in, and is essentially caused by, the breaking of the relationship between the person and the construction process.

The idea of reconnecting the practice of construction with the body-mind of those who build and live it, is wide open and largely unresolved, and is part of the more general crisis of the discipline of architecture from the second post-war to date. This problem is now widely acknowledged and even sit to the top of the agendas of various governmental and non-governmental institutions alike, since the construction at small and large scale is no longer representing people nor places, but instead a ruling industry. The quality crisis in the design and production of the human environment is such that it undermines the mechanism of political consensus: politicians have reached the point to not support any development program because whatever is designed is fought locally, generating a loss of consensus and therefore a political damage. Hence the political necessity to discuss once again the topic of "beauty", that is dealing once more with the vital quality of what we produce in the built-environment<sup>1</sup>. It is now

critical to reconsider the conventional construction approach altogether, since the crisis of contemporary architecture is not isolated, it is in fact a crisis of civilization, and it is global: it involves, in the developed countries, the essential relationship between politics, quality and consensus, and on the other hand, in the developing ones, the poor masses living in the suburbs of the big urban agglomerations. The construction's crisis has now become so evident that it generates an open debate about modernity and its architecture theory and practice.

This is for example masterly undertaken in "The Big Rethink", a series of 12 articles published every month on "The Architectural Review" by Peter Buchanan, in 2012. The author is an architect who has been director for long time of the most important modern architecture magazine in the world: "The Architectural Review". The essays aim at involving architects in the challenges resulting from the contemporary global economic and environmental crisis. Architects are encouraged to rethink their role as professionals and to change their conventional architecture and design's practices. The core idea behind this series of articles is that it is vital that we designers in the throes of an epochal transition, take actively part in this transition. The confusion that characterizes much of the current architectural scenario, and the inadequacy of our attempts to progress towards sustainability, stem from not fully grasping the nature of the changes that are underway, in fact the nature of the transition itself.

A deeper understanding of the goals of architecture and design is required in order to provide a higher and more authoritative vision, keeping up with the times. This is fundamental for achieving sustainability, promoting change and revitalizing architectural education. In this view, sustainability cannot be pursued only technically, such as by technological or organisational innovation, but must embrace a wider cultural transformation in the way we relate to ourselves and the external world, in fact a transformation in our "cosmology" (vision of the world). The author argues that architecture finds, in part, its origins in the attempt to fill in the gap between man and nature: the complexity given by the interiority and by the socio-cultural factors that characterize the individual can be a reason for the estrangement from the natural order in which we live and operates. When architecture loses its human dimension, its awareness of the context where it operates, it becomes functional and abstract, creating alienation as it gets out of the networks of relationships existing in the context itself. Restoring this connection is critical to promote "deep sustainability". It is time to reconnect the profound self and nature to the production of the built environment. Buchanan talks of "coming home". In Alexander's writings we can also find the idea of loss of something important. In an "integral" perspective, change occurs "by transcending and including" what exists, suggesting that being in direct contact with our history and what we are is essential to build a future that preserves our integrity.

In the last part, "The Big Rethink" introduces a new type of prototype neighbourhood capable of expressing a total and harmonious connection with all the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>For example, we may refer to the recent constitution of the UK Government "Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission": www.gov.uk/government/groups/building-better-building-beautiful-commission.

nuances of the human condition, suggesting an approach which can enrich individual and community life alike. Hence, "The Big Rethink" broadens and adds details to the discussion on urban design. The attention is focused on the mentioned neighbourhood as a place, where progress towards deep sustainability and the way it is experienced, cannot be achieved only by buildings but rather must involve the building process and the protagonism of the inhabitants. In this case as well, sustainability cannot be pursued by drawing only upon the external matters implied in technology and also in ecology, albeit these are vital. Again, we find here the call to a process of cultural transformation that only can bring together the exterior and the interior in a perspective of "integral development" (Buchanan, 2012b). In other words, a lifestyle that produces a deep satisfaction in human beings and that manifests itself in an environment capable of offering an extraordinarily rich choice of non-commercial activities and experiences, where its inhabitants grow, develop and age in harmony between communities and nature. Deep sustainability requires, therefore, the replacement of the alienating environment as well as an alienated self, result of modernity, an environment to which we could not relate and which prevents our relations with others and ourselves alike, with a new one where we can feel at home again, in the world.

A profound change in architectural education is paramount, which should follow the same lines highlighted for change in profession and the planning system. Regarding the way of teaching and learning the discipline of architecture, there are great differences between the various schools and teaching methods in terms of quality, and the best schools are not only the most famous ones. Moreover, only a few of them are working to cope with the crisis of our time and it is pivotal that teaching does not conceive the discipline of architecture as a knowledge possessed and preserved by few, since this prevents the very structure of the school from ever being renewed. Indeed, if architecture as a discipline is thought of in a rigid and immutable way, the teaching itself will be identified in a practice and not in a teacher capable of transmitting competences to another individual. Buchanan detects some criticisms concerning the incapacity of some architecture schools to provide an adequate basis with regards to technical and construction aspects. Students complain about poor quality design lessons, particularly from university professors unable to design. This is a consequence of the fact that many architecture schools are far behind a teaching system capable of transmitting a cuttingedge practice. This is the big challenge: giving students the opportunity to benefit from the support of professionals who work directly on the construction.

Buchanan also points out the lack of a detailed and coherent curriculum for teachers, and the fact that the study of architecture emphasizes the concept rather than the actual making of the construction. As a result, students have to produce concepts in no time, and this is a misunderstanding of the creative process. Concepts should emerge rather than be imposed. Due to this, the theory has become a self-referential equivalent of medieval scholasticism and this constitutes one of the main reasons why the academy has not been able to cope with doing, with practice.

It's also important to consider that, although issues such as sustainability have

become more urgent, they remaining additional, marginal components in the actual professional practice, and limited only to the circle of exterior matters approached with ecology and technology. The great changes taking place require an architectural curriculum adequate to the upcoming times, so that architectural education can reach the concrete contemporary reality in which it operates. The demanded changes are much greater than the efforts that have been made by now: they need the application of new knowledge and new ways of thinking which are more inclusive and integrative. Buchanan believes that it is necessary to adopt a "Meta Theory" able to inspect the horizontal relations between our fields of specialized knowledge and integrates a vertical dimension that can offer a high perspective in order to wisely apply said knowledge. The meta theories, albeit long available, have been neglected by architecture: they are inconvenient, since require a profound rethinking that aims at a whole-encompassing, unique field where all knowledge is summarized. In fact, the underway changes and these meta theories will even result in a radical rethinking of the same objectives of life, including architecture and urban planning. This is the level of the cultural transformation that is needed.

It is crucial to look far ahead. "Whoever discovered water, it wasn't a fish": this is how Marshall McLuhan (and others before him) explained our blindness as a consequence of dominant culture with reference to the media system. Albeit the context is completely different, something very similar can be said also of architecture and can be valid for architects and architecture scholars.

Starting from these general premises, the idea of a construction process arose that is based on a method and a model that are in turn conceived and implemented on the relationship between construction and the body-mind. My research aims to work on this connection. In the course of my research and in practical applications I tried to investigate a construction model process where the making practice followed certain theoretical principles, resulting in tangible gradual improvements in both the construction and the participants' body-mind. Building from Alexander's work, I have been looking for the founding principles of such model process and, as those began been identified, I tried them out in a continuous testing activity on the ground. That is why the need quickly emerged to reverse the conventional learning process (which leads from theory to practice and from abstraction to action) into a circular one where practice and theory feed each other in a fundamentally iterative, heuristic process of trial and error.

#### 1.3. PROJECT-BASED LEARNING AND PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH

It seemed not to exist, in the architectural design literature, an established body of knowledge capable of integrating construction and the body-mind into one consistent framework; the lack of research and experience on the interaction between Architecture and Therapy came as a surprise to me, and required a significant shift in my research plans. I had to recognize that the exploration and synthesis of what appeared to be a completely new field would have been possible only with resources different from those

available in a PhD course. The research methodology and applications themselves became a research field. Obviously, this opened up vast scenarios that cannot be explored completely in my PhD, but which could be dealt with at a later stage.

As previously mentioned, the study of a construction model that would have linked up again construction and body-mind had to start from the living being and its experiential wholeness. It was therefore necessary to turn the conventional research method around: instead of proceeding from theory to practice, I chose to start from practice to get to theory or, better, focus on the application of the theory in practice, to come back to Theory and test it again, in a circular model of trial and error. My research methodology began with a theoretical thought from which an application model arose, which then led to further theoretical constructs and so on. This cycle was repeated three times, which gave birth to the "final" formulation of a model living building process.

As a result, the research is characterized as a work in progress, based on skills and theories assimilated through practice. The research become an unfolding process that foresees change and uncertainty as indispensable prerequisites to get to theoretical facts that are not abstract, but rather emerge on the ground of the human experience of making.

This pathway became indispensable since it was vital to begin with the human being seen in his entirety and then to relate him to the interior and exterior space. This passage entailed that the participants reached full awareness of their being and actions, or rather of their ability to express them, which is what allows them to get to construction as a practice capable of giving shape to the present life, initially, and to the one which develops during the process itself.

I therefore undertook a properly *constructivist*<sup>2</sup> research, with reference to the Project Based Learning (PBL) approach, which develops learning through the implementation of real-world projects. In deepening this method of research, the collaboration and contribution of Enzo Zecchi, an accomplished expert in constructivist pedagogy, was of critically important.

The PBL method envisages an ongoing construction and its adaptation to what emerges during the process. The pedagogy is based on a backbone of recursive teaching models that are based on interdisciplinarity and adaptability to emergent and inherently unforeseeable challenges. Indeed, every project has a part called "conception", that is the definition of the project's idea and it deals with ambitions as well as real constraints. We also need to consider that a project is always defined by its needs. The feasibility is given by the project plan, where all the procedures to be developed are conceived and resources identified; this is the first step of computational thinking, which considers the resolution of complex problems through the identification of simplest components, by studying the relational network in which they operate. For each simpler activity the resources needed are identified: manpower, materials, need for knowledge, time. Computational thinking requires that each activity needs other ones to develop its own.

The construction process model I am looking for is made of structural and super structural parts that are in close accordance with the PBL concept described above. This topic will be further discussed in Chapter 5 entitled "From Experience to Theory", and in particular in 5.2 "Structure and Super-structure".

The PBL aims at instructing the learner on how to "break down" complexity. In this regard, we will refer to the Bloom's taxonomy, implemented in educational psychology to define the learning phases and construction of the educational process. The Bloom's taxonomy refers to various objectives that educators should set for their students, which are divided into three domains: cognitive, affective and psychomotor (at times simplified respectively in "know/head", "feel/heart" and "do/hands"). Within these domains, the transition to the next level is supported by the acquisition of the skills of the previous one. The Bloom's taxonomy strives to motivate educators to focus on all three domains, implementing a holistic educational approach. It is also worth mentioning that the committee established by Bloom over the years has worked in depth on the cognitive and, so a lesser degree, the emotional aspects, but has not touched upon the psycho-motor ones (body and hands), which the authors openly declared themselves unqualified for. However, other researchers later brought forward the Bloom's taxonomy as for these "missing" aspects: here we observe that in the category of psycho-motor goals the keywords "builds" and "makes" appear only at the seventh level, the most advanced.

The taxonomy of Bloom, which has been very influential in pedagogical practice, especially in the United States, is very relevant for my research, since I decided to revert the conventional learning sequence outlined below...:

- I. Scientific acquisition/comprehension (theory).
- 2. Knowledge application (practice).
- 3. Evaluation of the emotional aspects (self-awareness).
- ... to into the following one:
- I. Awareness of one's emotional intelligence (feelings).
- 2. Experience of construction and self-expression (body-mind).
- 3. Scientific conceptualisation (theory).

Along this way, theory is always bound to the reaction of real world, which critically includes lived emotional states, avoiding the pitfalls of abstract theory. While traditional learning consists of analysis-synthesis-evaluation, project/problem-based learning instead envisages basic and structural skills that must always be part of each phase, since learning is based on a method that involves the conscious transition from planning to doing. The full involvement of practice into the heart of the construction of knowledge brings with it the realization that the theory developed in isolation can collapse once exposed to practice, hence the project plan must be designed with a "light" or, better, "agile" structure, since it's likely to be completely modified along the way. This change is a physiological factor in PBL, and an integral part of the so called "Agile Design". In an Agile Design³ approach, the application of an original project structure requires new skills and raises new needs in order to meet the inherent unpredictability of the real process, where the initial plan must be modified by approximation. We therefore

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The expression "agile methodology" was first used in software engineering and refers to a particular approach to project management used in software development from the early 2000s.

proceed (by approximation) with a focus on learning how to think in an interactive way: comprehending means learning how to continuously reframe the project's structure according to the practical responses encountered along the way, thus gradually approaching the solution. This course of action is reflected in Chapter 4 "Testing the (Revised) Model", and more precisely in point 4.2 "Learning from Practice: Two Italian Cases". There, I discuss how the application of the construction process began by working on both emotional and cognitive skills (knowing to be), then moving on to the practical-experiential ones (knowing to act) up to the theoretical-scientific abilities (knowing to know), and how all this involved a radical change in the people involved as well as in the process of design and construction they implemented. This strengthened the characterization of my research and its application as an "unfolding" process. The implementation of an unfolding process, as well as of the PBL, is therefore made up by a project plan that foresees the development of new skills in the making of things, which leads to modify the project plan in an iterative way, by approximation. Eventually, the education process is identified with learning to think in an iterative way, that is to say, approaching the solution gradually, step-by step: an inherently heuristic pathway to knowledge.

All this leads to a development of the self, the community and their ability to take part actively and consciously in the construction process. In transmissive teaching model<sup>4</sup> there is no provision for a real-world project, but rather we proceed by storing problems; in constructivist teaching, on the other hand, we understand and decide by successive approximations that progress from computational thinking to experience, to achieve iterative thinking. When implementing the project, the project and the list of backlogs must also change: during the path, the arrival point that we set, can also change. It is mandatory to be adaptive to best handle complexity, with a recognition that change is in fact the area where creativity comes to stage, and is therefore an area of arising opportunities, which is to be welcome and treasured rather than limited and reduced to "stay stuck to plan".

Critical in a PBL process is the "theory of the retrospective", i.e. the formation of a team that helps to reflect on what happened: which things were done correctly and which could be easily forgotten if not mentioned again. In the Construction and Therapy experiment this resulted in a continuous, relentless and constructive retrospective dialogue between end-users and staff. Moreover, the application of the retrospective review stressed the importance of the need for an adequately trained coordination team that work across the construction process in the management of the process itself.

## 1.4. GAP OF KNOWLEDGE AND RESEARCH QUESTION: FRAMING THE RESEARCH

The core of this research is a set of key questions, some of which found answers, others remain open and set the stage for further investigations in the future.

The main research question was whether it was possible to infer a new model of construction process that "has life in", starting from Christopher Alexander's writings and practice, by exploring a new focus related to the body-mind relationship with the

built environment.

The challenge is that Alexander has never explicitly written on formalizing a model living building process in any systematic way. Evidence of this comes from the many conversations I had with his scholars and the careful reading of his writings: here he reintroduces themes and construction methods which, however, are never handled in terms of a structured and replicable model process. Alexander's strong personality and his personal profoundly intuitive intellectual capabilities were the true glue that made of every opportunity an experimentation tending towards wholeness, capable to include all the subjects involved and, at the same time, be faithful to the architectural, aesthetic, historical, cultural and human principles, which were both part of the construction process implemented and his own vision. The lack of guidelines regarding the application of an accurate model process also affected the part of my research that dealt with the therapeutic area. Frequently, in Alexander's writings, we find explicit references to construction as a process capable of bringing health, well-being and life, but there's no mention of a systematic and coherent model process that one should follow in order to achieve this.

All this undoubtedly comes from the fact that it is impossible to embody the values and the author's vision of architecture within a rigid application scheme. This is demonstrated for example by his outraged reaction to the conventional interpretation of his "The Pattern Language" book, which reduced it to a mechanical manual of instructions. Therefore, I soon got aware that I absolutely had to avoid conceiving a rigid, mechanistic model process of construction, which would contradict the same principles of adaptability that it started from.

After long-lasting conversations with Maggie Moore Alexander and Prof. Porta, I have come to think that it is possible to take up the challenge set out by Alexander of exploring a new way of building. The way foreword that emerged along the exploration was to look for an evolutionary model, where we articulate the distinction between the structural (relatively stable) steps of the process and, simultaneously, the superstructural ones (exposed to fast and unpredictable change), where the latter had to be treated as an integral part of the model itself. In order to conceive such model, it was pivotal to carry out a research based on the concrete experiences lived during the various applications I conducted, and to always bear in mind the overarching values and principles that constituted the "higher" structure of Alexander's practice. Therefore, I realized that what I was looking for could only emerge from a practice-based research that would develop from the premise of unfolding process, and yet maintain certain a "direction of travel" around "long-lasting" principles and values.

From these realizations, others derived. Hereafter I will present those of a greater relevance and briefly summarize the results obtained.

The first question arising concerned the degree of permanence (in the structure) and variability (in the super-structure) that should characterize the model process.

I managed to reply to this only at the end of my research work, since it was necessary to re-assess the question on a case-by-case basis, across the various experiences and applications completed along the way. This led to a model with three structural (constitutive) phases (named "Land Exploration", "Pattern Language" and Conception

<sup>\*</sup>The transmissive teaching model is based on an ancient and traditional transmissive conception of knowledge. According to which, mathematical objects have their own existence, are abstract and therefore do not exist in physical reality. Furthermore, they do not depend on space, time or the man who uses them.

& Construction). They are stable because they meet the founding values of Alexander's vision: awareness of the feelings in the land, capacity of the construction process to express the participants' deepest needs and dreams, and finally the ambition that everything learned would become part of the individual himself during the construction process. On the other side, the super-structural part consists of everything that in the course of these three phases comes directly from life, or rather from the circumstances in which these phases are performed. It is this latter component that ensures adaptability to the process, but it is the former that ensures coherence to it.

A most relevant part of the investigation, obviously, was dedicated to figure out how Alexander himself put his values into play and how they could be transferred of my model (and if at all they should). Undertaking this part of the research required methodological rigor in order to implement, within the model's applications, a practical approach that generated as a result the arising of these principles as a by-product of the process design. It was a careful, and occasionally difficult, search for a marriage between abstract and concrete aspects, which each particular case gave rise during its unfolding in real life. For instance, it was very difficult to implement an authentically unfolding construction process through the bureaucratic procedures and consolidated construction practices typical of System B, which did not conform to the methods and the approach that was to be tested.

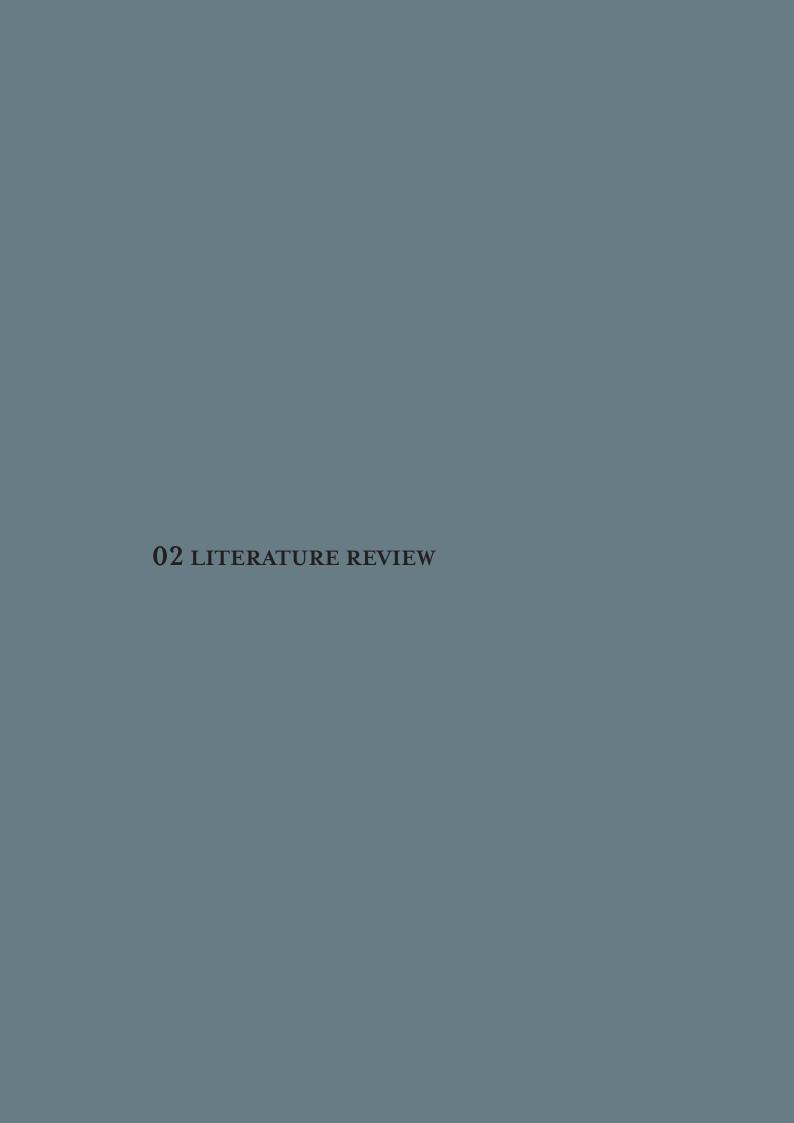
It was also necessary to understand and be able to explain what "therapy" was meant to be in the context of a living building process. The therapeutic part had to be the space where to perform the construction of real things characterized by a strong symbolic value and capable of expressing the realization of the human being. It had to foresee, therefore, a process of reconstruction and rediscovery of the individual through what s/he could make in terms of small artefacts, buildings or even urban plans: it was crucial to start from the self to achieve a profound awareness and capacity to externalize it, both at individual and collective level. This awareness and its manifestation are what allows a path of healing of the person and the community in the lived space.

So, the therapeutic part consists in the expression of one's self and the bodymind through the construction process, and it develops through all the three phases identified above. Again, it was essential to explore which disciplines and techniques had or could cooperate with architecture in that. Construction and Therapy was by definition an interdisciplinary process as it started from a holistic vision of the human being. As a result, the disciplines involved had to belong as much to the area of "hard" sciences as to the human, where both the areas had to interact and integrate because the very concept of body-mind carries with it the inclusion of both into the making of things: medicine, biology, physics, mathematics, psychology, philosophy, anthropology and art therapy. The architectural work here had to become the framework within which these disciplines were applied. During the research work, interdisciplinarity found specific areas of specialist competence, in particular: psychology, psychiatry, art therapy, anthropology and philosophy and pedagogy. I will discuss this in detail in Chapter 2 entitled "Literature Review", specifically in point 2.2. "Interdisciplinary Explorations".

Moreover, I would stress here that my work is structured as an action research based on experiences and practical cases of real-world projects that led to the development of continuous questions and to the consultation "in vivo" of new texts and authors. The argument addressed in this research originated from experience rather than from preliminary theoretical constructs. The structure of this thesis itself reflects this

underlining character of the experiential work conducted on the ground, as a narrative from which key questions emerged. This is to a degree aligned with Robert Yin<sup>5</sup> "Case Study Research", as a subjective story in which the time and theoretical sequence generates theory from practice.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Robert K. Yin is an American social scientist and president of COSMOS Corporation, known for his work on case study research and qualitative research. The case study is a research method used, in the context of complex issues, to broaden the experience or reinforce what is already known from previous researches. It is employed in different areas of science, in particular it is widely used in social sciences, and allows to put the emphasis on detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their connections. Robert K. Yin identified three specific types of case studies: exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Exploratory cases are occasionally considered as a prelude to research, explanatory cases can be employed for random investigations, while descriptive ones require the previous development of a descriptive theory.



I will present here the readings that have influenced and fueled the research the most along its way. I will touch upon publications in architecture, particularly from Alexander, to then pass on to others from other fields of knowledge such as psychology, anthropology and art-therapy. All these subjects have been fundamentally important for my ability to conceive a construction process based on an organic view of the body-mind, i.e. the harmonious interaction between mind and body.

The literature review develops in two main steps.

Firstly, a concise documentation of my journey through Alexander's own work is presented. This is about the driving theoretical principles, as well as the practical side of his work as a builder and maker. This first step involved an exploration of Alexander's work as presented by himself in his writings as much as a parallel one on his inner circle of former students and life-long collaborators. These latter were precious indirect sources of knowledge on three aspects: a) Alexander's own work (again), this time seen from an external point of view; b) the impact of the work done, how it was received from the academic and non-academic compounds; and c) the "environmental" level of information, about the facts, people and conditions within which his legacy got build up every day, which only can help generating the connections between ascertained facts and shed light on their original meanings.

Secondly, I also engaged in the review of areas of knowledge external to Alexander and, indeed, to architecture as a "discipline". Here, in particular, elements of psychology, art therapy, anthropology and pedagogy were touched upon.

A very succinct report of both these studies is offered in the next sections. Throughout this report, attention will be posed to singling out the individual elements of Alexander's theory and practice as emerging along the way, and understanding them in light of his theory. Indeed, the whole focus of the literature review is on distilling those elements, in view of deducting (or better inferring) from them the model process that he recursively happened to follow in the practice of actually making living architecture.

Finally, my conclusions about these elements are offered in the last section of this chapter. In the main body of this thesis I am only offering a short version of this voyage in the literature, which is why it may appear a bit scattered or, at times, even apodeictical. I refer the reader to the extended version reported in Appendix A for a more argumentative discussion.

#### 2.1. A JOURNEY ACROSS CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER'S WORLD

It came natural to me, when I first came across Christopher Alexander and his holistic view of architecture in various conversations with Prof. Porta, to start from his "magnus opus" in four volumes "The Nature of Order" (NoO) (Alexander et al, 2002-2005). I found in it the founding principles that had always guided me through my previous research and studies. I began collaborating with the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow

and during my work I had first-hand experience of the ideas that came right from NoO. All of this resulted in further commitment to continue this line of studies, which I did reading "A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction" (APL) (Alexander et al, 1977). This was also a moment of profound reflection and progress. I began to think that I could conceive a model of constructive process, which had as its fundamental principle the re-union of feelings' awareness and practical action. Furthermore, in 2012 "The Battle for the Life and the Beauty of the Earth" (Battle) (Alexander et al, 2012) was released, which was of pivotal importance.

Subsequently to the above-mentioned books, (NoO, APL and Battle) I continued expanding my exploration through others such as "The Production of Houses" (Production) (Alexander, 1985), "The Oregon Experiment" (Oregon) (Alexander et al, 1975), "The Timeless Way of Building" (Timeless Way) (Alexander, 1979), and various other papers and informal writings, many of which were provided by Maggie Moore Alexander with the consent of Christopher himself.

## 2.1.1. Battle: Alexander's Principles and Methods

Battle is Alexander's latest and last book (2012). It defines the importance of establishing a human system of construction, as opposed to the current industrial system dominated by appearance, power and money. He names the former System A and the latter System B. The book has as its object the description of a complex design, the new Eishin campus in Tokyo, Japan, which he designed and built with the collaboration of the book's coauthors.

## **Principles**

A New Civilization for a New Human System of Building

In the preface there is a passage entitled "New Architecture, a New Civilization" to indicate that the book has much wider intentions than just telling the story of a single construction case. In fact, right at the outset it is stated "our book describes a revolutionary vision of the human environment" (p. I). His anthropological vision of the living being pays attention to building practices' change over time.

Relationship Between People and Buildings: Principles of Well Being, Bringing Out Life and Wholeness

In System A, a 'living' construction is inserted in circular relationship between the people who built and live in it.

System A and System B

There are two archetypal systems of production: System A and System B.

In System A, creation and production are understood as organic processes and are ruled by human judgment. In System B what matters are regulations, procedures, efficiency and profit; society is seen as a large machine.

System A is used to refer to "more life-giving systems", while System B to "less life-giving systems". Moreover, the difference between environments that have more and less life can be measured by a series of indicators that refer to physical, mental and ecological health and to the way people are treated socially.

In the current mainstream process (System B) Architecture is transmitted only through drawings, but the reality of things is only very partially accessible by drawing. Alexander sustains that local adaptation can work if implemented day by day, during the construction and after the construction, thus improving the shape of and between the buildings. On the contrary, the contemporary commercial conditions make adaptation impossible in practice.

The fundamental principles expressed in Battle are:

- Allow life to flourish. Activate and intensify life itself through processes that are part of a system of construction which is radically alternative to the conventional one A.
- Implement a social/ economic/ political system that allows to overcome the current mechanistic logic (System B), in favour of one that is capable of making living processes possible, which are based on the living beings' natural criteria.
- Enhance awareness and recognition of the Wholeness, and at the same time recognize the actions that are destructive and non-life-giving.
- Seek a deep integration between human beings, buildings, set of buildings and urban plans in order to achieve a strong sense of belonging.
- Be people capable of courage and love: the "need for courage is a real requirement" (p. 100). Courage "is absolutely necessary as a practical matter in the world we live today" (p. 100), since what contemporary life is experiencing is, in fact, a battle.

#### Methods

Clues of a method of construction seem to arise in Part Four of Battle, entitled, "Groundwork for a New Creation System". Here the work carried out for the Eishin campus in 1987 is considered valid universally. The elements that are considered necessary to create a "living building complex, place, community, or settlement" (p. 380) are described.

In Battle, the generative process is presented as something that, although resembling to some degree a conventional production system, also has elements of art, feeling and inspiration.

> Architecture as a Tangible Spatial Construct: Witnessing the Comparison Between System A and System B

Architecture, which seems to be far from theoretical debates, is instead a living testimony of the comparison between the two systems: the domination over the physical space seems to be, above all, the battleground where the clash between the two systems occurs more acutely.

#### From Fifteen Properties to Fifteen Transformations

There exists in space a structure that can be identified as the Wholeness of the system at any exact moment in time. This structure is a rough configuration of space, which shows one or more properties that improve or reinforce "centres".

When working within the Wholeness, we observe fifteen recurrent properties of space. In Battle, they are translated in fifteen transformations, as they belong to the process rather than the object. Precisely because they are characteristics of the process generated by the Wholeness, they generate life. These fifteen transformations are active elements of the continuous change and adaptation in space of any living system.

In conclusion Alexander indicates the essential spatial basis which we can start from to begin the profound understanding of the whole and the Wholeness. Centres constitute the Wholeness across scales.

## Wholeness Manifests Itself Only Gradually

Wholeness comes into existence gradually, as nature is continually created, day by day. We are called to be aware that Wholeness can only develop action after action, over time, and can only manifest itself gradually.

## Wholeness Vivifies the Environment

From glimpses of ordinary life, we can see that the beauty of the physical world helps, supports and involves life.

## The Rebirth of Civilization

In the last Chapter of Battle, Alexander maintains that using very carefully the paradigm of gradual action (unfolding), we can recover the most profound aspects of human nature and orient ourselves towards a civilization imbued with compassion and ethics. This requires and generates at the same time a renewed physical world, together with a new way of dealing with the land.

## 2.1.2. "Timeless Way", "APL" and "Oregon": the Question of Patterns in Alexander

"A Pattern Language" (APL) is an essay on architecture and urban planning, published in 1977 by Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein, members of the Centre for

Environmental Structure of Berkeley<sup>5</sup>, California. It is considered one of the greatest bestsellers in architecture.

The book essentially consists in the illustration of a new language, called "pattern language" in that it is based on timeless entities called "patterns". Patterns are typical solutions to recurrent problems in the design of buildings, neighbourhoods and cities. The authors themselves in the introduction explain that the 253 patterns of APL as a whole constitute a language. The patterns introduce a problem that is recurrent and then give it a solution that is typical, time proved and evidence-based. Every pattern is then linked to other pattern that are applied at larger scale and smaller scale in the book. In this way, the authors give ordinary people, not just professionals, the possibility to work with their neighbours to improve a city or a neighbourhood, design a house for themselves or work with colleagues to design an office, a workshop or a public building like a school, by navigating up and down the scales starting at any point, and following the links between patterns.

## My interpretation of the Pattern Language

"A Pattern Language" (APL) and the Pattern Language (PL)

When I read APL, I matured a significantly different opinion of the book and what it is about.

At its very beginning, the reader is warned that Volume I, entitled "The Timeless Way of Building" 6, and Volume 2 "The Pattern Language", are in fact to be considered two halves of one single work.

APL provides a language to build and plan and a detailed description of the patterns, while "Timeless Way" provides the theory and instructions for using this language. The "Timeless Way" is the definition and explanation of the principles and concepts as well as their origins. The two books evolved in parallel over the course of eight years.

The very nature of the task of building cities and buildings is expressed in The Timeless Way of Building: it shows how both cities and buildings do not have any chance of becoming alive, without them being built by all the people who are part of the social community to which they belong, and without people sharing a common pattern language in which to build them. It is made clear in APL that a possible configuration of a pattern language is presented.

Once aware of the common interpretation of APL, doubts and questions

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Alexander was the founder of the Centre for Environmental Structure (CES) in 1967, and is still the President of the Company. In 2000, he founded PatternLanguage.com.

<sup>&</sup>quot;The Timeless Way of Building (1979) is book by Alexander where he presents a new theory of architecture (and design in general) that is based on the understanding and configuration of design patterns. Although it was published later, it is essentially the introduction to A Pattern Language and The Oregon Experiment. In the book, the author introduces the concept of "quality without a name", and argues that we should work in order to include this nameless quality in our buildings. The book is written as a long series of italicized headlines followed by short sections providing further details and it includes several full-page photo illustrations. The style used is also unusual for an architectural writing: at times resembling prose poetry or religious scripture.

immediately arose in me. I wondered: how could a language be considered a "method of implementation" and not a "construction process", i.e. a pathway to build a whole, a complete and significant thing?

A consequence of this superficial approach to the book, which is also a reason of its immense editorial success, is that it is mostly utilised as a "book of recipes", where patterns are taken as quick-fix products of universal applicability, rather than an example of practices to be regenerated at each project process, as part of the process itself.

Two Complementary Approaches to Patterns: "Vision" and "Observation"

I decided to further explore my concerns regarding APL, and together with m supervisor organised a meeting with Alexander and his wife Maggie Moore Alexander. I explained my point of view in an email to them, as follows:

Email to Maggie Moore Alexander, April 26 2014 (quoted with permission):

"The whole premise of the general interpretation of A Pattern Language is that the problem posed by Alexander would be the following: the city is a complex matter, architects can't design complexity for limits which are fundamentally cognitive, this is why their designs are ugly, so Chris proposes a tool (the PL) that aims at making design capable of creating complexity. To us this is wrong and what we find irritating about this is that the very simple fact of life, that the quality Alexander is interested in does not come by design, is apparently incapable to find its way in the mind of architects or planners. It's not a problem of design, and we don't think that Alexander has ever been primarily interested in the destiny of architects. We believe that the problem he has always been focused on is how to bring this quality into buildings. Which means: how can we create that quality without name that he has so clearly linked with life? Life is the key, and Alexander has always highlighted this point with extreme clarity. Now, the point with the PL as much as with anything else, is that it is not a design method, it is a process method. It's a language, i.e. a structure that allows processes to happen. Processes must include human beings doing things for real, in the real place, with their hands. This is what brings life into the process and allows beauty to unfold. However, the most important part is: we do think that this wider notion has expanded in Alexander himself in time, and APL is an early book in this sense that actually can easily be misinterpreted as if it was looking at a problem of design for architects. The essence of Alexander' thought is much greater in "The Production of Houses", for example, reaches full expression in The Nature of Order, and is magnificently exemplified in Battle. Here the PL takes a very different form."

Maggie Moore Alexander answered using these words:

"I am delighted that I have finally found someone with whom I can have this conversation. After APL was published, Chris could see from the way people used it that he had not gotten his point across, and that is why he spent the next 30 years writing The Nature of Order to talk about life and Wholeness. It was typical for people to select, mix and match patterns, rather than understand that they needed to be in a process."

Starting from this we tried to define some important and structural points of the Pattern Language according to our point of view.

The PL is the combination of one exercise of visioning and one of observation. The Visioning part is aimed at extracting from the community the authentic vision of what-is-to-be-built (a house, a school, a cluster of houses, a park...) as shared by the whole of community members. The Observation part is aimed at identifying what most of the people in the community ordinarily do with regards to what-is-to-be-built.

The distinction between Visioning and Observation is relative to the way we – the design team – get information from the community and the place. The processing phase after the survey should be conceived again as interactive.

In the visioning the aim is to establish an authentic vision of what-is-to-be-built that is shared by most of or the whole building community, including end users and relevant stakeholders.

The principle is that we all normally live far away from a clear awareness of what our aspirations are authentically, as that space at the individual level is heavily colonized by ideologies, images and expectations cast on us from exogenous sources (education, image industry, information networks). Therefore, we need to structure the interaction accurately in order to get the visions from the individuals at the appropriate level.

A further important point is that while visions, which are specific of individuals, are personal dreams, those that are shared are patterns: collective dreams. So, we need to identify the patterns, not the dreams. But we can only access the collective patterns through the individual dreams. Dreams are the gates to patterns.

Differently from the Visioning part, the Observation part is necessarily place specific: we would be looking at behaviours in the spatial context of the building site.

## 2.1.3. The Nature of Order: a Few Steps into a New Cosmology

NoO was published 25 years later than APL (1977). In fact, it is the reaction to the way APL was received by the world of architecture.

In NoO he proposes the foundations of a world that is entirely interconnected, where the separation of inner and outer reality is negated, hence the structure of the self and that of the "objects out there" is fundamentally the same, and is expressed in spatial terms. In NoO a real essential identity between life-beauty and architectural configuration in space is posed, which relies on a pervading structure that unifies the two domains, a structure that is inherently spatial and is, in fact, grounded on the order of space: Wholeness (W).

NoO is in four volumes, published between 2002 and 2005. The cosmological portrait on which the entire construction of the work relies is in particular introduced in two chapters of Book I "The Phenomenon of Life": Chapter 3 "Wholeness and the Theory of Centres", and Chapter I4 "Life Comes Directly from the Wholeness".

#### Life as a Phenomenon

The Wholeness is made of entities called "centres". Centres are the Wholeness' building

Alexander states that the idea of Wholeness has not yet found a precise definition in architectural culture, even if it is one of the major issues of contemporary science.

#### Wholeness

Alexander introduces a reality of the physical space named Wholeness (W), a space made of regions of space, each made of subregions that differ from one another according to the intensity of their centres. There are regions with a high degree of intensity and some with zero intensity, but intensity is not binary. All space is fundamentally constituted by centres to some degree.

The overall configuration of the settlement of centres in mutual not exclusive nor hierarchical relationship with each other, together with their intensity, composes a single structure which is the Wholeness of that specific region of space.

The Wholeness is defined at any moment in time by the state of its structure of centres in continuous change, across scales. As such, Wholeness is characterized as a fundamental part of the physics of matter and in particular as a substratum of all life in space. This implies that life is always directly an expression of Wholeness, as much as Wholeness is an expression of life.

#### Centres

The basic law of the nature of Wholeness resides in the concept of centre: centres are physical entities made possible by the order of space that they constitute, which are essentially characterised by unity in their form that is a reflex of a unity of use, where both unities are in fact the same thing. That is to say: centres are parts or local complexes of sub-centres and are not pre-existing; they are created by Wholeness by being themselves constituent components of it. The Wholeness is a centre made of parts, which are other centres, and these parts are created by Wholeness. The parts and Wholeness work in a holistic way and define themselves as centres, i.e. organized areas of space with an internal coherence and a relationship with the context. We can also call them distinct points of space that show a centrality.

This is a vision of matter that literally echoes latest achievements in quantum field theory.

## "Unfolding": The Living Construction Process.

Reading NoO also led me to the idea that during construction, a morphogenetic understanding of the environment and its becoming is necessary. The consequence of

this understanding is very direct on the form of the building process itself, which should be reconceived as a constant change that involves the generation of the object and its continuous change over time after the design and construction. In order for this process to be "live", it has to be in the form of a continuous "unfolding" where at any step the process moves from the existing configuration of centres to a stronger and better one. This is how morphogenesis works in nature, and is how it should work in architecture as well. This puts under scrutiny the relationship between those who design and build and the creative process itself, which is linked to life.

## 2.1.4. Exploring Alexander's World

A second strategy that I put in place to better understand Alexander's work involved a range of personal contacts with scholars and practitioners who had long been part of Alexander's inner circle of friends and collaborators. Luckily, I had the opportunity to meet—both in person and remotely, exchange emails and have skype meetings with many of them. I also had the privilege of being received at Alexander's home and exchange ideas and documents directly with him and his wife and co- author, Maggie Moore Alexander.

The impact that this long activity of personal exchange has had on my work has been enormous. It gave me the chance to deepen, consolidate and compare my own understandings with the first-hand human experiences which generated those ideas in the first place, and developed them in decades of collective work. Moreover, it allowed me access to non-published materials which otherwise would have been impossible to reach, some of which have played a crucial part in my own work, and stimulated the generous production of new materials as part of that intellectual intercourse.

## Maggie Moore Alexander

Maggie Moore Alexander, in particular, followed my research work constantly and carefully, helping me out a lot on various occasions.

## The Land Exploration

Maggie supported me since the very beginning of my research, that is when I was trying to translate the search for the centres in the land in a practical method, in particular what I came to call Land Exploration.

The "Quality Without a Name" in the Pattern Language

Maggie was essential in leading me to the vision of the PL as a process rather than a "catalogue" of solutions, and was also very supportive, along with Chris himself, in deepening my understanding of the "Quality without a name" in the PL itself.

According to Maggie, in order to plan according to System A it is useful to identify the basic "rules" that interact to produce a complex behaviour. In System A, therefore, it is necessary to identify such rules, which generate beauty and life over time, through co-action, following the initial design stage. Planning groups may be asked questions to help them to know how to "plan less and better" as well as support informal participation and cooperation in their specific contexts.

#### Alexander's inner circle and CES

I was involved in the work carried out by the Centre for Environmental Structures (CES, https://ced.berkeley.edu/). Maggie put me in touch with CES members she thought could help me, and kindly asked to make themselves available to collaborate with me. This was fundamental to the development of my research.

Among the many I got in touch with along the way, those I worked with the most were: Yodan Rofè, Michael Mehaffy, Howard Davis, Hajo Neis and Susan Ingham.

## Yodan Rofé

I elaborated on Yodan's ideas on how to create feeling maps, which turned out to be very helpful in the 2012/2013 VIP program (see Chapter 3) as well as the Rodari project. In particular Yodan shared with me his paper "Mapping Feeling: an Approach to the Study of Emotional Response to the Built Environment and Landscape". This essay, co-authored by Amelia Rosenberg Weinreb, allowed me to understand how my starting point to get to the feeling maps was different from theirs: they focused on the observation of people's daily lives, while I worked on interiority, on the self. However, I found that both were aimed at understanding where feelings about places were shared and why.

Furthermore, together with Prof. Porta we had the idea to investigate how System A could be implemented at large scale, the of the urban system. From these meetings and reflections two papers were published, entitled: "The Production of Cities: Alexander and the Problem of 'System A' at Large Scale" and "The City and the Grid: Building Beauty at Large Scale."

#### System A at Large Scale

The passage from the small to the large scale implies a new conception of the "project" that must be re-conceptualised in an evolutionary framework. System A and System B appeared as a binary system, but in real life it happens that System B is merged, erroneously, in System A and therefore they are mixed. In today's society System B is dominant over System A and the latter has almost disappeared. It is therefore necessary

to start thinking about System A more extensively and with the possibility of being rooted in the society itself, and this can only be done by conceiving System A at large scale.

Yodan proposed to start from the results, with the analysis of consolidated historical cities, in order to identify the processes that originated them. In historical cities, a degree of masterplanning has always been part of the evolution of the city. They are therefore configured as systems that organize themselves autonomously in an organic process, which the Masterplan is part of. However, the Masterplan itself can actually be conceived in a variety of ways. In particular, masterplans can be laid out so to hold a specifically evolutionary nature in such a way as to favour the vital processes and among these the more properly informal ones.

#### Michael Mehaffy

Michael Mehaffy<sup>7</sup>, Alexander's student at the University of Berkeley in the early 1980s, worked with him at Martinez House, near Berkeley. He recognizes Alexander's great educational influence on his life and work.

## Land Exploration and the Fifteen Properties

Michael and I talked in particular of the Land Exploration (LE). He defined it as a way to identify the key structure we are working with, which is a way of formulating what needs to be done in order to develop this structure through the work, a diagnostic process. In this sense, the LE and the PL are complementary and integral and can generate an adaptable form of success. Michael considered the LE necessary as the conventional approaches are no longer able to make the construction process adaptive. There are complex reasons behind this but all related to the evolution of technology in a structure too mechanical, lifeless, which provides powerful short-term benefits, but very destructive in the long term (this is the core of the problem of sustainability).

It was crucial to understand Michael's ideas about the role of architects in the PL as facilitators and translators of the schemes into appropriate forms, and the Fifteen Properties as guiding principles for subsequent action on the ground. According to Michael, the Fifteen Properties are functional to translate the PL into a specific physical form.

While working at the Rodari school, Michael's ideas that the quality of the relations between design staff and builders/inhabitants shows up in the final building, enriching it and making it more suitable for life, recurred in and informed my work. According to him the construction process allows minor adaptation actions if separated from a process of involvement of inhabitants, which, in turn, allows adaptation to the real models of

Michael W. Mehaffy, Ph.D., is a designer, builder, author, researcher, educator, and consultant in building and development, with an international practice based in Portland, Oregon. He has held teaching and/or research appointments at six universities in five countries, and he is on the editorial boards of two international journals. He is also on the boards of four NGOs including Portland-based Sustasis Foundation, where he is Executive Director, and the London-based International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture and Urbanism (INTBAU). Michael studied and worked closely with Alexander, and has published extensively on his work.

life. This helped me a lot in defining my own approach at a construction model.

In 2015 Michael edited a book entitled "A City is Not a Tree: 50th Anniversary Edition", which deals with Alexander's homonymous essay published in 1965. I also published with Yodan and Prof. Porta the paper "The City and the Grid: Building Beauty at Large Scale" discussed before. The latest book by Michel Mehaffy "Cities Alive: Jane Jacobs, Alexander, and the Roots of the New Urban Renaissance" (2017), talks about how, today, cities are experiencing a renaissance due to a new attention to their functioning in the light of the people who live in there. The book is an account which explores the figures of Jane Jacobs and Alexander and how their most significant insights shaped several generations of scholars, professionals and activists. In this latest work, Michael argues that, however, the desired rebirth is still immature, which raises very serious concerns in a period of rapid and often non-homogeneous urbanization.

#### Howard Davis

Howard Davis<sup>8</sup> is co-author of Alexander's "The Production of Houses", published in 1985. The book tells the story of a cluster of buildings built in 1976 by Alexander the CES in Mexicali, Northern Mexico. Each house is different from the others and the book shows how each family was helpful in building and conceiving their home according to the needs of the family and through the PL9.

## Experiencing Alexander's Pattern Language

Howard confirmed that Alexander wrote the PL in very physical terms and that the goal was to build patterns capable of physically transmitting the form proposed by the PL process itself. In their work, they always tried to get people in touch with the land, asking them what they knew about their environment and showing profound interest in what they said. Howard confirmed that the PL was interpreted and implemented in a different way than what was meant by Alexander and his collaborators. A good design process must provide for the involvement of people: this is what allows to work within a process that is based on the reflection of life in designing and building.

## Hajo Neis

Hajo Neis<sup>10</sup> is co-author of Battle and collaborated, as supervisor, to the construction of the Eishin Campus in Japan, as part of CES. He also took part in the drafting of NoO.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Howard Davis is an American writer and professor of architecture at the University of Oregon in Eugene. A native of New York City, he studied physics at Cooper Union and at Northwestern University and received a master's degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, where he worked with Alexander. He has worked on projects in the Pacific Northwest, India, England, Mexico and Israel.

The Production of Houses by Alexander with Howard Davis, Julio Martinez and Don Corner Oxford University Press, 1985.

<sup>1</sup>ºHajo Nais PhD (Architecture) University of California, Berkeley, 1989; MCP (City Planning) University of California, Berkeley, 1980; MArch University of California, Berkeley, 1979 Dipl. Ing. (Architecture and Urban Design) Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany, 1976; Hajo Neis, Associate Professor examines the concepts of quality and value in architecture and urban structure. The director of the University's architectural studies program in Portland, he teaches design studios, courses, and seminars in urban architecture and theory with an emphasis on the art of building.

## PURPLSOC - Pursuit of Pattern Languages for Societal Change

Hajo's contribution to my conception and understanding of the PL was key. He is part of the group that organizes and manages the Pursuit of Pattern Languages for Societal Change series of conferences (PURPLSOC https://www.purplsoc.org/). Thanks to his generous help I have been able to present two publications, written with Yodan Rofè and Prof. Porta, at the conferences held in Austria in July 2016 and San Francisco in October of the same year.

I discussed with him the critical relationship between planning rules and informal participation, hence the role of urban planners in bottom up generative and participatory processes of interaction and cooperation; we investigated conventional requirements, procedures and practices still mainstream in urban planning in large part of the world, and which new practices should be proposed and tested. We discussed about which experiments were feasible. Furthermore, we talked about how to identify and support informal participation and cooperation, what obstacles would stand in the way of establishing constructive conditions for that, the manner in which professionals continue to explore the idea of planning, and how to incentivize and allow genuine post-design collaboration.

## Living Systems and Living Architecture

Also, the discussion covered the relationship between living systems and living architecture, from which three important ideas emerged:

- The "Old View:" which is based on a dichotomy between life and non-life.
- The "Vision of the Living Systems" and the consequences of non-living the elements that are part of the living systems themselves.
- The "Living Architecture View" or rather, the idea that everything has a certain quantity of life inherent to itself.

All three ideas have at their core the notion that life is generated and manifested in the everyday: architecture here is considered the vehicle and instrument of expression of this quality. We concluded that a living system can only be served by a living architecture, which is necessary to it. In order to get to a combination of living systems and living architecture, the theories to keep into account are the following:

- · Conservation of organic life;
- Understanding of the living system;
- · Conception of a living architecture.

Susan Ingham

Susan Ingham<sup>11</sup> was particularly helpful to clarify the phase that we name Conception &

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup>Susan Ingham is a licensed architect practicing in Seattle, Washington. Her firm, KASA Architecture, was founded in 2004 and specializes in residential design. The main focus of her work is to try to create environments with beauty where her clients can feel a deep sense of belonging. Susan obtained both her bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, where she studied and worked intensively with Alexander and his colleagues. Susan has given lectures at national and international conferences, and her work has been published in several books and periodicals.

Construction, hence re-uniting in one single indivisible experience the act of design and that of construction, which conversely are strictly separated in the industrial processes of making. This stage is configured as the synthesis of Land Exploration and Pattern Language in a creative activity of making that is anchored to the project site.

## The Project Language

In Battle the two elements, PL and LE, are treated in parallel. As we will see further on in this thesis, LE and PL are two different processes of interactive analysis respectively looking at the centres in the actual project site (the land) and those in our dreams (the ideal new building). Once the reality of these two structures are identified, it is on the synthesis of both that the design and construction of the new building operates, since the structure of the new building is to expand and reinforce the existing structure in the land. This synthesis in Susan and Hajo's Project Language achieved a more sophisticated and yet simple form, closer to what conventionally would be termed a "preliminary design". The two methods were implemented experimentally together during the Building Beauty session 2017–18, where Susan and I had many opportunities to discuss and test ideas with the students in a practical construction process.

A more in-depth discussion of the Project Language and its application is offered in further on in Chapter 4.

#### 2.2. INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATIONS

While reading and examining in depth the works of Alexander together with his inner circle and closest collaborators, I also dedicated myself to the exploration of different disciplines, apparently distant from architecture and construction, which were recalled in different ways by the knowledge I was gradually achieving along the way. These explorations led me first to look at psychology and psychiatry in relation to self and collective unconsciousness. Then I dealt with anthropology, since it turned out to be essential to articulate the process of inhabitation that relates people and place, and its collective rituals and behavioural patterns. Afterwards, I turned to art therapy and psychomotricity in order to understand how the body-mind could be put centre stage in the construction process. Below, I will describe the main written works that I have perused in this interdisciplinary journey, always keeping a focus on concepts and method of practical use in my search for a living building model process.

## 2.2.1. Psychology and psychiatry

From Analytic Psychology to Gestalt and Humanistic Psychology

The Analytical Psychology of Carl Gustav Jung

Analytical psychology in Carl Gustav Jung has the clinical purpose of bringing the subject back to reality, freeing him from pathogenic disorders. In 1928, Jung claimed that the unconscious is composed of images, the archetypes, which determine the psychism, whose symbolic representation is expressed in dreams, art and religion.

Personality is considered as made up of a number of separate but interacting systems. They are:

- · The ego, namely the conscious mind.
- The personal unconscious, which contains forgotten or repressed information, too weak to leave a conscious trace in the person and the complexes.
- The collective (or transpersonal) unconscious, the basis of the psyche, is conceived as an immutable structure proper to the whole of humanity. It is the agglomeration of latent memories from the past as well as the psychic residue of the evolutionary development of man, layered after the repeated experiences of countless generations.

A crucial element for my research work, also with regard to the PL and the LE, is Jung's conception of the dream.

On the dreams Jung grounded the design and actual construction of his own house, a building that lasted a lifetime which he built with his own hands in Bollingen. The consonance of Jung's work, even at just the linguistic level, with Alexander's, cannot be overestimated.

During the Eranos meetings, among other things, Jung presented his idea of "archetype", which etymologically means "first imprint". He observed that in myths, legends and fairy tales of every culture, regardless of their place of origin, dominant themes and images frequently recur. Jung found these same images with surprising precision in his patients' dreams, hallucinations and fantasies. He deduced that they represented the building blocks of our original psyche. According to Jung, our body, as well as our mind, has its own history, and in both the unconscious and the body elements of the past are deposited. By "exploring" these sediments we sometimes succeed in reconnecting the consciousness to its deep origins, its distant past, its roots.

#### The Evolutionary School

Since Jung, the evolutionary approach has evolved and, to date, there are three main "schools" which have developed from the original analytical psychology.

The Classical school, which is mainly identified in the activity of the C.G. Jung Institute of Zurich, continues to articulate and carry forward the original tradition of analytical psychology, emphasizing in particular the aspects related to the individuation process.

The Evolutionary school, mainly developed in England thanks to Michael Fordham, proposes a deeper relationship between the relational psychoanalytic models and those proper of analytic psychology.

The Archetypal school, which is known in the psychological and philosophical world above all through the critical writings of James Hillman, its founder and main exponent, where great attention is paid to the archetypal symbolic meanings.

## The Characteristics of the Therapeutic Process and the Role of the Therapist

Jung brought a great innovation in psychiatric practice by reaching the awareness that the therapist's function consists not only in the rigid application of a "mechanical method", but in giving attention and importance to the patient's "life story" and to the stories he tells. As a consequence, analytic psychotherapy aims to reduce and transform the mental and existential discomfort of a symptom. This action takes place through a process of progressive awareness of the individual with respect to its parts, usually denied, buried and removed on a subconscious level.

Analytic psychology considers the individual not as one, but as composed of several parts and it contemplates the disharmony between these parts as generating conflicts. The fact that the individual is aware of this, leads him to elaborate and implement the conflict itself.

#### The Gestalt

The Gestalt or 'whole form' approach is a school of thought founded in Berlin at the beginning of the 20th century in opposition to Structuralism , widespread at the time.

The central principle is: "The whole is other than the sum of the parts" (Zerbetto, 1998). This means that the whole perceived is characterized not only by the sum of the individual sensory stimuli (the parts), but by a greater meaning that allows us to understand the whole form.

According to Gestalt psychology, perceptual experience is not preceded by a sensation but is a process governed by innate mental laws. These laws determine the way objects are perceived breaking down what human beings perceive in schemes capable of organizing and detecting the whole form. The perceived is part of a system of more complex meanings present in the central nervous system. Thus, perception occurs in two phases: form analysis and cognitive processing. The Gestalt says that we can only see what is processed after we perceive and give meaning to it.

#### Kurt Lewin

Kurt Lewin used information from the field of physics to explain the relationship between the individual and the total field, or environment. He developed in psychology the "Field Theory", according to which every object cannot be understood if not in relation to the context in which it is included. He distinguished the field from the perceptive field: the first is the reality that

surrounds us and in which the individual acts in order to achieve his objectives, while the second is a frame from which new figures perceived as relevant to be able to pursue our objectives or goals emerge. Therefore, the same object can assume different meanings depending on the need expressed by the individual at that precise moment. According to Lewin, needs determine and give meaning to what the human being perceives in a field.

## Humanistic Psychology

#### Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow

Through his clinical and therapeutic experiences, Carl Rogers identified a new series of motivations, not completely attributable to the psychoanalytic paradigm of the sexual conflict, that triggered him to explore, together with Abraham Maslow, a richer series of motivations of primary and physiological needs in human conduct. Maslow's humanistic psychology, coupled with Rogers' psychotherapy, identifies an alternative attitude to both the psychoanalytical and behavioural therapies of the period.

In order to solicit openness towards changes, Rogers rejects the whole "codified technical arsenal" and the very concept of "method" in psychotherapy. He firmly thinks that the treatment can only take place in a meeting between two people: the therapist and the patient. The historical value of Rogers' model consists in denouncing every technicality and in shifting the attention from the symptom to the interpersonal and human relationship.

Maslow introduces a vision of the individual based on researches conducted on healthy subjects. He believes that we all have an essential inner nature, seen as a set of innate inclinations and tendencies, which are however weak and easily swayed by cultural pressure and habit. In this way some aspects of our inner nature are removed or forgotten, while remaining latent at the level of the unconscious. Only if this essential nucleus is denied, the person manifests a psychological illness.

He argues that the intimate nature of the human being is not originally evil, but good or neutral (pre-moral) and from this we gather that it is necessary to support the intimate nucleus of individuals, rather than repress it: there's no psychological health without the acceptance and manifestation of it.

In his hierarchy of needs theory, the author focuses on "self-actualizing" people and tries to define their peculiarities with respect to those driven by "physiological needs". self- actualizing people have a different, less ego-centred, more objective and more creative way to relate to the world, to know, to love; they rely on intuitive and aesthetic intuitions, certain that language and concepts are unsuitable to express the totality of the reality. They face more frequently the so-called "peak experiences", those fundamental moments of love, mystical, naturalistic, aesthetic, intellectual experience that make life worth living. They live suffering but through maturity and they are able to move from the neurotic pseudo-problems to real problems inherent in the human condition.

Moreover, a paradoxical characteristic is highlighted: self-actualization, which is a form of autonomy, allows one to transcend the self, to be less selfish.

#### 2.2.2. art therapy: from the mind-body to the creation

#### Winnicott

Donald Winnicott writes about the relationship between playing and reality, namely play and the creative act, relating both to the fundamental experiences peculiar of the first period of life of the child.

According to Winnicott, playing is always a creative experience. The ability to play creatively allows the subject to fully express the potential of his personality, "thanks to a suspension of the judgment of truth on the world, to a truce from the tiring and painful process of distinction between oneself, one's own desires, and reality, his frustrations" (Winnicott, 1971).

Winnicott believes that creativity does not consist in the production of artistic works, but it is the way in which the individual relates himself to the external reality. The entire cultural life of the human being also originates in the potential space.

The potential space, the third area of human living, which is neither within the individual nor outside, in the worlds of shared reality, is the "leitmotif" that connects play and cultural experience and determines the quality of both. Creativity is conceived as a state of existential vitality, common to every human being, children, adolescents and adults alike, and that is why, according to Winnicott, the play, seen as a playful and creative attitude towards the world, has no age.

## Daria Halprin

In her book "The expressive body in life, art and therapy", published in 2002, Daria Halprin talks about the ability to consciously live emotions and personal and social relationships as a human instrument to express movement, that is the action of creating. In this book Architecture is specifically called to collaborate with human sciences; in fact, if space has to be recognized and recreated or filled by the physicality of what the individual creates with movement, all those involved in the creative/making process must rely on disciplines of making to be able to implement it.

## 2.2.3. Anthropology: The field work and the creative process

#### Bronislaw Malinowski and Franz Boas

The fieldwork develops in anthropological schools thanks to the contribution of F. Boas and B. Malinowski, who opposed "desk-sized anthropology". In particular, Malinowski introduces a new method coining the term of "participatory observation", that is anthropology understood as direct participation (lived, empathic) and the objectification of experience through data. With this regard, Malinowski writes that to judge something you have to be in place, pointing out the "pragmatic function" of the language.

He affirms that there is a whole range of phenomena of great importance that

cannot be recorded by consulting or perusing documents but must be observed in its full reality.

According to the anthropologist, all these facts can and must be theorized and recorded scientifically. However, this must be done not by a superficial annotation of the details, but rather by focusing on the mental attitude behind them.

## 2.2.4. Pedagogy: teaching through experience

#### Enzo Zecchi

I have personally engaged Enzo Zecchi in conversations in the course of my research work. Zecchi is an Italian theoretical physicist, creator of the "Lepida Scuola" method. He combines the rigor of scientific method with the richness of the human sciences for a pedagogy consistent with the 21st Century challenges.

In "Verso una didattica per competenze" Zecchi places the Project Based Learning at the centre of didactics, which is based on the development of learning through the implementation of projects.

#### Juhani Pallasmaa

In "The Thinking Hand" (2010) Pallasmaa maintains that the duty of education is to cultivate and support the human capacities of imagination and empathy, despite the prevalent values of contemporary culture tend to discourage imagination, suppress the senses and petrify the boundary between the world and the self. It follows that education in every creative field must begin to question the Wholeness of the experienced world and confront the re-sensitization of the boundary of the self. The main goal of artistic education cannot lie directly in the principles of artistic doing, but also in student's emancipation and openness, as well as her/his self-awareness and self-image in relation to the traditions of art and the experienced world, in general. He believes that an educational change is necessary with regard to the meaning of the sensory part of the human being to let him rediscover himself as a complete physical and mental being and to let him make full use of his capabilities.

Needless to say, the re-unification of these two aspects of the human experience resonates profoundly with the concept of Wholeness in Alexander.

# 2.3. CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS ALEXANDER'S BUILDING MODEL PROCESS

The various aspects of my literature review highlighted in the previous sections, cover some of the many I perused, selected for their importance in shedding light on the living process of making as I was at the same time experimenting in practice. They helped me formulating provisional answers to the needs that were emerging during the course of the

practical experiences, that I then subjected to further practical testing. This corresponds to the "learning by doing" strategy which I have purposefully undertaken in my studies, as discussed in the Introduction. Here, in particular, I would highlight some important impacts that these aspects have had in practice.

The part related to psychology as a whole was fundamental for the reconceptualization of the building process as a living one, based on the reconciliation between architecture and the body-mind. In particular, it was useful to identify the right ways of approaching the human being in his complexity, avoiding the rigidity of a certain part of psycho-therapeutic approaches. My psychology and art therapy explorations were also essential in the various experiments related to the PL. Moreover, anthropology studies were extremely significant for the PL as well, especially in the Rwanda case. The whole part related to psychomotricity and art therapy was the basis on which to Land and self Exploration activities were then designed and tested.

These connections between literature review, practical testing and Alexander's theory are presented in the next section with some detail.

## 2.3.1. Type of Research

Alexander always conducted a type of interdisciplinary research that was also highly and restlessly empirical, always fed into a circular loop between field observation, theoretical reflection, modelling and testing. All his writings are based on empirical research and rigorous observation, with constant reference to historical processes and spatial recurrences investigated cross-culturally. In his research process all this is strictly connected to art and architecture, but also to a continuous reference to other domains of science such as quantum physics and biology.

I reckon that in NoO in particular, Alexander found the synthesis of the relationship between the scientific and humanistic approaches to knowledge that establishes the peculiar position of architecture in the generation of a new cosmology. A life-long pathway at the end of which the magnitude of the perspective opened up onto the matter which everything that is is made of, is astounding, and transcends the limits of the tangible touching the mystical. As Alexander states in his last published lines: "Taking architecture seriously leads us to the proper treatment of tiny details, to an understanding of the unfolding whole, and to an understanding—mystical in part—of the entity that underpins that wholeness. The path of architecture thus leads inexorably towards a renewed understanding of God. This is an understanding true within the canon of every religion, not connected with any one religion in particular, something which therefore moves us beyond the secularism and strife that has torn the world for more than a thousand years." (Alexander, 2016).

The convergence of theory and practice in one single undivided experience of the world and ourselves is a profound trait of his work, one that goes far beyond the boundaries of a "method". It is expressed though also, and importantly, in the importance of designing and constructing buildings on the site rather than in a studio; that is, it leads to the involvement of the community in the generative processes and the use of large-scale work models to assess quality and costs, thus allowing the identification of a different design and construction process that is opposite and irreconcilable to the one through which contemporary space are conventionally produced. The actual projects carried out by Alexander are more than 200, all over the world. They gave a strong contribution to the definition of his "generative" method of construction and strengthened his empirical results even further. He repeatedly claimed the importance of a morphogenetic understanding of the environment and its transformations during the construction process. He therefore placed at the core of his observation, since the very beginning, the relationship between those who design and build and the creative process itself, linked by its nature to life and to generate life.

## 2.3.2. The Question of the "Model Process"

In my search for a model of living building process, first and foremost looking at Alexanders' own work, I have quickly understood and never forgotten that with all his restless efforts to clarify and define at both the conceptual and practical level his conclusions, Alexander never explicitly tried to put forth a model process of construction, nor did he ever conceptualize one. He has always endeavoured to make his ideas empirically demonstrable and logically consistent, and nevertheless one would search in vain across his gigantic intellectual production a conclusive "reductio ad unum" of the complex body of his observations.

Since nothing happens by chance in Alexander's work, it is quite evident that the overwhelming risks of the reduction inherent to any modelling are to be taken in the most careful consideration. And yet, by carefully reading his writings and focusing in particular on the sections specifically dedicated to the method, I proceeded with a synthesis of the recursive elements of his work, from which I deducted the model of the living building process that I named "Construction and Therapy". Such elements, which have to be understood as triggers of research and as such constituted the opening of my own exploration, are presented below.

## 2.3.3. Elements of Alexander's Model Process

#### Centres in the land and feelings

All Alexander's interventions began with a careful exploration of the project site ("the land") and the life webs that filled the space. This exploration aimed at identifying the centres in the land. Centres were put in relation to each other till constituting regions of degrading intensity around them. Centres were at the same time measured in terms of intensity and coherence.

Centres in the land are organized areas of space characterized by a level of inner coherence

that makes them recognizable as whole spatial entities. Such inner coherence manifests itself in the physical shape of the space (or the thing) and in the way it works (is used, or functions). Centres may be punctual, linear and areal. They do not have precisely definite boundaries; therefore, it is not possible to univocally define what sits outside and within the centre. However, centres are factual formations; their reality and strength is recognized by human beings individually and collectively. Centres are constituted by smaller centres, contribute to larger centres, and are never isolated in space: space is made of variously overlapping centres of different size and level of coherence (strength) in mutual relationship with each other. The system of overlapping centres in the land constitutes its spatial structure, or Wholeness (W). Every physical component of a place contributes to the Wholeness, no matter its size, with a strength that depends on its own level of inner coherence. Therefore, the Wholeness of a place constantly evolves according to the variations in space introduced by new entities. Variations to the Wholeness of a place can be positive or negative, depending on whether they add or detract to the Wholeness existing in the land before them. That is why developing an ability to understand Wholeness is fundamentally important for architects: it is the continuity and harmony of the Wholeness that allows a place to be liveable and enjoyable by human beings, ultimately determining its beauty. Construction is modification of the Wholeness of space. By constructing we either expand the structure of centres, reduce or even break it, affecting the beauty of the land and its ability to host and nurture human life.

The identification of centres can only take place through the recognition of feelings. Feelings are constructs of the soul that are affectively connotated and, if interrogated at the right level, are shared by most human beings. In this sense, they are objective. In particular, feelings are not preferences, or opinions. They are essential components of our embodied cognitive processes. The interface between the land and ourselves as human beings is our feelings.

#### Pattern Language

The Pattern Language (PL) is an essential element of all construction processes carried out by Alexander. The aim of the PL is to identify the archetypes of what-is-to-be-built that reside deep in ourselves. In the everyday practice of the relationship between humans and their physical environment, those archetypal construct take the form of recurrent behaviours, or "patterns", that emerge every time a practical problem faces us. Patterns can be access through two distinct forms of analysis: the first is based on the observation and annotations of the recursive answers to typical problems of the project area, while the second uses the direct interaction (interview) with the end-users and seeks to reveal the profound expression of the self in terms of needs and desires.

The two Pattern Languages work at two different levels: the first is that of behaviours; the second that of the deep self. Behaviours are accessible through observation, while the deep self through the exploration of dreams. Hence, the second type of PL aims at understanding the dreams and the most basic needs of the human being as related to what-is-to-be-built, since they are a constituent part of the generative process of life and beauty, of the construction process itself. In this second form, the PL sits in the process of interaction between the design team and the community, which takes place through a series of face-to-face interviews. Here, the aim is to gradually bring the conversation out from the realm of the "building program", into that of the authentic self. Dreams are the gate.

Over the years Alexander's work has increasingly and purposefully shifted from the first to the second type of PL. The following extracts from Battle proves this:

"...the possibility of doing things that people have dreams about even today. That is why Hosoi came to visit me in 1981. [...] This was Hosoi's dream. At root, he had a burning conviction that the people who lived and worked in the school would put all their knowledge – individual knowledge about myriad circumstances – into the design process". Battle, p. 99.

"Hosoi [...] looking for a group of architects who would genuinely – not with lip service but with sincerity, desire the involvement of the teachers and students in the creation of the school design". Battle, p. 102.

"Hosoi came, and for two days sat by my bed, telling me about his dreams for his project, his feelings about necessary changes in the society and architecture. [...] I realized that [...] the kind of buildings he wanted, were in a mental universe". Battle, p. 103.

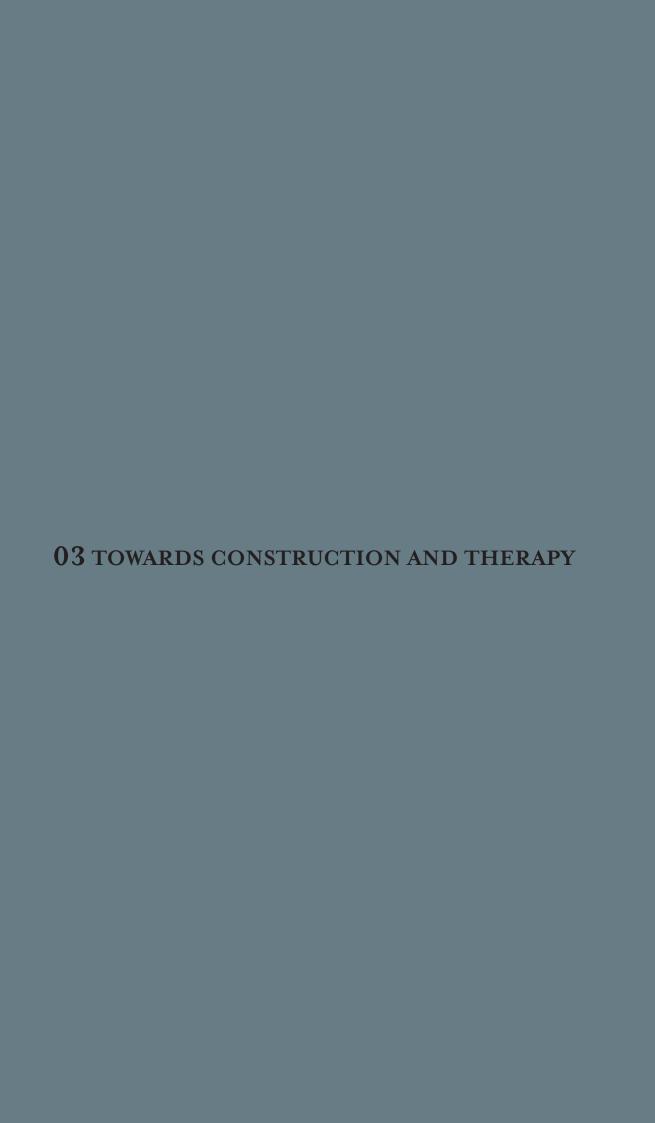
"All this time was spent talking through the human details, discussing them, until we saw what might be the problem. It was a fascinating way of working in human society, and tremendously effective. I learned an enormous amount from him. He cared about everyone, and he was very careful. [...] it became very clear that the dream would be challenged in many ways before it took shape in the campus that we built". Battle, p. 106.

"I told him that I wished to spend the first few days having some serious and deep talks with faculty members, about their hopes, dreams, and visions of the school, and that I also wanted to spend many hours by myself sitting on the site. [...] the process of becoming friends with the teachers, and really understanding their hopes and dreams, was of fundamental importance". Battle, p. 108.

#### **Creative Construction**

For Alexander the actual construction of a building is never conceived as a mere execution of a design project aseptically produced elsewhere (for example in a studio). Rather, it is a creative activity that vivifies the place and people who take part to the construction itself. This has always been explicitly affirmed and expressed through various publications, such as "The Oregon Experience", "The Construction of Houses" and especially in Battle. What he writes about System A and System B at p. 19 of Battle proves the point. He argues that there are two types of building production. Type (A) is a type of production that relies on feedback and correction, so that each phase allows to

refine the elements as they are made. Type (B) is a type of production that is based on a fixed system of rigidly prefabricated elements and the assembly sequence is programmed even more rigidly. In System A, we see an integrated way of making decision that is based on eliminating the barriers between people, time and place of decision. Quite on the contrary, in System B we see an increasing separation between people, time and places of decision that generates a highly fragmented process. Alexander deems that only System A responds to what profoundly characterizes the living building process which is, by its same nature, integrated and continuous. Even small buildings take years to grow and often centuries before they reach their peak. The living building process cannot be rushed.

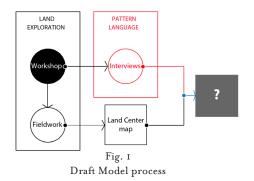


In this Chapter, I'll cover how Construction and Therapy came about, firstly through practice. The Draft Model Process is presented, the knowledge raised through its implementation and the amendments brought in afterwards, drawn from such experience and the observation of their practical outcomes. The most relevant result is the definition of a Revised Model Process where new practices were introduced, always along a line of exchange between body and mind, experience and theory, a dialogue that allows the expression of creativity within a model that is fit to make value of it.

## 3.1. DEFINING THE CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY DRAFT MODEL PROCESS

As discussed at the end of the previous chapter, my reading of "The nature of order" (NoO) in addition to "The pattern language" (PL) and the observation of the way Alexander steered the construction process, led to understanding that a preliminary part should have been added in the model process I was looking for, to be connected to the Pattern Language. I therefore focused on the initial phases of the model itself and looked at what is needed to complement and give sense to the Pattern Language. I thought of a moment that could put all the people involved in the constructive process in close contact with the awareness of their feelings and desires. I envisioned a process that makes the individual able to find, in the land and in its centres, the experience of past, present and future lives, so to treasure, celebrate and make sense of their feelings. To this phase I gave the name of Land Exploration (LE). In order to implement this, it was necessary to understand LE as a practical philosophy that used disciplines such as psychology, psychotherapy and anthropology in relation to the land itself, and the making of architecture.

The concept of LE is radically innovative compared to mainstream construction practices and has never been explicitly indicated by Alexander with this term, although it is a constituent important part of his concrete practice. In his work, it covers the passage between PL construction. In Battle he posits PL and LE as two distinct investigations of distinct realities, namely the structure of centres sitting in the selves inside us and in the land out of us. It is on this ground that the constructive process develops in unison with a process of healing of the person and of the land at the same time, through the construction process itself.



In this initial phase of my research, the attention was focused on the preparatory parts of the model, deliberately postponing the exploration of the construction phase. If LE and PL worked as we expected, they would give important indications and innovations on the construction method, so it did not make sense for the moment to anticipate the conceptual investigation of construction.

## 3.2. LEARNING FROM PRACTICE: THE VERTICALLY INTEGRATED PROJECT "CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY"

The opportunity to first experiment with this process came with a new course launched in 2012 at The University of Strathclyde, under an innovative teaching framework called The Vertical Integrated Project (VIP). The teaching structure of VIP consists of a new educational format first developed at Georgia Tech by Professor Ed Coyle (http://vip.gatech.edu) and embraced by The University of Strathclyde to create a new generation of programs across all areas of the Institution. The essential character of the VIP is that students at different stages of their development (from year I to year 5) are gathered around one single project: students from first year through to postgraduate level are given the chance to work with staff in multi-disciplinary teams on cutting-edge research and development projects.

Construction and Therapy was identified by UoS as one of the special projects working at the frontier of research and knowledge exchange for the academic session 2012-13 VIP portfolio. The VIP in C&T was activated in the 2012-13 academic session, involving more than 20 students of four different classes at year 2, 3, 4 and 5 of study, affiliated to the Faculties of Engineering and Business.

The scope of the project was the construction of an orphanage in the village of S. Kizito in Rwanda, Africa. In the first part of the course, from September 2012 to March 2013) students engaged with the theoretical foundations of the project, fundraising and marketing in support of VIP expenses (mainly travel and subsistence for students and staff), the conception of the process of community engagement and collaborative design and the delivery of the pre-construction activities (Pattern Language e Land Exploration). This part of the project was conducted in Glasgow; crucially, students also tested in Glasgow the process of actual construction by building a temporary timber Pavilion in the University-owned "Rottenrow Gardens". In April 2013 the cohort of five students at Master level (Year 5) finally travelled to St. Kizito in Rwanda with Prof. Porta, and undertook the field process. Students conducted this second part of the project with their PG Diploma design work, discussed in Glasgow in May 2013, which was developed further in the students' individual Master dissertation in the third semester, awarded in September 2013.

In the following, we present separately the two parts of the VIP project, which nevertheless must be considered functionally and conceptually elements of a single uninterrupted learning experience.

#### 3.2.1. The Vertically Integrated Project in Glasgow, UK

#### **Process Overview**

The students started with preparatory activities for the construction, that is to say, according to the method identified and illustrated above, with the Land Exploration and the Pattern Language, then moving on to the Conception and Construction phases. The parts related to the knowledge of the self, the community and the perception of space (Land Exploration) were conducted by the dance therapy expert Valentina De Lello and myself, supervised by Pascale Scopinich, Professional Expert Counselor, Jungian.

## Land Exploration

The Land Exploration exercise was designed as a four-day workshop aimed at developing in all the individual participants the capacity to feel centres in themselves and in the land as one single emotional experience. The four days were organised in five workshops: the first four were conducted indoor and held under the supervision of myself and Valentina Di Lello. It is important to underline that no theoretical material was given to the students prior to engaging in the workshops.

The following is a detailed summary of the workshops, that will then be illustrated one by one with more detail:

Day O: Staff Seminar.

Day I: Exploration of Body, Space and Feelings.

· First Workshop: Centres in the Self.

Day 2: Centres in the Self, in Others, in Space.

- Second Workshop: Definition of the Main Centre and the Region. Definition of the Main Centre (Home). Other's Feelings and Centres.
- Third Workshop: Group Centre and Collective Feelings. Centres in self, in Others, in Space.

Day 3: Centre in the Land.

- Fourth Workshop: Identification of Centres, Sub-Centres, and Feelings in the Land.
- · Fifth Workshop: Mapping the Centres in the Land.

Day O: Staff Seminar

In this seminar Valentina De Lello and I discussed with staff and the research team the Land Exploration Workshop's theoretical foundations and program. The group worked on the body, the self and others, practicing exercises similar to the ones to be proposed to students in the seminar, towards a higher awareness of movement in space.

Day 1: Exploration of Body, Space and Feelings

First Workshop:

#### Centres in the Self.

## Principles.

The focus of the first workshop were the concepts of "feelings" and "centre" as presented by Alexander in "The Nature of Order". Below I report a selection of the definitions extracted from Alexander's literature: importantly, this selection was used for designing the workshop, but students were not exposed to it.

"In order to understand life as a phenomenon, it is necessary to define something which I call 'the wholeness' and also certain crucial entities which I call 'centres', the building blocks of wholeness". (NoO, Book 1, p.80).

"A centre is a spot of living beauty in the land. When you walk around the land, as it is today, these places strike you with their life, the life radiates out beyond them, and they beg to be preserved. Centres can be any size: very small, middle sized, or very large. A trickling stream under a piece of stone may be a centre. A large basin in the landscape may be a living centre". (LN, http://www.livingneighborhoods.org/actions/preciousplaces.htm).

"To have a consistent way of talking about these entities, during recent years, I have learned to call them all (whether parts of local wholes or hardly visible coherent entities), 'centres'. What this means is that each one of these entities has, as its defining mark, the fact that it appears to exist as a local centre within a larger whole. It is a phenomenon of centredness in space. Thus, a human head, or ear, or finger is a discernible whole. It is also, both visually and functionally, a centre. We experience it as a centre. And it is, in the end, its centredness which is its most clear, defining mark". (NoO, Book 1, p.84).

"In using the word centre in this way, I am not referring at all to a point centre like a centre of gravity. I use the word centre to identify an organized zone of space — that is to say, a distinct set of points in space, which because of its organization, because of its internal coherence, and because of its relation to its context, exhibits centredness, forms a local zone of relative centredness with respect to the other parts of the space". (NoO, Book 1, p.84).

"When I use the word centre, I am always referring to a physical set, a distinct physical system, which occupies a certain volume in space, and has a special marked coherence". (NoO, Book 1, p. 84).

"This is the glue in any system of wholes. Wholeness itself is directly created by this apparent overlap, or ambiguity. The greater the number of overlapping wholes, the more tightly bound the configuration is, and the more deeply the wholeness of the wholeness shows itself to be". (Battle, p.401).

"[...] Each centre is (recursively) dependent on other coherent centres for its own coherence. Its coherence arises because of its relationships with other coherent centres. To understand this idea, it is helpful to regard a centre as a physical manifestation of coherence in space, and to define all centres in this way, as the fundamental primary entities". (Battle, p. 430).

"[...] it is always the wholeness of a place that matters. To intensify the wholeness of any place whether it consists of existing buildings in a town, or of virgin land that is largely unbuilt proposed construction and buildings must be decided, and that means 'felt' and thought through on the site itself. [In the footnote:] The process of this activity, is indeed anchored in feelings, human feeling. It rests on a kind of feeling which may be verified. It is not feeling, as people sometimes use the word to refer to an opinion which they hold. It is a feeling that in large measure can be shared and will be shared". (Battle, p.164).

#### Practice.

The work started in the morning of Day I. VIP students were present, as well as myself and Valentina De Lello. The session developed the ability to identify the "potential space" as related with one's own corporal sensations. Searching for an inner centre, the exercise expands the ability to get in harmony with the surrounding space. It leads to identifying a centre that is in accordance with both one's inner world and the external space. It is an exploration of the feelings generated by the propagation of the inner centre to the outer space, driven by a holistic sense of space, with no disharmony between external space and the inner world.

Students were barefoot and wore casual and comfortable clothes. The workshop started

with a presentation from the tutors to the group of students, all were arranged in the form of a closed circle and each person introduced themselves. The participants then spread into the room, first with their eyes closed, and then open. They were asked to feel the space of their body and the feelings that came from it, then opening their eyes to settle in the room in which they moved, finding harmony between themselves and the space. In the lesson program, yoga elements were included to help students achieve greater awareness of their own Mind - Body in the space. The students performed various exercises of movement and stretching that led them not only to perceive tensions and relax their bodies, but also to connect with their subconscious and gradually free their emotions. They were lying on the floor, moving with their eyes closed, in tune with background music; this allowed them to amplify the perception of feelings connected to some particular parts of the body that were in contact with the floor.

The awareness of the existence of a Centre in themselves and in the space is therefore increased by using the Body - Mind and the guided movement of this Centre in space.



 $Fig. \ 2 \\$  The first day workshop — exploration of body, space and feelings

Day 2: Centres in the Self, in Others, in Space

## Second Workshop:

# Definition of the Main Centre and the Region. Definition of the Main Centre (home); Other's Feelings and Centres

Principles.

On the second day the second and third workshops were held, which focused on "Others' Feelings and Centres" and "Group Centre and Collective Feelings". We extracted once again definitions of the key terms and then proceeded to formulate a first glossary as follows:

#### Boundary

"If I want to be accurate about a whole, it is natural for me to ask where that whole starts and stops. Suppose, for example, I am talking about a fishpond, and want to call it a whole. To be accurate about it in mathematical theory, I want to be able to draw a precise boundary around this whole, and say for each point in space whether it is part of this set of points or not. But this is very hard to do. Obviously, the water is part of the fishpond. What about the concrete it is made of, or the clay under the ground? Is this part of the whole we call 'the pond'? How deep does it go? Do I include the air which is just above the pond? Is that part of the pond? What about the pipes bringing in the water? These are uncomfortable questions and they are not trivial. There is no natural way to draw a boundary around the pond which gets just the right things, and leaves out just the right things. In a very rigid way of thinking, this would make it seem that the pond does not really exist as a whole. Obviously, this is the wrong conclusion. The pond does exist. Our trouble is that we don't know how to define it exactly. But the trouble comes from referring to it as a 'whole'. That kind of terminology seems to make it necessary for me to draw an exact boundary, including just those things which are part of the pond, and leaving out just those which aren't. That is the mistake.

When I call the pond a centre, the situation changes. I can then recognize the fact that the pond does have existence as a local centre of activity: a living system. It is a focused entity. But the fuzziness of its edges becomes less problematic. The reason is that the pond, as an entity, is focused towards its centre. It creates a field of centredness. But, obviously, this effect falls off. The peripheral things play their role in the pond. But I do not make a definite commitment about the edge, and what is in and what is out, because that is not the point. What matters in the existence of the pond as a coherent entity is that the organization of the pond is caused by a field effect in which the various elements work together to produce this

phenomenon of a centre. This is true physically in the actual physical system of the pond: water, edge, shallows, gradients, lilies — all help in the formation of the pond as a centre. And it is also true mentally in my perception of the pond". (NoO, Book 1, p.84).

"There is yet another reason for preferring the term 'centre' to the term 'whole'. [...]. From the point of view of relationships that appear in the design, it is more useful to call the kitchen sink a 'centre' than a 'whole'. If I call it a whole, it then exists in my mind as an isolated object. But if I call it a centre, it already tells me something extra; it creates a sense, in my mind, of the way the sink is going to work in the kitchen. It makes me aware of the larger pattern of things, and the way this particular element — the kitchen sink — fits into the pattern. It makes the sink feel more like a thing which radiates out, extends beyond its own boundaries, and takes its part in the kitchen as a whole. [...]. The same is true of all entities which appear in the world.

When I think of them as wholes, or entities, `I focus on their boundedness, their separation. When I think of them as centres, I become more aware of their relatedness; I see them as focal points in a larger unbroken whole and I see the world as whole". (NoO, Book 1, p.85).

#### Coherence

"It is a common fact of experience that we see regions of space which have different degrees of coherence. For example, we consider an apple to be coherent. If we consider the set of points that consists of half the apple, we shall probably consider it less coherent than the apple as a whole. In a similar fashion, the pips of the apple are coherent. And this idea of relative coherence does not only apply to sets which are in some sense complete wholes. A portion of the apple which includes the core plus the hull that houses the pips is moderately coherent. A random section of the middle of the apple would be less coherent, but still coherent to some degree. A disconnected set of points, including bits of skin, core, pip, etc. mixed up, would be still less coherent.

Although it may be impossible to construct a complete rank order on all the different possible subregions, it is clear that our intuition does typically assign some relative degree of coherence to each different subregion. We do recognize coherence in the world". (NoO, Book 1, p.446).

This session developed one's ability to identify their own centre, be aware of the centres in others, and position all these centres into the external space. The importance of fully sensing our feelings is practiced: feelings are experienced through the contact between our centre and those of others.

It also developed one's ability to sense the external and the internal space as related to the group, and the importance of the structure of centres ("Wholeness"). Participants learned to identify in real space the routes of movement and the reverberation of energy. Participants also learned to identify regions by "composing" space through collective feelings.

#### Practice.

The whole session was about liaising with real space in view of the work on the Land, through the consideration of trajectories and dynamics, spirals, light, matter and materialization of feelings. The group was gathered around the principles of movement and was considered a single entity that moved around with coordination. The individual participant engaged in sharing their own energy with the group and contributed to the generation of Wholeness. Single parts work together holistically, "part" meaning both person and space. Movement in space simulated a jellyfish.

Students got into pairs and started doing movements with elastic bands, with graphic reproduction of the elastic bands' trajectories in space. The tri-dimensional movement then became bi-dimensional, with remarkable symbolic and energetic value.

Then they worked in groups and experienced the visualization of the whole space as related to its parts (including physical/architectural) and the group. The activities were aimed at searching the trajectory and the space created/traversed by individual/collective bodies. In this situation the importance of fully sensing everyone's feelings was practiced: feelings were experienced through the contact between our centre and those of others.

Linking back to Day I, students were lying on the floor, individually, and worked on the perception of the centre inside them. The same activity practiced in Day I, only shorter. Then they got up, looking at the space around them to sense not only the space, but also other participants' centres of energy. Understanding how others' centres are placed with regards to one's own by the acknowledgement of feelings. It started with light eye-contact: individuals walked through the room according to the reactions that they felt. Movement was not random, participants sought eye contact. During the motion, one should always be aware of her/his pelvis and feet should seek the ground (ground is roots). From eye-contact, participants (now in pairs) gradually moved on to body contact. They worked on the different feelings that are generated by contact with different parts of the partner's body (for example hand, face, bust, pelvis). Expanding their senses, participants were guided to explore feelings generated by the contact with others and to relate them to what is involved in managing the space during a relational movement. Having achieved this goal, they played the "Game of the Guide", in pairs. A partner with closed eyes was encouraged to focus on her/his self while being led around the room by their seeing partner. The guided participant feels the different stimuli from the environment (light/shadow, warm/cold, breeze) generated by movement and the reverberation of the "little ball" that marked the body movement.

Other games. Deep work in pairs. By the end of the morning students had begun to gradually understand the co-existence and interconnections between their Inner Centre and the Centre of the outer space to the Mind - Body.



Fig.3 Trajectory exercise in pairs



Fig. 4
The collective symbolical patterns and energy values

# Third Workshop: Group Centre and Collective Feelings. Centres in self, in Others, in Space

#### Principles.

The third workshop was aimed at stimulating everyone's ability to feel and perceive internal and external space in relation to the whole group and understand the importance of how Centres can be understood and described within the concept of Wholeness. Wholeness, defined as harmonious unity capable of generating wellbeing from the centres of feelings and positive energy, is revealed when a place with "human characteristics" has the ability to heal and propel well-being and life. In this workshop the work focused on real space was carried out. This was done in preparation of the next phase (Mapping the Land) which provided for the decision regarding the spot of land on which the pavilion was to be built. The trajectories and dynamics of movement and light were carefully considered, and once again related to feelings, this time considering Wholeness explicitly.

The target skills indicated to the students were the following:

- · Consideration of the external and internal space in relation to the group;
- Perception of Wholeness;
- Research in the practical space of the trajectories of movement and expansion of centres of energy;
- · Identification of the Regions and the Space Composition Model

#### Practice.

The idea of Wholeness and unity of centres is transmitted and experimented through exercises, either in pairs or groups, which were based on movement and the ability to perceive the path and space filled by the movement itself. Participants were asked to perform movements using their body and an elastic band, which made visible the trajectory of the completed movement and the space it occupied.



Fig. 5 The master builder team



 $\label{eq:Fig. 6} Fig.~6$  The result of four key elements from the master builders

These trajectories in space, traversed by the individual and collective bodies, were then documented and reproduced graphically on paper. Afterwards, each participant was asked to join a group: in this situation the group was considered as a single entity capable of moving in unison and in harmonious coordination. Each individual was to try sharing her/his own experience and energy with the group and cooperate to generate group cohesion, that is to say a Wholeness. Examples of these exercises are illustrated in figures 5 and 6.

#### Day 3: Centres in the Land

Fourth and Fifth Workshops:

Centres and Feelings in the Land (indoor)

Centres and Feelings in the Land (outdoor).

Land Exploration Exercise: Mapping Wholeness.

## Principles.

## For these workshops the theoretical references to Alexander were the following:

#### Mapping Wholeness

"In any living system or living process, there is, at any given moment, a structure we may identify as 'the' wholeness of the system at that moment. This structure is an approximate picture. It is, in fact, a map of all the most powerful centres (large and small), in a given configuration.

It should be born in mind that some centres are very large indeed, and the centres which occur there are nested spatially inside one another. [...].

Whenever a spatial configuration has a particular form, one or more of the properties will enhance or strengthen the system of centres that form the wholeness of that configuration. In order to grasp this system in a practical way, one focuses on a limited number of centres at the core of one's range of observation. This may be very limited, but still have enough 'clout' to get realistic and useful results, when trying to decide what to do". (Battle, p.431).

"In any building project, before the site plan can be created, we must identify two systems of centres. (1) There is the system of centres that is defined by the pattern language. Pattern-language centres define the major entities which are going to become the building blocks of the new project. [...].

(2) Secondly, we had the system of centres which existed in the land. This system was created by the land forms, the slopes and ridges, by the roads, by directions of access, by natural low spots, natural high spots, and by existing trees and existing buildings.

It must be emphasized that these two systems of centres already existed at the time one started working out the site plan.

The first system consists of patterns (created notions or entities that exist in people's minds). These patterns exist in a loose and undeveloped form in people's minds, even if they have not explicitly built a pattern language. When the pattern language is explicitly defined, it is more clear and makes a more powerful system which will get better results, especially because it comes from the feelings of people themselves.

The second system exists in the form of places on the site, discernible places that can be seen and felt on the site, if you have sufficient sympathy with the land. You can make this system explicit, by making a map of the centres, and paying attention to their structure. Each of these two systems is real. Together they provide the raw material from which the community is going to be made". (Battle, p.168-169).

"What has to be done in creating a site plan for a community or an institution, is to bring these two systems of centres together. We have to hunt for a single configuration which springs from both systems, and integrates the qualities of both. We must find a way in which the system of centres defined by the pattern language can be placed, so that it enhances, preserves, and extends, the system of centres which is already in the land. It is a kind of healing process, which uses the new centres given by the pattern language, to heal the configuration of the old centres

those that exist in the land". (Battle, p.173).

#### Wholeness

"I propose a view of physical reality which is dominated by the existence of this one particular structure, W, the wholeness. In any given region of space, some subregions have higher intensity as centres, others have less. Many subregions have weak intensity or none at all. The overall configuration of the nested centres, together with their relative intensities, comprise a single structure. I define this structure as 'the' wholeness of that region'". (NoO, Book 1, p.96).

"The nature of wholeness is very difficult to grasp, in practical and material terms, but it is not mysterious. Creating wholeness is a practical matter, which comes about only when small wholes are twisted and threaded into one another. Buildings and environments need to be made this way. Difficult as it is, it is above all practical, and arises from having the right understanding of the way that wholeness works geometrically". (Battle, p. 96).

"The wholeness of any portion of the world is this system of larger and smaller centres in their connection and overlap. The wholeness of a window includes the coherent space which binds the window together — its sill, glass, the sloping reveals, its mullions, the landscape outside, the light coming in, the soft light on the wall next to the window, the chair drawn up toward the window's light — and the formation of larger centres which makes them one: the space of the window seat which binds the window reveals, seat, sill, and window plane; the view which combines chair, outdoor landscape, and the glazing bars; the light falling on the window reveal and on the floor.

Here, as before, the wholeness is defined by the major centres — entities — and the way these centres are arranged to form still larger centres". (NoO, Book 1, p.91).

"The general idea is that the wholeness in any part of space is the structure defined by all the various coherent entities [i.e. centres] that exists in that part of space, and the way these entities are nested in and overlap each other". (NoO, Book 1, p.81).

"The wholeness in any given part of space is highly fluid, and easily affected by very small changes continuously through time. And is dependent on subtle – sometimes even minute – changes in the configurations in it and around it". (NoO, Book 1, p.86).

"The wholeness, W, is a feature of the physical world which appears everywhere, in every part of matter/space". (NoO, Book 1, p.446).

"The nature of W relies on the relative life [i.e. coherence] of the subsets of a given pattern R [R = R Region]. [...]. The wholeness W is the system consisting of the most coherent subsets of R". (NoO, Book 1, p.449).

During the morning of the third day the indoor work carried out by the therapist Valentina De Lello was accomplished (Fourth Workshop). In the afternoon students went out to the construction site in the Rottenrow Garden and mapped the centres in the land (Fifth Workshop) putting into practice the achieved skills related to the concepts of self, feeling, centres, group and Wholeness.

Practice: Fourth Workshop. Centres and Feelings in the Land (indoor).

Students carried out the conclusive indoor activities in order to go out and partake in the real experience of the Land Exploration in the part of the Rottenrow gardens they were to build the pavilion. This session develops one's ability to find a main centre on the space/land as well as sub-centres, to define the regions around those centres in the real space, and to sense/attribute feelings to them. Participants learn how to associate basic terminology with the experience of feelings and space (Wholeness, Centre, Region, Feeling, Coherence, Beauty ...). Then they convene in the Workshop room.

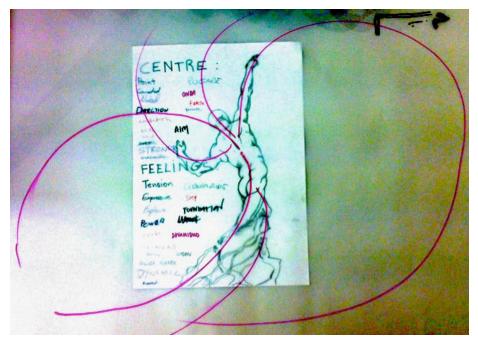


Fig. 7
One of students' assignment in the Workshop module: a definition of the key-words "Centre" and "Feeling"

Practice: Fourth Workshop. Centres and Feelings in the Land (outdoor).



The exercise of land exploration - outdoor

Participants started this workshop having achieved concepts and experience that allowed them to identify and perceive the centres present in a place and its Wholeness, and be able to harmonize the feelings generated in the space both at the individual level (Self) and in a collective dimension (Group).

Tutors led students through an exercise of reflection with the aim of understanding how they internalized the concepts of Feelings, Centres, Coherence, Boundary and Wholeness at a mental and experiential/body level. Students were organised in two groups and were asked to graphically represent the above terms, expressing their own perceptions and understandings about them.

Feelings, Centres, Coherence, Boundary and Wholeness, were key-words explored through Alexander's words, but students were kept unaware of this theoretical and conceptual background, therefore their production could not be influenced and were only laid out on the ground of the workshops' experience.

Practice: Fifth Workshop. Land Exploration Exercise: Mapping Wholeness.

The final part of the Land Exploration began with a tutorial delivered on the land and ended with mapping the density of feelings through the use of GIS (Geographic Information System) software. This field part of the work was an exercise aimed at identifying the type and intensity of feelings generated in the students as they walked the land across. Importantly, the Land Exploration Exercise as a whole came after, and was made possible by, three days of previous work on self and space, and followed a precise and defined methodological structure that will be shortly presented. In the "Centres and Feelings in the Land" exercise, the field work, after students had produced their graphics on the five key concepts (Feelings, Centres, Coherence, Boundary and Wholeness), the reference quotes from Alexander summarised above were finally distributed to all

Flag No.	PROTECTION		AWARENESS		EXPOSURE		PEACEFUL		STIMULATED		1-5)
	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Coherence (Intensity
											Ш
											Ш
-											$\vdash \vdash$

 $\label{eq:Fig.9} Fig.~9$  Feelings database using in the land exploration

Flag No.	PROTECTION		AWARENESS		EXPOSURE		PEACEFUL		STIMULATED		(5-1
	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Coherence (Intensity
61	Protected	4	Less Intruded	5	Restorative	4					3
62	Openess	5									5
63	Private	5	Visual to park	4							4
64	Restorative	4	Social	4	Connection	4					4
65	Sense of belonging	5	Private	4	Secure	4	Freedom to express	4			4
66	Path / Journey like	3	Visual direction	4							5

Fig. 10 Database during the recording

Flag No.	PROTECTION		AWARENESS		EXPOSURE		PEACEFUL		STIMULATED		1-5)
	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Name	Intensity (1-5)	Coherence (Intensity)
61	/	5		0		0	/	4		0	4
62		0	/	5	/	5		0		0	5
63	/	5		0	/	4		0		0	4
64		0		0		0	/	4	/	4	5
65	/	4	/	5		0		0		0	5
66		0		0	/	4		0		0	5

Fig. 11 Final land exploration database

involved students, who were requested to read them in a maximum time of 15 minutes. Another 30 minutes of discussion followed. Then participants moved out to the Land (Rottenrow Gardens), coordinated by Prof. Porta and Peter Russel. Individually, standing on the Land with eyes open, participants sensed feelings as a group and as individuals as well; they moved around individually in the land searching for centres by exploring feelings. Centres were marked by students by planting flags in the land, and recorded at the same time by Staff as "point" in a GIS environment via GPS. A centre ID was generated and students were instructed to refer all data relative to the centres, in particular to name their individual feelings in that spot of land and assign to them a degree of intensity in a I-5 scale. In this phase students identified feelings freely, using their own language with no predetermined categories. Using ropes, boundaries were marked on the land around all centres. The location of centres, type and intensity of feelings, and boundaries were recorded on sketched drawings jotted down by each student on a blank sheet of paper. Finally, in the Workshop Room, centres were recorded and mapped by staff in their precise location using GIS/GPS technology. After having placed all the flags on the ground and recorded their position digitally, all participants returned to the Workshop Room with their paper filled out to discuss and rework what was written, not individually but in groups.

Staff presented a list of all the words used by students to identify feelings on the field. A frequency analysis was then run over those words using the "word-cloud" technique, to identify five distinct main keywords, which were the following: I. Protection; 2. Awareness; 3. Exposure; 4. Peace; 5. Stimulation. Students were then asked, in a plenary meeting, to associate all feeling names used on the field to one of the five most frequently used, according to proximity of meaning. As a result, all mentioned feelings were reduced to five names, which represented all students' annotation on the field. A final density map was then produced in GIS by simply merging all individual centres layouts into one only map, and run a Kernel Density Analysis of them weighted by the intensity of the perceived feelings.

The diagram below reproduces the perception of feelings in the land cumulated across all students. The final diagram recorded the density of all feelings, their intensity and coherence and the place where they had been located.

The GIS database was updated accordingly, so that all centres were attributed the same set of five feelings. Feeling maps were produced. One map for each of the five feelings, i.e. five maps in total. Each feeling map was a combination of a kernel density analysis of centres weighted by feelings, and a contour visualization. Analogously, a coherence map was produced, but not shown to students. Feeling maps were then projected on a wall, one by one. Discussion was opened on each: objections and amendments were discussed and noted on a tracing paper directly on the screen. Consensus was reached on each map. Feeling maps were then projected together. Consensus was reached on an overall Composite Feeling Map. The Coherence Map was then shown and processed as above. The Composite Feeling Map and the Coherence Map were compared and discussed. Finally, a Wholeness Map was produced.

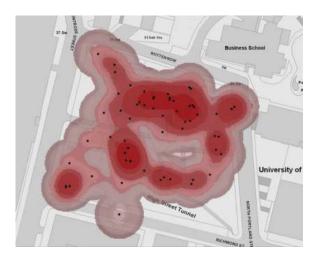


Fig. 12 Gis map intensity of protection spaces

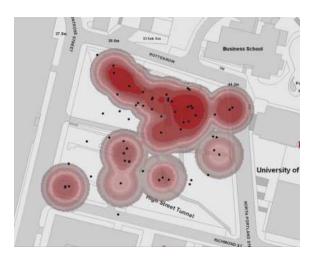


Fig. 13 Gis map intensity of awareness spaces

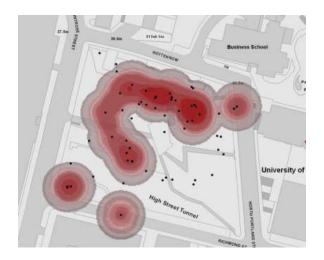


Fig. 14 Gis map intensity of exposure spaces

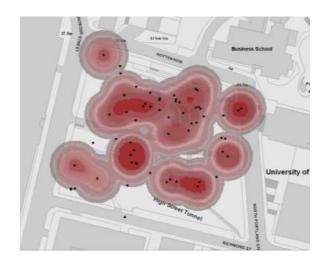


Fig. 15 Gis map intensity of peaceful speces

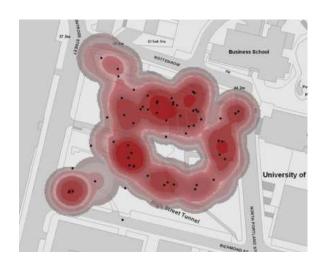


Fig. 16 Gis map intensity of stimulated speces

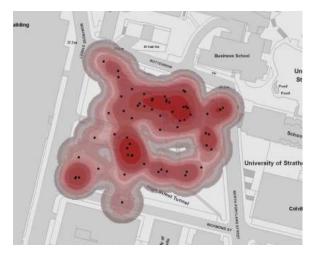


Fig. 17 Gis map intensity of 5 feelings in the spaces

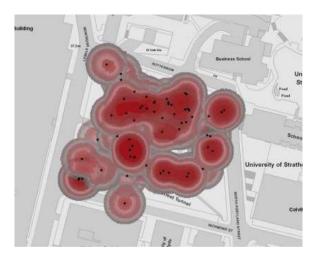


Fig. 18 Gis map intensity of coherence in the spaces

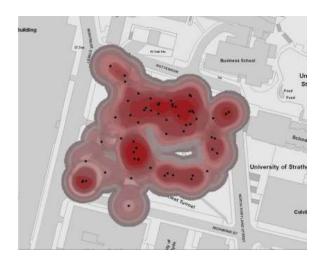


Fig. 19 Gis map intensity of intensity of the 5 feelings in the spaces

## Pattern Language

#### Process Overview

The Pattern Language (PL) was delivered through ten individual interviews in which the 4th year students of architecture played the role of end-users, while the 5th year students were on the design team. The process was in two parts: I) Delivery and Documentation, and

2) Synthesis. Delivery and Documentation consisted of the ten interviews, while in the Synthesis part the analysis of the stories collected in the previous phase took place, resulting in the identification and documentation of common Patterns from all the interviews.

The design team identified two important factors for the interviews to be successful:

- The way in which the team were to design the visions expressed by the end-users.
- The identification and characterisation in the stories of their physical and spatial elements, the "objects" (the chair, the table, the room, the path uphill, the forest ...).

#### Delivery and Documentation

The PL was aimed at identifying the ideal pavilion for each end-user by ensuring that they would express their dreams and their feelings through an interview method called "Quasi Dream Work". From every interview a Dream Map was obtained and drawn. (The details of the interviews' structure and the examples can be found in appendix 3.2). In order to prepare the interviews students undertook a long and careful analysis and preparation work, aimed at ensuring that the interviewees would be able to freely express their desires and needs about the structure to be built and about their inner being.

To succeed, they used techniques related to psychotherapy and psychology. The Design Team took care of the space where the interviews were to take place, making it comfortable and informal; moreover, they paid attention to the way of speaking, in particular to the body language, both of the interviewer and of the interviewee. All this was prepared during an exercise previously carried out at the Nursery of the University of Strathclyde and in the four-day workshop of the Land Exploration (LE). In these phases, participants were followed and guided by me as well as psychotherapy and counseling experts. After an initial introductory phase aimed at putting the interviewee at peace and feeling inwardly secure, the heart of the interview began with the following question: "Let's assume you have a pavilion, which is in Heaven, and that you proudly want to show it to me as a friend would do. You now accompany me visiting your Pavilion-in-Heaven: what do you see?". The interviewers were always in pairs, one tasked to write down the interviewee's answers who could not interact, and the other tasked with interacting with the interviewee by asking questions and simulating the "walk" in the Pavilion-in -Heaven.

These roles were opened up to the interviewee, along with information on the processing of stories, the duration of the interview and so on. Immediately after the interview ended, the two interviewers met to examine the written notes, and complete/modify them according to the fresh memories of both. With the dreams now recorded on paper, the design team begins a long process by creating a Qualified List (QL) for each story-dream. The QL is a simplified structure of the story, in which the nouns that express objects in space are first extrapolated, and then sorted hierarchically according to their belonging in space (for example, the vase of flowers on the table belongs to the table, and the table belongs to the room); finally, each spatial element so organized was associated with the "attributes" mentioned in the story: for example, the vase was red, the table was beautiful and bright. Based on this structured list of nouns associated with

adjectives, called the Qualified List (QL), the Design Team generated for each story a graphic version of it called a "Dream Map" (DM). Here the spatial elements are loosely represented with circles nesting or overlapping with each other according to dream structure simplified in the QL.

#### Synthesis

If the first part of the PL consisted of the production of a visual word-picture diagram, Qualification List and Dream Map of each participant, the second witnessed the transition from the Individual Dreams to the collective one, a manifestation of the collective unconscious<sup>13</sup> concerning the aspirational vision of the structure they wanted to build. That is the identification of the shape of the pavilion that the group dreamed of and the spatial and architectural features capable of expressing the group's wishes and feelings.

In order to do so, all the individual DMs were compared to retain what they had in common and dismiss what distinguished them. The result was the Synthesis Dream Map (Fig. 20) which graphically indicates "how" the collective unconscious of the group wanted to build the pavilion after the LE and at the end of the PL.

The Synthesis Dream Map was then reported to the users and discussed collectively, to understand the extent to which it represented a shared idea of the Pavilion-in-Heaven, or the collective dream of it. The outcome of the PL process is therefore another map, but this is something completely different from the map that emerged from the LE: indeed, it concerns the Building (in Heaven), not the Land. The PL map is a conceptual map that retains a representation of the fundamental spatial relationships between the physical components of the dreams, in the way circles are related to each other and adjective characterized them.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup>The collective unconscious is a concept belonging to analytic psychology, developed by Carl Gustav Jung. In opposition to the personal unconscious, it is shared by all men and comes from their common ancestors. The collective unconscious, according to Jung, represents a universal psychic container, or rather that part of the human unconscious which is common to all human beings. It contains the archetypes, that is the forms or symbols that manifest themselves in all the individuals of all cultures. They would exist before the experience and in this sense they would be instinctive. However, critics accused this vision of being ethnocentric, because it universalizes European cultural archetypes into archetypes of all humanity. This topic has already been discussed in section 2.2. Interdisciplinary Explorations of the second Chapter, titled "Literature Review".

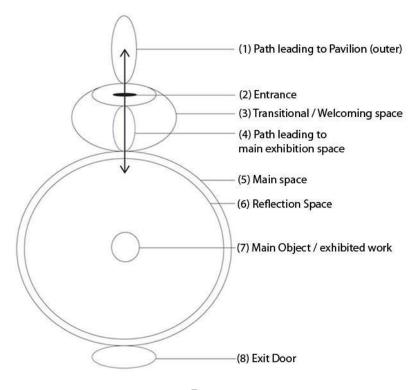


Fig. 20 Syntesis Dream Map

## Conception and Construction

## Process Overview

Once the LE and PL were completed, we started the Conception and Construction phase (C&C), where three applications were implemented: "Composing", "Mocking up" and "Construction".

#### Composing

At this point of the work two maps were created:

- The Wholeness Map, which gives us a picture of the emotional reality of the project site (output of the LE).
- The Synthesis Dream Map, which gives us the building's concept plan in the collective consciousness of the participants, as a group (output of the PL).

It was necessary to create a good match between the two, such that the structure of the building would complete and enhance that of the Land, rather than weakening it further. The results of the LE and the PL were presented to end-users and discussed collectively. With a clear vision of the ideal Pavilion and feelings in the land, an important ethical problem was posed:

Did the area where we were to build have to be a weak or strong place in terms

of structure? Did we have to conceive our new construction in a spot of the land that already held a significant degree of beauty, or should we on the contrary target a weak spot and exactly to make it better with our project? Did we have to identify the weak places to raise them and improve the overall structure of the park? The discussion with students was particularly interesting on this point. The final decision was essentially addressed by the idea of "healing", that is, the idea that every intervention in space must complete and strengthen the existing structure and its wholeness. It was therefore decided to build in the weak places of the Rottenrow gardens, rather than the strong ones, to make them better through our intervention. In order to decide in which place to build, it was necessary to go directly to the Land, where each potential construction area was further assessed in a plenary conversation with all students. Finally, the options were reduced to two of them: one on the South West of the garden and the other on the North West, as seen in the Google Image below.



Fig 21 Google map —optional location on the land of Rottenrow Gardens

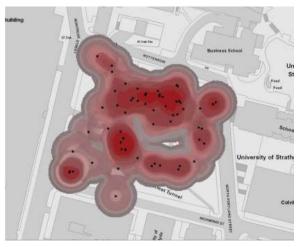


Fig. 22 GIS map of the 5 Feelings + Coherence

Finally, by re-analysing the map of the combined five feelings + coherence, we concluded that the Pavilion was to take place on the South West corner of the Rottenrow Gardens, which was considered to be the least desirable. As shown on the map, most of the places on the Land were identified as positive centres, therefore the Pavilion had to constitute a space that would act as a bridge, reinforce and connect the Lands centres identified on the GIS map, connecting the chain of positive centres on the Land as a Whole.

The need was to "reconnect" the weakest part of the land, the South West quadrant, with the rest of the space, particularly the strong point located to the North East. By so doing, the pavilion could contribute to make the land better. The decision was taken to connect the path and the entrance of the pavilion (spatial elements number I and 2 in the Synthesis Dream Map, Fig. 20) to the strong centre, since the weakest part could be healed by connecting it to the strongest point characterized by the benches, the beautiful terraced landscape and the flowering plants.

## Mocking-up

Once the location of the pavilion was determined, the group went to the land again to start the mocking-up. This was a peculiar moment because everything was becoming real and the idea was beginning to take shape in the real space that was the stage of this transformation: a great creative moment of a collective nature. The students gathered where the entrance was to be built and started discussing how to build it. They began to use ropes and cardboard boxes, timber boards and bricks, planting pickets and elevating sticks, trying to imagine how exactly the entrance should be.



Fig. 23 Scrup boxes for the mock up

Various groups of students shaped up spontaneously, proposing different solutions. It seemed impossible to find an agreement. Just at that very moment of stalemate, a student walked alone towards the very low west corner of the area, where a strong land centre was, and sat at the convergence of the two perimeter stone walls. After a few minutes he shouted to the others students and asked them to come over and look around. Everybody agreed that that was a great place, at that point they decided together not to start from the entry way, that in fact it seemed much better to start from the backyard o the pavilion, which should be located roughly in that spot. The reason was not rationally clear to anyone, but the strong feeling was that this was absolutely the right thing to do. The emptiness of the pavilion's backyard was to coincide with an existing strong centre in the land, and the pavilion itself would bridge the gap between it and the next centre, trying to reconnect the two existing centres with the new structure.



Fig. 24
Discussion of the quality of the space

From this moment onwards everything took place, surprisingly, in a smooth and easy way, enthusiasm grew, and energy spread around in the group. Students started mocking up the perimeter of the backyard in a rectangular shape, no one asked for explanations on why to do it as a rectangle and not, for example, circular or square.

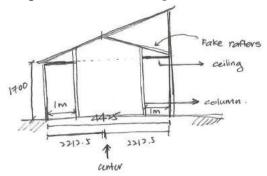


Fig. 25 Sketch drawing during the mock up

Everyone immediately agreed that the rectangular shape was the right one. The question of what kind of shape could be used for the backyard wall didn't ever enter the discussion. After about four hours of intensive work on the land, all the basic parts of the construction were completed full scale: general plan, section of the main exhibition hall with three naves and four pillars, the shape of the roof and that of the entrance. Then measurements were taken and sketches preparatory to the construction were made. Drawings were used at that point to record decisions that had been taken directly on the land by intensive discussion and mocking-up. Students soon realized that the building and its characters were made out of parts that were all interconnected and that the change of one part would immediately influence the other parts of the building. All this would not have happened if the mock-up had been conducted in studio instead of the real building site, and the whole work group had confirmation of that in retrospect, whereas initially it was placed as a working condition by the teachers' staff. The students welcomed the proposal because they were now fully aware that the core of the construction process related to their feelings in the first place, and how this required the physical presence on the site of construction.

#### Construction

After the mocking-up phase, the construction work began in the Strathclyde University laboratory; at this step the test-process work moved a bit away from the fundamental principles that underlie C&T. The construction process was centred on large modular components that had to be crafted in the laboratory and then reassembled on the Land at a later time. The reasons for that were determined by contingencies. It was in fact too cold to build directly on the land and the building had to be ready within two weeks on a budget of only £ 2,500 altogether.

As in any other real-world project, approval from the appropriate institutions was needed before the construction could take place. In this case the design team was in contact with the owner of the park, the Real Estate office of the University. Despite having only a rough idea of the scale and the volumes of the spaces, preliminary sketches of the site plan and section were submitted to Estate for approval (Fig. 26). The role of drawings was completely re-defined in the C&T compared to conventional design processes. Instead of being the moment where the future shape of the pavilion was conceived, drawing was used retrospectively to record the decisions taken collectively on the project field. Its use during the creation of the project was limited to a "secondary role": sketches of construction details were performed by the students to better understand their intentions, to clarify and agree ideas, at the same time when the decisions were tested directly through the mocking-up. At the end of the architectural "composition" process, entirely guided by the mocking- up carried out in the building site, drawings were also used to obtain the authorization from the Real Estate office of the University. It is interesting to note, however, that even in this case the relationship with the Real Estate officers had been preliminarily initiated in person, with meetings in the office and on the building site as well.

Given the short time available, and in order to make the most of the work of the people involved, the project team was divided into four groups of five students each. Two tutors participated in the construction: Derek Gillan and Peter Russel. Their role was very similar to what Alexander indicated as "Architect-Builder".

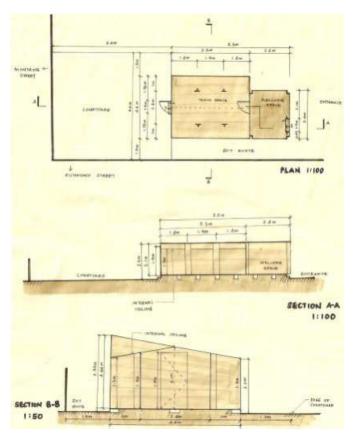


Fig. 26 Sketch plan and sections for Estate

The team conducted a total of 9 days of construction:

Day I. It started with a project briefing of rules and regulations in the workshop, the regulation of different sessions, the time and the work schedule for each group. The very nature of the constructive process, devoid of a preliminary design but based on an evolving design, meant that the work was based on an initial plan and sections laid out with which all the parts of the pavilion were designed and built on-the-spot. It was crucial that none of the details were pre-designed to ensure the flexibility to change and adapt at every step of the construction. The first parts built were the side wall panels of the pavilion. Every joint, construction technique and material was discussed, designed and decided collectively at the moment of construction of each piece. This was a great challenge for the students who had to measure with their limited knowledge in the field of concrete construction. Helped by the tutors, they experienced the proper ways of nailing and handling of tools. Every member gradually picked up in speed and knowledge.

Day 2. Parts of the roof rafters were built. Since the roof supports and holds the walls



 $\label{eq:Fig.27} \mbox{a Bref exploration of the proper usage of tools}$ 

in place, by setting up a module with the accurate width of the main space, the roof rafters could be manually measured and prepared: students took the measurements and started processing the pieces of wood, and at the end of the second day, a full section of the main space was assembled. At this point the project team started to experience the scale and the quality of the interior space and ended up talking about the entrance and exit panels and door design. They also discussed with Prof. Porta about the quality of the reflection space as outlined in the Synthesis Dream Map, and the ways to achieve the attributes mentioned there (peacefulness, relaxation, protection at the back, intimacy at the perimeter of the space, light from above in the centre...). With this step the team realized that if they had pre-designed blueprints, the flexibility that enabled them to change and adapt the structure to be built in the real space in which the construction was carried out would not have been possible. As Masters students wrote in their final thesis "The Collective Visions and Our Shared Experiences": "The quality of the space is experienced, discussed and experimented on until general consensus is achieved, until wholeness of the space is achieved."

Day 3. The pavilion was gradually taking shape thanks to the completion of some models (side panels and entrance and exit) and students began to assemble a section of the pavilion to give meaning to the spaces. With the installation of the wall panels, the rafters and the transparent roof sheets, the interior space of the Self and the Body-Mind had taken shape in the constructed material space out of us. Since the reflection area was expected to have a lower ceiling and a darker atmosphere, the staff discussed at length about how to achieve this. The design of the environment was created by looking for interesting ideas and debating on the pros and cons of suggestions in order to give the space a sense of reality and life.

Day 4. The right assembly and alignment of the wall panels was sought. Each panel, after being placed temporarily, was marked with different letters and numbers. Once certain about how to assemble the panels, they were bolted and assembled permanently.

Day 5. The floor frames and panels were designed and built. The design of the floor

led to various comparisons because it was important to understand well the place where it was to be laid and the actual use that would be made of it. The team was divided into two groups: one for the preparation of materials and the other for manufacturing the panels. The designed floor had five large and small panels for the main space and three separate sized panels for the welcoming space.

Day 6. The external space was for the most part finished, what was missing were the internal elements and the door. After numerous considerations on the advantages and disadvantages of the various types of doors, the project team collectively agreed to have a sliding transparent door installed internally. After finding a solution for the door, the focus moved to the interior space. The interior columns were designed to create a symmetrical view of the space, referring to the Synthesis Dream Map. Nevertheless, students could build only four columns, as the material available did not allow them to build the eight designed. This clearly reduced the symmetrical impact on the space, it however emphasized the centre of the site which was the most important point most notably because this is where the public part, used as an exhibition space, was to be placed.

Day 7. It started with a discussion on the construction of the four missing internal columns with respect to the project and it was decided that they would be built if there was remaining material after construction of the welcoming porch. The second part of the day continued with a reflection on the internal ceiling that would span over the reflection areas. After a long discussion, a ceiling made of wood and plywood was finally agreed. The sketch of it included, as indicated by the dream, the design of a ceiling that would lower the reflection area, thus underlining the contrast between the central and wider point and the peripheral points of the reflection area. This latter part, being dark and narrow, conveyed the feeling of quietness and privacy that was envisaged. It appeared to be a private place of reflection that remained hidden compared to the centre of the room that was brighter and attracted the most attention.

Day 8. The bolting of the panels for the construction of the floor began. At the end of the day only the front porch, the welcoming space and the internal furniture were done. Day 9. The front porch and any other unfinished little parts were completed. The team was divided into groups that were given precise jobs planned at the beginning of the day to ensure that all work could be completed by evening. With this type of cooperation and a careful organization of work, the front porch was entirely completed, while due to lack of material the interior finishes were postponed until a few days later.

Final Day. The Final Construction. The Project Team was divided into two groups: the first team, which was supervised by Peter, started by footing works on the site of the Rottenrow gardens and the second team, led by Derek, was in charge of the transportation of the built modules from the laboratory to the site, using a minivan. According to what was established in advance, the pavilion had to be lightened to minimize the damage on the existing land and this constituted a major change, at the time of actual construction, compared to the preliminary design. The pavilion had to be carefully positioned, paying attention to how it would rest on the ground and guaranteeing a levelled floor.

Fortunately, when all the parts arrived at the site, the assembly work on the floor had already been completed. The assembly work began with fixing the panels on the ground, then the walls, and then with the installation of the roof rafters and the door for the main space. While the transparent roof sheets were set, other team members set up the front porch. Then, the work continued indoors with the artificial ceiling and the internal columns. At the end of the day the work was 100% complete.

Launching of Pavilion. The day after finishing the construction, a lunch was organized to celebrate and share the work done. The Pavilion then remained temporarily in the university gardens for several weeks. It was then used as expected to host the exhibition-performance of the works of the students of Year I Architecture.

#### Results

During the VIP it emerged how important the Land Exploration and Pattern Language are for the kind of construction process we were looking for.

Authentic feelings, which form individual personalities, are part of what usually becomes less apparent to the person at the time of their transition to adulthood and with the pressure to conformity exerted by the outside world. In C&T, on the other hand, everything puts feelings to the core of housing production across the board. It is precisely in this sense that C&T wants to reach the users, that is where feelings are not opinions nor idiosyncrasies.

The degree of authenticity in sharing is a crucial feature in C&T. This is the reason why in every phase of the process we started from the individual user and then analyse the individual materials in order to understand what exactly is to be shared. If in the LE and PL phases this exercise is practiced with the necessary accuracy and depth, it is surprising to note the simplicity with which this type of sharing can lead to collective solutions felt as their own by most or all participants, since they are in fact profoundly human and for this reason just belong to all.

The most important part of the work consists therefore in establishing relationships with the users at the deepest level of the dream, that is the unconscious level. This is what the PL is essentially about, more than anything else.

Everything in the C&T process is constantly shaped and maintained in this direction, but LE and PL are certainly the phases entirely and intensely dedicated to feelings, to the awareness of them and their sharing in anticipation of construction.

A second important result was the definition of the construction phase as "conception and construction", a significant innovation compared to a conventional construction process.

I will elaborate this in detail in the conclusions of the chapter, for now I will only list the main steps of the Conception and Construction phases which are: Composing (preparation of the material and recovery of it), Mocking-up (scale I.I, on the land), Construction (participated construction followed by a moment of sharing as a lunch or a meeting to re-experience the place together).

To conclude:

- The sequence Land Exploration Pattern Language Conception and Construction proved to be internally coherent and innovative.
- The objectives of the activities carried out in the Land Exploration were:
  - Awareness of your own feelings (individual self)
  - Awareness of the feelings of others (collective self) Awareness of the feelings in a space (feeling centres) Authentic relationships with others
- Most of us have interpreted the PL only according to the APL book (Alexander, 1977). But Alexander himself progressed in his life to a much deeper and more mature practice of the PL in his latest work (NoO and Battle). Here the PL is basically a voyage into the people's self (individual and collective), to discover their authentic vision of building. The PL is in fact about the building, the wholeness of the building (geometrically: Its living structure). This must be coupled with a similar voyage to discover the wholeness of the land, which we have named "Land Exploration". In this second form, the PL is the process of interaction between the design team and the people, which takes place through a series of face-to-face "experiences". In this approach to the PL, the main objective is to gradually bring the conversation out from the realm of the "building program", into that of the authentic self, where dreams are the gate.
- The Construction phase essentially derives from the two preliminary phases of LE and PL. Here a new way of building is conceived based not on the "studio design", but rather on the experiential study of the land from the spatial and emotional point of view. Person, space and construction are all re-defined on the basis of shared relationships and the ability to recognize the collective unconscious. All this is expressed in the act of construction. The mocking-up is important because it is performed on the land and leads directly to the construction. This process puts in place a "way of building in becoming" where design and drawings are consequences and expressions of hands-on experiences, as opposed to abstract theorizations resulting from a purely conceptual work completed in studio.



Fig. 28
The construction finished

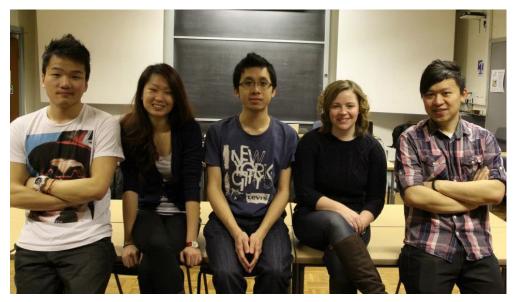


Fig. 29 (From Left to Right): Chin Wai Fan, Kim Choon Lim, Ming Shien Yeo, Anslie Kennedy, Jun How Wong. Collectively: StudioSK

## 3.2.2. The Vertically Integrated Project in St. Kizito, Rwanda

### Background

The village of St Kizito in Rwanda is a place of education and shelter for orphans in one of the poorest places on Earth. The village has been built and managed for about 40 years by a community of Salesians led by Father Hermann. During the VIP C&T in 2012/13 Prof. Porta led there the five Masters students and implemented with them a few modules of C&T including Pattern Language and Land Exploration. Albeit I could not be part of the trip, I have been an integral part of the design of the process as well as its delivery, by contributing to the overall venture and by constant exchange from distance during the two weeks of the workshop in St Kizito.

The Rwanda project is a set of initiatives aimed at understanding the housing needs of the local community of the St. Kizito village, which include building construction, educational/ business opportunities and sustainable economic development. The team of five students created a specific workgroup, Studio S.K., which during the VIP C&T raised funds to self-finance the research trip in Rwanda, collaborating with MBA students of the Business School. The project centred on the idea of collaborative construction, that is, a live building process in which students would have the opportunity to work with the various components of the village community, including in particular the orphans, to realize direct construction. Following the philosophy of C&T, the group worked with therapeutic intent based on shared experience and trying to use the building process as a means to amplifying people's awareness of themselves and the place, and the beauty of the land. As we will see, despite the failure of the last phase of the project, that of actual construction, due to circumstances beyond our control an responsibility, the process was a significant success in many ways, and had a very tangible impact on successive construction initiatives that Father Herman autonomously undertook in the village after

to our departure, but still following our guidelines.

#### **Process Overview**

The project took place following a plan of action in three main activities:

- I. Preliminary Research. In this preliminary phase students researched the history, culture and geographical structure of context of the village in Rwanda. It was important to increase our historical, cultural and geographical familiarity with the place, both at large and small scale.
- 2. Land Exploration (LE) and Pattern Language (PL). This activity can be considered the core of the process. This is where the students' team experimented with the Construction and Therapy method starting with the Land Exploration phase, and through to the Pattern Language. Unlike the previous activities in Glasgow, here students experienced LE and PL not in the educational context, but being immersed in a real-life situation of particular complexity, in which it was necessary to build a structure for the needs of locals. The information collected and integrated in both phases (LE and PL) provided the foundations on which the architectural project is developed.
- 3. Conception and Construction (C&C): Respecting the collective vision that emerged from the previous phases, the intent was to develop the design of the building. In this phase students had to be careful not to be diverted from the collective ideal and to be sure to make it become a collective realisation. A way to do so was to create a live mock-up exercise.

#### Preliminary Research

The workshop in Rwanda took place from March 26th to April 10th 2013. During the preparation of the trip, particular attention was paid to the genocide that occurred in 1994 and to the impact it had on local communities. Many other topics were explored, among them the study and construction interventions that have characteristics similar to C&T in similar contexts. Since the project involved children, the team also studied and experimented with various types of educational, relational and communicative models related to pedagogy and evolutionary psychology, in order to find the best way to carry out the integration between construction and human relationships. Students experimented working with children in Glasgow before departure, by conducting a series of workshops within the University nursery.

A Site Analysis (from Remote) was carried out. This experience was different from the usual analyses carried out in an architecture studio as it involved various subjects and different methods of documentation. Before the site inspection of March 2013, the first analysis of the place and the village took place harvesting information from the internet and meetings that Prof. Porta and I had had with the association Barabba's Clowns, which operated in the village. For the students it was not easy to mine information on real life conditions, because the communication with Barabba's was very difficult due various contingences, including difference of languages, remote location

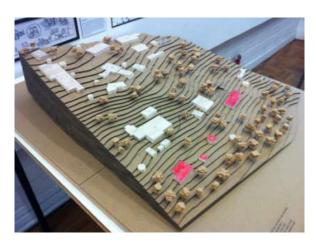


Fig. 30 Physical site model



Fig. 31 3D Graphical Model

of the place, time gap and poor IT infrastructures in Rwanda.

Studio S.K. used their technological and communication skills to understand the social composition and the general conditions of the village. The information was ultimately recorded in graphical diagrams, 3D digital as well as physical models. This helped the team understand the functions of existing buildings in the village. Studio S.K. conducted and recorded various interviews by contacting local stakeholders including: Comfort Rwanda, Maggie's Centre and S.K.I.P. Glasgow.

## Land Exploration

Studio S.K. and Prof. Porta then departed to Rwanda and went to the village of St. Kitzito to start the process. The C&T process had been up to that point explored and applied in a semi-controlled environment, that of the University itself, thus allowing students to test it before applying the preliminary phases live on site in St Kizito. The trial in Glasgow covered the process in its entirety. However, in St. Kizito we could only implement the first two phases, since the third phase, Conception and Construction, was stopped due to issues arisen with the funding sponsor, the "Ordine degli Architetti" of Varese.

The purpose of Land Exploration is to map the collective feelings a community



Fig. 32 StudioSK in San Kitzito, Rwanda – playing games with the children

holds towards the land itself. As seen in the trial, the individuals marked the spaces in Rotternrow in which they experienced a positive feeling. In the case of St. Kizito, the aim was to understand how the community perceived the Land; this was achieved through participant observation and exercises such as mental mapping and tours. A sample of locals were invited to participate in the exercises, which, similarly to the trial, resulted in a map of emotional centres that was presented back to the community.

For the LE the workshop the "Field Work" or "Participant Observation" defined by Bronislaw Malinowski was applied. Before Malinowski, anthropologists field work was mainly about structured interviews, without proper immersion in the daily life of the subjects under observation. Malinowski stressed participant observation, emphasizing the daily contact between the scholars and their informants. In his work "Argonauts of the Western Pacific" (1922), the objective of the anthropological research was defined as "Looking at them from the point of view of their integral effect, they shape, the general outline of the Kula, and give it the character of the double-closed circuit". Here he anticipated the distinction between description and analysis and between the points of view of the social actors and the scholar. This distinction is still the basis of the field survey methodology.

In the phase of LE in St Kizito, a participant observation course of action and a continuous interaction (verbal and non-verbal) between team, locals and staff in the village were put in place. Students actively participated in the daily activities of the youngest children for over a week, accompanied every day by the village staff to support the children at all times in their daily duties, play and eat with them, cleaning and preparing food for them, etc. Every evening at the end of the day, students met Prof. Porta to compare their experiences of the day and look for common patterns of behaviour and



 $\begin{array}{c} \text{Fig. 33} \\ \text{Moment of daily like in St Kizito} \end{array}$ 

use of space. These patterns were translated into text and then into drawn diagrams. The information was obtained through prolonged observations and conversations. The Team also engaged local staff by moving around in pairs and asking them to identify, both individually and collectively, the centres in the land. Gradually the information was documented and analysed before starting the PL phase.

The students focused on the lower part of the village. They explored the land, not just in the village but also in the spaces outside, relating the external spaces to those inside the village. Another place visited was the nearby lake Muhazi. All this led to a discussion about the planning of activities for the LE and the PL. Living in the place personally gave the team the opportunity to better understand the context regarding the local environment and culture. In addition, they were able to compare the gap between the work done beforehand in the graphical research and the site analysis from Glasgow with the reality of daily life in the village. They wrote: "By observing the patterns and the elements of the village and how the locals respond and move around it gave us a sense/ perception of the structure and significance of certain parts of the village. Again, as experienced during our research in the University's nursery, the most effective way to understand and experience the land essentially boils down to "spending time with the locals on the land".

Studio S.K. interacted with the local children and the group; they were involved in the daily activities the children would equally have done doing without them, i.e. cleaning dormitories, changing bed linen, washing clothes and light maintenance such as cleaning windows. The idea was to break down social barriers prior to the delivery of the LE and PL. The trial in Glasgow confirmed to students that a relationship with the client was essential to ensuring better responses.

Before starting the LE, a briefing was set up with local staff: the objectives and the rules of the exercises that would be conducted were explained. The goal was for the end-users to fully understand the nature of the exercises and significance of LE. It was therefore made explicitly clear that these exercises were particularly intense from an emotional point of view, and what kind of mental state they required. Most of the locals and staff spoke only Kinyarwanda and a little bit of French, making the language barrier one of the biggest obstacles. Fortunately, the director of the school, despite having grown up in the village, had had the opportunity to study in Italy for a certain period of time thanks to the association Barabba's. She acted as interpreter for the students. With the help Barabba's staff present in the village, the instructions and conversations of Prof. Porta were translated from Italian to Kinyarwanda to the locals and also the team's communications regarding the exercises could be translated and understood by the locals.

The LE was run in two exercises: A) Stories of the Land, and B) Mental Mapping.

#### Exercise A: Stories of the Land

This first exercise was conducted with Barabba's Staff and locals separately. Couples formed by a person from Studio S.K. and a representative of the staff or a person from the village, took a walk through the village. During the walk a place was chosen where a story about the village and/or the person himself could be told. The purpose of the exercise was to deeply understand the land and identify the positive Centres in it. All the relevant connections between the land and the people were recorded and displayed in a graphic map. Students asked the end-users to tell stories and positive memories of the land and point out their favourite spots in the village - the places they had grown up in and the events that might be meaningful to LE. This exercise was conducted in two separate sessions, one with the staff members of Barabba's and one with the girls of the village.

The children's favourite places were recorded on the map not through interviews, but by living with them while observing their daily habits. It was observed how children lived in the places, drew them and which spaces they chose to gather.

## Exercise B: Mental Mapping

Unlike the trial at the University, Studio S.K. asked the Barabba's Staff and the girls of the village to draw the land, trying to lead them into the representation of a Mental Map. This exercise aimed to better understand the importance of the centres identified in Exercise A. By noting the places, the boundaries and the proper order of the drawings, the team drew conclusions concerning the reference spaces for the people of the village, and their relative importance. That is, they understood how the users perceived the land. This exercise was also conducted with the Staff and the Girls in two separate sessions. The team told them: "Imagine that you are writing a letter to a remote friend and you want to describe to her or him the lower part of the village. Imagine that instead of writing, you describe the place in the form of map".



Fig. 34 Example of Mental Map

The rules of the game were:

- Limit of the place. Focus on the part of the land that is defined by the wall to the north, and the external railing to all other edges: only the lower part of the village.
- Label Comments. Name all the elements that you draw (for example: "wall", "bell", "pound"). Annotating comments is allowed.
- Order. Make sure that every element is numbered in order of appearance, from I (the first that is drawn) to the last.
- Precision. Using an eraser is allowed, but keep in mind that accordance to reality is not an issue. We are seeking to accord the drawing to your memory of the place, not its real configuration.

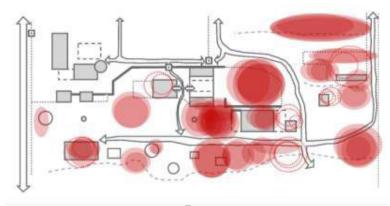
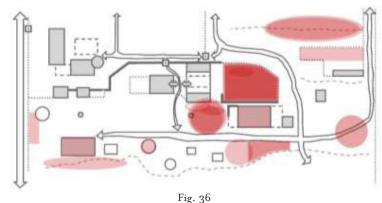


Fig. 35 Staff' syntesis diagram of centers

• The mapping was documented by asking Barabba's staff and the girls to draw the place which had the strongest impression on them. The end-users were provided with pencils, coloured markers, erasers and A4 sheets of paper. There were no limits of time or materials. Each participant was assigned a member of the team responsible for annotating the number and order of appearance of the drawing components and for observing other qualities or elements relevant to the reading of feelings on the land. Below an example of mental map output and notes by Studio S.K.

The identification of the latent centres and the centres of the Land, both for staff and locals, was finally reported in a Synthesis Diagram of Centres. The diagram

was created even though Studio S.K. had neither the technological means nor the time to specifically record the intensity and frequency of feelings on the centres. Proper centres were recorded with a red circle, whereas latent centres with dotted circles. The frequency and intensity of the shading was representative, whereby the darker the tone of



Girls' syntesis diagram of centers

red the more central the centre was for more end-users. The feelings generated by these centres had been identified during the narration of the stories and extrapolated from the observation of the body language and behaviour of the locals.

Two different Synthesis Maps of the centres and latent centres were produced, one referring to staff and the other to the village's girls. You may notice similarities between the two maps for example: the basketball pitch, bell area, refectory, banana plantations. These maps were subsequently shown to the end-users and most of them agreed that these collective centres had been accurately recorded and coincided with their sensory and experiential perception of the place.

## Pattern Language

The major distinction between LE and PL is that the first concerns the Land, while the second is about the project. Such distinction can be very labile in practical application because the elements of the project's dreams may emerge during conversations and interactions of different nature. For this reason, Studio SK decided to reserve the last four days, in the final phase of the project only to the PL. The PL was carried out on the emotional climax and the dreams already experienced during the LE. However, unlike the PL, conversations with staff and locals had to be more structured in order to obtain material for the dreams, without which it would not have been possible to work out the PL itself. It was therefore necessary to orient the dreaming to the project building.

Since the PL in the village contemplated the work on several different buildings, in particular the "girls' dorm", "refectory" and "nursery", it was carried out slightly differently from what had been done for the Pavilion in Glasgow. Two separate exercises were conducted.

The first exercise, Exercise C, consisted of individual Interviews with local staff and girls of the village, followed by the identification of common patterns in each dream,

the "Synthesis Qualified List" and "Synthesis Dream Map"; the second, Exercise D, was about having the locals and Barabba's staff draw a series of Mental Maps. Both the exercises were performed on all the three buildings mentioned above.

#### Exercise C: Individual Interviews

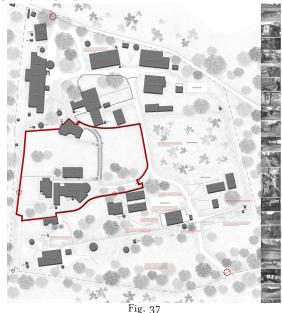
The work focused on: identifying common patterns in each dream; laying out the Synthesis Qualified List; laying out the Synthesis Dream Map.

The interviews were conducted as per the model defined during the PL carried out in Glasgow for the construction of the pavilion. Our students interviewed girls and staff individually, trying to extrapolate the personal Dreams and Visions for the three buildings. Immediately it was clear that the results of the interviews were not as authentic and profound as they had been in the Glasgow trial. This was probably due to the language barrier and the lack of experts involved in the LE stage. People seemed to respond more to satisfy their interviewees than express their personal aspirations and dreams. Furthermore, for the interviews, a particular setting characterized by a certain atmosphere was not prepared, as it was during the pavilion interviews.

The only factor for choosing the place was that it should be quieter and more secluded. There were no guided questions for the interviews and they depended on how the respondent reacted and what specifically they were saying.

Each interview therefore adapted and changed direction according to the person interviewed. The interviews were conducted using a simplified and basic verbal language and body language was often used to express more complex comments and feelings. For each interview a Qualified List, a Dream Map and the Spatial Elements were made.

Responses from both Staff and Girls were combined into a collective diagram for each of the three buildings. Below is shown as an example the work concerning the Nursery, extrapolated from the final works.



The San kizito village site plan drawing – done by StudioST

Since it would have been impossible to conduct interviews with children considering the language barrier and the perceptive cognition due to their age, each child was asked individually to design the nursery building according to their imagination. While not aspiring to the extrapolation of Patterns from this activity, the results were above expectations. The goal was to use drawings to figure out the common pattern of the dream nursery and the rules of the games were paper, pencil and eraser (provided) and no time limitation.

## Conception & Construction

As previously mentioned, despite agreements had been established for securing funding for the realization for the building that we the village needed by the involvement of a private sponsor, the "Ordine degli Architetti" of Varese, the unexpected withdrawal of the sponsor well beyond midway into the project did not allow us to proceed into the Conception and Construction phase along a proper C&T perspective. Back in Glasgow after the two-weeks workshop in Rwanda, students completed their work in a more conventional way, by laying out a masterplan for the lower part of the village. Students, however, were able to deliver a highly successful masterplan: the masterplan was based on principles deeply discussed with Father Hermann in St. Kizito, which he profoundly understood and contributed to, and was therefore received very favourably by Father Hermann himself after completion. Eventually, Father Hermann proceeded with the renovation and extension of the girls' dorm in the lower part of the village, following the students plans quite literally. The capital of trust and shared vision accumulated with the work on site paid off in unexpected ways, helping Father Hermann to change his mind on how to best develop the village, and reach more sensitive and cheaper conclusions that he implemented independently after the students' departure.

## Results

The experience in Rwanda faced various difficulties related to linguistic and cultural barriers and the limited amount of time that was possible to spend on the site. The last two gaps would certainly have been overcome by the presence of therapists able to work in the context of the C&T process. They would have provided the disciplinary and experiential tools useful for identifying feelings, dreams and personal awareness of operators and end-users.

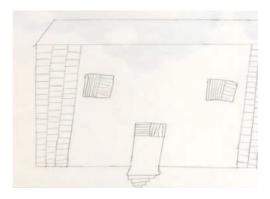


Fig. 38
Exemple of the Mental Mapping exercise

The following statement from our students is significant: "Studio SK invited a number of locals to take part in the PL Interviews. These were asked to imagine a contextless place, such as Heaven, and take us through their ideal home. However, it must be noted this was not as successful as the trial part partly due to the language barrier".

Even if In the St. Kizito project the PL and LE followed the principles tested in Glasgow in the construction of the pavilion, they nevertheless adapted to the local circumstances and means available. This led to the reflection that the three phases of Land Exploration, Pattern Language and Conception and Construction seem to hold a structural nature, as well as one that is super-structural, in other words linked to the contingencies of the case, the people and the place.

# 3.3. LEARNING FROM THEORY: CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

In January 2014 I designed, organized and managed an event in two parts dedicated to C&T in Glasgow, at the University of Strathclyde. The general aim of the event was presenting the first experiences of C&T to a wider audience of interested scholars and discussing a few points emerged as critical in practice.

The first part of the event was a Seminar entitled "Healing the Land and Healing the People: First Steps in Construction and Therapy".

The second part was a Workshop conducted by Pascale Scopinich entitled "Effective Communication Workshop: the Path to Healing Relationships", where some of the students who attended the 2012/13 VIP course were led to discuss specific communicational aspects of their experience in particular with regard to the Pattern Language.

Following that event, I then organized, in April 2014, a second one-day workshop with the same students, which was held at the Ross Priory on the Loch Lomond, North of Glasgow. The objective was to re-elaborate some of the concepts which emerged in the VIP course and also in Scopinich's later workshop.

## 3.3.1. Seminar I: "Healing the Land and Healing the People"

I will discuss here both the seminars of the first event: they were, after all, two close moments in the same stream of reflection.

The seminar offered an opportunity for scientists in these different fields of knowledge to present their experiences and discuss the Construction and Therapy perspective from their point of view, moving the experimentation on to the next stage. The direct involvement of the construction's beneficiaries with the act of conceiving and realizing "their" buildings, firmly sits at the core of the process, in a radical interpretation of participatory design that touches the area of self-build construction.

To realize the seminar, it was necessary to identify the topics and the speakers that were best suited. I made contact and went in person to the Association "Il Boschetto Pan" in Rome to meet Dr. Mariarosaria Nardone (Associate Professor in Special Education at the University of Chieti and Pescara in Italy) and Dr. Camillo Boano (Senior Lecturer at UCL and Director of MSc Building and Urban Design and Co-Director of the UCL Urban Lab in London, UK).

Prof. Porta introduced the Seminar and presented the speakers, among them Ainslie Kennedy, one of the five Masters students who made up the Studio St.Kizito team, presented the VIP C&T in Glasgow and Rwanda, highlighting the new relevance of this approach in the Climate Change era, with communities hit by displacement, poverty or post-war/post-disaster challenges".

Dr. Nardone touched upon the pedagogy of space between identity and citizenship.



Fig. 39 Camillo Boano during the seminar "Healing the Land and Healing the People"

Dr. Boano dealt with a subject more specifically related to city planning and architecture with a report entitled "Design the Un-Designable: Urban Design, Informality and Critical Architectural Pedagogy in the Experience of the Development Planning Unit". The talk brought into our work the legacy of the DPU, going back to the legendary figure of the founder, John Turner. The spectrum of the DPU design course's

engagements with informality, communities and urban design and the complex practice that continuously questions the relationship between the architect and political power, the client and the service provided and between ideology and spatial forms, all these themes contributed significantly to collocate Alexander's work in a new perspective, and emphasise its growing relevance before XXIst century's challenges.

Topics related to education and pedagogy were also discussed with Ilaria Mussini, Educator at Education and School Services office of the City of Scandiano in Italy, where the Rodari project was at that point already developing.

Allister Murdoch, a humanistic psychotherapist, presented about the therapeutic relationship between counsellor and client, assisting clients to grow awareness, and the importance of actively listening to the client.

The Association "Il Boschetto di Pan" finally closed the talks with a reflection on the object mediator in Art-Therapies as a vehicle of expression and communication and a stimulus for the enrichment of affective and cognitive vocabulary. In educational handicraft, the mediating object coincides with the product that you intend to accomplish. It looks after the welfare of the individual, the family and the community through the promotion of educational, rehabilitative, therapeutic and training projects, with particular attention to young people.

The final discussion allowed to trace back this wide array of external contributions to our C&T experience. The comparison offered different perspectives and stimuli to frame my research work within a multidisciplinary landscape (architecture, psychology, psychotherapy, pedagogy) linked to the contemporary academic and architectural practice. This allowed us to make a leap forward in conceiving C&T in a more concrete way and consolidate the idea that the multidisciplinary method was the most appropriate to the nature of our venture. The reflection resulting from the seminar led to an increasingly holistic characterization of the construction process and the research method of C&T.

# 3.3.2. Workshop: "The Path to Healing Relationships"

In order to make sense of the VIP C&T experience, in the second part of the event we organized a workshop on Effective Communication. The workshop aimed at exploring with the students the elements of communication related in particular to the Pattern Language process. The workshop was designed to develop or improve sensitivity and skills of listening, a prime function in making good relationships with buildings' users. Active listening is a powerful tool to help people to express, process and eventually share their problems. On the other hand, if misused it could undermine the "healing relationship". The workshop's working method was interactive, and participation and involvement was constantly stimulated and assisted, respecting personal preferences and pace. The person who conducted the course was Pascale Scopinch, specialist in Psychomotor Skills and Gestalt Counselling. Again, the exposure to Dr. Scopinich's point specialist point of view opened up an entire new area of expertise the role and function of which in a C&T process of making became immediately clear.



Fig. 40 Ross Priory: the workshop' location

# 3.3.3. Seminar 2: Ross Priory Pattern Language Workshop with VIP 2012/13 students, April 2014

## Background

The five Masters students of the VIP C&T in Glasgow and Rwanda, who also attended Scopinich' workshop, managed to converge at the Ross Priory for a one-day gathering in April 2014. In the first part of the day (morning session) we discussed the Pattern Language phase as delivered in their VIP course in light of some of the concepts that had been successively presented by Scopinich in January. At the end of the morning, we focused on a few topics that were acknowledged to have played an essential role in the past experience. On this ground, in the afternoon session I engaged the students with a questionnaire about those terms, to which students were asked to respond first individually, to then agree on a synthesis of them that I am presenting below. It must be noted that the document keeps some of the inaccuracies that were originally present in the manuscript.

Students were asked to discuss and respond to the following questions about the Pattern Language process.

#### Students' Feedback: Questions and Answers Session

QI: What is your understanding of PL?

A method design focused on the emotional experience of the user and a system of communicating patterns responsible for the design of the built environment. The architect takes the role of the enabler.

A system of communication patterns responsible for informing the design of the build environment.

A set of alternative approaches and unconventional tools for building for people. A Human scale approach to not-so-human practices. The end users (or the client) is being given a much higher priority than normal, and the architect has a human character

rather than the narcissistic "ego" of a creator.

A method of design more including to the physical experience of end user.

Q2: Why is it necessary and what do you think one stands to gain by using the PL process? We do not believe it is the only way to achieve better architecture, but it provides a structured method to achieve good experiential architecture. It should also result in an architecture more suited to the end user. It breaks down the barrier between architecture and end user, thus changing the public image of architecture. It is also necessary to introduce new/upcoming professionals to this process early in architectural education.

It's very important to learn it as a theory process in the early stages of the architectural ri-education. It introduces the future professionals to a more human ways of driving the standard design and build process. It also necessary to remind the future professionals to the alternative approach of building for the end user, as it is getting more difficult in the fast-paced globalised world.

One gains a greater volume of user input into the designer project and a set of design criteria/objectives to meet. It results in a building more suited/more satisfying to the end users.

It's the right way to produce good architecture, but perhaps is a born field structured method to do it. It breaks down the barriers of architecture and user, encouraging the users to take an active role in forming their physical environment to thus, changing the public image of architecture.

Q3: Can you critically evaluate the flaws in PL, from your experience?

The concept of time is crucial in the pattern language. In our experience time was a crucial constraint that may have affected our experience of it but in real life adaptation of this time will likely be a concern also.

Data from interviews (qualitative) is not quantifiable, and it makes it difficult to what is important.

We have also identified a number of situation/effects to be aware of from the perspective of different individuals:

- The interviewee: not knowing their desires, not effectively communicating in the desires that they do know, providing answers they feel are "expected" of them, being unable to interpolate their needs.
- The interviewer: hearing what they want to hear, putting words/concepts in the interviewees mind, not conveying the intent/importance of the exercise, being aware of the impact of setting on the answers.
- The designer: misinterpretation of needs, misinterpretation of responses, designing with one's own style or dispositions.

Time is a key-aspect in any step, from LE to developing and working with the end user. During our academy project we had certain time restrictions, therefore the results were not perhaps that adequate. Time will also be difficult to allow in an actual life project.

Perhaps a large sample must be taken, more all prepped in a communication workshop, brought to a level of equality and openness.

It will be an ongoing test to measure if this is consisting successful way to practicing good architecture.

Q4: How could a PL interview follow a unified protocol, and at the same time explore emotional material that is personal, hence individually specific of each interviewee?

Alternative interview techniques can be devised, ideally in a more casual manner, engaging interviewees ideally in their own environment or a place of work/activity they feel emotional connection with. External observation can temper the losses of an informal interview. Engaging with end users is still significant but carefully monitored observation and rational analysis could be advantageous in avoiding corrupted interview answers.

The interview should be prepared in advance. Minimizing the element of surprise and will allow for optimizing the input from the interviewed.

Analysis of users could be based on observation of gestures and activities, the feedbacks of which are much harder to corrupt. However, this requires an interactive real construction method, which would require a flexibly/mocking up building activity.

Q5: Jung felt he was able to build a physical representation of his fantasies and dreams through his Bollingen home. How can we understand our desires and dreams today in a way that allows them to transcend the realm of the unconscious into the form of something built?

Desires and dreams are not something that 'appear' in a lumps sum. The act of recording them draws out further ideas and dreams. Manifesting these into a physical way, creative way should be conducive to this process. This process should/ will take a long period of time.

Most people don't really realize what they want or like the most. Defining what is the "dream" home for you is very difficult. However, people know clearly what they don't like and what is not functioning for them so by identifying those flows one can find the best working solutions. As life is never black and white, the notion of "perfect" or "dream" home doesn't exist. However, allowing enough time to find and test thing would bring the most desired and functional live built from.

Try to draw them. Make an attempt to put them into physical form (as Music – Art) to express the feeling in the mocking up.

Inception stile creativity could be emulated via rendering/3D software, like in virtual reality environments.

Q6: Please comment the following passage of Gordon Murray: "Many of our most crucial skills are internalized as automatic reactions that we are not consciously aware of. Even in the case of learning skills, the sequence of movements in a task is internalized and embodied rather than understood and remembered intellectually. Prevailing educational

philosophies continue to emphasize conceptual, intellectual and verbal knowledge over this tacit and non-conceptual wisdom of our embodied processes, which is so essential to our experience and understanding of the physical and the built."

The passage illustrates the tragic difference between the conceptual professional design process and a more unconscious design process of the layman where people adapt their surroundings to suit. We feel it a failing in the education process that these concepts have been introduced so late or as additional options rather than fundamental concepts of design.

Prevailing educational philosophy in architectural education does not focus enough on the tacit and non-conceptual ways of creation. In our case, we were only introduced to the work of Christopher Alexander in the final stages of our education, which proves the point. The natural, embodied process of the Pattern Language is equally important to forming a better understanding of our built environment.

Our built-in instructive "learning" mechanisms will continue to inform our use of the environment. Our understanding of these "Instructions" should be in parallel with our understanding of the intellectual side of them.

To sum it up, it is important to underline the following aspects.

- Students understood the PL as a design method focused on end users' emotional aspects and a way of communicating significant models of reference for the designer.
- In the C&T process the architect has been identified as the one who is capable of "enabling", and the end users as subjects who are more important than in conventional processes of construction.
- The PL has been identified as a human scale approach for a discipline that too often does not take into account the end users' needs, feelings and desires. In this sense, the architect has to deal in a human way with the people who he or she works for.
- A remarkable element of the PL as a design method is the inclusion of the physical experience of the end users as a working and study material.
- Students found it important to utilize the PL in order to introduce an experimental architecture that reaches a closer fit with the end users and changes the public image of current architecture, by contributing to reduce existing barriers that separate architects and end users. Students concluded that a new type of professional architects, educated according to the principles experimented in the VIP C&T, is needed, and that this new education should operate from the earliest stages of children's development.
- Architecture should be taught in a way that makes education capable of offering more
  human instruments to guide the design process and encourage end users to take an
  active role in it. Students highlighted that the most significant obstacle for them in
  the process was the lack of specialist, disciplinary guidance in the therapy area.
- Students concluded that the best way to give real shape and meaning to end users' dreams and desires is through drawings, art, music and physical expression.
- · With reference to "The Thinking Hand", the reading of which was suggested to me

by Prof. Gordon Murray, and some extracts of which I have delivered to the students in the Ross Priory workshop, students identified a gap in current architectural education, as they it late, and only in a marginally, includes concepts like tacit and non-conceptual wisdom which are meant to be typical of embodied processes.

Of all these interesting results after the Ross Priory workshop. I would here just stress the importance that students attributed to the formation of a new specialism that provides a firm guidance, and the necessary depth through the therapy side of the C&T process. This is the specialism, interdisciplinary by its nature, which my research explores.

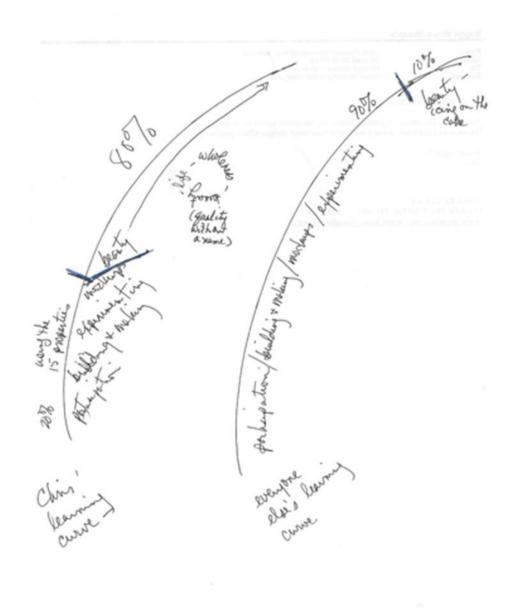
# 3.3.4. Seminar 3: Symposium on "Pattern Language" Applications at UCL London.

On April 28th 2014 Prof. Stephen Marshall organized a seminar at the Bartlett School of Planning of UCL in London, whose aim was to explore the PL in Christopher Alexander and its applications in architectural education and practice. The purpose of this event was to gather experts and other interested parties with an interest in PL, following from but building beyond Christopher Alexander's seminal book "A Pattern Language", and exploring the possible applications for today's education, research and practice. The agenda involved "exploring the use of "patterns' as 'building blocks' of urban form and formation, and their relation to urban design and planning, including attention to urban codes, neighborhoods, urban morphology, generative processes, adaptability and the 'localism' agenda". Prof. Marshall invited Prof. Porta to prepare a presentation, as an expert speaker, for the symposium, and to participate in a discussion/workshop to which researchers and students (with recent experience in working with PL) were also invited. Prof. Marshall also looked forward to discussing with us (and other selected invitees) the potential for future initiatives in this area, especially regarding possible future research projects, but also relating to any other areas of interest (including education, publication and practice). Together with Ainslie Kennedy, another PhD student and formerly student of the VIP C&T project, I was asked by Prof. Porta to attend the event and contribute to its preparation. It was, at that time, a nice opportunity to make a point regarding everything that we had done that far on the PL as part of the C&T building process.

Our mission was twofold:

- · Bringing forward the idea that there are two different PLs, and what "ours" is.
- Explaining that these two are actually complementary and should definitely work together.
- The "Quality Without A Name" in the Pattern Language: Life, Wholeness and Beauty in Christopher and Maggie Alexander.

Throughout the whole research experience that started with the VIP C&T course in 2012/13, and especially for this particular matter the experience of the PL delivered in the Rwandan village of St Kizito, and in addition throughout the successive workshops, readings and discussions with particular emphasis on the comparison between the



 $Fig.~4I\\ Maggie~Moore~Alexander's~"Life \leftrightarrow Wholeness \leftrightarrow Beauty"~sketch~illustrating~the~"learning~curves"~that~she~thinks~have~characterized~Christopher~Alexander's~approach~as~opposed~to~that~of~everyone~else~$ 

illustration of the PL in the "A Pattern Language" (APL) (1977) and "The Battle" (2012), our group at UDSU gradually became aware that the same notion of PL evolved considerably in Alexander's theory and practice, so that now we could distinguish two different versions of it.

However, what helped more than anything else to elucidate our own vision of PL as a process, as opposed to a "catalogue" of solutions, was an email exchange that we had with Maggie Moore Alexander, Chris' wife and collaborator, which took place a few days before the symposium at UCL in London.

Maggie's email to Prof. Porta, received on April 26 2014, is here copied with permission: "Chris was always focused on beauty, even before he had the details of an approach to architecture and tools to experiment with. His mind was able to engage

with a broad range of theoretical ideas from different fields and imagine a series of experiments that would gradually piece together an approach to architecture that made sense to him. For him, it had to include beauty to make sense. So, on his learning curve (attached) participation (including pattern language), building and making, experimenting, mock-ups, and 15 properties were not distinct from each other, but rather gradually moved along together, each contributing to the others' development. Perhaps one or a few got more attention than the others in the next project that came up as he was testing particular ideas. But all of this activity for him was meant to get to beauty. That was and is the prize. Because beauty heals."

In support of her email, Maggie drew and sent the sketch that I report here in Fig. 42. We realized with Maggie's email that we needed to keep always in our mind that the ultimate goal is the production of that particular "Quality Without A Name" that Maggie identifies with "Life / Wholeness / Beauty". This is particularly important when we talk of the PL. As a consequence, we brought to UCL this realization which effectively sets the PL apart from any "manualism" and, most importantly, away from the domain of "public participation" and public policies in general.

In fact, public participation emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s as:

- A means to empower communities in the historical passage from representative to direct democracy (politics).
- · A means to take more equitable decisions (ethics).
- · A means to make decisions viable in terms of sheer consensus (public policies).

For Christopher Alexander the ultimate goal is the realization in practice of that particular living quality that we can call "beauty", "wholeness" or "life". Studying patterns in a PL context involves the people primarily, because that particular "Quality Without A Name" has one characteristic that makes it rather peculiar: it does not come by design. No matter how good the design is, it will never ever be able to generate that quality that makes it alive, unless that "design" is actually the result of a living process. And here is why people are important: not because they hold particular types of information, or we need their consensus, or we can deliver a more democratic process or a better solution by their involvement. People are important because they are alive, the only living "thing" that we can include in a building process (beside the land itself). Therefore, it is fundamentally impossible to get a process that is living, if it is not based on human (living) beings. C&T is our own attempt at establishing a process of housing production that is living, and as a result therefore creates places that have a living quality.

The preparation of the UDSU intervention at the UCL Symposium acted as the basis for the first publication that we created regarding all the work completed up to that point on C&T, i.e. the paper presented at ACSA and included in the Appendices.

# 3.4. THE CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY REVISED MODEL PROCESS

At the end of the experience written in this chapter the research resulted in a revision of the C&T Model Process.

The structure is composed of a preparatory phase that includes the phases of Land Exploration and Pattern Language, from which the Dream Map and the Wholeness Map are obtained, and then moving on to the Conception and Construction phase using the Composite, Dream Map and Wholeness Map as tools.

Through the course and challenges of the VIP C&T program and the intense reflection that followed in the series of workshops and seminars illustrated above, the model we started from underwent a range of changes that—at the level of the structure—can be represented as a development of the previous one in the image that follows (Fig. 42):

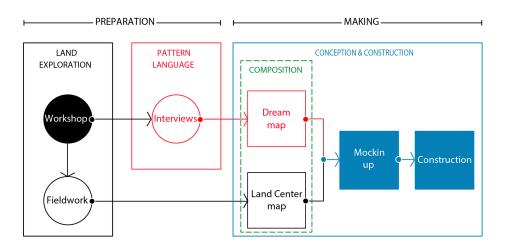


Fig. 42 Revised Model Process

What are then Land Exploration, Pattern Language, Conception and Construction? And what do they consist of? First of all, since all these three phases are based on the primacy of feelings, we realised very clearly that one will never succeed in a C&T process of making if s/he is not able to acknowledge what feelings the land triggers in her/himself, which is based necessarily on the ability to acknowledge her/his own feelings in the first place. This means the skill of being aware of yourself and your inner space, to live in a holistic sense, in order to identify the spaces in the land where your centre sits.

Initially, an exploration of body, space and feelings is carried out in order to sense the inner centre, getting in harmony with the space. Then we move on to a PL series of activities, which pose the attention on the Centres in the self, in others, in space, that is the ability to sense the inner centre in relation with that of the others. From this we get to developing a notion of group centres and, crucially, collective feelings.

The third phase includes practicing the definitions of terms such as Wholeness, Centre, Region, Feeling, Coherence, having experienced them through the LE and PL. Hence the two phases are necessarily preliminary to the third. There is a sequential order in the way these phases need to be implemented in order to have them best supporting each other.

The LE ends up with mapping the Wholeness of the land (building site), since everything you do in the land will change the structure that was in place before you (either positively or negatively). In this step it is necessary to identify the Centres in the Land through an understanding of the individual feelings, and to map those that we share, and the objective is the Mapping of the Wholeness of the Land. The tools used are: flags, excel, www. wordle.net (word cloud), blackboard, ArcGIS.

The course of action is the following:

- Individually: identifying centres in the Land, attributing feelings and coherence to centres, attributing intensity to feelings and coherence.
- Collectively: mapping the individual terminology (individual word cloud), drying up the terminology to shared items (collective word cloud), mapping the centres (weighted according to feelings and coherence) and discussing patterns.

The PL ends up with mapping the wholeness of the project as an abstract, ideal thing, completely detached from the reality of the land. It is the archetype of the project that we identify in ourselves in the first place, which as such holds a meaning that transcends the individual person, and through each person reaches a universal value, hence belongs to everybody. Louis Kahn would probably call this the pavilion-ness of the pavilion, the school-ness of the school, the house-ness of the house. The PL therefore is very far from a handbook, it is a form of language that captures the dreams and needs of people at a deep level, in order to identify the patterns that express the structure of the building, one that makes sense for all.

One of the main reasons that led us to this type of PL is the belief that whatever you need to build, it will be lively and enjoyable only to the extent it expresses the profound patterns that determine the desire to live in a harmonious way. Such patterns are accessible through the authentic dreams only. In order to access them it is necessary to recognize and express the authentic feelings and visions of those involved in the construction, and share everybody's emotional landscape. The objective of the PL is mapping the Wholeness of the building and to do this, we called into play elements of Jung's theories of the collective unconscious, techniques of effective communication and the Baby Language. Outputs of the PL are the individual and collective Quasi Dreamwork Maps (synthesis), and the Synthesis Quasi Dreamwork Maps.

The Construction phase therefore expands to include a much wider array of creative processes that interrogate profoundly the emotional dimension of the individuals involved, hence the new name of "Conception and Construction" (C&C) is introduced. The main innovation compared to the previous model is in fact in this area, where practical experimentation allowed us to develop the reality of this step into a certain level of details. As a result, C&C is now composed of three phases: Composing (which is about overlaying the two LE and PL maps, i.e. the Wholeness of the land and that of the building in the self), Mocking-up and Construction.

During the Composing, the Synthesis Dream Map was processed and the Wholeness Map was eventually laid out. On the basis of this the Mocking-up was started which included (ex-post) drawing, then the actual Construction took place.

The complexity and richness of the "human material" brought into play and capable of shaping the building itself brings out, by comparison, the reductive nature of the conventional construction process. The continuous involvement of the end users is crucial and their participation is present in every phase, up to the final stage of the construction. It is very interesting that the drawings are used throughout the construction in an unconventional way. The workgroup must use drawings and photographs particularly during the mocking-up to clarify the intentions with regard to crafting problems and to record the development of the process. These drawings are gradually re-defined and used to present more appropriate design proposals. Drawings are useful to support the understanding of construction details within a heuristic process of trial and error, avoiding the use of drawings to anticipate the building's overall layout or appearance. The use of ex-post drawings to note the decisions already made through a hands-on mocking-up process in the land, is essential throughout, and offers a practical way out to practicalities related, for example, to the authorization process and planning permission.

It is also very important to point out that the distinction between mocking-up and construction is largely abstract, while in the practice of the C&T process as experienced in the VIP there were many superpositions, feedbacks and integrations between the two phases in a rather circular manner. In order to proceed with the construction, analysing and understanding the structures of the land and the building does not suffice. A process is needed that can change them gently and patiently, a process led and framed collectively by human feelings, where the new structure unfolds naturally, phase by phase, and where each phase expands the structure of the previous. This brings the ability to build positively in both the technical and human sense of the word.

The tools used in the C&C phase were anything cheap material you can use to mock-up, such as disposed building materials and tools.

A further question also arises: Is the link between the three phases hitherto identified, of a linear-sequential or circular-cyclical nature? Can a phase make sense independently of the others?

04 TESTING THE (REVISED) MODEL

The Chapter focuses on two important aspects: the implementation of the Revised Model process and the educational/pedagogical dimension of the model. The two experiences presented in the Chapter leave the academic experimentation setting, and enter that of the real world of building in a primary school and a former convent homing an Institution of Higher Education. This was the most challenging part of the research, and the most productive, in that it allowed testing the strong and weak points of all the previous work, and talking of "living building process": it is only through the actual experience of life that living and dynamic theoretical models can be distilled which are capable to get in touch with the emotions, dreams, wounds and difficulties of daily life, and adapt to them. The application of art-therapy and interaction techniques of psychology and pedagogy are illustrated, which allowed me to immerse myself and the process of construction in the life of people and the communities with which the construction took place.

#### 4.1. BUILDING AND TEACHING WITH CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY

With reference to the conclusions of the third chapter, that illustrated the Construction and Therapy Revised Model, it appeared necessary to test the Land Exploration, Pattern Language and Conception and Construction phases in practical, real-world applications. Through such tests we were also seeking answers to the question with which the chapter ended: is the link between Land Exploration (LE), Pattern Language (PL)L, and Conception and Construction (C&C) purely linear, or are there cyclical feedbacks linking them backward?

In theory, and with the previous experiences in mind, there was no doubt that the phases were to be performed according to an ordered and sequential scheme that provided LE first, then PL and finally C&C: that is because LE provides the tools for PL and the results of LE and PL together, are the basis for C&C. However, it must be borne in mind that everything that comes from each phase goes on to implement and modify the others, and this happens cyclically and continuously during the construction process: this appeared to essentially characterizes C&T as a living process of making throughout the VIP project in Glasgow and S.Kizito described in Chapter 3. It was, therefore, necessary to test whether in real contexts related to everyday life that would have held valid.

The work done that far also suggested that C&T could work on both fronts of the profession ("doing" C&T) and education ("teaching" C&T). I realized that C&T touches on a topic that until then had not emerged: how could we build and teach on the basis of the same principles?

As mentioned in the third chapter, when C&T was applied differently in Glasgow and Rwanda, it was found that "structural" and "super-structural" parts in the process seemed to emerge. The challenge was, therefore, which were the founding and structural parts and which those more case-specific, hence super-structural. To do that it was necessary to develop the revised model through a range of different real-world

applications and, according to the path traced that far, the two areas of application to be explored were the professional and educational.

The professional part was tested in the Rodari Project in Scandiano, while the Educational part in a new Higher Education program named "Building Beauty", in Sorrento, both in Italy. The two experiences will be presented in the following part of this Chapter.

#### 4.2. LEARNING FROM PRACTICE: TWO ITALIAN CASES

Consistently with the project/problem-based approach illustrated in Section 1.3, both processes of learning and making begin with relational and emotional abilities, which allow the achievement of the practical abilities required in C&T. It is important to underline that using this approach we never speak of notions and abstract knowledge, but rather of "abilities".

My research has been an active learning environment in which all people involved, cooperatively, developed projects and, in the meantime, were trained to achieve knowledge and skills to become aware of their own doing. The realization of the projects becomes the ideal learning environment for me as a researcher: by observing the subjects and consequences of the "doing", I constantly had to critically assess and review the outcomes of my assumptions, thus shaping new theories along the way. I too, together with the subjects involved, started developing relational abilities in order to make both the self-awareness and construction processes grow together; I then moved on to a rationalization of my observation based on cognitive abilities. The skills shaped in this continuous self-reflective process were the basis for the further development of theories and results.

The above-mentioned scheme refers to the principles of Effective communication applied to the transmission of abilities in practical and relational contexts. These methods are the basis of Counseling work and have been used, right from the beginning, in the practical applications of my research. Effective communication finds its origins in the studies of Paul Watzlawick, psychologist and communication scholar, who theorized the cornerstones of communication defining it as: "an interactive exchange between two or more participants, provided with reciprocal intentionality and a certain level of awareness, able to make sharing a particular meaning based on symbolic and conventional systems of signification and signalling according to the culture of reference" (Watzlawick, 1971). He also made one further step by adding that "neuroses, psychoses and in general the forms of mental illnesses are not born in the isolated individual, but in the type of pathological interaction that is established between individuals".

From these principles, the studies on Effective communication have developed, which is the process that allows the transmission of information. Communicating effectively means knowing how to express yourself in every situation both verbally and non-verbally (facial expressions, voice, and posture) in a way which is clear and consistent with your mood. Communicating effectively means making sure that the message that I (sender) would like to deliver to the other (receiver) arrives so that it can be understood,

remembering that there may be "background noise", i.e. there may be both external interferences (actual once such as noise, broken telephone lines, etc...) and internal (emotions, thoughts that interfere with or expression or understanding of the message).

My activity in both the Rodari and Building Beauty projects in Italy were deeply informed by a will to establish an effective communication environment between participants all along the processes, in order to better pursue a project-based learning practice.

The principles of this method had been already tested in the "protected" environment of the VIP project illustrated in Chapter 3 where, in short:

- · Students were provided with textbooks only at the end of the program.
- They had no established nor known methodological reference for their work.
- They started the program with workshops on the Self and on the Self in the Land, that is the Land Exploration (relational ability), followed by workshops on the Pattern Language and Conception and Construction (learning ability) and only at the end they finally began conceptualizing what they had experienced by studying textbooks and writing reports (scientific ability).

The same I implemented in the Rodari project and, to some degree, in the Building Beauty program. Here the steps were I. Self and Land Exploration, 2. Pattern Language and Conception & Construction, and 3. Reflective summary.

# 4.2.1. In the Profession: The Rodari Project

# **Background and Process Overview**

The collaboration with Ilaria Mussini (Head Pedagogist of the Municipality of Scandiano)14, was important in realising and designing the Rodari project. The municipal primary school Giovanni Rodari of the town of Scandiano, in the Reggio Emilia Province, was opened in 1972 to promote the development of identity, autonomy, skills, and citizenship in children. The service, children of both genders from three to six years old, aims at establishing a rich network of relationships between children, families, and the territory. The pedagogical model refers to some ideas and values that orientate the senses and meanings of the educational project, within a theoretical framework aligned with interdisciplinary approaches to education. Here in particular I found a focus on the "design approach" that refers to Loris Malaguzzi's educational legacy, so profoundly and famously embedded in the organization of all the primary schools of Reggio Emilia. This legacy has helped enormously my project as it made of Reggio Emilia a long-established innovation centre in primary education that has positively influenced the local area of Scandiano, where the Rodari project was embraced and implemented. The Rodari school is constantly in contact with other schools in of the municipal and district administrations, it maintains close collaborations with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia and hosts each year visiting delegations and interns from different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup>The collaboration with Ilaria Mussini started at the seminar "Healing the land and healing the people: first steps into C&T", held in Glasgow on February 13 2014.

European countries. The Rodari School is organised around three classes of peers for a total of 75 children (sections 3/4 years, 4/5 years and 5/6 years). Each group-section consists of 25 children and two teachers. If there are children with disabilities, specialist educators generally sourced from the private social sector are contracted in support of the section.

The project was structured as an interdisciplinary training course for children, families, and operators of the school, which focused on "the experience of building together". The aim was to test the C&T process within a specific context also characterized by the presence of pedagogical professionals and end-users belonging to a city community. The practical objective of the project was the redevelopment and reconstruction of the Visual Arts Atelier, already established and operating in the school, into a space of free multidisciplinary creativity. This redevelopment effectively took place through the C&T revised model process that I designed, directed and implemented in the school during the two consecutive academic years 2014–15 and 2015–16.

Counseling interventions, psychomotricity, art therapy, and artistic workshops were used, in a synergistic and integrated way, in the C&T process implemented in the Rodari school. These interventions involved all the subjects that, in different ways, are part of the reality of the school and the staff of professionals who took part in the project (researchers, local artisans, etc.).

It worth highlighting again that in the context of a C&T process and this research in general, with the term "therapy" we refer to the creation of well-being conditions for and between the subjects who live in a specific relational context as opposed to psychological support/treatment to people with mental disorders or pathologies. Considering the therapeutic values of C&T, it is essential to underline that at the very basis of the therapy is the idea of a human being understood as a harmonic subject. This distinction between therapy and well-being had always been implicit in the theorization and application of the C&T method, but it had never been explicitly stated: in the Rodari project it was necessary to do so at the outset, since the term "therapy" could arise aversion by parents and staff. Eventually, they would have felt to be sucked into a curative process as objects of treatment, with a sense of unease and violation especially since this action would have been directed to children. Explaining the distinction between therapy and the creation of a well-being condition has given the opportunity to clarify in more specific terms the different areas of application relevant to the C&T method.

The term "psychomotricity" refers to a set of practices that use the game, and above all the game of movement, as the main tool to accompany and support the development of personality, understood as unity of body, mind and emotion, in the different stages of growth and life.

The "Counsellor", instead, is the professional figure who, having attended at least a three years course of specialist study at higher education level, and being in possession therefore of a diploma issued by certified specialist training schools, is qualified to treat psycho-existential hardships which do not however involve a profound renewal of the personality. The counseling intervention can be defined as the possibility of offering

guidance or support to individuals or groups, encouraging the development and use of the user's potential.

A goal of C&T at the school was to solicit the participants' design and implementation skills through an investigation of their own world. In this way we wanted participants to recognize their needs in relation to the spaces and facilities of the school itself. To do so, interdisciplinary skills have been involved in collaboration with "Coress, A.S.P.", and "Il Boschetto di Pan", which are shortly introduced below.

Coress Cooperative operates in the territory of Reggio Emilia's Province. In this area Coress has its roots, here it chose to operate to contribute to the wellbeing of its community, as an ethical and strategic decision and in full compliance with what is referred to by the ART. I of the Law 38I/9I<sup>15</sup>, which sets the legal basis of the Social Cooperatives in Italy. The driving force of the cooperative is its will to be a "node" of reference for the network of social protection and promotion by offering its professional, human, structural and financial resources to participate and contribute to the process of social responsibility of the community and improvement of the citizen's quality of life. It is a social cooperative that carries out its mandate through promotion of community welfare and design and implementation of quality services in the social-assistance sectors. In addition, Coress puts into practice its business and development model in synergistic action and complete reciprocity with the territorial context from which it was born and to which it is still firmly rooted in terms of ties, sense of belonging and history.

The Social Promotion Association "Il Boschetto di Pan" ("The Pan's Wood") was generated from the professional and personal research of a harmonious integration between different aspects of oneself, oneself and others, and oneself and the outside world. It deals with the growth and psycho-physical health of the person, family, and community. To this end, it offers different paths, guided by professionals with specific skills (counsellors, psychologists and psychotherapists, art-therapists, wellness operators) that can be experimented individually and/or in groups. It is based in Rome, Italy.

The cultural association "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi" ("The Garden of Languages") was established in 2013 by a group of young music and functional psychomotricity teachers, with the aim of spreading musical and motor skills as expressive languages. Luca De Marchi is the chairman of this association. Since the 2011/2012 academic year he organized at the Rodari school musical workshops according to the legacy of Edwin Gordon<sup>16</sup>. The musical and motor education that this association promotes have as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup>L.381/91 Art.I. Definizione I. Le cooperative sociali hanno lo scopo di perseguire l'interesse generale della comunità alla promozione umana e all'integrazione sociale dei cittadini attraverso: a) la gestione di servizi socio-sanitari ed educativi; b) lo svolgimento di attività diverse - agricole, industriali, commerciali o di servizi - finalizzate all'inserimento lavorativo di persone svantaggiate (L.381/91 Art.I. Definition I. Social cooperatives are intended to pursue the general interest of the community fostering human promotion and social integration of citizens, through: a) the management of social-health and educational services; b) the exercise of various activities - agricultural, industrial, commercial or services - aimed at the employment of disadvantaged people).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup>Professor Gordon is currently Research Professor at South Carolina University (USA). He is renowned all over the world in the field of music education as a researcher, author, university professor, and editor of several scientific journals. With his scientific and didactic work, he provided a fundamental contribution not only to the study of musical aptitude, of musical thought (Audiation) and of its development in the child, but also of the mechanism that are the basis of musical improvisation in the study of movement in relation to the development of the rhythmic sense.

their focus the individual, whose specific characteristics become skills and abilities to be developed and enhanced, favouring personal creativity, interests and inclinations. During the workshops in primary schools the musical language is used as a continuously evolving creative material (children are called to improvise tonal and rhythmic patterns or to invent new texts or synchronized movements), a relational "bridge" among the individuals of each group, and an opportunity to experiment and acquire new skills and awareness of their identity in the settled working group.

The construction phase of the Rodari project was followed directly by Michele Messori, architect and builder, Principal of "Messori Arredamenti", a bespoke furniture company in Scandiano. Michele Messori was chosen for his craftsmanship and specific skills, such as his attention to recycling of materials and the unique production of his designs. Whilst using advanced manufacturing technologies, Michele is proud to use hand-made process whenever necessary for the quality of the final product. The right balance between craftsmanship and technology makes it possible to exploit better the properties of the materials used: in the company, wood is never considered to be waste material, even when so could seem to a less experienced eye. It becomes instead a cutting board, a box, an accessory or anything that the fantasy of the moment suggests. In the Rodari project Michele personally supervised all phases of participatory construction, covering a creative, technical and organizational role at the same time, close to the "Architect-Builder" figure advocated by Alexander (Alexander et al., 1985).

Building following C&T was an opportunity to test a type of construction process based on a network of multidisciplinary collaborations within a local pedagogical framework. The project was initiated by the public administration of Scandiano on the ground that it could constitute a basis for further expansion of the Rodari school compound and, more in general, for a new "person-centreed approach" in the field of public construction.

The application of C&T at the Rodari school was implemented during the two school years 2014/2015 and 2015/2016. A total of seven tenured teachers, three support teachers, and four auxiliary teachers were actively involved throughout the process. In the project, the section of children aged four to five was targeted, which included 25 children, some of whom with disabilities (sensory, psychological or behavioural). The project was structured following the three steps identified in the C&T construction process: Land Exploration, Pattern Language and Conception & Construction.

In the 2014/2015 school year, the Land Exploration and Pattern Language phases were completed, while in 2015/2016 Conception & Construction was. In the therapeutic practice a narrative was proposed, the metaphor of "crossing a magic door", which represented the cohesive ground of the whole group (children, parents, teachers, coordinators) and at the same time the element of continuity between the various experiences. Every single participant and the whole group involved was therefore able to:

• Explore beyond the door an "imaginary land", its space-time rules, its sounds, the characteristics and the movements of its inhabitants, revealing little-known parts of

themselves and their most authentic needs and desires.

- Bring feelings and experiences lived in the "imaginary land" back, on this side of the door.
- Give form and voice to what was discovered through a path of feedbacks and processing through sound, movement, graphic representation, dramatic action, and verbalization.
- Experiences the direct construction of an individual product first, and a collective product then.
- Focus on a common imaginary capable of conceiving a shared goal.

The common narrative also made the monitoring and supervision easier through regular interventions by the design team. These interventions were carried out both as workshops (with the aim of deepening, returning and elaborating the experiences of all agents involved during all activities proposed), and in the form of periodic coordination meetings. The therapeutic supervision in particular was a responsibility of "Il Boschetto di Pan".

In the first year a coordination meeting took place between "Il Boschetto di Pan" (Sandra Pierpaoli and Tonino Aspergo), Coress (Enrico Mansutti), "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi" (Luca De Marchi), "Messori Arredamenti" (Michele Messori), the Pedagogist of the Municipality of Scandiano, the Rodari school's teaching staff responsible for the 4-year section, and myself. This first session was then followed by three coordination Skype meetings between the same subjects. In the second year (2015/2016) a new coordination meeting was held as well as two days of workshop at the Rodari school, personally supervised by "Il Boschetto di Pan".

The activities carried out with parents were less than those with children because of time their constraints and the actual differences of role and presence in the school between the two groups.

#### Land exploration

The first step of the Land Exploration (LE) took place between October and December 2014 and involved children, parents and school staff. As previously tested in the VIP project in Glasgow illustrated in Chapter 3, people experienced centres and emotions in themselves and in the project space. To do that, the ability to feel and live one's own centres was explored. The aim was to experience the space in harmony with the completeness and wholeness of one's own existence.

With parents we ran two evening meetings, in December 2014 and February 2015, in which they were invited to observe the atelier environment, paying attention to the perceived feelings and trying to get in touch with their own visions. In May 2015, the closing meeting was held to inform them about the activities carried out in the first step and introduce the Pattern Language and Conception & Construction phases scheduled for the following school year (2015/ 2016). School staff participated in the LE in a similar fashion as parents did. The experiences with adults were conducted in a more

rational way and without entering into symbolic gaming.

During the LE with children, two streams of activities were run as an integrated part of the daily work carried out in the section: the psychomotricity workshop, conducted by Enrico Mansutti, and the musical one by Luca De Marchi. The implementation of these workshops was monitored by Sandra Pierpaoli and Tonino Aspergo, who also supervised the integration of art therapy techniques. This supervision allowed for in-depth analyses, elaborations and feedbacks, in both the therapeutic and construction areas of activity.

The final product of the Land Exploration was the mapping of the participants' inner space in accordance with the space in which the construction would take place, that is the production of collectively shared Feelings Map.

#### Process Overview

In the first days of October 2014 the first organizational meetings with children, school staff and specialists were held. I found in particular great collaboration and support from the psychomotor specialist Enrico Mansutti, Luca De Marchi who worked on the musical project, and teachers Simonetta Paltrinieri and Nicoletta Bedeschi.

A small sample of the materials produced is presented here in the text, while more materials are reported in the Appendix. In particular, this refers to the following workshops:

- 4.2 Expressive Motor Laboratory, Rodari, 2014/2015.
- 4.3 Creative Laboratory, Rodari, 1st and 2nd steps, 2014/2015.
- 4.4 Creative Laboratory, Rodari, 3rd step, 2015/16.
- 4.5 Music Workshop, Rodari, 2015/16.
- 4.6 Project "Construction & Music", Rodari, 2014/2015.
- 4.10 Project "Places of Wellness", 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

An interdisciplinary team was created which included the skills necessary to run two parallel workshops, music and psychomotricity, and supported the daily work of school teachers in the section. All related streams of activities started outside the "Atelier" (the project site). As part of the LE we gradually moved "inside" the space of the Atelier. The work team made this transition consciously so that the participants first would have placed their attention on the self and their feelings, then they would have learnt to recognize this awareness in the space of construction.

The musical project, entitled "Music workshop of sound construction and exploration of the self and of the space", took place at the Rodari school, which included ten morning-meetings and lasted from October 2014 to April 2015. The first meetings were held in the school's music classroom, while the last four in the Atelier. The project's aim was the "discovery" of the environment in terms of space and sound, in relation to the body.



Fig. 1 Children looking for sounds in the space





Figg. 2-3
The construction of the City of Music

The meetings consisted of an entry protocol, followed in each lesson by activities related to the work of LE that was taking place in parallel in the other modules. Below is a list of the topics addressed in sequential order of execution:

- The sound that your body emits.
- The sound that the room produces (children beat with sticks) as well as the things present in it.
- How the sound occupies the space (with use of water: sound waves).

Since December 2014, the meetings were held in the Atelier. They began by reusing the building materials. Children built to produce and listen to sounds. Initially, construction was free (not instructed), then the theme of the city of music was assigned.





 $Figg.\ 4\text{--}5$  Activities during the "internal Space" of the Body-expressive Project of Psychomotricity





 $Figg.\ 6-7$  Activities during the 'external space and time'" of the Body-expressive Project of Psychomotricity

Finally, children performed a concert "playing" the city of music built as if it was an instrument. The sound had therefore taken shape and become concrete in the materials used to build and to produce music again. There were also played games on feelings: children foresaw the association of sounds with animals that symbolically represented strong emotions, the construction of narrative/sound paths and the discovery of external materials capable of producing unknown sounds.

As previously mentioned, in parallel to the musical project the body-expressive project of Psychomotricity was held. It was founded on playing, one of the child's greatest pleasures. Through the game the child expresses and realizes her/himself, he relates to the space, objects, himself and the other. Within the motor-expressive workshop, children switched focus from the pleasure of acting to that of thinking.

The first eight meetings of the expressive-motor workshop took place in the Psychomotricity room outside the school (near the nursery school). They lasted one hour each, and the attending group of children was divided into two distinct sub-teams. For each meeting a specific theme was used:

- I. Crossing the magic door (let the children pass through a door built by the cubes and parallelepipeds leading them towards the space of movement games); then jump from the gymnastic ladder or from the bench, roll, crawl, climb, descend (experimentation with space, materials and their own body).
- 2. Experimentation of balance and disequilibrium (creating various heights to jump from).
- 3. Experimentation of destroying and rebuilding (throwing down towers, walls, etc.).
- 4. Game of pushing, then games of strength (means of transport).
- 5. Game of being transported/dragged into a bedsheet or a mat (the helicopter or ship game).
- 6. Motor skills games (going up and down from the gymnastic ladder, somersaults, rolling);
- 7. Game of constructing one's own house, dens, shelters, castles (with cubes, parallelepipeds and sheets).
- 8. Game of building together (designing a common home where there is room for all children).

The activity was divided according to two perspectives: I) "internal space and time", linked to the emotional and corporal space, and 2) "external space and time", linked to the construction and design of significant spaces (in which centres and feelings were acknowledged). In the "internal space and time" children were able to experience their own body expression (movement), their relationship with objects (interaction with them, relationship, transformation), their spatial knowledge (displacements, explorations, actions, constructions), their relationship with the other (exchange, ideation, communication), the perception of oneself as a corporal and psychic unity, and finally the representation of one's own actions in the space as well as in the mind. During these meetings, the space of actions and games corresponded to the Space of Expression, where the instrument was the motion inside an environment equipped with soft materials (cubes, parallelepipeds, mattresses) as well as fixed ones (gymnastic ladder, mirror, benches).

The "external space and time" was dedicated to plastic expressiveness and language (place of representations) and tools were used such as drawings, constructions, manipulation of materials and verbal language. Through graphic-pictorial, constructive



 $Fig. \ 8$  Moment of transformation during the symbolic game



Fig. 9 Explanation to children, with the use of the map of the place, of the game in space with the three positions: Home-Fear-Shelter

and manipulative activities, the child took distance from the emotions previously explored with motion and he could now "represent" his own experience. In therapeutic terms, we talk about decentralization, which is important for the child, as it represents the crucial factor of operative thought. This way the subject can be prone to transformation and listening, and then to open toward the outside world. In these passages, the children needed to be accompanied by adults, who would leave them the possibility of expression, recognize and understand them, and give meaning to all their productions, both verbal and non-verbal.

The structure of each meeting was the following: a first part of motor experimentation with the use of the gymnastic ladder, carpets, mirrors; a second one of motor experimentation with materials (e.g. cubic bags) that prevented entrainment, rolling; then, the body part diminished as the symbolic and construction part increased: an intermediate time in which to experience calm, sound, breathing; and finally the feedback session. Feedbacks were expressed in an art therapy framework which included the expressions of the body. In the first meetings, these representations were only of



Fig. 10
The fight against the witch (personified by me)



 $\label{eq:Fig.II}$  The witch's defeat by the children

a graphic type (drawing), then progressed into representations closer to construction (from graphics to construction materials such as sticks and cloth). In the last meetings, children were able to build, in groups, a tower connected to a castle that could be reached via a path and a playground (all this in the psychomotricity hall).

In order to structure the activity efficiently, it was also important to define the spaces and times within the location (the room) where the motor-expressive laboratory took place. The space (internal and external) and time (internal and external) devices, with both physical values of the place and emotional and interior of the child, are closely linked in the psychomotor activity. The Pedagogical Project linked to C&T carried out by the teachers, consisted of a "targeted exploration" of the school performed by children during the daily activities of the section. Children were led to comment on the theme of building a beautiful school.

An experiential exploration was conducted: the ordinary activities normally carried out in the section were transferred to the Atelier: the children ate, made a nap, waited for the parents in the atelier space instead of those normally allocated to the same routines.

Finally, teachers asked children to draw the "school seen from above" (i.e. a plan); eventually, above the drawing the physical model of the school was built.

The realization of the model was facilitated by the children's familiarity with building in a space of the section designated for this activity. This space, pre-existing to the project, was called "the infinite city": there they could find recycled materials and store the completed constructions that were never destroyed, but only continuously transformed. The children of the section, whenever they wanted, could go and play/build there.

After this preparation, the corporal-expressive work moved from the psychomotor room to the Atelier.

The section was divided into five groups, each conducting the same place mapping experience described below. The division of the section into five groups was functional to the activities to be performed, which required a careful observation and annotation by adults. In each workshop Enrico (the psychomotor specialist), the teachers and I accompanied five children in the Atelier. They were asked to identify, through the use of the symbolic game, three spaces that represented primary feelings and they felt as their own.

The symbolic game allowed to work within a fantastic dimension: children were supported in the search for places that express the specific primary feelings we requested. The feelings to be identified in the atelier space were:

- · Security, associated with a space called home.
- · Fear, associated with a place considered dangerous.
- Strength/ability to react, associated with a place of refuge.

The symbolic game consisted in the transformation of each participant into an animal or a fantastic character; this was done through the use of a "magic statement" pronounced together, holding hands and gathering in a circle, at the beginning of the working session.

After this topical moment, the activity began and each child was accompanied to recognize the place that represented the home, that of the fear and that of the shelter, used to recover strength and overcome fear. The group's mission was to defeat an ugly witch (played by me in the game). Starting from a neutral place (First Position) children could move freely looking first for the Home and then choosing where the witch could stay (place of fear) and in which part of the room was the place where they could recover the strengths and the tools to be able to defeat the witch (shelter).

In Appendix 4.7 "Rodari' Maps" it is possible to view all the maps produced. During the workshop, the activity was converted from personal to collective. In fact, the witch could only be defeated if the children were able to ally and fight together.

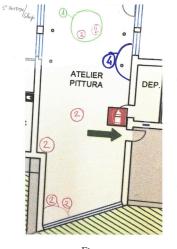


Fig. 12 Group n. 1 'map

Enrico and I took note of the places that each child associated with feelings:

- n. I = Place of First Positioning in the Atelier
- n. 2 = Home/Safety
- n. 3 = Place of Danger/Fear/stumbling block
- n. 4 = Place of Safety

An example of the resulting map of one single group of children is reported above. This work was repeated for each of the five groups composed of 4/5 children.

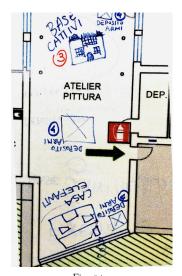
A collective meeting followed the mapping step described. The children decided that, during the meeting, they would be a herd of elephants and that they would make big decisions to transform their land, the Atelier. They were arranged in a circle in a room of the section; on a wall the map of the atelier was projected without any annotation. The children were guided in recognizing the atelier in the abstract representation of the projected map. Then the five feeling maps derived from their symbolic games were



Fig.I3
Collective meeting to discuss about the maps

projected. In all such maps, the location of Home, Place of Danger and Place of Safety was shown and children were asked to name these places.

The result was the following: Home became the "Home of Elephants", Place of Danger the "Base of the Bads", and Place of Safety the "Weapons' Storage". In this plenary (the "great elephant assembly") all the children located the three key-points in



 $\label{eq:Fig. 14} Fig.~14$  Collective map of Home, Place of Danger and Place of Safety

the space, as reported in the map that follows.

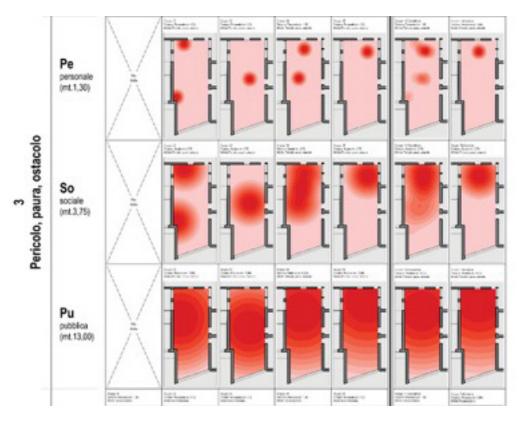


Fig. 15 GIS map of Danger

This made it possible to obtain one single Feeling Map shared by all the children in the section. This map represents the outcome of the work carried out in the LE: in the atelier centres had been identified which experienced feelings had been associated to, and these centres had a shared meaning worth to find a concrete expression in the actual construction. The graphic representation was an element of concretization of the

LE and therefore it was the first step towards the design.

On the basis of the hand-made maps resulting from the LE, after consultation with the UDSU colleagues, we developed maps to illustrate the density of feelings taking advantage of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) technology. An excerpt of such density maps is shown above (the entire set of maps is reported in the Appendix "4.8 Rodari'density map").

### Interactive Workshops

In this section, we offer a visual documentation of the interactive workshops conducted in the Land Exploration , with comments

harvested directly from teachers and the design team (in Italics) and from children/adults. The documentation is divided in sections that correspond to the distinct workshops, presented in the temporal sequence of implementation in the project. Children's quotes are reported in brackets in the relevant captions.

#### Wellness

As the design group of the project we asked ourselves where to start from. The immediate and shared answer was to start from the idea of wellness and delight that children feel living in this school. We believe it is a great opportunity to go and explore with children what is it that supports our wellness in the school to then, later on, redesign a part of the environment following the indications coming from those who inhabit it, meaning the adults, children and parents altogether.

- · Do you feel good in the school?
- · What is it that makes you feel good? Doing what, staying where?





Figg. 16-17

<I really like staying close to the colors because I like painting... I am always a beautiful painter...>



 $\label{eq:Fig. 18}$  <I am good in this school, playing in the park makes me feel good, and I do like the little house a lot.>



 $Fig.\ 19 \\ < I \ like building constructions on the enormous board, the squared one, or on the rug in the hall.>$ 





Figg. 20-21 <Of the school I do really like everything. I like staying at length in the book laboratory. I like the Atelier a lot, you can paint, you can play with toys. >



 $Fig.\ 22 \\ < I\ like\ making\ inventions\ on\ the\ tables\ of\ the\ section...\ I\ like\ all\ places\ of\ the\ school.\ Yes, \\ watching\ books,\ so\ everybody\ leaves\ me\ in\ peace...>$ 

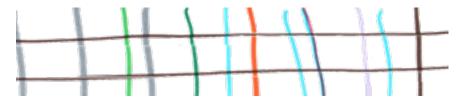


Fig. 23  $\,$  <I like colouring with Chiara and Elisa because I want to draw a thing for my mum. To play mum and child with Chiara and Elisa is fun! >





Fig. 24 <The garden makes me feel good because I like running and jumping higher, to the higher</p> branches, and then I catch them up.>



the park, I like playing with toy-cars with Manuele and Lele... I like playing in the hall.>



Fig. 26 <I like it outside because I play super-heroes with Jacopo, we play super-heroes every week.>

The children words reflect a positive experience, serendipity. And even when they do not know how to express their feeling of wellness and comfort, nevertheless we can see delight in a luminous look, or from a friendly smile, or the body language.

Through the verbal interaction in small groups, we strive to make a bridge between the feeling of wellness perceived by the children and their visions.

Keeping together the dimension of reality and that of phantasy, the children represent graphically or in three dimensions their wills, mixing together their personal experience with the idea of school that they shaped up themselves. The expressed languages support each and every child in representing what they dream. Each one experiments different techniques and choses the one which supports them better.

#### Questions:

- · If you could build the school as you wished, how would you make it?
- · What would you put in there?



Fig. 27 <I would put in a field of butterflies. Many animals... a jungle!>





Figg. 28–29 <My school would have all the Christmas ornaments, with all the lights, and the Holy tree! Mine would be very bright!>



 $\label{eq:Fig.30} % \end{substitute} % \end{subsu$ 



Fig. 31 <I want to make a square... because I like the squares... because Scandiano's square is more beautiful because it has the stone bridge.>



Figg. 32-33 <With the large bricks you can do large things! And a different one...a room as green as your jumper, one pink, one white and blue.>



 $$\operatorname{Fig.} 34$$  <I would make the school all with wood, to put one on top of the other...>



 $$\operatorname{Fig.}\ 35$$  <In the school there is the ladder for the slide, and these are the sticks to climb it up.>



Fig. 36  $\,$  <With bricks, because the paper breaks!... and the straw blows away!>

As school teachers, we asked ourselves how to support the children in their expression of their experience related to the delight, wellness, rhythms, spaciousness, brightness, furniture, opportunities for encounters that the school allows.

The Atelier has been the place proposed for exploring and experimenting.

As adults, we have shared our view of the space of the Atelier: Atelier as a workshop for experimenting and building learning and abilities, where science and phantasy intermingle, space that triggers the creativity of the children.

An Atelier that serves a school which is integrated with the town.

A school that aims, through ecologic communication, to:

- Support every individual's potential.
- Respect diversity.
- · Act for the context, i.e. the collective aim of the group.
- · Provide the children tools, abilities, and autonomy.

Hence, we trust the ability of the children to interpret their own needs and contribute to redesign an important pat of their city, a space of the school.

We begin a daily attendance to the space of the Atelier, to allow them to know it personally. One of the key objectives of this project is to pay special attention to non-verbal communication, to feelings, the creative expression and the integration of the corporal/emotional aspects with the verbal communication.



Figg. 37-38-39-40-4I-42
We brought here the benches, nice!
In the Atelier can we also make the soup? Yes! And how, we don't have the tables! We'll bring all the tables in!
Can we use the round table, the tall one and this one?
How many are we? If we are many, we bring many, if we are a few, we bring a few!>



Fig. 43 <I liked because there were fishes up there, we looked at them, me, Jacopo and Viola, all of us looked at them!>



Fig. 44 <It was that nice because we never did before! There is little mess.>



Figg. 45-46-47-48
<We ate in the Atelier, it was so nice!
It was that nice because we never did before!>

The experience of sound exploration of space, objects, and their own body and the emotional echo that the encounter with the sounds, silences and rhythms produces was for each child and the group an opportunity to know some of the different qualities of the reality outside of us, as well as inside.





Figg. 49-50
It sounds like a rock and roll... and there was a guitar, drums and a mic.
Those are tubes, some short, some long!>



Fig. 51 <I drew Lele, Memme, Jacopo, Pia, Niccolò, look: he is happy! Know why? Because he liked attending music!>



Fig. 52
<A picnic is when you take a basket, a table cloth, then you take bread, crackers, put the table cloth on and then start eating.

It is when you go somewhere far from Italy and you eat on a table cloth.>





Fig. 53-54 <It is one thing that you put the table cloth and some food out on the grass.

It is a small table cloth with food on, and then you eat the food that is on the small table cloth >

# Mapping places

With mapping places of wellness identified by the children, our aim was to build a map of feelings and emotions. Through the symbolic games that bring us in a dimension of phantasy, we support the children in the interior exploration of what they feel inside during the experience.

We invited the children to transform themselves into animals or character, and identify in the Atelier a place of shelter/home, a place of safety and protection, as well as one more unsafe, less secure. A magic statement pronounced altogether in a circle, allows the transformation and starts the game.

Cooperating is a daily exercise of living in the school; hence this transformation game is meaningful because it allows to defeat the ugly witch. Knowledge is fed by imagination, logic, socialization emotion, creativity and aesthetics. It lives of acted facts, of comparisons. In the experience we acknowledge as values:

The creation of an expressive environment of dramatization, comparison and negotiation among peers.

The synergy among different expressive languages: corporal, graphic, musical, verbal.

The encounter with the bidimensional representation of space (the map of the Atelier).

The action on the space and at the same time on its representation.

The balancing of listening to yourself and your wellness with their synthesis and symbolic representation.

Find a spot that you like. Now we become animals and begin exploring this spot as animals... then these animals will need to find some food... and a shelter for the cold weather... and a bed for sleeping... and something to drink... a place to sleep and feel comfortable, one where they can play... and watch the telly... OK, have you thought what animal you want to be?

We draw your homes on a sheet of paper and we'll never forget! Now we have to come back to ourselves, become children again, become yourselves!



Fig. 55
<We were two carnivores... therefore two friends.
This is the dragon's nest, where he made his eggs.
You are a toad.
No, I have changed now!
And what are you?
Pterodactyl.>





Figg. 56-57
<We need to mark it, because if they go away and go in this home and see it is theirs, they go into it, but it is not theirs, it is ours.

Let's make a trap.>



Fig. 58 <What is Ivan's home? It is the one under the table!>

In further occasions, also the adults who lived daily the school were invited to map their own wellness spots. Parents and staff were proposed to observe the Atelier space paying attention to their own perceived feelings and trying to connect up to their own visions. The involvement of the adults has been experienced at a more rational level, without entering in the symbolic games: it was sufficient to stay in silence and listen to our interior song, as our words highlight.



Fig. 59

<Open, bright, with many opportunities to touch, smell and caress.</p>
Putting at work curiosity, feelings, emotions, letting me slipping in different worlds
A place where time can be stopped or go backward, leaving me astonished and fascinated...
Where magic things may happen made of colours, lights and shades.>



Fig. 60

<The feeling of warmth and welcome which this space conveys, especially in the sunny days when the daylight pervades the whole inner space.</p>

The possibility and opportunity to be in mutual relationship.>

### Mixing Experiences

The workshop experience supports the children since the beginning of the project. Experts, each with their own specific peculiarity, were invited to be part of the design team in order to build their own contributions in a coordinated way. As a result, we take advantage of a range of resources that support all of us in experiencing a pathway that works on listening to the children, on the team work as an idea of shared design, of mediation of opinions and school as a community where all have vale and a contribute to give. The expressive/psychomotor laboratory we have been part of borrows from psychomotricity an array of techniques which utilize as main tool the game, particularly motion games. This is in order to accompany the development of personality, as a unity of body, mind and affectivity.

Music is an intuitive language, whose rules can be achieved informally and molded according to cultures, situations and individual needs.

Many elements of musical practice can be practiced within a symbolic game framework, and that of the exploration of the self, through what we can produce or modify, not as much with reference to material objects as to the air that surrounds us.



Fig. 61
<I liked attending Luca's laboratory because I liked singing "Ciao, ciao Luca..."
We clashed like this... with the sticks that Luca gave us.
...bim, bum, bam...!

It was good to play music and also bad...at the beginning I did not like it because waiting was boring, then we started and it was good because we played altogether.>

### Pattern Language

#### Background

Once the Land Exploration was over, it was possible to start the Pattern Language (PL) phase, which took place in autumn 2015. The PL aimed to recognize dreams and visions of the new Atelier, and with that the deep needs of the individuals belonging to the school community. The skills that had to be put into play were about how to interact, drawing on the unconscious of all the people involved in the construction process. The aim was therefore to get to a dialogue about the collective unconscious of the community regarding what was meant to build in the schol, i.e. the new Atelier. The PL involved all the individuals of the school (children, school staff and parents) and was supervised by the therapeutic coordination group.

#### Process Overview

The purpose of the PL was to accompany the community of people who had stakes on the project towards a higher awareness and better definition of their authentic—and collectively shared—vision of the project in their dreams. The structure of the application was not different from the one explored and firstly defined in the VIP project illustrated in Chapter 3. The instruments used were however different, in continuity with the interdisciplinary workshops led by Luca De Marchi (music), Enrico Mansutti (psychomotricity) and Il Boschetto di Pan (Integrated Art-Therapies). They were based on graphic and crafted output preparation, in-depth analysis and elaboration through dramatization techniques and Artistic Educational Crafts workshops, in which the individual and collective construction method where experimented. During the PL, special verbalization techniques were used introduced, such as the Keyword (after Jerome Liss "Ecological Communication")<sup>17</sup> and Effective Communication.

As a final product we got to the definition of the collective vision through the identification of a list of keywords used to define the object and space of the construction. The PL was only grounded, as for the children, on conversations/interviews made during regular school sessions, and as for adults on an open questionnaire supplied during evening and afternoon meetings. In preparation for the interviews and questionnaires I elaborated the questions in collaboration with Maggie Moore Alexander and Hajo Neis. Two different questionnaires were prepared for children and adults (staff and parents). Moreover, children were interviewed individually, while adults in groups of about ten people each.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup>Ecological Communication is the application of ecological principles to human relations: nurture the resources of each person, respect diversity and at the same time maintain global cohesion so that people can act together for a common goal. The method, conceived by Jerome Liss, aims to find a balance between individual needs and growth of the totality. Especially, the key methodologies for the creation of a democratic communication in the group are tackled. It is analyzed through practical activation and simulation of concrete cases: constructive criticism, conflict resolution, project development, cooperation, body empathy, metacommunication, non-verbal communication.

The questionnaires were as follows:

#### Adults:

- · What are the most important things in your life?
- · How can you realize those things in your work, individually and together?
- · What are the precious places you want to design in the Atelier?
- · What are the places that need to be repaired in the Atelier?
- Close your eyes and try to imagine how would be this place if it would be the most beautiful place that would exist.

#### Children:

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- · What are the precious places you want to design in the Atelier?
- What are the places that need to be repaired in the Atelier?
- · Close your eyes and try to imagine how would be this place if you would be in Heaven.

Overall, we harvested 17 questionnaires compiled by parents, 7 by staff and 25 by children. The texts were processed according to a "language" that had been previously tested in the Land Exploration. The scope of the language was to highlight the spatial structure of the "dreams" and the attributes of location, form and feeling that characterized them. Successively, the dreams had been further matched with those resulting from the Land Exploration.

The PL interviews were conducted focusing on the three spaces previously identified by children as "Home of Elephants", "Base of the Bads" and "Weapons' Storage". Below, I am reporting the results for adults and children.

PRECIOUS PLACE TO PROTECT:	PLACES TO BE REPAIRED:
HOME OF ELEPHANTS N.16	HOME OF ELEPHANTS N. 1
WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 2	WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 6
BASE OF BADS N. 3	BASE OF BADS N. 5

Tab. 1

Identification by the parents of the place to protect and the place to be repaired

Parents located the "places to be repaired" in the "Weapons' Storage" and in the "Base of Bads". Instead they recognized the precious place to protect in the "Home of Elephants". In particular, the parents' results touched the following points. They expressed "The need for order" in the "Weapons' Storage" and in the "Base of Bads". They recognized the necessity to reorganize the space of the atelier, in fact they perceived it like a utility room and not like a free creativity space. That's why, in the questionnaires there are so much "to take away the shelves" (7/17) and "reorganize" (6/17): that means that 13 people out of 17 have expressed the needs for "order". Their suggestions as to how to reorganise the Atelier's space included:

- To clear furniture and natural materials.
- · To make boxes easily accessible to children.
- · To put boxes on the high part of the wall, for adults' use only.
- To take the shelves off.
- To change the lighting system.

Parents recognized the place where children had positioned the "Home of Elephants" like the "precious place to protect" in the atelier and the reasons for this were the following:

- Sense of continuity with the outdoor space, in fact it's there is visual contact with nature through the windows abutting onto the school's park.
- Strong contact with all the natural elements in the school;
- · Lot of light.
- · Some real rocks on the floor;
- · Big hand basin already in use and good order, called Fountain.

When Enrico and I asked the parents to "close their eyes and imagine to be in the atelier in heaven", they replied with these keywords:

OUTDOOR	9
COLOURS	7
TO TAKE AWAY THE SHELVES	7
LIGHT	7
REORGANIZING	6
BOXES EASEAR PASSABLE BY CHILDREN	6
HAND BASIN - FOUNTAIN	5
NATURE	4
TO EXPRESS YOURSELF	4
GLASSWALL	4
SEA	3

SOUND OF NATURE	3
CLEAR FURNITURE AND NATURAL MATERIALS	3
TO SET	2
MUSIC	2
WARM	2
DYNAMISM	2
SOUND OF CHILDREN	2
TO ENTER IN CONTACT WITH YOURSELF	2
DRAWINGS AND PICTURES	2
FLOWERS	2
FRIENDS	I
CALM	I
TABLES	I
STAIRCASE	I
ANIMAL	I
GAMES	I

Tab. 2 Results of the Parents' PL

They described an open space full of light, with the sounds, smells and elements of nature. A place where it is possible to find peace and keep in touch with their soul and their body; a very comfortable place where people can feel like in their own home. They talked about magic, music, colours, sea, flowers and sky. There weren't any architectural elements named for any of the three spaces, but there were recurrent indications of actions to undertake in order to realize their visions by changing the Atelier.

Like parents, staff associated the "places to be repaired" to the "Weapons' Storage" and "Base of the Bads". At the same time, they also recognized the "Home of Elephants" like the precious place to protect". School staff's 7 interviews' results were as follows:

PRECIOUS PLACE TO PROTECT:	PLACES TO BE REPAIRED:
HOME OF ELEPHANTS N.5	HOME OF ELEPHANTS N. o
WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 2	WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 2

BASE OF BADS N. 1	BASE OF BADS N. 1
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Tab. 3

Identification by the staff of the place to protect and the place to be repaired

The staff expressed the vision to organize the the 'Weapons' Storage' and 'Base of the Bads'. They would like to see those spaces empty from all materials who get stored there in years. They wished the materials stored in a way that it would be easy to utilize. Like parents, staff perceived the atelier as a storage utility rather than a free place of creativity.

They suggested to organize and modify the Atelier as follows:

- Clear off furniture and natural materials.
- · Make boxes easily accessible to children.
- · Put closed boxes in the top part of the wall, for adults only to access.
- · Take off the shelves.
- · Find a different room for storage use.

Staff associated the "precious place to protect" with the "Home of Elephants"; they motivated that with the following reasons:

- Sense of continuity with the outdoor space thanks to the wall window abutting onto the school's park.
- · Lot of light.
- · It seemed an open space.

Like children, staff highlighted the sense of magic of the "Home of Elephants". Staff and parents mentioned music in that space. When I asked them to "close their eyes and imagine to be in the Atelier in heaven", they replied with these keywords:

6
6
4
3
3
3
3
2
2
2
2

MAGIC	2
WARM	I
CALM	I
CLEAR FURNITURE AND NATURAL MATERIALS	I
SEA	I

Tab. 4 Results of the Staff' PL

They described their dreams talking about an open space, full of light and with large windows; a place where it is possible to work with calm, to think and be at peace. A space with a strong contact with the nature, in particular with fields, flowers and the sky. There weren't any architectural elements nominated in the three spaces but there were a lot of indications about what to do in order to realize the school staff's desires during the changing of atelier's space.



Fig. 62 Staff during the PL

Children's answers to the PL interviews were as follows:

PRECIOUS PLACE TO PROTECT:	PLACES TO BE REPAIRED:
HOME OF ELEPHANTS N.12	HOME OF ELEPHANTS N. 0
WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 2	WEAPONS' STORAGE N. 5
BASE OF BADS N. 4	BASE OF BADS N. 7

 $$\operatorname{Tab.}\,5$$  Identification by the children of the place to protect and the place to be repaired

COLOURS	17
FRIENDS	15
DOOR	14
ANIMALS	9
TO EAT AND DRINK	9
HAND BASIN - FOUNTAIN	9
MAGIC	8
TO PLAY	8
LITTLE HOUSE	7
DAD AND MUM - FAMILY	6
DRAWINGS AND PICTURES	6
SEA	6
OUTDOOR	6
BED	5
LIGHT	5
CASTLE	5
то јимр	5
CHAIRS	5
FLOWERS	4
RAINBOW	4
STAIRCASE	4
TABLE	4
TO HAVE A BATH	4
TO TAKE AWAY THE SHELVES	4
COSTUMES	4
GAMES	3
PLYGROUND	3
ROOF	3

STREET	3
ROOMS	3
SWIMMING POOL	3
COLD	2
FIELD	2
HEIGHT	2
PRINCESS	2
SNOWMAN	2

Tab. 6 Results of the Children' PL

Children didn't suggest any actions to repair the spaces named as "Weapons' Storage" or "Base of the Bads", but in certain spots of those areas they dropped a feeling of fear, danger and elements of stumbling blocks.

The teachers and I conducted individual PL interviews with each one of the children, and when we asked them what they had seen after closing their eyes and imagining to be in the atelier in heaven, they expressed the following keywords:

I decided to report here all the keywords they identified because in this project they are the most important among the participants, and they also were the only ones completing entirely the LE and PL program of sessions. I therefore felt children where the main reference.

They described the "Atelier in Heaven" like a place with a lot of colours and friends, where it is possible to eat and drink with the family. During the PL interviews, they talked about the presence of Magic and light, rainbow and flowers, and they often referred to the exchange between indoor and outdoor spaces. Children described a place suitable for playing and jumping, and where it is possible to have a bath in the sea or in a swimming pool. Unlike parents and staff, children indicated a few precise architectural elements: in particular, they "saw" a castle or little house, however the most mentioned was "the door".

Another important finding is that in their vision most children mentioned the big hand basin (informally called "the fountain"), which is located at the beginning of the space called "Home of Elephants". After the PL interviews we had a second meeting with all children and staff of the school and we reported what words emerged from the story of the Atelier in the Heaven. The children associated certain keywords to the "precious place to protect" into the space identified as the "Home of Elephants", and they linked the "places to be repaired" with the "Weapons' Storage" and "Base of the Bads". In this way the three spaces were identified with precise characteristics concerning the children's feelings, but also with architectural elements that could potentially be built. During the

meeting, they decided to build in the Home of Elephants the following elements:

- A home with transparent walls, through which one can only see an silhouette of the home. The house would have a big and coloured door that would be closed with keys or a clasp.
- · A machine that shoots colours.
- · A place to grow vegetables and flowers.
- A veranda next to the Atelier, where it would be possible to do picnic with friends and family members.
- A tank receiving water from the fountain, in which to put fish (they decided to do
  it because they acknowledged that bringing the sea itself into the atelier would have
  been impossible).
- · A specific area for jumping on a big trampoline.

I also informed them that their parents and staff had suggested to reorganize the places of the "Weapons' Storage" and the "Base of the Bads" in order to take away all the things that scared the children. I therefore asked them if there was someone available to help the adults to do that: five of them made themselves available.

At this point of the PL it was important to identify the keywords showing up in all categories of respondents (children, parents, staff), the ones only in the children and parents' answers, those only in children and staff's, and finally those present in staff and parents' answers only.

## Keywords for children, parents and staff (49):

•	Colours	26
•	Outdoor	21
•	Handbasin – fountain	17
•	Light	15
•	To reorganize	14
•	To take away the shelves	14
•	Sea	IO
•	Field	IO
•	Drawings and pictures	IO
•	Glass wall	8
•	Flowers	8
•	Table	7
•	Warm	5
•	Music	4

#### Keywords for children and parents (42):

•	Friends	16
•	Animals	IO
	Staircase	Б

# Keywords for children and staff (42):

• Magic 10

Keywords for parents and staff (24):

Boxes easier for children to handle
Clear furniture
Natural materials
Calm
2

# Interactive Workshops

## Building the Collective Vision

The body-artistic workshop proposed and conducted by "Il Boschetto di Pan" aimed at accompany children, parents and staff through a process of creative design and construction based on analogic dialog and mutual collaboration, starting from shared psycho-corporal, perceptive and sensorial experiences. These were oriented to support, through body contact and non-verbal communication the development of interpersonal connections and trust among participants, shaping a group oriented to a shared set of objectives.



Fig. 63
Drawing produced during the workhop



Fig. 64 Children during the workshop







 $Figg.\ 65-66-67$  Children during the psycho-corporal, perceptive and sensorial exercises





Figg. 68-69 Drawings produced during the workshop

## Visiting the Temple of Making

At this point of the project, we were clearly approaching the "Conception and Construction" (C&C) phase. At that moment, the children spontaneously asked: "How can we build everything?" After the PL interviews, teachers asked the children to draw what they had been speaking about before. The graphic representation was made to fix more concretely the children's verbal expressions through graphics that could be easily interpreted and memorized by the children themselves. We therefore replied to the children that their drawings would be the project - the maps we all would have followed to build their elephants' house (or the new space of creativity). They were told that there was a place (Michele Messori's company) where all materials could be transformed and they could build whatever they wanted. Children made a first visit to Messori's, where Michele introduced himself as the Craft Master, the man who would follow them and helped them to make their drawings real. With this promising commitment, the 2014/2015 school year could end up in a glow of hopes, the project to be restarted after the summer break, in autumn 2015.

We visited with the Children the carpentry workshop of the Messori company, welcome by Davide, Francesca and Michele Messori with competence and enthusiasm. This was a very significant step in the children's development within the project.

The carpenters have told children what is their work in practice: they showed them a tree trunk, and how it could be transformed into a table, a chair, a toy, by using the appropriate tools. Children were all very attentive, they posed questions and tried



Fig. 70 First visit at the Messori Company



Figg. 71-72-73

<We used that thing that puts the screws in and pulls them out.

The drill!

I fitted a nail with the drill.

No! The screws are fitted with the drill!

I liked the drill, which we went in depth and then we made the screw, we flattened it too much and it went into the table... and then the table blamed us>

out some tools.

This experience supported the children in their knowledge development, and in particular helped them being leading the transformation of ideas into objects, timber boards into envisioned shapes.

## Conception and Construction

#### Background

In September 2015, once again the school activity started, and with it the "Conception and Construction" (C&C) phase of our project. According to C&C's assumptions, analysing and understanding the fundamental order of space in the land and in the essential (in fact archetypal) nature of the building is not enough. The building still needs to be built!

A further process is needed that translates all the knowledge piled up in the previous phases, gently and patiently, into a proper physical construction, a process conducted and framed collectively by human feelings, through which the new structure develops ("unfolds") naturally, step-by-step; one where each phase constitutes an expansion of the previous structure and yet makes sense by itself, is somehow "complete" as it is. This requires the ability to learn to "build positively", both technically and in reference to the most human, pedagogical and educational meaning of the term. The aim, therefore, becomes the construction as an expression of a collective need and a conscious expression of one's own existence, all of that pursued at a "authentic" level. Similarly to the Pavilion case of the VIP project, so at the Rodari school it was decided to use any cheap material for the mock-up and the construction as a start.

Considering the time interval (summer holidays were from July to August 2015) passed after the LE and PL activities carried out in the previous school year, we decided to run a two-days workshop held by "Il Boschetto di Pan", the art therapy specialists who supervised the therapeutic side of the whole project. As usual, the workshops involved children, parents and school staff.

The workshop was held on October 2nd and 3rd 2015, in two consecutive sessions, with the aim to accompany children, parents and staff through the transition from the embodied and imaginative experiences completed up to that moment, to the C&C phase. The workshop had as final objective the construction of a three-dimensional object, considered as a product shared between children, parents and staff. The construction was deemed to start in directly continuity from the psycho-corporeal, perceptual, imaginative and creative experiences of the workshop itself.

Of the two sessions, the first was entitled "From Perception to Form" and was led by Sandra Pierpaoli, psychologist and psychotherapist with a bioenergetic orientation<sup>18</sup>. The laboratory was carried out separately for children and parents. Techniques and processes of Bioenergetics, Theatre-Therapy and art therapy were used, with the aid of music. All these techniques were flexibly adapted to the different age groups of participants.

The section was divided into two groups, each accompanied by teachers. For both children and adults, the proposed path started with the perception of oneself and own's boundaries to get to the perception of the creation of forms with one's own body and with the body of the other. The imagined form then had to be recreated from all the bodies of people involved, together. This form has then been transformed into a graphic representation, chosen among many, as the most significant to be placed in the imagined space. The same laboratory was carried out with the parents and the experience ended with a short verbalization.

The second workshop, entitled "I imagine, I create... I build with you" was about Artistic Educational craftsmanship, and was conducted by Tonino Aspergo, biosystem counsellor and group facilitator, expert in artistic educational crafts. The techniques used in this workshop were those of Artistic Educational Crafts, which combines Ecological Communication with the practice of artisanal techniques, through the use of three fundamental components: creativity, dexterity, communication.

The workshop involved a children, parents and staff. The idea was to start from the works created in the first workshop, in order to compare the child's experience to that of the parents and staff. This experience was based on the "dialogue" between the graphic forms that emerged in order to create a common language.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Bioenergetic analysis is a form of body psychotherapy developed by Alexander Lowen, American physician, psychotherapist, founder in 1956 and executive director for 40 years of the International Institute for Bioenergetic Analysis in New York City. It is a psychotherapy based upon an analytical-characterial and somatic-relational psycho-therapeutic approach also used in group therapy. It is a unique and very specific method that combines verbal and body psychotherapy. The concept of integration is based on the fact that mind and body form a unity, a continuity. We are our thoughts, emotions, feelings, impulses and actions.

Once the common graphic form was identified, a three-dimensional object was created, to be placed in the central hall of the school. The realization of drawings for the three-dimensional project was done in pairs and usually the children chose their parents as their partners. For the final realisation the objects used were geometric wooden discs, woodworking scraps, other assembly material and colours.

In preparation for construction, which would take place in the month of October, the Movement Therapy project with the children was also completed. The third and final step of the project was about helping children to represent the symbolic places through collaboration and cooperation (for example: drawing on the same sheet, agreeing on what to draw and how to colour it, etc.). In this activity all the children's ideas were good and the adult had the task of facilitating the creative, experiential process and the cooperation between them. The concepts and objectives of the motor-expressive laboratory of the previous year were taken up as, for example, the relationship with the objects (interaction with them, relationship, transformation), the relationship and spatial knowledge (displacements, explorations, actions, constructions) and the relationship with the other (exchange, ideation, communication). During this phase, graphic and three-dimensional representations allowed children to arrive at the design/ creation of the desired object/space and to build it together. For the representation were used the same materials that children had used during the experience of the motorexpressive laboratory: drawings and wood sticks. The section was divided into four teams (A, B, C, D) of six children each.

In the first meeting groups had to "draw" the home of elephants, and the weapons' storage to defend themselves, and the base of the bads, while in the second one the task was to "build" the three spaces. The peculiar thing was placing on the ground, in correspondence of the three places identified, three sheets on which the children had to draw; moreover, the wood sticks were in correspondence of the three spaces corresponding to the home of elephants, the weapons' storage and the base of the bads, in order to start building them. Design and construction have always been collective and shared. All children began to draw/build from the home of elephants' space, after about fifteen minutes they had to move together to the weapons' storage and in the last fifteen minutes to the base of the bads. In this way they physically travelled the three symbolic places while making the representation of the places themselves.

The activity took place in the atelier of the school and was structured as follows: the group of children was welcomed in the atelier where the task was explained; later children were invited to take their place in the symbolic place that they would represent (in the first meeting) and build (in the second meeting). Here they were given the material (large sheet and felt-tip pens for the drawing/wood sticks for the construction). From that moment onward, they began to draw/build.

In November 2015, the mocking up and construction phase began. Children returned to the carpentry and reported to Michele Messori the results of the PL, explaining him what they wanted to build and asking how they could do it. The architect-carpenter Michele, Francesca and Davide explained them how their work takes place and

showed the children the trunks from which the pieces for the construction would be taken. They showed how a table or any other object or structure could be made from a wooden log, if it had been worked through the skilful use of machinery and tools. The children were very involved, focused, asked questions and tried some tools directly. Mr. Luciano Messori, founder of the company, together with his brother, had previously built wooden toys that gifted to the children. The games built by "grandpa Luciano" then became part of the home of elephants' ornamentation and furniture. The children were amazed and eager to start the new adventure of construction.

Michele and I had several meetings to discuss the results of LE and PL together. Meanwhile at the school the mock up was done with cardboard sheets and recycled materials from the home of elephants, the weapons' storage and the base of the bads. It is worth remembering that these three spaces were all in the atelier and they were an integral part of its transformation into a new "space of free creativity".

In addition, a meeting was held with parents regarding the construction. They designed and told what and how they wanted to build and made themselves available to participate personally in the construction itself, and to collaborate with Michele. Michele and I had a meeting which resulted in a draft construction project that summarised all the data collected in the phases of LE, PL and C&C.

The day when the construction materials were transported from the carpentry shop to the workshop was a moment of great emotion for all the participants and from that moment the real construction began.

The children started to assemble the home of elephants with Michele and Davide's help. With the simple and versatile components prepared by Michele and mindful of the experience in the construction workshop of the carpentry, children set up the structure with screws and tools. During the construction, they observed the parts, used the tools and materials and helped each other by sharing the acquired skills. Confrontation, negotiation and group decisions led to increasingly responsible and aware attitudes. These attitudes were proof and result of the implementation of a synergy between the building activity and the person's internal growth.

During the construction, the C&T model became a reality. Parents and staff also participated in the construction taking care of the parts that the children were not able to perform, considering their age. During the construction there were moments of rest and perception of well-being that resulted from the progressive change of the environment. The transformation appeared unequivocal, and children and adults enjoyed its benefits. Here are some feelings expressed by the children during these moments:

- "It's great! It's comfortable. I really like these stripes because they are coloured and I like the door ".
- "What changed is all zigzag: first everything was straight and now it's like that, the house of elephants!".

The structure without doubt changed radically. The home of elephants circumscribed and defined the space considered to be conducive to greater well-being by adults and children. It consisted of empty spaces that allowed the view of the park outside

through the large glass wall that connected interior and exterior. All materials used were natural and gave a sense of continuity with the nature adjacent to the room, which was visually closely connected.

The construction phase started in March and was completed at the end of June 2016. At the end of the construction phase, the atelier space was transformed into a "multidisciplinary creative laboratory" and the transformation is startling when compared with the image of the atelier before the intervention. The closure of the project was celebrated with a snack in the new space of creativity. It was a moment open to all citizens and promoted by all the subjects involved in the project, including the City Council MPs of Scandiano and the mayor Alessio Mammi.

## Interactive Workshops

## Transitioning From Thoughts to Graphics

In the learning process of children, the mind-hand-eye connection is of great importance, since it allows them to give shape to their thoughts, trust themselves and the others, and know how to create what does not yet exists. Sandra Pierpaoli and Tonino Aspergo led the workshop "From Perception to Form" involving all participant children.

Having already practiced the contact with themselves through the work undertaken in the experiential workshops, and supported by a strong relationship with the adult, children manage to tell about themselves and their own visions and dreams. By free expression, in the game of the interview the most intimate wishes emerge.

Which is the most beautiful and comfortable spot of this room, the one that makes you feel most good? Where would you build anything? What would you build? Is there anything that you don't like in this room, or that you would make better? Close the eyes and tell me how you imagine this room to be if it was the most beautiful place that exists.



 ${\it Fig.~74}$  Sandra Pierpaoli e Tonino Aspergo start the workshop "From Perception to Form" with children



Fig. 75 <I like it because there are elephants, because we can play, because there are stones, because I am comfortable sitting here, because one can look outside.>



Fig. 76

<I'd like to be in an endless fair. There is a panoramic wheel and also a pirate ship in which you can be boarded and then it goes up and down, and then I wished there was a park with a slide, and a swing and the spring horses, and there are also many stalls with puppets and toys and the fishing pool... you get there through a trail that was long but then I got tired and used the tele-transport to move to the other side. It all belongs to the rainbow, there are threads with lights of all colours, it is nighttime and the sky is black with all the stars...>



Fig. 77 <I'd like to be at the seaside. There are umbrellas, then the sea, the sand, a toy-bar... we got there by car and it took 300 years...>



Fig. 78
<In order to make the pool, we put a plug...then we poor the water from the tap! Then we strip off, put the swimming shorts on and jump into the water!>





Fig. 80 <We need a crane... a door... a little house.>



Fig. 81

<Hello kids, I am going to tell you what I saw in your interviews about what you would build in the Atelier: a door, a small house with a roof and many friends, where you can have dinner together and jump here and there. You would have lot of water and flowers a playground in the park. How do we build these things?>



 $Fig.~82 \\ < At~the~floor~where~we~males~will~be,~could~we~make~a~gym?~We~can~make~in~the~garden~two~pools,~and~that~of~the~males~larger! >$ 



Fig. 83

<To make it flying we need lot of wind and the wings should be mobile. We have to make the house landing as an airplaine.>







Figg. 84-85-86

<The rainbow house. All colours: yellow, purple, orange and blue. I want to make all colours in. I paint it blue with red flames. The roof yellow with green flames, the door brown with black flames. This way there are many flames, and the house is more marvellous!>

# I Imagine, I Create... I Build With You

Moments of the workshop "I imagine, I create... I build with you"





Figg.~87-88 Moments of the workshop "I imagine, I create... I build with you"





Fig. 89-90

Children playing with one of the games prepared and gifted to them by Luciano Messori, called "the Grandpa".

# Making the Magic: the Making the Magic: the Construction Workshop



Fig.91 Design with parents and Michele Messori

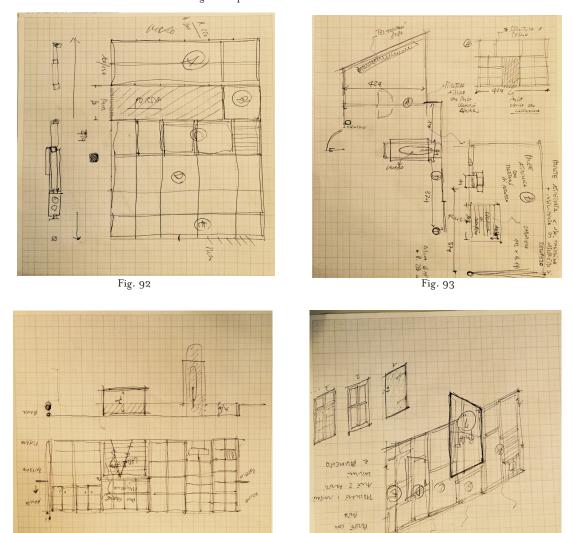


Fig. 94 Fig. 95

 $Figg.\ 92-93-94-95\ -\ Project\ sketches\ -\ unique\ drawings\ made\ by\ adults\ before\ construction$ 



Fig. 96 The artisans of Messori Company show how to build children



Fig. 97 Children during the construction



Fig. 98 A teacher who builds the door of elephant home



 $\label{eq:Fig.99} \label{eq:Fig.99}$  The space after some days of construction



Fig. 100 Children enjoy the space in which they built

After the bidimensional phase of design, we proposed to children to make their visions three-dimensional, by building with informal materials a mock-up of their dreamt house. The informal nature of the chosen materials and the many building opportunities that they had experienced already at school in the past, supported them in consolidating those experiences in this project. They learn to reflect on their experiences in a different context, by exploring, observing and taking action in a collaborative environment that values exchange and creative innovation. While making, children exchange ideas and skills on materials, balance and number, similar and different, weight and size, immersed in the pleasure, determination and commitment in achieving the objective that they set for themselves.



Fig. 101 <I am making a house, the house of the elephants. I make it with things, and glue. I used some tubes, then made a wall, and some lines.>



Fig. 102
<I made a tunnel, the floor and a table... and above I laid out a roof with a chimney.
I put tea spoons to make the walls, so that they look like bricks. I made the flooring with black tiles.
... of cardboard!>

The construction phase became even more tangible when we started assembling the house of the elephants, with help from Davide and Michele Messori. Using the simple and versatile elements that Michele prepared, and drawing from the experience of visiting his workshop, the children are able to assemble the structure with screws and tools. Children observe the parts, take action on the tools, and exchange skills on the way they work. The discussions, negotiations and decisions achieved by the children on the ground of shared motivations, opinions and behaviours reached increasing levels of responsibility and competence.

How do you think we could attach to this wooden stick the stripes that will be the door of our house of elephants?

The feelings, ideas, visions, designs, the experiences, our hands and those of the experts, in time, have contributed to transform this place. And now the transformation is undisputable before our eyes. Our eyes perceive the brightness and warmth of the environment; the mind records the shape and transparency of the structure; our feet lean on a re-discovered lucid parquet.







Figg. 103-104-105

<This is a laser house made of straws, one fitted into the other, and a stick that with a hand unfolds the laser sword. I took inspiration from Marci. The couch is made of many pieces of sponge, two rectangles, a square and a triangle. This is the entrance, we made it with one straw in the middle and two tubes that support it.>

How do we feel in this new space? What has changed?

The structure surrounds the space that was perceived of highest wellness by children and adults. It is light in order to make the outdoor visible from inside, and is made of natural materials in order to give continuity to this transition. Water and flwers will soon be part of the house of the elephants.







Figg.106-107-108
<How do you think we could attach to this wooden stick the stripes that will be the door of our house of elephants?>

#### Results

In this section I shortly highlight some take-aways from the experience of the Rodari project as relevant to my research objectives.

## Application of the C&T Revised Model

Speaking of the objective posed at the beginning of Chapter 4, i.e. the challenge of applying the C&T Revised Model in a professional setting, the following considerations can be made.

One important innovation emerging from the Rodari project compared to the VIP in Glasgow and Rwanda, is about the nature and role of these workshops within the overall C&T process. Started at University level as a special experimental activity related to architectural space and limited to the Land Exploration phase, in the Rodari projects workshops have been turned into activities that were:

- · Run horizontally across all the various phases of the projects, rather than only one.
- · Related to a much wider and deeper spectrum of life experiences of those involved,



Fig. 109 The atelier before C&T



Fig. 110 The atelier after C&T

far beyond the spatial component of the school, touching in particular elements of the participants' personal growth and human sphere.

We have come to realize that this change in the form of the workshop is necessary to the proper healing nature of the construction experience, as well as the proactive engagement of children into the construction.

One remarkable result of all the activities conducted at the Rodari school is the general recognition, coming from staff, parents, administrators, specialists and ultimately the children themselves, of the tangible growth in all participants' personal and collective emotional awareness. In particular, children spontaneously demonstrated the desire to progress into the construction phase, which is perfectly in line with the theoretical framework underpinning the whole venture.

Moreover, during the Land Exploration phase it was found that the potential of children to build and interact with space and with others increased in conjunction with the greater recognition of and respect for each other's emotions.

In the Pattern Language, instead, it was not possible to produce the dream maps and the synthesis dream map as in the VIP project, due to time constraints related to the rhythms of the school year and the lack of a related team of specialists. Ideally, students of the VIP could have worked on the quasi dream maps: they would have used the knowledge gained during the PL carried out in Glasgow to expand and amend the output through new maps. The dream maps and synthesis dream map have been replaced by graphic and constructive drawings that represented the contents expressed in the interviews and the questionnaires delivered as part of the PL. These outputs were ultimately supervised by Michele Messori, the master craftsman, and myself; as already mentioned, Michele kindly and competently followed up the entire project, particularly the of mock up and Conception and Construction phases.

#### Collaboration with a public institution: The Municipality

It is essential to underline how the application of the project in a public structure (the City Council of the town of Scandiano), entailed a range of mediations and a close collaboration with the political and institutional representatives (the Mayor and MPs) and with the bureaucratic and technical machine of the Municipality. The Municipality played the role of public client in relation to my proposal for the application of the C&T research. In addition to this, it was necessary to coordinate the external professional figures with the school staff and the City Council. I also worked to obtain and manage the funding from the Municipality to support the realization of the project and the work of all those involved. This meant for me a managerial commitment, which intertwined with the strictly research-related part and the practical application of the C&T model. In order to obtain the approval, the funding and the necessary resources, several interviews, skype meetings and a continuous correspondence between my supervisor Prof. Porta, the institutional representatives of the Municipality and myself were held.

Moreover, a new theme emerged: the professional skills and roles of all figures

involved in the project, the children, school staff and work team, went constantly stretched and twisted, and ultimately entirely restructured, along the way, including of course my own role. In the implementation of the C&T model, we had to constantly ask everybody to put her/himself out there regardless to the roles s/he would be accustomed to and was contracted for. Adults, in particular, often found themselves uncomfortable for that, clearly out their comfort zone. In addition, since C&T is constantly in progress through variations around the structure, the shock of having to work with uncertainty always emerged, had to be managed, and occasionally took over: the subjects involved frequently said: "we do not understand". The important result though was that, in the act of "doing", everyone understood that not understanding in advance "was fine", it was a constituent part of the process. Once we managed to share this awareness, everything became much simpler, and the work became more vigorous, enthusiastic and creative. Even freeing oneself from a predefined role became more natural. It can be said that there has been a gradual relaxation that kicked in as we started "making" and that this, in turn, has allowed a significant improvement of the "making" itself.

The three topics identified above, I) the continuous re-framing of professional skills and roles, 2) the shock of uncertainty, and 3) the pattern of understanding by making, proved to be very important for the definition of the proper structural parts of the Construction and Therapy model, as we will see later in this thesis.

In conclusion it can be said that the greatest difficulty encountered in this challenging project was the lack of a team of architects working in collaboration with the entire staff. This became evident particularly during the Pattern Language and Conception & Construction. From this I would conclude that a C&T process of making can be implemented comprehensively only when appropriately supported by an interdisciplinary staff of professionals who on the other hand, and critically, have to be adequately trained on working in the peculiar conditions required by the principles of C&T.

### 4.2.2. In Higher Education: Building Beauty in Sorrento

## **Background and Process Overview**

In parallel to the Rodari Project, key aspects of the C&T theory went under constant discussion and experimentation in a different setting, a purely educational venture: in fact, I had the opportunity to design and implement a set of modules for the "Building Beauty: Ecologic Design and Construction Process" (www.buildingbeauty.org) post-graduate Diploma in Architecture launched in those years in Sorrento, Italy. The program originated together with my own research activity and the rich network of academics and professionals established around my supervisor since 2013, together with Alexander himself, his wife Maggie, and his inner circle of collaborators.

Building Beauty started in November 2017. The program was shaped to offer a profound experience of designing and making, revolving around the exploration of the reality of feelings and an evidence-based approach to the architectural process. A solid

common ground is shared by the program and my research, both set out to experiment on Alexander's legacy over the last fifty years. The 2017/18 program included seven students from six countries who came together to learn about cultivating community and the physical act of making. In terms of construction project, the aim was to build something that would contribute to "heal" the garden of the hosting Institution, the Sant'Anna Institute in Sorrento. To do so, students studied the garden as a physical space and place, and discussed its role and potential. Directly involved in designing and implementing the program were Maggie Moore Alexander as Honorary President of the Building Beauty Cultural Association (ACBB), Prof. Porta (President), Antonio Caperna, Yodan Rofè, Susan Ingham, Chris Andrews and myself in the role of Members of the Building Beauty Master Council and Program Commission.

In spring 2017, three days of program presentation, scheduling and discussion took place. Our visit began with Maggie Alexander and Prof. Porta making a formal presentation of the Building Beauty program to the hosting Institution. There were about 30 people in attendance, including faculty and current students.



Fig. 111
The presentation of Building Beauty

The proper therapeutic part of the program was supervised by a professional team from Turin—Davide Favero and Silvana Graziella Ceresa (psychologists, psychotherapists) and Stefano Candellieri (psychiatrist)<sup>19</sup>, complemented by the association "Il Boschetto di Pan" of Rome , who had been working with me since the first C&T VIP experience in Glasgow. I actively participated to the design and delivery of both contributions. This therapeutic part of the program was named "Self, Community and Space"; it included the realization of practical art therapy workshop raising the ability to recognize and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> For further information:

trust feelings in relation to the space. The program ended up with the Summer School in Cisternino, a small town in the South of Italy: students learnt from local master-builders how to build the circular stone-houses traditional of the place, the "trulli". Self, Community and Space was complemented by two other specific disciplinary areas of the Master: "Construction and Cultivation" and "Seminars".

Self, Community and Space started in November 2017 with a three-day workshop led by "Il Boschetto Pan", which was followed in April 2018 by second workshop conducted by the Turin therapists.

## Workshop I: art therapy and Educational Crafts

The workshop, entitled "Structures of Beauty: Feelings in the Design Process and the Awareness of the Self", was a journey in the perception, listening and awareness of space, starting from the exploration of body's boundaries and personal space; after this phase, students moved on to meeting and sharing with the other, through practicing the relational space up to the experience of interconnection of the self in the group/community's space. Through the practice of art therapy and Artistic Educational Crafts, participants were able to identify, name and share their individual and collective feelings, seeking and finding a solid emotional terrain to develop a common language in the act of building.

In particular, the following experiences were implemented:

- Integrated Drama Therapy. This method covers elements of Bioenergetic Analysis (psychotherapeutic orientation based on the functional identity between psyche and soma) and Art therapy. In it, experiences of perception/ psycho-corporeal expression are integrated to creative experiences of movement and dance therapy, art therapy (graphic, pictorial representation, plastic manipulation), narration and dramatization (drama therapy and theatre therapy). The objective was to practice within the individuals' interpersonal relationships and their community bonds. The involvement of the many individual selves, discovery of underlining roles by playing parts, awareness and enhancement of everyone's emotional and relational space, and finally the facilitation of the processes of integration, communication, sharing and group consciousness, were stimulated.
- Educational Artistic Craftsmanship. This is a practice emerged at the interface between Artistic Craftsmanship and Bio Systemic Counseling. It integrates explorative/expressive processes with the construction process typical of crafting and making. A view of cooperation and mutual collaboration is pursued, aimed at fostering the potential of each individual and respecting their diversity. The participants act for the context, that is for the common purpose of the group members, using arts and crafts techniques as tools for achieving collective consciousness. For this purpose, the principles of Ecological Communication by Prof. Jerome Liss, founder of Bio Systemic, were practiced.
- Psychophysiological Music Therapy. The discipline revolves around experiences of music listening and/or sound production, which facilitates the interpersonal contact

within a relationship, in pairs or group, which enables a transformative process. Such transformation is about expanding the expressive space of the person, softening behavioural rigidity and schematism. In psychophysiological music therapy, the postural role of the individual and his imaginative processes play a major role, both in sound production and in music listening. In particular, the muscles—like strings of a musical instrument—generate a varied range of "feeling" experiences, which positions the body in circular communication with the Central Nervous System, modulating and influencing its activity.

The workshop was divided into three sessions, a total of seven laboratories: four of Integrated Drama Therapy, two of Educational Artistic Craftsmanship, one of Music Therapy.

The first session aimed at exploring the space of the self and the boundaries of the body and personal space. Afterward, the self in relation was approached through the experience of contact and trust. Two laboratories of Integrated Drama Therapy conducted by Sandra Pierpaoli were initiated. Subsequently, the focus shifted to the self in an integrated relationship with the other, through a Artistic Educational Craftsmanship workshop conducted by Tonino Aspergo: here we started from the exploration of our body boundaries, making a perceptive and sensorial experience by modelling our body with clay. The participants were accompanied through the process that would eventually make them able to get in touch with their personal space, exploring the possibilities of self-narration. Since the space of self is defined within a relationship, experiences in pairs were proposed, aimed at stimulating contact and trust (for example a game of mirroring and differentiation). Moreover, the same/different, full/empty, light/shadow polarities were investigated through movement, and the experience of intersubjective space was shaped with the use of clay. Construction of personal objects and building in pairs were proposed: through graphics and crafts, participants produced a personal imaginary object and transferred it into a shared construction process. The expressive modalities were both drawing and artistic fretwork on wood. This first part was therefore of inspiration for the basic principles of the Self and Land Exploration.

The second session focused on the collective space of the self. It began with an Integrated Drama Therapy laboratory entitled "The Group's Body", led by Sandra Pierpaoli, and continued with a Music Therapy laboratory conducted by Daniele Salesi which focused on harmony, melody and possible musical narratives. Individual instruments were amplified through the body of all participants in order to make the group experiencing a Collective Body that was capable to inform growth and awareness, while continuing to amplify and contain individual experiences. Music was used because, as in a musical composition, the group can also be described and represented by harmony and melody: harmony creates the stable structure of the composition on which melody can lean and develop which instead represents the flexible part in which individuals are able to identify emotionally. Exercises of musical production have been proposed that allowed the participants to know each other as at the same time stable and flexible parts of the group, that is harmony and melody, and to become aware of the emotional

experiences. The path was preparatory to the Pattern Language phase.

The third session explored the notion of "interconnected space", with a laboratory of Integrated Drama Therapy conducted by Sandra Pierpaoli entitled "Threads of Self Weaved in Space", and a subsequent laboratory of Artistic Educational Craftsmanship named "Interspace" by Tonino Aspergo. The interconnected space was explored through moments of trust and relaxation within the group. The "Dance of the Shadows" exercise was proposed in order to explore the possible forms of the group. Students were then "woven" and developed in space until the creation of the "own form of the group". Furthermore, a path was proposed to create a scale model that represented the space perceived, explored and shared by the group throughout the various experiences undertaken over the workshops. The scale model was the expression of a collective construction and fostered the feeling of group consciousness in relation to the creation of a common space. In this phase the group was prepared for the realization of Conception & Construction.



Fig. 112 Moment of Drama Therapy laboratory

## Workshop 2: Therapy of Self and Space

With the Turin team constituted by Tiziana Silvana Ceresa, Davide Favero and Stafano Candellieri several meetings took place from remote as well as in person. That was followed by a weekend of intensive work in Reggio Emilia aimed at preparing and training the professionals about the principles and practice of C&T. My supervisor Prof. Porta also attended this intensive session. The teaching session in Sorrento took place over three days. Each day focused on a particular Self – Space – Time combination.

On Day I the combination was: Self – Space – Present, with reference to the Self and Land Exploration phase. On Day 2 the combination was Self – Trans generation – Post, which aimed at preparing for the Pattern Language. On Day 3 the combination was Self – Landscape – Future, with reference to Conception & Construction.

The spatial reference was made by choosing each day a precise room of an ideal "house" to work on: each room had a strong symbolic meaning and was closely linked

to the work on both self and time. More in detail, on Day I (Self - Space - Present), the room chosen by the team of therapists was the bathroom. The students were invited to sit on chairs arranged in a spiral formation so that no one could see any other. Each participant was asked to describe how he imagined his bathroom. A Social Dream Matrix<sup>20</sup> was created, in which each one had "his" bathroom and brought it back to the "collective" with a mental link. Here are the results emerged from the participants' visions: Ist scene: mother with her daughter in the bathroom, dialogue and memory; 2nd scene: a window on the forest, many plants, a shower; the window comes alive and tells you to cross it, goes out into the forest, walks; 3rd scene: the father puts the bubbles in the bathtub; 4th scene: clean the toilet with acid, soap, brush; 5th scene: in the bathroom there is a bookcase with a book on Aristotle; 6th scene: brush your teeth and in the mirror there is the engaged couple; 7th scene: the candles in the bathroom around the tub and a long stay. The therapists explained that the bathroom represents the space of intimacy, it is a cross symbol, an encounter between the outer and inner space also at unconscious level, the encounter between culture and nature. In this first step participants worked on the individuality, the intimate and closed space, and on the self.

On Day 2 (Self – Trans-generation – Post) the room was the kitchen. This is a room in which significant relationships are evoked. The stories derived from the Social Dream Matrix were the following: Ist scene: grandmother's kitchen, early in the morning, sitting, a dog, a big window, it's cool, out of an avocado tree and you smell the scent. In Zimbabwe; 2nd scene: under the bed that is outside in a tent, you can look through the tent, it is used in the garden for the orange trees, at 5:00am there are birds that sing; 3rd scene: your grandparent's house, in the kitchen for breakfast that is on

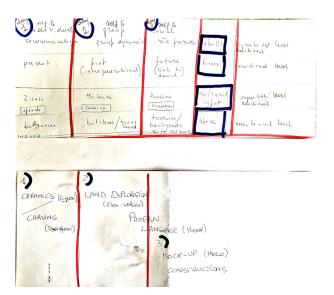


Fig. 113
Sketch of work that shows the topics covered in the three days and the links with Self and Land Exploration, Pattern Language and Conception and Construction

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup>Social Dreaming was discovered by G. Lawrence in the 1980s when he was director at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations in London. It is a methodology used for transforming the thought of dreams by using free associations, thematic amplification, and systemic thinking, in order to create bonds, find connections and free/generate new thoughts.



Fig. 114
Social Drama Matrix: students recite a story told previously



Fig. II5
Group construction with the materials recovered in the Sant'
Anna institute cotryard

the wooden table, outside the sun, I hear the sound of bacon frying; 4th scene: parents' house, it has a terrace on the fifth floor, the evening after having studied you are sitting on the rocking chair with your girlfriend for hours, the sun coming down filters through the tall houses; 5th scene: bedroom, it is Sunday morning, at IO:00 o'clock daughter and son come, even their father, and they all lie down, the daughter is five years old and sings, the son is two; 6th scene: skip the story: he has the fog before his eyes.

After listening to the story, participants were asked to look deep in themselves and make a group play of each of them. That is, using their bodies they had to stage the story turning into people, furniture, sounds (etc...).

The group played the following stories from the previous Social Dream Matrix:

- The grandmother's kitchen with many people/some actors became the table, the fridge.
- The tent and the cicadas in the garden/ the assembly of the tent/ the feeling of a beautiful experience.

• The grandparents' kitchen/an actor became the plum-cake and its perfume/ the arrival of the neighbour with the newspaper/an actor was the porch.

With this exercise, from the closed and intimate place of the bathroom we moved on to the open and relational space of the kitchen. That is to say, the work moved from an emotional level to a cognitive level, from an unconscious level to a conscious level.

On Day 3 (Self – Landscape – Future) the space was the garden (or as an alternative, a public place). The Social Dream Matrix put the focus on a lived social dimension, outside/public, "The social you". The stories were as follows: Ist scene: many dogs and a table at home; 2nd scene: the Fever–Tree in Africa; 3rd scene: a friend in a very tight group; 4th scene: the helmet game; 5th scene: students sing with their arms raised with the imagined guitar; 6th scene: the brother and the father fish from the tree with a fish for bait.

The assignment of a group construction followed. The construction was completely free, even if limited in space because it would be done in a room, with materials that had been recovered in the park of the institute during an afternoon. The participants created a parterre. The session aimed to exercise the ability of building together.

At the end of the workshop, I held a lecture in which I explained how the three therapeutic exercises were targeted and connected to the three primary phases of C&T. I pointed out that in the first workshop the work focuses on Self and Land Exploration, in the second on Self and the Land Exploration within a collective dimension (Pattern Language), and finally the collective construction aimed at the materialization of the skills acquired during the three days of work.

I also showed a video called "Message from Christopher Alexander" in which Alexander talks about how to live and experience Beauty and the consequences of such move (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpXNlOxupmM&feature=youtu.be/).

### Pattern Language

The garden of St. Anna Institute was the place selected for the phase of PL and construction. Following I will summarise the fundamental concepts written by Susan Ingham, who together with Prof. Porta directly followed the PL. The final report document was shared with all the members of the Program Commission.

Prof. Porta and Susan Ingham (with Chris Andrews in the first two days) began with the student a work that would be later completed, in particular, by Yodan Rofè and Susan Ingham. Prof. Porta and Susan Ingham prepared the interviews and conducted in person the "internal" set of them, i.e. the interviews delivered by the students with each other. They also led a Land Exploration work with students outside in the garden: students only had a limited time (about 30 minutes) to draw a plan of the current state of the garden on a white sheet of paper, in order to force them to be selective. In giving them this task, it was specifically said that it was not at all required to draw the garden completely, nor to be precise. They only had half an hour to draw the garden starting from the things that they considered the most important, "as if they had to give general

directions to a foreigner to recognize the garden if it happened to him to be there one day" (the expedient aimed at making them prioritising the most important, or "structural", components of the garden, those that more than others would determine the "gardenness of the garden"). Once back, the drawings were compared and components which were recurrent across most interviews were identified. A collective map of the garden was therefore created, made up of those components that all had designed. Students were then tasked to go back to all the identified components in the garden and to mark their feelings (the name and intensity of them). Then the collective feelings map was collated and realized.

Subsequently Yodan Rofè drove students through a somehow different take at the identification of feelings in space, by simply telling them to go outside and mark their feelings on a plan of the garden, distinguishing them roughly in positive or negative feelings. Then he continued with the work on the keywords. During the PL proposals emerged aimed at making the garden an active educational facility, hence more integrated in the daily life of the Sant'Anna Institute. This proposal is laid out by way of a "Project Language". The language provides a series of "patterns" at various scales which describe the life of the garden as part of the institution, and which can be gradually, and flexibly implemented over the years. The proposals range from large-scale projects to small-scale interventions that the students could potentially build by the end of the semester. Students analysed and documented their process to find out which techniques worked best. The majority of the work was done in steps as a group, with the participation of Sant'Anna staff and external students, as shortly reported below.

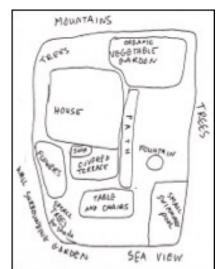
Step 1: Visioning

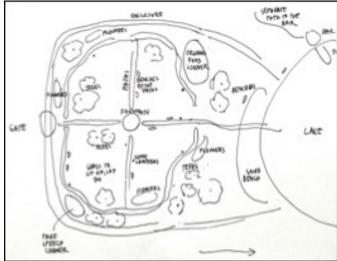
The exploration began by trying to find the vision that the individuals involved had of the ideal garden, or "your beautiful garden in the Heavens". The following questions were asked: "Are there certain activities that would characterize the garden in Heaven which are not present in the Sant'Anna garden?". Are there certain activities that extend the definition of the ideal garden so to encompass the nature of the Institute and its values?". "What is, effectively, your ideal garden?".

Students thought about outdoor activities and outdoor spaces and sequences that they had enjoyed or experienced in the past, and tried to imagine them as coherently as possible. They drew on their memories, places where they had been, images they had seen in movies, passages in books, anything that inspired them. They also researched traditional Italian gardens and general principles associated with gardens for inspiration. Mostly, and most importantly, students were asked to relax and let their emotions flow in order to allow profound visions, memories and images to emerge driven by feelings. To capture these visions, they used an interview process which allowed the garden to unfold in the participants body-mind as they talked through it and "stayed" closer and closer to themselves while talking about it. The interviewers were trained to put the interviewees at ease so they could open up and express what was in their heart. In several cases the conversation when as far as triggering emotional states that led to tears,

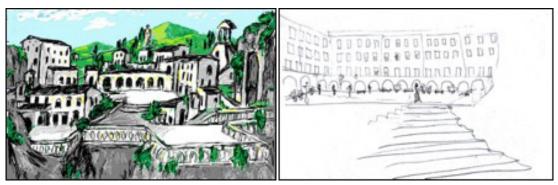
at times, and authentically emphatic exchanges. Students interviewed each other and then the Sant'Anna staff. Then transcribed the stories harvested in the interviews, the "dreams", and analysed them. These discussions helped them form a common vision of what people hoped for in a garden. The visions of the Sant'Anna staff were particularly important because they had been spending a much longer amount of time in the garden than any student, and their personal investment in it was also proportionally higher.

Contrary to the VIP in C&T, in Sorrento this particular approach to mapping the feelings in space wasn't developed to the point of influencing directly the design of the project in detail. Nevertheless, it contributed greatly to give students a greater awareness of the character, nature and value of the current garden and its various components, together with the "latent" ones which then crucially informed the general definition of the project (for example, the nature of the bench and its position in relation to the main entrance of the Sant'Anna Institute, the entryway and the rest of the garden to its back). In sum, this first go at the Visioning strengthened a common understanding of the hidden potentials that were a reality of the interviewees' dreams as well as the garden itself, starting to build the crucial bridge between the inner and the outer space, the reality of the self and that of the land.





 $Figg.\ II6-II7$  Diagrams of individual visions. They show relationships like proximity and view



Figg. 118-119 Two sketches for a garden vision.

Yodan worked with the students on mining the meanings of the work done in the first approach. For example, he led students to the analysis of the Keywords dropped by the interviewees in their dreams, which included trees, flowers, and birds, among other things. The words were counted and ranked to see which appeared most often in the dreams. They were then generalized into categories to find which categories appeared most often.

	Total (10)		Total (10
trees	10	chairs	
house	8	fruit trees	
friends and family	8	night use	
birds	8	fountain	
vegetable garden	7	herbs and grass	
sea/body of water in distance	7	hammock	
path	7	gate	
flowers	7	pergola	
big table	7	animals - not cats or dogs	
lights warm	7		
stones on ground of path	7	sleeping	
formal/manicured	7	veranda	
non formal/"wild"	7	grass	
small garden	6	benches	
reading/solitude	6	seating under trees	
connection to nature	6	fire area	

Fig. 120 Keywords counted

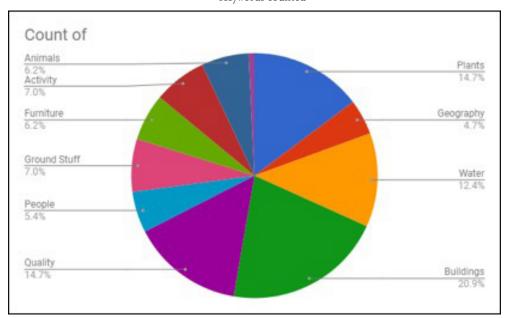


Fig. 121 Categories counted as a percentage

A shared vision gradually developed from the interviews. It incorporated the most important elements that staff generalized into themes. For example, instead of specifying "bird bath" or "fish pond" or "reflecting pool," we used the term "water feature". The shared vision represents the essential qualities that appeared in all or most of the visions. And yet, the final representations also incorporated ideas that did not appear often but still contributed to our visions.

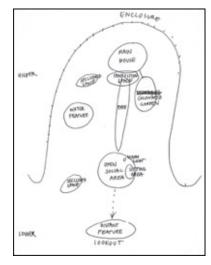
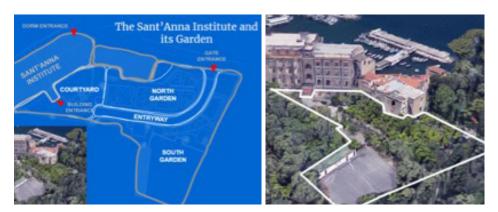


Fig. 122 Shared vision diagram

Step 4: Garden Spatial Analysis

The Sant'Anna garden is the ground of the institute. It is the main entrance to the building. It can be divided into four areas, named "courtyard", "entryway", "North garden", and "South garden". The entryway physically separates the North from the South garden. The North garden has greater physical connection to the building while the south garden has greater visual connection with the beautiful mountains and hills that surround the Institute southward.



Figg. 123-124 Overview of Sant 'Anna Institute and its garden

## The Garden Centres

The spaces of the garden were named and identified as centres. Students rated the centres according to their "density": the map is shown below, with the larger type size corresponding to a higher rating. They also noted which areas have the most potential, which were not necessarily the worst areas, though they usually were. Those centres are marked in green. The students all felt that the large unused football pitch could be put to better use. The centres marked in blue were particularly unpleasant.

Centres were then connected in a network based on their belonging in space. Students organized these connections in an network map. The largest centres are the context centres which include the city of Sorrento, the Marina Grande neighbourhood, and the Sant 'Anna Institute. The city of Sorrento has many neighbourhoods, and the Marina Grande neighbourhood which the Institute belongs to has different characters. Within the Sant'Anna centre (Level C), the building and the garden are interconnected. Within the garden centre (Level D), the entryway, the north garden, and the south garden are connected to the courtyard.

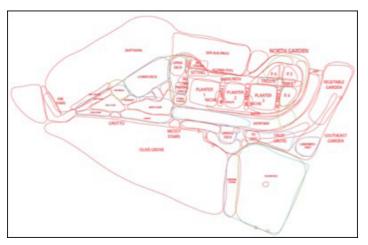
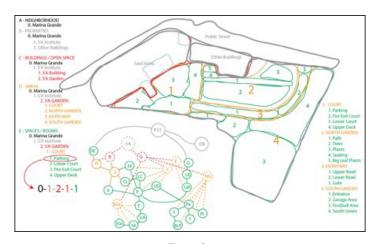
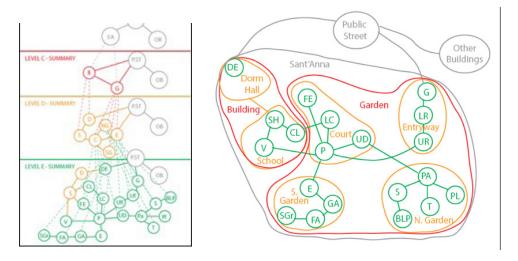


Fig. 125 The Garden Connections



 $\label{eq:Fig. 126} Fig. \ \mbox{126}$  The center, their hierarchy and their connections



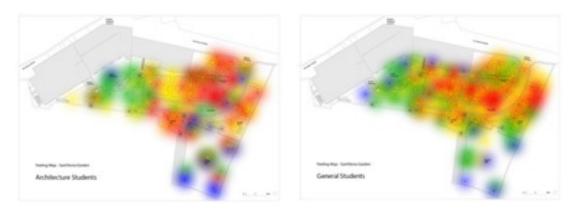
Figg. 127-128 Different ways of representing the access network map

## Feeling and Wholeness

A second approach to the feelings maps was then implemented under Yodan's direct supervision, which developed the first further and linked up with the tangible "design" of the project in the garden. While exploring the garden they noted how their sense of wholeness and wellbeing changed depending on where they were. They rated each spot from I-4 on a map. They compared and aggregated their results into a single map to find in which areas they felt better or worse. This exercise was also completed by fellow students of other programs in the Institute as well as staff of the same Institute. During the analysis similar observations surfaced between different groups of people. The exercise was repeated at various intervals to better understand the garden with respect to the life of the institute and its occupants. The areas of the football pitch and the entrance courtyard were least pleasant while the North garden and parts of the South garden were most pleasant. Participants varied in the number of spots they rated and how they rated



Figg. 129-130 Feeling map by staff and building Beauty students



Figg. 131-132 Feeling map by architecture student and general students

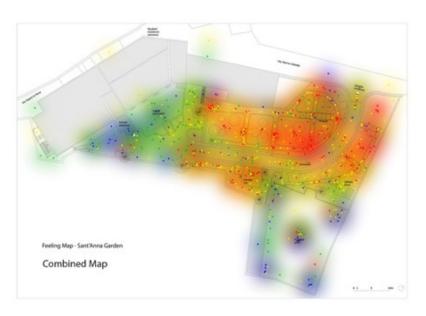


Fig. 133 Aggregated Feeling map

them. Several participants marked four numbers at each spot for each direction. The view in each direction was important to the experience of each spot. The colour-code in maps is: red (very good), yellow (good), green (bad), blue (very bad).

In addition to analysing the physical site, students also looked at how students and staff use the site. They surveyed found that the garden is not used very often and could be used more. The cold and rainy weather from November to February is one reason behind the lack of use of these spaces but even on nice days students only sometimes used the garden. The chart below shows that 93.3% of students never or only sometimes use the garden during the week. When it is used, it is for brief periods of time to sit, make a call, or pick fruit. There is not a main place to gather in the garden and so large groups do not congregate there much. The football pitch was suggested as a possible area for having large gatherings. Students also stated that they would use the garden more if it was available to them during the weekends when they have more free time. This somehow more conventional analysis helped anyway to set the functional nature of the design at its most practical level.

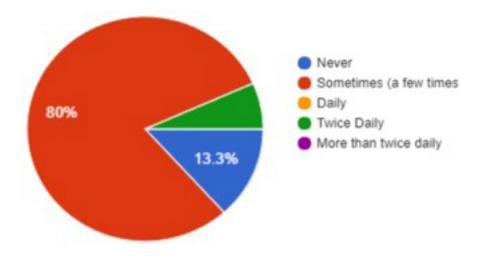


Fig. 134 The garden's current use

#### Garden Ideas

The analysis of the garden helped students form their visions into more concrete ideas which developed into a series of shared structures (patterns), which formed the "Project Language". The difficulty of proposing solutions from the beginning was alleviated by starting with a dream. It only restricted them in their definition of a garden. And broadly understood, their "ideal gardens" could describe any outdoor experience or memory so it was not dependent on their knowledge of gardens and there wasn't any pressure to be right. The goal was to get as many authentic visions as possible which could then be tested according to the garden analysis. The garden analysis showed which visions could work in the garden. It also led to new visions they hadn't considered. Everything had a more definite feel after walking around the garden and talking with staff and students. The visions became more specific and detailed, which students named "garden ideas". They asked the Sant'Anna staff for their garden ideas, similar to their visions but more specific to the Sant'Anna garden. Their responses varied. Some had well-thought out plans while others were more tentative, doubting whether their ideas could work. Many of the ideas were for new activities like cooking and eating outdoors. The football pitch, which the students marked for potential improvement, was also mentioned for improvement during the interviews. Students were surveyed about which ideas interested them most, and cooking and eating in the garden was at the top of the list.

The survey results are shown below.

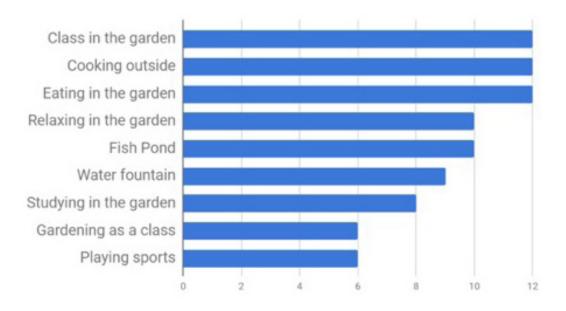


Fig. 135 Garden ideas which most interested students surveyed

## Project Language

The "Project Language", according to the vision of Susan Ingham and Yodan Rofè, is the very moment when the Pattern Language (the structure of the centres of the project within us) and the Land Exploration (the structure of the centres in the Land outside of us) are put together and operated so that the project makes both ourselves and the Land more alive. The Project Language is therefore the step of transition between the phase centred on feelings and the actual shaping of the project in the Conception & Construction phase.

The Project Language came to stage in the making of the Building Beauty 2017/ 2018 session, thanks to the contributions from S. Ingham and Y. Rofè. This work is the direct development of the Project Language that Susan Ingham and Hajo Neis defined in 1994 over a professional work undertaken in Breuberg-Neustadt, Germany. It describes how the Project Language distils and describes the essence and character of a specific building project and defines its connection with the city as a whole and with each of its individual occupants. The project has a particular and peculiar character: it is a structured sequence of statements and sketches that derive from careful observation and interviews with the local residents and the parts involved in the project itself: the key aspect of the Project Language really consists in this. It indeed describes the exact nature, the essential components and the relationships that a project and all its elements have, but at the same time it also maintains an opens a childlike ambiguity about the exact form of the project and its elements. Therefore, the Project Language preserves the context within which the exact form will present itself directly in occasion of the onsite work. In our case, the project language presents a vision for the Sant'Anna Garden. A project language describes a collective vision for a place based on an understanding of the users' dreams and aspirations for that place. It repairs and improves the place by implementing patterns. The patterns are adjusted to local context, circumstances and conditions and they address the physical, emotional, and social problems of the place.

A key aspect of a Project Language is that it describes the "exact nature, essential

components, and relationships" and "all of the elements" that the project will contain, whilst remaining "open, childlike and ambiguous as to the exact form of the project and its elements" (Neis et al., 1994). The Project Language therefore establishes an overall framework where many different solutions can arise directly from local participation and specific site conditions. It is typically done at the beginning of a project and these patterns are considered "archetypal examples of good environments" that can be "applied repeatedly" but moreover, can be applied in a range of contexts and conditions depending on the local context (ibidem).

It is therefore a more specific application and relation to a particular project and its unique circumstances, in this case the garden of the Sant'Anna Institute. Patterns and elements come directly from the interviews and discussions with the local residents and staff at the Sant' Anna, and are expressed as dreams, aspirations, and visions for the garden, and informed by the local landscape and culture of the area.

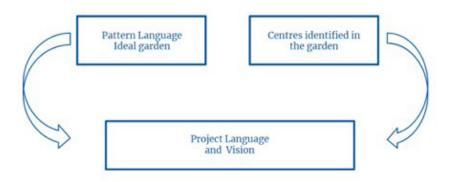


Fig. 136

Combining Pattern language and Land Exploration into a Project Language

The Project Language document informs the future work of detailed design, and if accepted by the Institute, may have a lasting impact on the future development of the garden and its relationship to the Institute's building. The observations and findings suggest that the garden is not well connected with Sant'Anna's learning ideals and many areas could be improved. The garden could support the wider ambitions and ethos of the Sant'Anna Institute through spaces for recreation, self-reflection, and learning.

#### Pattern Structure

The three main patterns for the Sant'Anna garden are:

- I. "A Learning Garden", the garden's role within the educational mission of the institute.
- 2. "A Connection to the Building", the different ways that the building and garden can be connected.
- 3. "A Garden Full of People", uses and attractions in the garden that will draw people out into it, despite the difficulty of the physical connection.

A second group of patterns focuses on places within the garden (these are large-scale and general, and look at the garden as a whole):

- 4. "Class Outside", various places for learning in the garden.
- 5. "Mediterranean Food", ways to use the garden for teaching Italian cuisine and culture.

- 6. "A Garden Open to the Public", bringing students and the larger community together through cultural events.
- 7. "Main Entrance", courtyard configurations that present a welcoming entrance to the institute.
- 8. "Access to Parking", different parking alternatives with less visual and physical impact.
- 9. "Library Balcony", proposal of a balcony overlooking the garden which forms an arcade on the ground level, sheltering the gymnasium entrance.
- 10. "Outside Cooking", different possibilities for cooking outside.
- II. "Big Table", a large sitting space and table where students can eat, study, or have class.
- 12. "Playing and Sports", various sporting activities in the football pitch area.
- 13. "Banquet", large gatherings in the garden, eating and socializing either in the lower courtyard or in the football pitch with a large tent.

The third group are still smaller in scale. They are:

- 14. "Still Pools and Flowing Water", water features as important elements in the garden, where people can cool off and relax.
- 15. "Alcoves and Niches", small secluded spaces in the garden off the main path.
- 16. "Garden Benches", the types of garden benches and where they could be placed.
- 17. "Hammocks", making a hammock space under the many trees.

The resulting pattern language structure is shown below. They are related to each other in many ways. For example, a good "Connection to the Building" helps make "A Garden Full of People". "Mediterranean Food" helps to make "A Learning Garden" and "A Garden Full of People". Many of the smaller scale patterns enhance the main patterns with more detail.

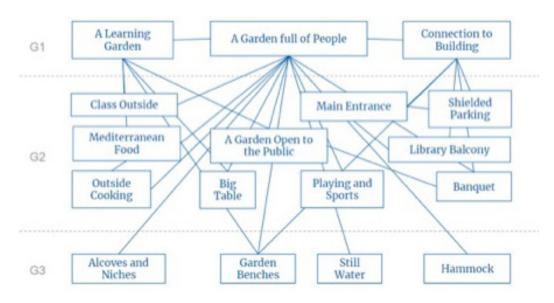


Fig. 137 The Pattern Language Network Map

#### Construction

The construction began after the PL. Within a few weeks' time, the students picked up everything they had previously learned, the overall vision they had developed and the model they had built and started to build a bench in the Sant'Anna garden. They were led by Yodan Rofè for the decision-making process and by Paolo Robazza<sup>21</sup> and local builders for several aspects of the technical construction.



Fig. 138
Building Beauty students sit on the bench at the end of construction

First of all, the previously recovered blocks of tuff were taken to be sanded and washed. The construction began with a pile of volcanic sand, which the participants had to scour so that it had a smooth granularity. After that, a mortar was created in order to tie the blocks of tuff once put in place. The bench started to be built from the centre to the sides. A base was built on which the arch was placed, in this way the bench could grow on both sides. Meanwhile, it was necessary to make other decisions concerning the construction process. One of these was to determine the exact profile of the seat base. For the first time a rather elaborate form was created, but once they tried different variations, it clearly appeared that the simpler it was the more beautiful it was. The students found that beauty often pops out when sophistication is neglected. In the middle of the construction phase the structural part of the bench was set. Working with the tuff blocks was really fun, as the students understood that they could achieve many results by orienting them in different ways. In order to obtain the optimal height for the bench, the blocks were fixed vertically and then evered with others arranged horizontally. Two parallel rows of these vertical blocks were positioned, and in doing so the participants found that to obtain the perfect depth of the seat, the rows had to be separated using a 90-degrees-rotated vertical block. Implemented the structural part, students proceeded to fill the gaps in the construction of the whole project.

The pieces left from the previously cut blocks were reused and everything was covered with the mortar. Before covering, the students decided to hide something of their own in the bench: a small capsule in the form of a message in a bottle on which they wrote their names and also a model of one of their project ideas discarded before. They then proceeded to place the stones of the backrest. To proceed it was necessary to better understand a few

<sup>21</sup> https://www.buildingbeauty.org/faculty-profiles/paolo-robazza

things first: How to make the stones in the corners of the seat bases? How to round the stones at the far edges of the seats? How to shape the edges of the backrest? To answer these questions, prototypes were first produced and, after once achieved satisfactory results, they proceeded to cut the blocks of stone according to what they learned from the chosen prototypes and to position them in an appropriate way. Another series of decisions to be taken concerned the choice of the type of tiling with which cover the bench: How much should be tiled? Where exactly did the tiles have to be placed? What colours were supposed to appear? Were patterns also needed, and if so, which ones? In order to reply to these questions, many experiments have been conducted. In some of them were used tiles made some months earlier during the handicraft workshops; for others, pieces of paper hand-painted by the students were used. Evaluating each proposal, we realized that it was necessary to look at the construction not only from near, but also from a certain distance, for example from the library window. It was therefore a construction for experimentation and in progress. The final result is shown in the picture below.

#### Results

It is important to highlight that in the Building Beauty program, unlike the VIP C&T and Rodari projects, the phases of Land Exploration, Pattern Language and Conception & Construction were not followed and attended step-by-step, continuously, by the team of therapists. This happened mainly because of time constraints from the professional therapists' side. The therapeutic sessions were therefore carried out in two intensive time-windows that were substantially isolated from all other activities. As a result, the creation of harmony through increased awareness of the self throughout the process was not achieved to a sufficient degree. In other words, the therapy has not promoted a holistic attitude throughout the process, and the same approach to therapy was perceived as self-standing by the students, hence itself less significant and justified in the first place.



Fig. 139
The bench at the end of construction

In this regard, in the following I am reporting the feedbacks on the "Self, Community and Space" modules received from therapists, teachers and students.

#### Therapists' Feedback

For the Turin Team of professional therapists, the first and most obvious obstacles encountered during both preparation and teaching were related to involving participants who held a predominantly "technical" background on subjects they had probably never dealt with before. It was necessary to stimulate them to keep their attention high, to involve them by showing and almost letting them get in touch with the emotion that each one brought to the group during the work of the seminar. Therapists had to accompany participants to understand that emotions and feelings are an integral and important part of each person's personality, not to be denied or repressed, and to bring them "handin-hand" to opening the self. They believe they have succeeded in this and that the feedbacks, received both along the way and at the end of session, confirmed that. Doing therapeutic work with people who were not expecting to be subjected to any "therapy" and did not know it would be considered otherwise normal routine, routine in group works, presents specific hurdles. On the other side, carrying out the therapeutic session late in the process and well into the final stages of the program, was not seen as a problem. Therapists believed that issues had to be related to the particularity of the module, aimed at sensitizing "technically oriented" people on the "emotions and psyche" side of themselves, which however was ultimately overcome by involving participants, i.e. making them act as subjects of the investigation rather than simply as objects of it.

Furthermore, some problems emerged because of splitting the larger group into smaller subgroups, or even pairs, but this also they believe was managed and resolved.

The small number of participants at the start was also an issue in terms of managing the intra-group dynamics. These same dynamics have however proved to be significant, important and constructive in the small group of people who followed the whole session. They had indeed the opportunity to exchange emotions, memories, feelings in a protected climate characterised by reciprocal reassurance. The therapists themselves felt part of the group, as opposed to teachers/conductors or alien subjects observing from outside. For them it was a rich, enriching, engaging experience that concentrated on the communal work undertaken on the last day by students, once they had finished with the construction of a lively and symbolic, beautiful garden.

Asked what the ideal way to work would be (e.g. preparation time, knowledge and meetings with other teachers, participation in activities carried out during the Master's course even if not relevant to them ...), therapists answered that the meetings and conversations held in preparation to the session with Prof. Porta and myself were relevant and sufficient. Furthermore, the exchange was essential for designing intensive work modules, alongside themes that involved students emotionally and actively engaged them to the point of having them reach self-disclosure. They stated that attending "technical" conversations would not be useful instead; they initially read texts of architecture and some of Alexander's writings that we indicated, but this served mainly their personal culture rather than the specific work of the seminar. Asked about what they had to change compared to their normal way of work in the profession, they replied that in fact there was no particular difference. The techniques used were the same: psychodrama, attentive and deep listening, team building, reading of group dynamics, restitution,

final synthesis. They applied paradigmatic modalities typical of the work of corporate or therapeutic groups, that is transference dynamics, and they supported the group.

The Team from Rome, the Association "Il Boschetto di Pan", wrote that despite the excellent welcome and a good availability to learn and understand from the students, they found that the sense and the objectives of the workshops was perceived as obscure to some extent by the students, which came as the major obstacle in their work with them: the connection of their sessions with the general aims of the program did not seem to be clear to the students. Sandra Pierpaoli writes: "I felt that it was about dealing with a virgin field with regard to bodily and artistic experiences, and having a very concentrated and short time to prepare it for sowing and germinate". According to the therapists, the students' expectations were understandably high, hence it would have been important to include the therapeutic session in a theoretical-methodological framework of reference. They felt a bit too disconnected from the whole ethos and tasks of the program, although in a warm climate of great friendliness with both the structure and the students.

To work properly they would have needed one or more initial meetings (preferably in person, or otherwise from remote as well) with the other teachers of the Self, Community and Space area; this would have allowed to share their program and objectives, as well as to compare the different approaches. It would also have allowed the creation of a leit-motif and a stronger methodological continuity, which would have been important for students and teachers alike. Therapists highlighted that holding feedback meetings out of each session with all teachers in the therapy area would have significantly helped (or at least sharing reports on the individual sessions undertaken). The fact that students did not write anything on the Learning Journal about the experiences related to this area, is for the therapists from Rome a confirmation of the feelings previously exposed. A conclusive meeting with all the teachers of the area and the students would also have been important in order to give a meaningful meaning to the sequence of sessions.

Sandra and Tonino also stressed how their working method had to adapt and change so as to act within the Building Beauty program. They had to modulate the intensity of their practice to adapt it to the introductive nature of the module. Moreover, the felt they had to give more explanations than usual with regards to the meaning of the experiences that were proposed. In addition, the feedback phase of the students was not as much focused on their personal experiences and contact with their own internal self, as to theoretical topics or seeking connections with their profession. Tonino, who took care of the crafts workshops, had to change the approach with students since they were already professionally structured adults.

In sum, the Rome team's proposal for the future was to give greater consistency and continuity to the Self Community and Space Area of the program in order to make students more aware of the meaning of a "therapeutic" pathway and its connections with the other areas of the program. It also was found necessary to create a connection point between teachers in the area. To achieve that, they believe it would be important to plan, starting from the beginning of the year, a series of skype coordination meetings (one at the start and one at the end of each session) and a final one with all the participants involved. It would then be necessary to develop a report offering a theoretical-methodological contribution from each teacher (or group of teachers): that would introduce and motivate the experiential practice, and it would feature a general introduction edited by Prof. Porta and/or myself: students would be asked to read it

before starting the workshops so as to be more aware and informed about the path they will take and its value within the program.

Tonino said that the practical experiential laboratories are very important because generally architects are trained and informed mainly at the theoretical level and lack practical experience of making. For this reason, the presence of laboratories in the program is to be considered as an added value as it combines theory and practice, which will represent an extra opportunity for the professional future of the participants.

In Sandra and Tonino's opinion it would be good to split the experience of the Awareness of the Self workshops into two parts: the first to be set at the beginning of the program to lay the basis of the Self Community and Space pathway, and the second at the conclusion of it; this would allow students to receive, through the practical and bodily experiences of the Self, Community and Space part of the program, the outcomes that we would expect. It would also be important to introduce a questionnaire, to be filled out by the teachers in the weeks following the intervention.

#### Teachers' Feedback

The architecture teachers, in the preliminary meeting at the beginning of the master, expressed their doubts about how to implement a therapy path, although they were of the importance of it. Here Yodan Rofè, Susan Ingham and Chris Andrews<sup>22</sup> conclusions from their April 2017 report (details in the Appendix) are summarised:

".....A second element of uniqueness of the program is the conscious search for a practice connecting between space and self. While this is a central aspect of Christopher Alexander's thinking and his approach to building design and construction process, from the 'Quality Without A Name' (QWAN) to the 'Mirror of the Self', and is the gauge of quality at any stage of the building and design process, it has always been an implicitly learned skill, and a rather public one at that. There hasn't been explicit work on learning to know oneself better, getting better in touch with one's feelings with regard to objects or spaces, or getting better clarity on the different aspects of self-encounter when doing this kind of work. What is the difference between the universal or shared substrata of self that is the one appealed to in doing this work, and the unique aspects of history and psychology of each individual self? It was relatively easy for us to envisage exercises of connection with self as part of the learning process, either through the process of designing and producing an ornament or tile (see below), or in the process of learning from places within the monastery, or in the surrounding city, and diagnosing the state of the courtyard and its surroundings. It was harder for us, not having experienced it, to envisage the process of connecting with self that Pia and Prof. Porta talked about, as a discipline towards improving the capacity for learning about spaces and objects. It's not clear for us yet whether this should be learned in an intensive workshop at the beginning of the course, or whether it should be practiced as a discipline at a certain frequency. Also it's not clear to us yet how it could be extended to the larger community informing its decisions and feedback to the work carried out in the courtyard. We suggested that in our next meeting Pia will lead us in such an exercise, so that we could better grasp its meaning and its power, and also asked Pia to forward to us the results of her work". (Appendix 4.11, "Full Naples report").

https://www.buildingbeauty.org/faculty-profiles/yodan-rofe https://www.buildingbeauty.org/faculty-profiles/susan-ingham https://www.buildingbeauty.org/faculty-profiles/chris-andrews

Some students did not give positive feedback on the direct interventions of the therapists regarding the Self, Community and Space section, although in the las session of the year the picture appeared to be more complex than originally portrayed. In a nutshell, and mostly, they felt that an unsolicited therapy was imposed on them, sometimes not appreciated and above all disconnected from the program's architectural path. The therapy workshops were taken as isolated module detached from the contest and the aims of the program, especially their design and making objectives. The Self, Community and Space contribution was certainly more understood and appreciated in the phases of PL.

In this regard I asked Or Ettlinger, who participated in the Turin therapists sessions as a participant/observer, to express his opinion. Or replied to me with a detailed report, which is part of the supplemental material that can be resourced in the Appendix 4.12 "Self, Community and Space", in which he summarily stated that the daily psychodrama exercises were emotionally intrusive, without being preliminarily introduced, hence coming as a surprise to students, and because of this some students raised defensive shields and continued to play standing firm on a superficial level only for not being an obstacle for the other students. As a result, less significant memories to work on were released in order to protect the invasion of one's personal boundaries. Moreover, the constant taking of notes by the psychologists of every word that was said in the room, created discomfort. During some of the exercises, the students felt a bit like laboratory animals, as an object of study and observation and this inevitably changed their behaviour and their way of acting. Thirdly, many of the exercises were performed outside a clearly indicated context, although pleasurable, they lacked an explanation or a grounding reason that could justify their execution: while respecting the claim that experience is primary and not everything has to be explained, the whole thing seemed disconnected from the context. The fact that psychology is not the final goal of the program was not considered, but rather a means to reach personal intuitions related to the design and that consequently the manner in which the exercises are performed is crucial, both to create motivation before and while they are done, and to achieve valid results after them.

Furthermore, analytical discussions able to reconnect the work done in the therapeutic field to the remaining work in the other areas lacked. The discussions that took place were mostly an analysis of the group, its dynamics and the psychological models that it had revealed. This

analysis was distorted by the fact that the students were careful not to get too involved for the reasons mentioned above. Therefore, the resulting content of this analysis was not relevant to the entire program of the seminar. Even when interesting intuitions emerged (for example, that bathrooms are not only functional, but that their design expresses an entire cultural mentality that is behind them), therapists failed, for the most part, to provide a value that could be valid other than only for psychology's sake. This could perhaps only be the result of a circumstance in which the therapeutic session took place, since there was no immediate opportunity to translate this knowledge into the practice of making. In an ideal context the ability to reach intuitions could have been incorporated into the design process itself, and not segmented into a study aimed at

achieving "psychological insights" detached from real construction experience. A related problematic issue was that the three leaders of the seminar had no experience of design or any particular link with the design processes. Indeed, the daily themes explored the psychological meanings of certain types of space (for example, "bathrooms, through the sewers, also connect the subsoil to fear and madness"), but they showed only an analytical approach to psychological symbolism.

The major criticism is, therefore, about the suitability of the application of psychology in achieving the objective set by this workshop in the broader context of the program. The main topics of the seminar, while remaining "self" and "feelings", should be implemented differently. It depends on what is meant by "feeling" or what by "self", and how the awareness of both could be taught to everyone. The therapists of Turin understood the "self" and the "feeling" as psychological phenomena and faced them as such, but this was not pertinent to the Building Beauty program the main focus of which is on the act of making and the transformative impact that has on both the self and the environment.

It is therefore necessary to ask oneself if Alexander's "self" and "feelings" are really a psychological construct, and if when Alexander talks about the "self" that is reflected by a well-developed design it is really the same "self" of which an individual could become more aware by engaging in a group dynamic exercise. When he speaks of "feeling" the life of a beautiful Anatolian carpet, it is actually the same "feeling" that could be developed by recalling and reintegrating childhood affective memories? According to the way Or understood Alexander, the answer is no.

However, as said above, a much more complex picture of the impact of the therapy sessions emerged in the last day of the program, where a general feedback session took place with the students. Some said that actually the sense of "failure" that accompanied the therapists work got overemphasised, and many found it actually helpful in many ways. Positive aspects were reported as well, including the same exposure to a different and indeed specialistic understanding of "self" and "feeling", to some degree different from the meaning associated to these words as part of the process of making in the program. It was felt that psychotherapy seemed treating such topics as abstract intellectual themes to be studied and conceptualized, and as personal idiosyncratic themes to be analysed and taken back to light within the process. However, crucially, these approaches did not seem to place "self" and the "feelings" anywhere near the universal level that we need in making, as fundamental patterns of being human that must be lived and experienced as such. These, it was felt, are topics of great value and it is an important result that they are included in an architecture program. But now that this road has been opened, it is possible to do much more and better in the future. How exactly to proceed it is a matter of further discussion. Considering the different points of view and the lack of coordination, it is essential to underline the limits of the traditional therapeutic teaching in the C&T process and therefore to ask oneself how the "therapy" sessions can be redefined in the future.

The Building Beauty program was very important for this research by revealed an array of issues related to the "therapy" part and its teaching, which did not sufficiently integrate with the Seminar and Architectural parts. In these latter parts, both transmission and learning of the therapeutic skills didn't had never occurred in a completely conscious and structured way, but rather came as a "side effect". For example, Susan Ingham and Prof. Porta did a remarkable work of therapy within the PL (I will take this in point 5.1:

"Connecting the Dots"), but when I said that to Prof. Porta he confessed he wasn't fully aware of the properly therapeutic part he had taught in leading the PL.

In conclusion we can say that both the Rodari and Building Beauty projects highlighted points of concern which are very relevant to the Construction and Therapy method:

- The process of construction based on the concept of "unfolding" entails the acceptance of uncertainty as a positive factor. An implication of this is that roles in the process must be fluid enough to change along the way and creatively so.
- The connection between Self and Space can only be conceived as an integral, constituent part of the construction process.
- This, however, makes interdisciplinarity rather challenging, especially for those who have a very defined and formalized professional and disciplinary background. This is particularly true for specialists (i.e. therapists), who have the attitude to privilege working with the individual rather than engage in the actual construction.

The therapeutic actions provided a hard and concrete proof of this issue. Hence, considering these criticalities, I had engaged with Prof. Enzo Zecchi, expert in constructivist pedagogy, to seek his support and guidance. That helped me to reframe more thoroughly my understanding of Pedagogy as a discipline, particularly in relation to the positive value of uncertainty in constructivist/constructive pedagogical approaches.

Project-Based Learning (PBL): Treating Uncertainty in Construction and Therapy.

Together with Enzo Zecchi I discussed what kind of pedagogy he would see fitting the values and nature of the Construction and Therapy model. According to Zecchi, the most appropriate educational approach is the so-called "Didactics for Skills", an approach that does allow the evaluation and certification of skills but is above all about favouring their development. Such approach requires in many ways a change of paradigm: from a predominantly transmissive teaching style to a properly constructive one; we widely discussed this in the published paper "The Timeless Way of Educating Architects", presented in the Appendix.

In this regard, reference is made to the implementation of the Project Based Learning (PBL), which is to encourage the development of learning by engaging students in the realization of projects (see chapter 1.3: "Project-Based Learning and Practice-Based research"). Here the group of students and teachers becomes a learning environment by working-doing in which the students, in a cooperative way, develop projects and in the meantime achieve knowledge and skills, become experts. PBL is the environment where students develop their own identity going beyond any classification of skills that, albeit useful, still cannot fully fit the endless complexity of real-world situations and create unnecessary constraints in the learning process.

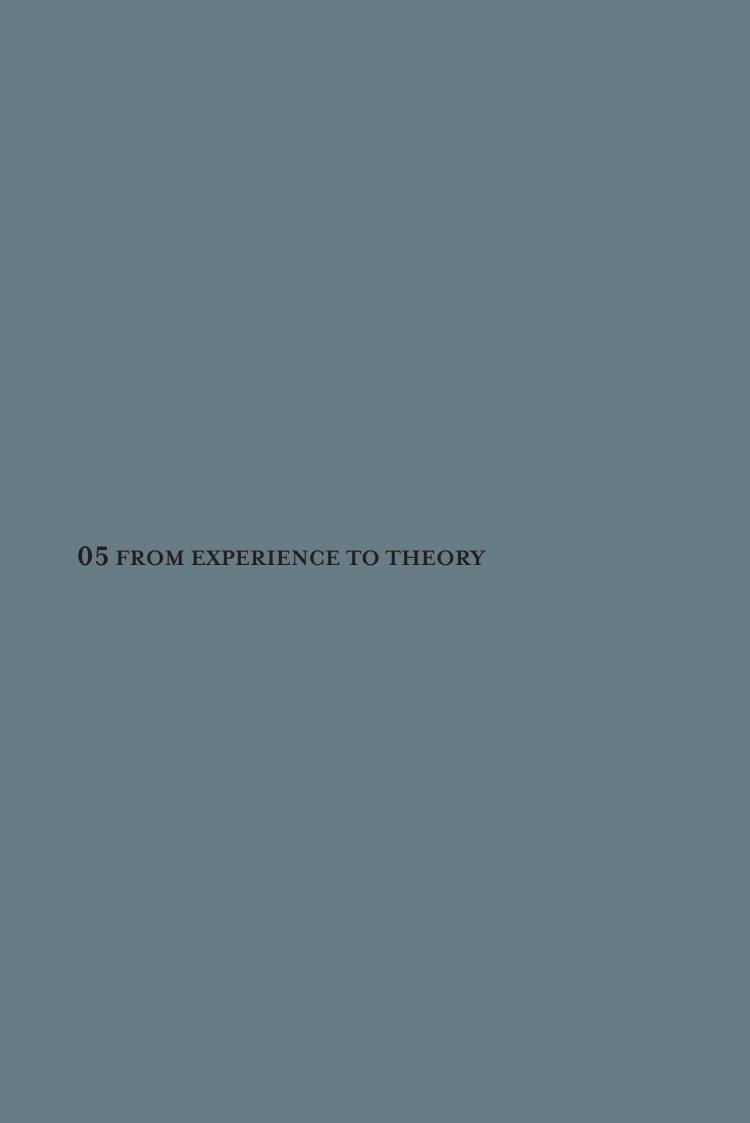
Hence, PBL appears to be the ideal learning environment for teachers as well, who are called to observe students' work and evaluate/certify the skills achieved. It also provides verification of the degree to which theoretical concepts initially conceived for the project develop and translate into implemented practice. Often the anxiety to teach specific skills pushes the teacher towards particular, special projects, towards a list of competences to be checked. To develop a project is more than this, it is to engage students in operations that span 360 degrees on their identity, which favours the construction of skills not foreseen and not foreseeable in any list and transcend any project theme. It

is the art of designing in itself that sets unplanned and unexpected learning in motion: a gym where students involved in authentic problems form their own identity in its entirety. This is essential to go beyond the bureaucratic checking of any list, towards the development of the identity of the person as a whole.

A condition that allows to implement a PBL approach is that the term project is loaded with all its value and that the students are engaged in real projects and not in confusing and uncoordinated activities.

Bringing back this reflection to the results of the Building Beauty program, we must conclude that a review is needed in the teaching methodology linked to therapy, the coordination between the various areas of knowledge and the value assumed by the term "project" itself, along a Project-Based Learning perspective.

During my research and my projects' implementation, I came to the conclusion (fully shared by Enzo Zecchi) that teaching Construction and Therapy requires the presence of a coordination team tasked to adequately train all teachers involved. The nature of the program requires a team of teachers able to cope with an interdisciplinary ongoing process, and this entails focused and careful coordination. This certainly is an ideal destination that involves a long and demanding journey, both at practical and theoretical level. There are great challenges to be faced in order to achieve the result of having a team of teachers, trained and coordinated, who can lead a program such as Building Beauty. Some obstacles are purely practical and operational, while others concern the difficulty of the transition from a transmissive approach to teaching, which doesn't involve facing complexity but rather having a purely deterministic cut, to a constructivist one, which achieves its objectives through continuous adaptation which in turn leads to practicing computational thinking. To this regard, Enzo Zecchi argues that shift from a transmissive to a constructivist approach that aims to stimulate students' learning while developing projects, brings up a serious problem: the loss of the "liturgy" proper to the transmissive teacher profession, without a different set of rituals being readily established in support of the new paradigm. Zecchi maintains that without a "safety net" the teacher is disoriented: therefore, his proposal is the creation of a model for the effective implementation of PBL in the classroom, characterized by a life cycle and an organic set of rituals available to the teacher.



The Chapter offers a reflection on the practical construction experiences previously illustrated, seeking for the consolidation of a theory capable to consistently comprehend—and make value of—the whole research. The Final Model Process is presented for this purpose: bringing out the systematic and adaptive (structure-superstructure) nature of a model that is the workable synthesis of the research, and the ground for its future development.

#### 5.1. CONNECTING THE DOTS

As evidenced in Ch 3 and 4 above, the practical experience of Construction and Therapy and the development of my research work went hand in hand, in that aligning with the principles of Battle: the research was empirical and theory was called into the game in close connection with the development ongoing in practice; as a result, the Rodari project for example effectively occurred completely out of System B, generating a professional and human attitude clearly aligned with the System A set of objectives.

From the beginning, the cornerstones of my analysis have been the focus on the human being and the idea of bringing out life within a continuous and self-sustaining building cycle. Construction and Therapy was the first attempt at establishing a living building process capable of making things characterized by that "quality without a name" to which Alexander at a later stage gave different names: "wholeness", "beauty" and "life". The process was in three phases: the first two, Land Exploration and Pattern Language were preliminary to the third, Conception & Construction. As a consequence, a proper "design" did not exist and the "drawing" itself held a completely different meaning and role in my process compared to the conventional construction process (System B). Finally, the Conception & Construction phase of the building finally turned out to be part of the same indivisible experience, enlivened by the "deep participation" of the end users. This experience was entirely carried out on the land, that is on the project site.

## 5.1.1. Land Exploration: Theory and Experimentation

The initial point of my research coincided with a focus on the phase of Land Exploration, the first of the Construction and Therapy process. Its implementation was first undertaken during VIP in Construction and Therapy course held at University of Strathclyde and in Rwanda in 2012-13 illustrated extensively in Chapter 3.

I began from Alexander's NoO, among others, and developed from those readings a framework for action prior to beginning the construction phase. The architectural construction, at large or small scale, would be based on a deep perception of space which would have used feelings as a reliable ground for decision-making.

I realized that in order to bring forward the author's exhortation to continue testing and expanding his work, it was pivotal to think of a process that would begin with the involvement of people in a different state of awareness of their own self and inner space: only by achieving this higher state of awareness they could move on to an authentic, seamless experience of the interior and exterior space, hence to the identification of the same structure of beauty, life and Wholeness in both.

Since its very early days, the profound nature of the conflict between System A and B emerged clearly: while the second was constantly aimed at getting rid of uncertainty, identified as a factor generating additional risks and costs in terms of organizational inefficiency, in the first uncertainty was not only accepted, but well received and placed at the centre of the process. That generated difficulties which were detected, highlighted, discussed reflectively and managed properly. Only upon the vital dynamics inextricably linked to the "here and now" the process could draw the resources of humanity and sensitivity which not only allowed to go past the hurdles along the way, but indeed gave birth to beauty. Instead of keeping them out, the process we were searching for would analyse and experience in practice the dynamics of the unforeseen in the context of the production of physical objects. I then identified a first core of skills, methods and processes that constituted the kernel of the phase of Land Exploration, then renamed "Self and Land Exploration" in recognition of the importance of connection between the two terms of Self and Land.

All of that was tested and operationalised in practice through the use of an array of carefully designed techniques of analysis and interaction which made the transition between analysis and design seamless or, better, emerging as two parts of an integrated body-mind endeavour.

## 5.1.2. Pattern Language: Considerations and Applications

The work on the Land Exploration phase was followed right away by one on the Pattern Language. This was laid out on the ground the complex intellectual exploration of the matter across Alexander's own experience after the publication of the APL book. During my research work and its various practical applications, far from considering it a repository of ready-made operational instruction to pick-up according to needs, the PL was turned into a proper process of personal interaction. This was designed to aim primarily at the personal growth of the individuals and the community with regards to the essence of the project, where dreams where the gates, hence the means of investigation.

Maggie and Chris Alexander suggested a "formula" made of "three-words-in-a-circle": "life- wholeness-beauty". This expresses the nature of the "quality without a name", which is posed as, and remains, the ultimate objective of the process of building. This is particularly significant in the definition of the Pattern Language phase, since it qualifies it as inherently different—and complementary—to "public participation" or "community design". By studying the patterns, we are allowed to involve people exactly because they hold that particular quality that cannot be generated by any purely individual "design" process. No matter how good the "design" is, it will never produce that very quality that makes it alive, unless it stems from a process that people provided life to, their active, tangible and practical life (their time, commitment, trust and feelings).

Repetitive experimentation on the ground of this idea of PL, under different circumstances, allowed to mature a set of techniques that span across various areas of knowledge, touching upon elements of therapy as much as text analysis, small group management, interaction facilitation and spatial and analysis feeling mapping.

With this in mind, the PL is considered part of the preparation phase, a constituent part of the construction process.

## 5.1.3. Composing: Land Centre Map, Dream Map and Project Language

Within the whole model process of Construction and Therapy, a set of three distinct but related activities emerged and consolidated in time over the various experimentations undertaken along the way, which was completely unexpected at the beginning of my research, and turned out to sit right in-between the Land Exploration and the Pattern Language on one side, and the final phase of Conception & Construction on the other. Such intermediate phase, which we can name Composing phase, consists of: a) Land Centre Map; b) Dream Map, and c) Project Language.

## Land Centre Map

The Land Centre Map was, at first, referred to as Wholeness Map, as illustrated in Chapter 3. This happened for practical reasons since it was necessary to have a comprehensive idea, but not theoretically specific, for the need to map the land respecting what it expressed in terms of feelings, centre and wholeness. Once the results of this mapping exercise became available, a more thorough reflection took place. That led to the articulation of the "Land Centre Map", as the centres were the focal point of the investigation of feelings and, at the same time, the constituent structure of Wholeness.

This map is the direct outcome of the Land Exploration as described above. It is conceptually close to a feelings map, but its distinctive feature is the identification of the centres of the land rather than those in the people. In practice, this distinction turned out to be very tangible: it is about starting from the "things", for example from those which have a name, and working hard on the language and the name themselves to gradually extract the densities of coherence of which centres are made, their location in space, and mutual relationships. A technique that, in the practice of the real-world tests, made the Land Exploration closer to the Pattern Language and the discovery of the power of human language to recognise and identify centres.

Eventually, feelings are associated with centres, and these are firstly identified through the naming. The language co-evolves with space, and recognizes the existence of centres by aggregating meanings in the form of the generation of names. A chair receives the name of "chair" because it is that centre of coherence in the space in which sitting takes that shape. Sitting is the way in which individuals, all of them, interact with space when resting in that particular way that is what allows them to sit. This is the very essence of the chair as a spatial phenomenon, its proper nature. This is how the Land Centre

Map ultimately is a Wholeness Map of the project site: the cartographic representation of the structure of the centres in the land, at different scales (the "legs", the "armrest" and the "backrest" are minor centres of the "chair", and the "chair" is, in turn, the minor centre of the "dining room").

## Dream Map

In the same way the Land Centre Map is the direct outcome of the Land Exploration, so the Dream Map is the direct outcome of the Pattern Language. Both are a representation in plan of structure of centres, i.e. of Wholenesses: however, one represents the Wholeness of the building site (the Land), while the other that of the profound ("archetypal" in fact) idea of what -is-to-be-built shared by the community. In operational terms, the latter is the product of the interviews conducted during the PL. That is to say, it is the map of the patterns identified through the unfolding of individual dreams, then brought up to the collective unconscious of all the participants in the construction.

## Project Language

The Project Language, very simply, is the activity of bringing together the two previous maps into one where the two structures illustrated above, the centres of the land and those of the dreams of what-is-to-be-built, make each other stronger and more whole. It is the very moment in which the Dream Map (the reality of the centres of the project within us) and the Land Exploration (the reality of the centres of the project in the Land) are reconnected and integrated so that the project could make more alive both ourselves and the Land.

A significant step forward occurred towards the end of my research, when working on the construction element of the Building Beauty program in Sorrento. Here it was Susan Ingham bringing over the Project Language work long experimented in partnership with Hajo Neis in past works of professional consultancy. Their approach interpreted this moment of "synthesis" in a way that emphasises its "design" component, hence its creative nature. As illustrated in Chapter 4, in their hands the integration of Dream Map and Land Centre Map turns into direct introduction to the subsequent Conception & Construction phase, a passage which is very close to Alexander's narrative of the Eishin Campus (which in fact was directed on-site by Hajo Neis) as offered in Battle.

### 5.1.4. Conception & Construction

The core element in the Construction and Therapy building process is the elimination of the barriers that conventionally separate the agents of the process from the places and

time of the decisions concerning them.

As a result, in the proposed process there is no separation—of time, place and agents—between the conception of the project and its material execution: both take place at the same time and in the same place (the building site), and both have as their main agents the same individuals in close physical communication with each other.

On the basis of the practical experiments carried out at the Rodari School and in Building Beauty, I would affirm that Conception & Construction begins with a modelling activity of the building and its related spaces through which the group simulates and experiments directly on the land the various possible options, collectively deciding which one is the best through a purely heuristic physical process of trial and error. This process, named "mocking- up", is about the construction of models on a scale close to real size (as much as possible), real rough simulations using zero-cost materials. Mocking-up sessions take place on the ground progressing by large functional systems from the larger and more collectively relevant (such as public or common areas) to the smaller and more individual ones (such as private or personal spaces, details and building systems, etc.). This constitutes a circular process at every scale, which connects mocking-up and real construction until the complete realization of the construction system at that scale. Importantly, each mocking-up cycle must end up with a system that is in itself complete, i.e. makes sense as a whole even if nothing further will be built after it. Each cycle, once completed, constitutes the unquestionable starting point of the next one. The final result is an overall form of the Conception & Construction phase in shape of a spiral, where the loops that take place at each scale, repeating themselves identically between mocking-up and construction, are progressively reduced in scale until the final implementation of the work. The construction site is therefore opened in the light of the results of this experimentation and physically involves the group as a whole on the basis of availability and skills. It is key rule of the process that decisions about higher systems (in terms of size and collective role) cannot be changed afterwards, but variations are always possible, even during the construction phase, within the same system.

## 5.1.5. The Rodari School and Building Beauty projects

### Renovation of Professional Skills

Always in any Construction and Therapy application, but particularly in the Rodari project, one issue constantly emerged that deserves attention: the profound restructuring of the roles conventionally associated to each participant's professional figure, including the children, staff, design team and even the city council officers. In the implementation of the Construction and Therapy model everybody was, at some point in the process, forced to go well beyond the long-established boundaries of their conventional figure. Adults, in particular, have often found themselves challenged, if not literally blown away well out of their comfort zone. Moreover, being Construction and Therapy open to

unforeseeable change, the shock of uncertainty often resulted hardly bearable for many. The subjects involved often said: "we do not understand".

The significant result was that, once as part of the experience of making everyone was reassured that uncertainty was expected and fine, and was an integral part of the journey, everything smoothed down and the work became more vigorous and enthusiastic, and more alive. At that point, the attitude towards the flexibility of roles changed, and experimenting oneself in unused fashions came more naturally. I can say that as a rule, gradual relaxation occurred during the work and this, in turn, allowed an improvement in the making itself. It is hard to overestimate the importance of accepting uncertainty as a vital component of the "learning by doing" approach, indeed a particularly difficult one to accept and metabolize especially for the professionals involved. This emerged as a vital turning point without which the Construction and Therapy experience simply cannot develop.

### **Unfolding Process**

The three principles identified above, reframing of professional skills and roles, shock of uncertainty and understanding "in doing", proved to be essentially important in the implementation of the Construction and Therapy model process structure. It came natural, as the processes on the ground developed in practice, to increasingly give attention to these principles terms at the moment of designing the process itself, in order to manage, and make value of, the kernel of any human process of making: the very fact that it opens up in time through a cyclical repetition of trial-and-error steps, each of which makes in itself full sense and makes the Whole stronger. This, in short, is the unfolding. The way I came to order the various activities of the processes I designed through this research, increasingly focused on the best realization of the unfolding, and the ways that should be arranged around it to manage the externalities of a process where one works under a purposefully limited perspective, is forced to change her/his own comfortable role, and has only to rely on an abstract concept, that of the wisdom of doing, along the way.

# Team and Pedagogy in Construction and Therapy

In Sorrento also, difficulties in the definition of roles arose, this time in an educational setting. As already illustrated in Chapter 4 "Testing the (Revised) Model", in the Building Beauty 2017/2018 program the right coordination of teachers from different disciplinary areas resulted problematic. What was missing the most was the ability to communicate and compare experiences outside of the personal specific areas of competence. Working on the Rodari project we had realised realized the importance of a properly trained work team: as a consequence, we can say that the Construction and Therapy building model can be fully implemented only if supported by professional

staff who, while specialised in different disciplines, share an appropriate understanding of the principles of Construction and Therapy. New skills and attitude require to be introduced and developed in the staff of a Construction and Therapy project. Hence, a targeted and informed cultural transformation is necessary in order to generate the competences that characterize a Construction and Therapy process of making, which interrogates profoundly the crisis of Architecture education in the first place.

### 5.2. STRUCTURE AND SUPER-STRUCTURE

## 5.2.1. The Construction Model: Structure and Super-Structure

The Construction and Therapy model process is composed of a structural part, which fundamentally remained unchanged during its various applications on the ground, and an array of different expressions and practices that emerged case-by-case, triggered by case-specific opportunities, problems, resources and contingencies in general, which we call "super-structural".

The structural part is made up of those founding and relatively stable elements that characterise the essential nature and identity of Construction and Therapy as distinct from others, and opposite in particular to Systems B. According to a bio-evolutionary metaphor, these constitute the DNA of the Construction and Therapy.

Over the course of my research and in the experimentation of the construction model, I paid particular attention to the emergence and identification from the practice itself of the structural part (non-case-specific), trying to capture through experience how the various components progressively consolidated in a solid "skeleton". At this "final" stage of my analysis, the structural part of Construction and Therapy consists of:

- · Land Exploration
- Pattern Language
- Composition (Dream Map + Land Centre Map + Project Language)
- Conception & Construction (Mocking Up + Construction)

Albeit placed in different contexts, these phases remained the fundamental "building blocks" of the process. They contain the genetic, structural information that is meant to frame the process' functioning and further development.

The super-structural part is the expression of such structure in relation to the variables deriving from surrounding circumstances, the different situations in which the process is implemented.

We can compare the construction process' model to a book where the structural parts provide the information to act, but during the act itself annotations are taken, postit notes are inserted and whole chapters are underlined: all this additional information modifies the structures on the basis of the environment and the experience, so as to achieve a singularity capable of bringing the lived experience back into the construction process itself. This means that different detailed rules and tools for the application of the process can and must exist and change in time relatively fast, while remaining consistent

to the basic values on which the four structural phases rely.

The concept of super-structure is easily referable to what Alexander defines as "local adaptation" in Battle. In the second chapter of the first part of the book, entitled "The Crucial Importance of Local Adaptation", he precisely highlights the crucial role played by adaptability in ensuring the unfolding of life during construction. In this respect he writes: "This kind of adaptation is in some degree similar to biological adaptation, but it is not coded through the genes. It is purely functional, and it is driven only by functional pressure. It is also driven by geometrical consideration of coherence." (Battle, p.23,).

# 5.3. CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY: THE "FINAL" MODEL PROCESS

In this Chapter, I am presenting the Construction and Therapy model process resulted at this final stage of my research from the various applications I conducted during my PhD studies (fig. I).

As previously pointed out, the model is made of structural and super-structural parts; obviously, the model captures the structural parts only, since the super-structural are, by definition, case specific, hence cannot be generalized.

The structural part is made up of the phases of Land Exploration, Pattern Language, Composition (Dream map, Land Centre Map, Project Language) and Conception & Construction (Mocking-up and Construction in an at-scale loop, with back-loops to Composition). It is relevant to highlight that, during the research work, new phases within the mentioned structural parts arose bringing he model to the shape just described at this stage. The final model is therefore the result of modifications implemented during the work. It is relevant to show with some detail what these variations were by comparing the three models discussed in my thesis along the way: the Draft Model Process, the Revised Model Process and this "Final" Model process.

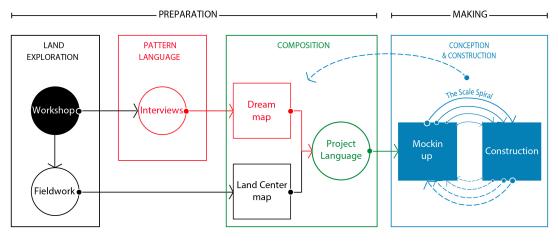


Fig. 1 Final Model Process

#### Draft Model Process:

• It does not show any articulation concerning the construction phase, since the attention is focused on the Land Exploration and the Pattern Language to start with.

#### Revised Model Process:

- Two distinct higher-level periods are identified in the model overall: Preparation and Making.
- Preparation consists of the previously defined land Exploration and Pattern Language activities, while Making covers the Conception & Construction phase, which is internally articulated into: Composition, Mocking up and Construction.
- The Composition phase, including Dream Map and Land Centre Map has been added to the previous model, witnessing the extension of my exploration to a wider area of practice: Dream Map, Mocking-up and Construction appear for the first time

#### "Final" Model Process

- Composition is now part of the Preparation and leaves the Making period, in particular it is not part of Conception & Construction any more.
- · Within the Composition phase, the Project Language appears for the first time.
- Conception & Construction is still made of Mocking up and Construction; however, it is now acknowledged that it occurs in loop with the Composition phase.
- Mocking up and Construction are looping from the largest to the smallest scale, generating a spiral-shaped dynamical movement in the activities towards the actual realisation of what-is-to-be-built.

Why do these structural parts guarantee and how? The structural parts must rely on, and ensure the enactment of, the foundational "principles" of Construction and Therapy. In a nutshell, these are:

- The human being's awareness of his own feelings and how they operate in the body and space.
- Ability to find the inner space where feelings manifest themselves, and understand the authentic needs (material and spiritual) deriving from the act of making.
- Ability to project and identify one's own inner space in the external physical space through the identification of centres, regions and the Wholeness.
- Identification of one's own dreams and expression of them in personal and collective terms
- Sharing with the community the awareness of one's inner and outer space in terms of expressing feelings, dreams and needs, both individual and collective.
- Awareness and sharing of the collective unconscious and ability to work cooperatively in it.
- Recognition of the patterns through which life and dreams are expressed in the built
  environment, that help us create materially what can give shape and space to life and

the Wholeness:

- A construction language capable to harmoniously and holistically integrate the awareness of one's emotions, of inner and outer space, of one's dreams within the identified patterns;
- · A construction process based on the unfolding cycles of centres' expansion and reinforcement.
- Informed and "live" participation in the construction process of all those who have a stake in it.

The principles mentioned above show up through all the four structural parts. In particular:

- In the land Exploration, the people involved are profoundly aware of their emotions, of the physical space they have to occupy on the construction site, both individually and collectively.
- In the Pattern Language, dreams and needs are expressed and the patterns able to unfold through the Fifteen Transformations identified by Alexanders are outlined.
- In the Project Language, the mutual reinforcement of the inner structure of the self and the outer structure of the Land occurs in a highly creative process where the distinction itself between inside and outside tends to blur.
- In Conception & Construction, the construction takes place in a "deep" participatory and collective manner, with a high degree of empathic interaction.

According to this model the Wholeness unfolds from within the construction process and in the construction itself.

It is pivotal to emphasize that these four structural steps must be understood in a cyclical time sequence, rather than in a rigidly sequential one. There is certainly a point of departure and one of arrival, but these parts, and their founding principles, talk to each other and are constantly nourished by this dialogue: they are connected to one another not in a linear way, but in a circular one, where the "final" stage is just the initial one of the next cycle. This includes the outcome of my research as well, hence the brackets that accompany my use of the word "final".

The super-structural parts essentially consist of all the possible forms of expression, deriving from the structural ones, which emerged in the local applications along the development of the construction process itself. These were the less recurrent techniques and processes that never managed to "make it" again in different contexts: they correspond to the specific visible manifestations of the genetic code in the phenotypic traits of the individual organism.

At this point, crucial is the process manager's ability to discern, in the practical experience, deviations from the expected structural norms which belong to the long-term modifications of the code, from the situated expressions of the general code, where the former must be carefully evaluated in a conservative sense in order to preserve the structure and not distort the process itself, while the latter must be welcome, encouraged and best developed in the given conditions. At the level of contingency where the practical experience of building evolves, the tension on the structure is constant and

must be carefully managed: Construction and Therapy is an innovative process that as such challenges the "normal" and triggers its conservative reaction. The designer has therefore to acknowledge that on the one hand the modification of the structure itself must be accepted though with extreme care: the structure is not unamendable. However, on the other hand structural change occurs on a much longer timeframe and, crucially, happens to be a product of historical rather than occasional pressure: structural change has times and ways of emergence that rarely occur in the single experience, but rather qualify as a sedimentation of groups and streams of practical experiences in time, largely independent from our initiative and will. What requires particular attention are the heterogenous patterns of the structure, not the individual twists. The continuous tensions on the structure that arise recursively, can be considered potentially as "genetic variations", the very engine that fuels the evolution of the Construction and Therapy model outlined in this thesis. The ability to identify the expressions in relation to the context in which we are working in order to implement them in accordance with the structural parts, and to carefully annotate the torsions of the structure, are both significantly important skills, in fact rarely taken into consideration in conventional architectural education.

In practical terms, the structural parts (Land Exploration, Pattern Language, Composition and Conception & Construction) exhibit techniques and processes that must and do adapt to the people and the systems of life within which they operate. They cannot be mechanically accomplished, since they constitute the basis for the particular expression that must be an integral part of every situation. The presence of the superstructural parts is credible and positive in evolutionary terms to the extent that it relates the structure and expresses it profoundly and consistently. In this sense, and only in this sense, it ensures contributes essentially to adaptability as a key feature of System A.

During my research work the practical applications of the construction model were performed in different ways according to the circumstances in which I had to carry out its various activities, always taking into consideration local conditions, resources and peculiarities. For instance, the graphics associated with the Pattern Language exercises were different in the VIP Construction and Therapy course in Glasgow, the Rodari School project, in Rwanda and in Sorrento; the Land Exploration was different in Sorrento compared to all the other ones; the management of the Pattern Language and Conception & Construction have always been adapted to the people, places and tools available in the different circumstances.

The super-structural variations didn't change the very nature of the structural parts, but rather made them human and capable of meeting the final aim of Construction and Therapy: the expansion of Wholeness.

### 5.4. RETROSPECTIVE NOTES ON THE FINAL MODEL PROCESS:

In the following I will look back to the four phases of the final model process as experienced in the course of the research work, particularly with a focus on the continuous exchange between inner and outer space, that of the self and that of the land. The aim is not that of providing a field-guide on how to "use" the model, but rather making the process itself as clear as possible to the reader, by emphasizing the importance of keeping the channel of communication between the two realities open and in operation throughout the process.

In the Land Exploration and Pattern Language phases, the main objective is the knowledge and awareness of one's own inner space as well as its link with the emotional space of the group or community. In order to do so, all participants are called to undertake activities for the exploration of their feelings and the body. This is perhaps the most difficult step of the whole process, because an awareness of the self and of what we want to build has not been raised yet, hence practices of psychology and art-therapy may easily be seen with suspicion. It is important to bring everything to the level of concrete life, and especially to emphasize the beauty of staying together. Participant need to be involved in moments of conviviality, such as having meals together, dancing and playing, finding the pleasure of being here and now. This brings the group to a level of joy, which goes together with the liberation of emotions and feelings of all sorts. By so doing, the capacity to explore the land and the dreams and live with them positively and proactively will be enhanced.

During the Land Exploration and Pattern Language phases, it is important that participants as individuals and a community do not feel intimately investigated. They will be asked to express their dreams with words. This may seem a simple thing, but it actually means the request to expose themselves as they are and wish to be, i.e. showing themselves with no masks. It is necessary to let them know that this is important for realizing a building which is authentically beautiful, where they will feel good and in peace. Moreover, it is important that they can express themselves with the language that, beyond the verbal, they feel they own the most. Such languages are in all expressive arts: drawing, dance, acting, music, sculpture etc. For example, in the Rodari project the Pattern Language settings were drawing and modelling crafted by the children, dance and musical pathways.

The last phase of the preparation to build is named Composition. At this point, participants are fully aware of their aspirations and the land potential to host a building that embodies the community's aspirations. In practice, the goal is finding a language that translates and consolidates in a synthetic graphic form both the Pattern Language and Land Exploration. Here, in order to have the best results, the collaboration with professionals is at the apex, which can only be achieved if fundamental trust is matured between the community and the professionals involved. At this point, at the relational level what is done is done, which means that a good deal of the chances of success in realizing a good building depend on how Pattern Language and Land Exploration were conducted. The resulting maps shall not be only technically sound, but rather get closer to the kind of representations and forms of expression that users themselves utilized along the process, including artistic drawing, music, dance and drama.

In the making phase, named Conception and Construction, all participants are called to be part of the the construction according to their own individual abilities

and peculiarities. This must be a moment of great satisfaction and joy, though coming together with the fatigue of the physical work of building. Crucial is the physical contact with the building materials and tools. So it was during the Rodari project: this is the moment of the concrete realization of all what was previously unveiled and dreamt about, and the discovery that those can have a shape and a place in which they can exist for real. It is the moment in which all participants make in the outer space what they had been realized in the inner space before.

06 CONCLUSIONS

The presence of an interdisciplinary practice is pivotal when building an inclusive understanding of cognitive, experiential and emotional aspects, not only in the field of architecture but in every area of knowledge. These practices are the only way to comprehend and lead the complex processes that become significant and crucial in order to tackle the emergencies of the 21st century.

In the light of Bloom's Taxonomy, which recognizes the processes of knowledge generation in the three domains, cognitive, affective and psychomotor, the need for a reorganization of the construction process, especially in the educational field, is fundamental.

It is with respect to this point of view, that I recognize the crisis of architecture as part of the wider crisis of modernity affecting our times, a historical period of Western civilization characterized by the increasing separation between the three domains and the prevalence of one of these in all aspects of life, culture and production.

My research as well as the way I approached this thesis somehow reflect the tension towards a concrete exploration of this need for a profound innovation, through the inversion of the conventional theory-practice-evaluation sequence (the latter inclusive, at least ideally, of emotional competences) into a different practice along the inverted sequence: emotional awareness-practical experience-theoretical training.

Within this attempt, my attention to the psycho-motor domain grasps a neglected area even in the subsequent developments of Bloom's Taxonomy. This issue, with regard to the field of construction, shows up in particular in the connection between direct experience of building and the collective holistic expression of the body-mind.

This scientific space, which is defined by the connection between the act of making and the dynamics of the body-mind, is a blank area in architectural literature. In this gap, the writings and the concrete work of Christopher Alexander towers over the years from the 1960s to 2012.

This work constitutes the foundation of an exploration that can be said is in its early stages, and yet is of central relevance in overcoming the crisis of the modern era towards higher levels of spirituality, a scenario which, alone, can allow us to face with hope the tremendous emergencies of the future in environmental, social and political terms.

The first conclusion I can draw from my research experience, condensed in this thesis, with all its limitations, is the full confirmation of these premises as a result of the construction practice experimented in the case studies. I tried and verified, I moved on and retraced my steps, I started a debate and concluded it, and I had to submit myself to leaving, sometimes, some questions unanswered. But always in the real world, with real people and real institutions, and within their timeframes. Moreover, I witnessed first-hand the importance of the problem in everyday practice through the eyes and hands of the parents, children and teachers involved in my practical work.

It is on the basis of this ascertained relevance that the thesis' initial questions materialize, as I pointed out in paragraph 1.4 "Gap of Knowledge and Research Questions: Framing the Research". Such questions can be summarized as follows:

- I. Is it possible to deduce a construction process model from Alexander's lesson starting from a point of view linked to the relationship between body-mind and built-environment?
- 2. Are there recurring and therefore "permanent" (subject to slower change) aspects in the construction process model? If so, in what relation do they establish with the variations that occur on a case-by-case basis in real processes? Does a structure/ superstructure dynamic within the actual construction process exist and how does it show up in practice?
- 3. Is it possible to identify a set of fundamental principles that characterize and constitute a "living construction process"?
- 4. In the context of "Construction and Therapy", what meaning should be given to the term "Therapy" which is consistent with the principles?

The research has clearly made it possible to identify in Alexander's work an articulation of the relationship between the body-mind and space in the built environment. In particular, this articulation sits to the very heart of his approach aimed at generating beauty, when he describes the reality of the Wholeness as a structure of centres belonging both to the exterior world of "things" and to the interior world of the person's dreams. It is worth keeping in mind that centres are essentially real formations of space: in this approach, feelings represent the "gate" through which centres become accessible to our experience, and it is the body-mind that generates this possibility by being the interface between space and the self.

The practical consequence of this in the actual construction process is particularly evident in what we called Land Exploration. Land Exploration and Pattern Language are, in fact, maps of existing centres inside and outside of us (respectively in the Land and in our dreams). The most innovative aspect of my research work is precisely the identification and reconsideration of these evolving practices in Alexander's experience looking towards an explicit methodology, with all the many and significant risks associated with that. I've always been aware of these risks during my research work, as they are typical of the transposition on the virtual plane, of a flow of experiences which in Alexander remains mainly on that of their individuated actualizations in the practice of building.

It is only in this context and within these limits that the distinction between permanent parts of the process and parts linked to specific circumstances of an individual's reality, finds its meaning. And it is always among the first, the permanent ones, that we find the founding principles from which the recurrent practices of the processes are generated, extensively treated in paragraph 2.I.I. "Battle: Christopher Alexander's Principles and Methods". Not only they can be identified in the author's writing, but they actually were in front of us throughout the experiences built up in the case studies and described in this thesis.

Likewise, the emergence of well-being in the construction process is a tangible and proven fact looking backword to the projects carried out, in particular at the Rodari School. This is about a situation of greater harmony which expands into the area of ordinary and everyday emotion, both individual and collective, in relation to the lived

space. It is important to point out that, although the construction experience may have therapeutic value against clinical pathologies, this is not what I analysed in my work, which in contrast refers to a larger spectrum of "well-being" personal and ecological dynamics.

The research presented in this thesis is essentially experimental. The issues have been tackled and sometimes necessarily left unresolved, awaiting future developments and opportunities. Among the latter, un-responded questions arisen from this research are:

- I. Can the "Final Model Process", which is the culmination of this thesis, be applied in real cases of different and greater scale and complexity? To what extent can System A become "mainstream"?
- 2. Is it possible to think that the academic world, which is significantly different from the experience of people and organizations out of it, could welcome and even lead the change towards the integral future outlined in this research?
- 3. How can the adaptability and creativity typical of the living model process explored in this research, be reconciled with the static and rigid nature of the roles and professional figures involved in this process?
- 4. How can one confer effective and concrete scientific relevance to practices located in disciplinary areas, such as art therapy, drama-therapy, dance and psychomotricity, yoga, which belong to the individual and collective inner experience?

This sequence of open questions, as a result, outlines a relatively unexplored research area of particular social, environmental and academic relevance. I am not able to tell now what the future holds for me in relation to the exploration of this space. Certainly, I look at it with faith and hope.



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# ORDER AND CONSTRUCTION IN CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER: EXPLORING THE LIVING BUILDING PROCESS

Appendix

MariaPia Vidoli



# LIST OF APPENDIX

# **APPENDIX A - CHAPTER 2**

· Extended Literature Review

# APPENDIX B - CHAPTER 3

- 3.1 Synthesis of P.L. in the Final Master Thesis "The Collective Visions and Our Shared Experience" - Kim C. Lim and Jun Hoe Wang, VIP C&T students. (pp. 72-78)
- 3.2. Workshop at Ross Priory: results question and response
- 3.3 Presentation used at UCL BARTLETT FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING - Symposium and Workshop on Urban 'Pattern Language' Applications
- 3.4 Relators' materials from seminar: 'Healing the Land and Healing the people: first steps into Construction and Therapy'
  - Mariarosaria Nardone, DESIGNING WHOLENESS:
     A PEDAGOGICAL SPACE BETWEEN IDENTITY
    - A PEDAGOGICAL SPACE BETWEEN IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP.
  - Ilaria Mussini, "Educational contexts, creative processes and the construction of well-being: the role of teachers and children's perspective". PRE-SCHOOL

     GIANNI RODARI / Creativity in pre-school education / The perspective of children: a project about the concept of well-being at school
  - A.P.S.IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN Scuola Art.eD.O. di Roma, L'OGGETTO MEDIATORE NELLE ARTI TERAPIE E NELL'ARTIGIANATO ARTISTICO EDUCATIVO: dalla creazione di relazioni alla costruzione di una funzionalità sociale.
- 3.5 Flyers seminar e work shop 'Healing the Land and Healing the people: first steps into Construction and Therapy'

### APPENDIX C - CHAPTER 4

- 4.1 Rodari Project
- 4.2 Expressive Motor Laboratory at Rodari Scholl 2014/2015
- 4.3 Creative Laboratory at Rodari Scholl I' and 2' steps 2014/2015
- 4.4 Creative workshop at Rodari Scholl 3' step Conception and Construction -Y2015 -
- 4.5 Music Workshop "Music in Construction & Therapy Finding a music in the Pattern Language" at the Rodari Scholl – Y 2015
- · 4.6 Project 'Construction & Music' at Rodari 2014/2015
- 4.7 Rodari' Maps
- 4.8 Rodari'density map
- 4.9 Report Rodari' workshops Boschetto di Pan Report of the laboratories carried out at the "G. Rodari " of Scandiano by the Association. P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan on 2015 2/3' October
- · 4.11 Full Naples report
- 4.12 "Self, Community and Space" workshop, Building Beauty, Sorrento, March 26-28, 2018 Personal report, impressions and reflection Or Ettlinger

# APPENDIX D - CHAPTER 5

5.1.Published Works

# APPENDIX A

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The literature review develops in two main steps.

Firstly, the documentation of my journey through Alexander's own work is presented. This is about the driving theoretical principles, as well as the practical side of his work as a builder and maker. This first step involved an exploration of Alexander's work as presented by himself in his writings as much as a parallel one on his inner circle of former students and life-long collaborators. These latter were precious indirect sources of knowledge on three aspects: a) Alexander's own work (again), this time seen from an external point of view; b) the impact of the work done, how it was received from the academic and non-academic compounds; and c) the "environmental" level of information, about the facts, people and conditions within which his legacy got build up every day, which only can help generating the connections between ascertained facts and shed light on their original meanings.

Secondly, I also engaged in the review of areas of knowledge external to Alexander and, indeed, to architecture as a "discipline". Here, in particular, elements of psychology, art-therapy, anthropology and pedagogy were touched upon.

An extensive report of both these studies is offered in the next sections. Throughout this report, attention will be posed to singling out the individual elements of Alexander's theory and practice as emerging along the way, and understanding them in light of his theory. Indeed, the whole focus of the literature review is on distilling those elements, in view of deducting (or better inferring) from them the model process that he recursively happened to follow in the practice of actually making living architecture. My conclusions about these elements are offered in the last section of this chapter.

# 2.1. A JOURNEY ACROSS CHRISTOPHER ALEXANDER'S WORLD

My journey through Alexander's writings began reading "The Nature of Order" (NoO) (Alexander, 2002). I approached this reading with questions regarding the role of human practical action in the interplay between one's own feeling and the perception of reality. This was, in fact, the core of my Master in Philosophy dissertation, which explored the deeper meaning of the cultural expression of human needs. So, it came natural to me, when I first came across Christopher Alexander and his holistic view of architecture in various conversations with Prof. Porta, to start from NoO. That was indeed a revelation for me, because I found in it the founding principles that had always guided me through my previous research and studies. I began collaborating with the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow and during my work I had first-hand experience of the ideas that came right from NoO. All of this resulted in further commitment to continue this line of studies, which I did reading "A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction" (APL) (Alexander et al, 1977). This was also a moment of profound

reflection and progress. I began to think that I could conceive a model of constructive process, which had as its fundamental principle the re-union of feelings' awareness and practical action; Furthermore, in 2012 "The Battle for the Life and the Beauty of the Earth" (Battle) (Alexander et al, 2012) was released, which was of pivotal importance. Subsequently to the above-mentioned books, (NoO, APL and Battle), which were of great relevance for my research, I continued expanding my exploration through others such as "The Production of Houses" (Production) (Alexander, 1985), "The Oregon Experiment" (Oregon) (Alexander et al, 1975), "The Timeless Way of Building" (Timeless Way) (Alexander, 1979), and various other papers and informal writings, many of which were provided by Maggie Moore Alexander with the consent of Christopher himself.

# 2.1.1. Battle: Alexander's Principles and Methods

Battle is Alexander's latest book (2012). It defines the importance of establishing a human system of construction, as opposed to the current industrial system dominated by appearance, power and money. He names the former "System A" and the latter "System B". The book has as its object the description of a complex design, the new Eishin campus in Tokyo, Japan, which he designed and built with the collaboration of the book's co-authors.

# **Principles**

#### A New Civilization for a New Human System of Building

In the preface there is a passage entitled "New Architecture, a New Civilization" to indicate that the book has much wider intentions than just telling the story of a single construction case. In fact, right at the outset it is stated "our book describes a revolutionary vision of the human environment" (p. 1). The same concept is then reinforced when the author uses the expression "symbiosis of building form, social behaviour, and human feeling" (p. 1, The Battle), which underlines the strict dependence of "making" and the experience of living. Alexander indeed talks about constructions in reference to values such as "human quality from the point of view of our psychology, our emotional states, our social and mental well-being, our happiness, our joy in life" (p. 2).

To this anthropological vision of the living being, interpreted in its totality, he adds a broader connotation concerning civilization, understood in its historical, cultural, political and economic sense, which pays attention to building practices' change over time. In this regard he writes: "the environments we were building became progressively more sterile" (p. 3).

Relationship Between People and Buildings: Principles of Well Being, Bringing Out Life and Wholeness In System A, a 'living' construction is inserted in circular relationship between the people who built and live in it: "Quality of buildings depends entirely on the ability of anyone building or group of buildings to support human life, especially in its inner, and emotional aspects" (pp. 4-5).

# System A and System B

There are two archetypal systems of production: System A and System B.

In System A, creation and production are understood as organic processes and are ruled by human judgment coming from the underlying Wholeness. It is such Wholeness that defines what needs to be done at any time in the process.

In System B what matters are regulations, procedures, efficiency and profit; society is seen as a large machine. Integrity is secondary, while mechanical considerations are primary.

System A is used to refer to "more life-giving systems", while System B to "less life-giving systems". Moreover, the difference between environments that have more and less life can be measured by a series of indicators that refer to physical, mental and ecological health and to the way people are treated socially. This is confirmed on Chapter 3, "System-A & System-B: A necessary Confrontation" which is introduced by the description of System A as a production system in which local adaptation plays a primary role. Its process is governed by methods that make each building and each of its parts unique and realized in a way which is uniquely specific to its context. On the other hand, System B is guided by a mechanistic philosophy. The components and products are devoid of individual identity and often alienating in their psychological effects. The will to use such a system of production derives mainly from goals related to the logic of profit and the desire to achieve it in the shortest possible time. Alexander states that in the current system, which follows System B, buildings can no longer adapt to the local context and the construction process itself does not allow a component of a building to become unique in relation to its context and larger location. Architecture is now transmitted only through drawings, but the reality of things is only very partially accessible by drawing, as it comes from the structure of something that is there in the field at every level in a complex and unique way. Alexander sustains that local adaptation can work if implemented day by day, during the construction and after the construction, thus improving the shape of and between the buildings. On the contrary, in the current system it is impossible for the abovementioned process to occur. The contemporary commercial conditions make adaptation impossible in practice.

### System A at Large Scale

In the last chapter of the Battle, Alexander goes from the Eishin's project's description to a wider vision that concerns and deals, at the same time, with a reconstruction of the contemporary civilization. However, there is a gap between the individual project made

for a client and the coordination and functioning of several agents aiming at different and often conflicting purposes, typical of urban design. This gap is real and perceived by the authors themselves: Hajo Neis reveals how Chapter 24, entitled "Large scale building production: Unification of the Human System and the Physical System" was ultimately cancelled before the publication (Neis, 2014). This anecdote highlights how alexander considered the problem of System A at large scale not sufficiently resolved to the point of excluding it from the book at the date of the its publication. On this problem I co-authored with Sergio Porta and Yodan Rofé the paper entitled "The Production of Cities: Alexander and the problem of 'System A' at large scale".

The fundamental principles expressed in The Battle are:

- Allow life to flourish. Activate and intensify life itself through processes that are part of a system of construction which is radically alternative to the conventional one A.
- Implement a social/ economic/ political system that allows to overcome the current mechanistic logic (System B), in favour of one that is capable of making living processes possible, which are based on the living beings' natural criteria.
- Enhance awareness and recognition of the Wholeness, and at the same time recognize the actions that are destructive and non-life-giving.
- Seek a deep integration between human beings, buildings, set of buildings and urban plans in order to achieve a strong sense of belonging.
- Be people capable of courage and love: the "need for courage is a real requirement" (p. 100). Courage "is absolutely necessary as a practical matter in the world we live today" (p. 100), since what contemporary life is experiencing is, in fact, a battle.

#### Methods

Clues of a method of construction seem to arise in Part Four of Battle, entitled, "Groundwork for a New Creation System". Here the work carried out for the Eishin campus in 1987 is considered valid universally. The elements that are considered necessary to create a "living building complex, place, community, or settlement" (p. 380) are described. It is also stated that "unity, connectedness, and Wholeness-extending transformations are the key to make this great shift in consciousness".

The creation system envisaged in Battle, however, goes deeper and deeper. In fact, the generative process is presented as something that, although resembling to some degree a conventional production system, also has elements of art, feeling and inspiration. By understanding this creation system, we will learn to respect it, to cooperate with it and to use it in the right way. As a result, it will be possible to create spaces capable to touch people's souls. We will have the opportunity to combine theoretical and practical work with the profound nature that resides in living beings.

Architecture as a Tangible Spatial Construct: Witnessing the Comparison Between System A and System B The main battle between System A and System B, which one may imagine being fought through social or political acts, has in fact shown itself vividly and fiercely in the practice of building the Eishin Campus. In that case, the question revolves directly and concretely around the construction of the buildings. Architecture, which seems to be far from theoretical debates, is instead a living testimony of the comparison between the two systems: the visible form of buildings as well as that of the spaces between them, concretely say what they do to help, or hinder, human interaction. The domination over the physical space seems to be, above all, the battleground where the clash between the two systems occurs more acutely.

## From Fifteen Properties to Fifteen Transformations

Nature has its own geometry which, although following identified rules, is subject to the constraints and inevitable contingencies of the real world, in which it exists. The geometry of nature itself is composed of elements that interact, giving rise to complex configurations modeled by reality. This reality is therefore a "living reality".

There is a geometric dimension of the Wholeness, and it is possible to recognize the basis which it emerges from. There exists, in fact, a structure that can be identified as the Wholeness of the system at any exact moment in time. This structure is a rough configuration of space. Each spatial configuration shows one or more properties that improve or reinforce "centres" residing in the field of observation. As a result of this observation, realistic and useful results can be extracted in order to decide how to act. That is, after understanding the Wholeness of a system, the steps to be implemented, experiments to be tested and explorations to be pursued can be identified.

When working within the Wholeness, we observe fifteen recurrent properties of space. In Battle, they are translated in fifteen transformations, as they belong to the process rather than the object. Precisely because they are characteristics of the process generated by the Wholeness, they generate life. These fifteen transformations are active elements of the continuous change and adaptation in space of any living system.

In conclusion Alexander indicates the essential spatial basis which we can start from to begin the profound understanding of the whole and the Wholeness. He claims that all the sets that create a living space have the qualities of the whole, in this ensemble each whole is balanced with the others, and they are grouped together. This does not mean that centres are finite or limited, but rather that they constitute the Wholeness at every scale (from the smallest to the largest).

### Wholeness Manifests Itself Only Gradually

Wholeness comes into existence gradually, as nature is continually created, day by day. We are called to be aware that Wholeness can only develop action after action, over time, and can only manifest itself gradually. As a consequence, the maintenance of Wholeness

in every process derives from acting continuously within Wholeness itself. There is a "Golden Glow" that guides, step by step, the one who acts in practice: each step modifies the previous one, in this way also the profound structure of the new centres emerges gradually and continuously.

#### Wholeness Vivifies the Environment

In Chapter 24, Part Four of Battle, photographs are displayed which show how, from glimpses of ordinary life, the beauty of the physical shape of the environment helps, supports and involves life.

# The Rebirth of Civilization

In the last Chapter of Battle, Alexander maintains that using very carefully the paradigm of gradual action as described in chapters 20-24, we can recover the most profound aspects of human nature and orient ourselves towards a civilization imbued with compassion and ethics.

This requires and generates at the same time a renewed physical world, together with a new way of dealing with the land. It is possible to outline a new way of thinking which is, perhaps, profoundly useful as a beginning, to repair the disastrous errors we made during the last century. In this regard he concludes by writing that if we have sufficient courage, we can make a difference in our lifetimes; he writes: "In a couple of hundred years we may have recovered ourselves, our wits, our common sense, together with a newly inspired framework, giving us back real architecture as the locus of our new life and our recovery" (p. 475).

# 2.1.2. "Timeless Way", "APL" and "Oregon": the Question of Patterns in Alexander

"A Pattern Language" (APL) is an essay on architecture and urban planning, published in 1977 by Alexander, Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein, members of the Centre for Environmental Structure<sup>1</sup> of Berkeley, California. It is considered one of the greatest bestsellers in architecture.

The book essentially consists in the illustration of a new language, called "pattern language" in that it is based on timeless entities called "patterns". Patterns are typical solutions to recurrent problems in the design of buildings, neighbourhoods and cities. The authors themselves in the introduction explain that the 253 patterns of APL as a whole constitute a language. The patterns introduce a problem that is recurrent and then give it a solution that is typical, time proved and evidence-based. Every pattern is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Alexander was the founder of the Centre for Environmental Structure (CES) in 1967, and is still the President of the Company. In 2000, he founded PatternLanguage.com.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> It is the greatest innovation in contemporary theoretical linguistics. It was conceived and implemented by N. Chomsky based on the elaboration that his teacher, Z. Harris, had made of the notions of substitution and expansion, proper of structural linguistics. The term "generative" refers not to the concrete production of single sentences but, to the mathematical meaning of the verb "generate", to an abstract device that specifies, enumerates certain structures.

then linked to other pattern that are applied at larger scale and smaller scale in the book. In this way, the authors give ordinary people, not just professionals, the possibility to work with their neighbours to improve a city or a neighbourhood, design a house for themselves or work with colleagues to design an office, a workshop or a public building like a school, by navigating up and down the scales starting at any point, and following the links between patterns. The Pattern Language is usually read as a set of documented problems and solutions, what a mathematical theorist or computer scientist could call a generative grammar<sup>2</sup>.

APL is for mostly considered a way of gathering and structuring information about good design practices, for example of buildings. More precisely, as a method that allows the collection and organization of knowledge, even if at a higher level of abstraction. From this it follows that those who use it have as their main goal the creation of information structures built with the pattern language model. According to this vision, the objective is in fact to organize the knowledge related to design problems of tangible or intangible objects and their resolutions, inserting them into a network of relationships. This vision of the pattern language is used not only in architecture but also in various other fields, as for example in the science of education, in information technology and in the design of human-machine interrelation systems.

# My interpretation of the Pattern Language

"A Pattern Language" (APL) and the Pattern Language (PL)

When I read APL, I matured a significantly different opinion. It seems to me that only a few had given proper consideration to one of the first sections of the book, the chapter entitled "USING THE BOOK" (written just like that, in capital letters, by itself, to fill an entire page, prior to anything else). Given that nothing in Alexander's writings is left to chance, such introduction has to be looked at with the highest attention.

At its very beginning, the reader is warned that Volume I, entitled "The Timeless Way of Building"<sup>3</sup>, and Volume 2 "The Pattern Language", are in fact to be considered two halves of one single work. APL provides a language to build and plan and a detailed description of the patterns, while "Timeless Way" provides the theory and instructions for using this language, the discipline that makes it possible to use patterns in order to build cities, neighbourhoods, houses, gardens and rooms.

APL is the book that tangible expression of the way universal principles and concepts at the interface between humans and their everyday built environment are configured, that are validated by widespread ("universal") emergence over generations; the "Timeless Way" is the definition and explanation of such principles and concepts as well as their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Timeless Way of Building (1979) is book by Alexander where he presents a new theory of architecture (and design in general) that is based on the understanding and configuration of design patterns. Although it was published later, it is essentially the introduction to A Pattern Language and The Oregon Experiment. In the book, the author introduces the concept of "quality without a name", and argues that we should work in order to include this nameless quality in our buildings. The book is written as a long series of italicized headlines followed by short sections providing further details and it includes several full-page photo illustrations. The style used is also unusual for an architectural writing: at times resembling prose poetry or religious scripture.

origins. The two books evolved in parallel over the course of eight years. Alexander during these eight years worked on one hand to understand the nature of the constructive process and on the other to build a contemporary pattern language that captures how such nature shows up before our eyes. The authors maintain that they had been forced by practical circumstances to publish the two books separately, but they actually form an indivisible whole. The reader is warned that it is possible to read the two books separately, but in order to fully understand what the authors want to communicate, both must be read. The very nature of the task of building cities and buildings is expressed in The Timeless Way of Building: it shows how both cities and buildings do not have any chance of becoming alive, without them being built by all the people who are part of the social community to which they belong, and without people sharing a common pattern language in which to build them. It is made clear in APL that a possible configuration of a pattern language is presented. This language is extremely practical and is the result of eight years of work by Alexander and his colleagues. The constituent elements of this language are entities called "patterns".

Once aware of the common interpretation of APL, doubts and questions immediately arose in me. I wondered: how could a language be considered a "method of implementation" and not a "construction process", i.e. a pathway to build a whole, a complete and significant thing? A language, a model of discourse to create meaning, could not make sense otherwise, in isolation.

A consequence of this superficial approach to the book, which is also a reason of its immense editorial success, is that it is mostly utilised as a "book of recipes", where patterns are taken as quick-fix products of universal applicability, rather than an example of practices to be regenerated at each project process, as part of the process itself.

And again, why despite the explicit recommendations recalled above, the patterns in APL have so rarely been considered in the context of Alexander's work, at least together with Timeless Way to start with? Why were patterns not considered as entities / centres of life, as later comprehensively illustrated in NoO but already clearly mentioned in Timeless Way?

Two Complementary Approaches to Patterns: "Vision" and "Observation"

I decided to further explore my concerns regarding APL, and together with m supervisor organised a meeting with Alexander and his wife Maggie Moore Alexander. I explained my point of view in an email to them, as follows:

Email to Maggie Moore Alexander, April 26 2014 (quoted with permission):

"The whole premise of the general interpretation of A Pattern Language is that the problem posed by Alexander would be the following: the city is a complex matter, architects can't design complexity for limits which are fundamentally cognitive, this is why their designs are ugly, so Chris proposes a tool (the PL) that aims at making design capable of creating

complexity. To us this is wrong and what we find irritating about this is that the very simple fact of life, that the quality Alexander is interested in does not come by design, is apparently incapable to find its way in the mind of architects or planners. It's not a problem of design, and we don't think that Alexander has ever been primarily interested in the destiny of architects. We believe that the problem he has always been focused on is how to bring this quality into buildings. Which means: how can we create that quality without name that he has so clearly linked with life? Life is the key, and Alexander has always highlighted this point with extreme clarity. Now, the point with the PL as much as with anything else, is that it is not a design method, it is a process method. It's a language, i.e. a structure that allows processes to happen. Processes must include human beings doing things for real, in the real place, with their hands. This is what brings life into the process and allows beauty to unfold. However, the most important part is: we do think that this wider notion has expanded in Alexander himself in time, and APL is an early book in this sense that actually can easily be misinterpreted as if it was looking at a problem of design for architects. The essence of Alexander' thought is much greater in "The Production of Houses", for example, reaches full expression in The Nature of Order, and is magnificently exemplified in Battle. Here the PL takes a very different form."

Maggie Moore Alexander answered using these words:

"I am delighted that I have finally found someone with whom I can have this conversation. After APL was published, Chris could see from the way people used it that he had not gotten his point across, and that is why he spent the next 30 years writing The Nature of Order to talk about life and Wholeness. It was typical for people to select, mix and match patterns, rather than understand that they needed to be in a process."

Then she continues on a statement that indicated APL as an instantaneous way to generate the complexity that is usually found in urban fabrics:

"...as if there could be anything instant in understanding complexity. Once again, APL is being used in a way that it was not meant to be used – people sitting in a studio working with abstract notions and drawings and finding it doesn't work so well.

So, it appears that complexity is the issue they want to focus on. Most professional use only one of the process tools -- pattern language -- to look at it. Why does this happen? I don't know. From a cynical point of view, I can say they are lazy. It could also be that they don't have experience with process, can't imagine it, and they want to fit everything into their intellectual framework, instead of placing themselves where they have to, which is daunting at best and at times quite frightening. It takes courage to do what you have set to do. It's much easier to sit back and throw ideas around.

In trying to overcome my own cynicism, which doesn't give people room to learn, I attempted to describe what is missing with the learning curves. That is the most articulate I have been able to be so far, since I can't take everyone to see West Dean. At least they show that pattern language is only one tool that Alexander developed to understand how life can be generated. And the "Battle" demonstrates the interplay between the tools.

You are going to be much better than I am at figuring out how to describe processes in the context of urban planning and development, since I have no way to understand that. When you speak of your research, you talk about life. I remember you saying that, for instance, a baker wants to have his shop where people come to it easily — that's life. So, the old cities were made letting these relationships develop naturally (not sitting far away from the place mixing and matching patterns), and they developed from the process of living them. (I probably made that too simple.) Can you speak from this place of knowing and explain to others what the processes could look like?

You are developing a process-oriented learning laboratory. Can you speak of how that is different than studios in which people do not have a relationship with the place, and make the point this is not an intellectual exercise to undertake from afar? APL? I don't see how to get to beauty without them.

Here's what I learned about complexity theory many years ago. The complexity of anything is based on a few simple 'rules' that constantly interact (process) and generate the complexity. If you can identify the rules that are interacting, you can become aware of what is operating, modify the rules, and thereby modify what they generate. I don't know that this is the way to take their issue of complexity forward, since I don't understand how they use the word. And I don't know if we should go along with their assertion that complexity is the issue – the goal. Life is the goal".

Starting from this we tried to define some important and structural points of the Pattern Language according to our point of view. The following notes emerged:

The PL is the combination of one exercise of visioning and one of observation. The Visioning part is aimed at extracting from the community the authentic vision of what-is-to-be-built (a house, a school, a cluster of houses, a park...) as shared by the whole of community members. Therefore, the Visioning part is a voyage in the territory of human deep aspirations. The Observation part is aimed at identifying what most of the people in the community ordinarily do with regards to what-is-to-be-built. For example, if we need to build a house, we would observe how individuals use their houses and try to select peculiarities that most of them share. Therefore, the Observation part is a journey in the territory of human visible behaviours.

In the following there will be references to the fundamental point of what is "shared" by "the community" or "most of the community". This has to be intended not as a binary position (shared vs. not shared) but as a grading of sharing. One vision, for example that "there should be a calm and serene courtyard", could be shared by almost everyone, while one other, for example that "windows should be small and protected", may be shared by a minority of the community. We should stick to the notion that patterns are as such only when they are shared only by all or almost all. However, we should take note of "minor patterns" and keep them alive in our consideration during the discussion.

The distinction between Visioning and Observation is relative to the way we – the design team – get information from the community and the place. However, in both cases the design team has the responsibility to process the information gathered after the survey. Because the survey is always individual, the processing phase is mainly about distilling

the elements that are widely shared from the various individual visions/behaviours.

The processing phase after the survey should be conceived again as interactive, bringing back to the community the first results, discussing them collectively, re-elaborating the feedback and getting back again to the community for a second, a third and a fourth round if needed, until we and the community are comfortable with what we have in our hands.

In the visioning the aim is to establish an authentic vision of what-is-to-be-built that is shared by most of or the whole building community, including end users and relevant stakeholders.

The principle is that we all normally live far away from a clear awareness of what our aspirations are authentically, as that space at the individual level is heavily colonized by ideologies, images and expectations cast on us from exogenous sources (education, image industry, information networks). Therefore, we need to structure the interaction accurately in order to get the visions from the individuals at the appropriate level.

A further important point is that while visions, which are specific of individuals, are personal dreams, those that are shared are patterns: collective dreams. So, we need to identify the patterns, not the dreams. But we can only access the collective patterns through the individual dreams. Dreams are the gates to patterns.

For those visions to be relevant they must be ideal, articulated and visual.

- I. Ideal: visions should not be affected by the constraints of the case or the land. But they can take advantage of opportunities perceived in the case or the land. In other words, they should not be place-specific, but they should be place-informed. Ultimately, the collective visions should capture the essence of what-is-to-bebuilt, its deep nature. We need to conceive techniques to bring the interviewee down to the level of the ideal in order to put her/him in the right condition to be authentic and essential in her/his vision. Elements of these techniques include:
- Making clear that we are not talking necessarily of "that" house in that place, but of her/his "dream house", or "ideal house", or her/his house "as it would be if s/he was in heaven".
- The "close your eyes" technique: "now close your eyes, say we are approaching your beautiful house in heaven from the street: what do you see?".
- The "guest tour" technique: "Say that you are receiving a guest in your new beautiful house in heaven: how would that work? What would you show to your guest first? Where would you bring her/him first? And then? And after that?".
- The "comic strip" technique: ask your interviewee to sketch a series of drawings of their new beautiful house in the form of a comic strip, as they imagine it while progressing from the street into the house. Then ask her/him to add a short caption at the bottom of each image explaining what they see in their own drawing.

- 2. Articulated: visions should be articulated in components. For example, if the aim of the project is to create a house, visions should refer not only to the whole thing, for example "the house", but also to some of its components, or parts, like the gate, entrance, kitchen, courtyard etc. However, the distillation of components that are shared is an important step in the creation of the Pattern Language. This means that the list of components should not be suggested, but should emerge from the visual material that results from the interviews. One way to do that is through the "tour" exercise: in this case the interviewer should pay attention to what the interviewee describes during the tour, and come back to those components afterwards to get the vision clearer for each of them: "you have nominated X and Y in your tour, do you mind if we get back to some of them? Let's speak a bit of X, imagine that you are there now, what do you feel? And what do you see?".
- 3. Visual: visions, including emotional visions, should always be linked to a spatial expression, i.e. should be as close as possible to what one could see. For example, one could say that the courtyard should be calm and serene (emotional, non-visual), but in this case a spatial representation of these emotional qualities as associated with the courtyard should be offered. One good way to trigger that is asking: "For example? What would make your courtyard calm and serene?", or: "Ok, let's say that you are entering your courtyard, that is calm and serene, what do you see first?".

Tools that are useful for the visioning part are:

- Drawings (subjective, remote and face-to-face).
- · Verbal interviews (subjective, face-to-face).
- Lists (objective, remote and face-to-face).

The aim of the Observation part is to look at community members' observable behaviours when using something of the same nature of what-is-to-be-built. Of course, one strong limitation here is that the intent of the project must be about something that already exists in the community, otherwise we could not observe behaviours in the appropriate setting. For example, if we had to build a house, we would observe community members in their current use of their existent houses.

However, if the specific purpose of the project does not exist locally, we could shift the focus of the observation slightly towards the context, i.e. the daily life of community members in the place, to grasp elements of the values associated to the place by users.

More specifications about observation can be undertaken on site by the design team, or from remote by the community members themselves. In this second case, questionnaire should be framed in a way that limits as far as possible the subjectivity of individual perceptions. For example, if we want to have a notion of what the daily life is in the

community, we could ask interviewees to give us snapshots of what they do every half an hour, and to clarify with numbers on a map all their references to the particular elements of the place.

Differently from the Visioning part, the Observation part is necessarily place specific. Wewouldbelookingatbehaviours in the spatial context of the building site. The tools used are:

- · Map-supported lists (objective, remote).
- Behavioural annotated maps (objective, face-to-face).

# 2.1.3. The Nature of Order: a Few Steps into a New Cosmology

NoO was published much later than APL (1977). In fact, as we learn from Maggie Moore Alexander's words quoted above, NoO is the reaction to the way APL was received by the world of architecture, which was as successful commercially as substantially misunderstood in the merit of what Alexander set out to deliver with it. I will go deeper on this topic on point 2.1.4. "Exploring Alexander's World". More than 25 years passed from APL and NoO. Not less than that it took to Alexander to get to the bottom of the new cosmology (vision of the world) without which his message of practice—he felt—could not be understood profoundly, as demonstrated by the APL case.

In NoO he proposes the foundations of a world that is entirely interconnected, where the separation of inner and outer reality is negated, hence the structure of the self and that of the "objects out there" is fundamentally the same, and is expressed in spatial terms. In NoO a real essential identity between life-beauty and architectural configuration in space is posed, which relies on a pervading structure that unifies the two domains, a structure that is inherently spatial and is, in fact, grounded on the order of space: Wholeness (W).

NoO is in four volumes, published between 2002 and 2005. The cosmological portrait on which the entire construction of the work relies is in particular introduced in two chapters of Book I "The Phenomenon of Life": Chapter 3 "Wholeness and the Theory of Centres", and Chapter 14 "Life Comes Directly from the Wholeness". Moreover, in the Introduction is highlighted the importance of raising awareness that life is a phenomenon that reveals itself in buildings, and that a language capable of understanding life as phenomenon will be presented in the four volumes of NoO.

# Life as a Phenomenon

In order to perceive life as a phenomenon, it is essential to provide new tools to understand life: it is necessary to interpret life as a Wholeness which is made of entities called "centres". Centres are the Wholeness' building blocks.

Alexander urges the reader to try to grasp and use these concepts because the idea of Wholeness concerns the beauty of buildings that work as wholes, unbroken and undivided. We see it as part of an extended and indivisible union. Using these definitions, we will be

able to see how life is generated (Chapter 4) and the structural characteristics that it has in space (Chapter 5). He declares that through the pages of the book it will be possible to create a consciousness capable of letting people understand life as a structure.

Chapter 3 states that the idea of Wholeness has not yet found a precise definition in professional or scientific architectural culture, even if it is one of the major issues of the contemporary science. Alexander asserts that no one has yet been able to show how to represent the Wholeness and that, furthermore, nobody has even been able to isolate it in a precise mathematical language: we have only come to know it intuitively. This is due to the fact that we do not yet have the intellectual tools that can show us how to know the Wholeness.

#### Wholeness

Alexander introduces a reality of the physical space named Wholeness (W), a space made of regions of space, each made of subregions that differ from one another according to the intensity of their centres. There are regions with a high degree of intensity and some with zero intensity, but intensity is not binary. All space is fundamentally constituted by centres to some degree.

The overall configuration of the settlement of centres in mutual not exclusive nor hierarchical relationship with each other, together with their intensity, composes a single structure which is the Wholeness of that specific region of space.

The Wholeness is defined at any moment in time by the state of its structure of centres in continuous change, across scales. As such, Wholeness is characterized as a fundamental part of the physics of matter and in particular as a substratum of all life in space. This implies that life is always directly an expression of Wholeness, as much as Wholeness is an expression of life.

#### Centres

In order to progress in our understanding of the order of space and the way this is connected with life, it is necessary to better define what centres are. This is the subject of Chapter 14, entitled "Life Comes Directly from the Wholeness".

Here we read: "The entities [centres] which come into existence in a configuration are not merely cognitive. They have a real mathematical existence, and are actually occurring features of the space itself. They may be established mathematically according to the relative hierarchies of differentiation in the space. They are mathematically and physically real". (Book I, p. 83).

The centres that constitute the Wholeness are characterized by energy and centralization that come from combinations of facts that all depend on the global configuration of space. This configuration derives from rules that identify the areas of space and which determine the image that causes the coherence of the segment of space that appears. It is important to underline how centres are not only cognitive, but have physical existence

and a different degree of strength.

The basic law of the nature of Wholeness resides in the concept of centre: centres are physical entities made possible by the order of space that they constitute, which are essentially characterised by unity in their form that is a reflex of a unity of use, where both unities are in fact the same thing. That is to say: centres are parts or local complexes of sub-centres and are not pre-existing; they are created by Wholeness by being themselves constituent components of it. The Wholeness is a centre made of parts, which are other centres, and these parts are created by Wholeness.

The parts and Wholeness work in a holistic way and define themselves as centres, i.e. organized areas of space with an internal coherence and a relationship with the context. We can also call them distinct points of space that show a centrality.

Each centre therefore has a physical place, a distinct physical system that occupies a certain volume in the space and has a special and pronounced internal coherence that covers both its form, use and emotional being. A particular configuration of timber sticks and plaques on which we sit is a centre that language recognises with the word "chair", a word that contains and is made of the act of sitting that is acknowledged in the form of the thing in space. However, the individual stick on which we rest our arm is the armrest of the chair and here again the language recognises the inner coherence of that component that constitute the larger unity of the chair, But the chair is also part of the table, and the table of the kitchen and so on, across scales. Centres are such practical configurations of space that are internally consistent in form and use, and they do exert an influence in space towards other unities since space is always active. A chair, in this sense, is a convergence of energy that is express in spatial consistency, a field of higher consistency in space, a vision that literally echoes latest achievements in quantum field theory.

# "Unfolding": The Living Construction Process.

Reading NoO also led me to the idea that during construction, a morphogenetic understanding of the environment and its becoming is necessary. The consequence of this understanding is very direct on the form of the building process itself, which should be reconceived as a constant change that involves the generation of the object and its continuous change over time after the design and construction. In order for this process to be "live", it has to be in the form of a continuous "unfolding" where at any step the process moves from the existing configuration of centres to a stronger and better one. This is how morphogenesis works in nature, and is how it should work in architecture as well. This puts under scrutiny the relationship between those who design and build and the creative process itself, which is linked to life.

Two years after the publication of the last volume of NoO, Alexander published an important paper that further examines the concept of a living construction process expressed in NoO: "Summary of Empirical Findings from the Nature of Order" (Summary) (Alexander, 2017). The paper begins with stating that the history of the last

four centuries, and particularly the last fifty years, profoundly changed our culture and civilization and transformed the vision of what a human being is. The gap between reality and value is unchanged, despite the exuberance of modern scientific thought of this age. The questions regarding the values of what should be done (how to solve problems, how to act to manage our problems, how to find peace and tranquillity in everyday's life, how to act to preserve the planet, how to spread kindness) have not changed, on the contrary these problems have intensified and become more painful every day. Science rarely deals with these things and scientists (Alexander writes: "we scientists") have not yet conceived a way of thinking capable of caring in an attentive and tender way to everyday's life on Earth. The discoveries of science have intentionally separated the process of the formation of mechanical models from physics, from the process of feeling and the appreciation of the whole poetic, which forms our very existence. Therefore, the human being is no longer able to recognize himself: a comfortable image of daily actions was lost, in relation to the larger whole of the Earth and the Universe. The goal of NoO is to try to build a coherent image of life on Earth, which contains a sense of these things and gives the human being something to live for and worth living for.

In order to achieve this, NoO is structured in a particular way: it deals with modest things, often neglected by science, things of the everyday world, that are around us; it observes the rooms and the streets, the houses and the trees. The four books aim at describing our world in objective terms while facing the emotional and objective experience at the same time. This ordinary vision, able to combine feelings and concrete reality, is what raises all human beings from frustrations and inability to recognize themselves in their ordinary lives.

Summary explicitly refers to an exploration of the world that envisages creatures capable of interacting with their surroundings, through their senses and perceptions. This interaction is what allows living beings to understand themselves and the nature of their life, until they get to the nature of their own soul. The essay establishes, as the core of the four books of NoO, a logical and empirical discussion that with the purpose of generating a new vision of living beings in relation to the physical world. This new vision is what leads to the Wholeness.

In Summary, all of the four books that make up NoO are described in detail and summarised by Alexander himself for the wider audience. From that synthesis, I pick up a few points of relevance for my work.

Book I "The phenomenon of life". In this book the foundations are laid out for understanding the built environment's patterns that support and nurture humans' life and well-being. For 40 years Alexander explored such patterns as they appeared in buildings. By the late 1970s 253 spatial patterns were identified, each associated with the stability of a human- environment system. They were published in APL, among others. During the late 70s and early 80s, Alexander began to notice that these 253 patterns were themselves special cases of much deeper configurational properties, and after 10 years of work fifteen of these properties had been identified. While discerning them, Alexander realized that all the "good" living structures showed these Fifteen Properties.

Moreover, they were present not only in buildings or works of art, but equally in natural physical systems. Empirically it is possible to prove that all the natural phenomena have a configuration (i.e. spatial structure) constituted by these Fifteen Properties. Alexander and his collaborators began to think that there was a recurrent structure that could be seen in a huge variety of real-world phenomena, which was profound enough to vary over time albeit remaining the same.

Book I gathers 30 years of observations and experiments in 13 topics. Below I will summarize these points, trying to highlight their meanings. A continuously variable phenomenon (or quality) was observed, called "Life" or "Wholeness", in artefacts; it may be present or absent to various degrees in all things. The quality of life seems to be correlated to the recursive appearance of fifteen geometric spatial properties that emerge through the configuration of the thing. This quality must be understood as a "living structure". The degree of life that lies in everything is objective, that is, its experience can be made by people with different inclinations and cultures, and measured using replicable empirical methods. Notwithstanding the variety of human beings, there seems to be a substantial agreement on the judgments concerning the quality in question and this suggests the existence of a common factor in the profound nature of the human self. The Fifteen Properties are the ways in which living centres can contribute to the coherence of other living centres. It is possible that properties arise through human cognition and operate because of the cognition itself, but this does not explain why they occur and keep occurring, and why they play such a significant role in natural phenomena.

Centres appear both in living structures (with greater density and degree of cooperation between centres) and in non-living ones. This characteristic comes directly from the presence and density of the Fifteen Properties. The appearance of the living structure in things leads to deep feelings and a feeling of connection among the people who live in the presence of these things.

Book 2: "The Process of Creating Life". This book questions how life is generated, where it comes from in things, and why the Fifteen Properties keep occurring. This last question in particular applies to phenomena that appear in nature, since in nature the living structure is created during a process that continues in time, while in architecture that does not always happen. Rarely or almost never traditional science asked "why?" or "how" do things become beautiful. These are questions that an architect or professional must answer. Looking at recent urban or architectural constructions, it seems that beauty does not occur automatically, while in nature it comes without effort. It must therefore be concluded that in nature particular types of processes that make things beautiful repeatedly occur. It can be assumed that these natural processes are limited and specialized. We must therefore ask ourselves what is universally present in natural processes of shape generation, or morphogenesis, but very often missing in contemporary processes of building. This question must be posed as a new and considerable scientific question. In architecture it is easier to identify the unique character of positive processes since in this discipline errors are obvious, shared. We are therefore in the position to

explore how we achieve harmony, in the cases when we do.

The contents of Book 2 of NoO covers the points from I4 to 24 of Summary. These points are sequential to the ones mentioned in Book I. Below is a short summary of them.

The spatial structure of living beings shows a predictable geometric coherence. That is, almost without exception, the result of a process of unfolding, which determines the structure of the whole through progressive differentiation.

These internal transformations, which continuously occur in time, elaborate and heal the space in which they operate and therefore generate an architecture that gives life, deeply suitable to the place and able to spiritually rejuvenate the people who live there. It is possible to demonstrate that these types of transformations generate the Fifteen Properties as a by-product of their action, which in turn extends and reinforces Wholeness.

Paying attention to the negative factor, we can affirm that the environments created by the commercial development in the last hundred years, are generated by a system of transformations almost diametrically opposed to the one that generates Wholeness, by continuously creating interruptions and gaps between centres, hence making Wholeness weaker rather than reinforcing it.

From this it's possible to conclude that healthy environments can be generated only by actions and processes based on transformations that extend existing centres, hence reinforcing Wholeness. The whole social organisation of the production of buildings and cities must be inspected in order to incorporate the living processes that are necessary for the health and beauty of the built environment. Such living methods and processes will lead to a widespread willingness to make profound changes to our society.

The overarching principle that underpins the generation of consistent quality in making is the holistic nature of their generative processes.

<u>Book 3: "A Vision of a Living World"</u>. The third book of NoO is dedicated to the presentation of evidence from the real world gathered through a long series of experiments developed in decades of research. These experiments were aimed at discovering to what extent the methods of construction, hitherto conceived, were feasible and what were their effects on people and on their individual and social well-being.

The living building process so far indicated can take several shapes, sizes and configurations. Only by working on hundreds of real-world examples, Alexander had the opportunity to evaluate and refine the recovering procedure. He writes that in his work he has sought and found practical ways to let the process be successful in specific cases, to then extract common recurrent rules, step by step, obtained during the evolution of the tested processes. Those cases are presented in Book 3 in about 700 pages of text and illustrations, where the theoretical idea of Wholeness generation by a process of unfolding could find a practical sense in architecture. Alexander emphasises that testing the theory through practical experiments and construction projects leads to a deeper understanding of the theory itself.

One important point in the theory that is emphasised, both from the human and the

conceptual point of view, is that of belonging. In other words, what is most important in the built world is the extent to which people feel at home in the place where they are. What matters most is that people literally experience the feeling of "I belong here". This belonging is far from material possession, it is instead a form of comfort that comes from the fact that everything that surrounds the living being arises from careful choice, adapts and creates comfort for the soul of a person or a family. This belonging derives directly from the unfolding of Wholeness.

The ultimate goal of building is to allow the self to emerge to consciousness and assume assumed a greater and more practical meaning. The practical importance and usefulness of this idea allowed us to see how this quality, in things and places, was the most important thing to consider. Also, when working and living follows and pursues Wholeness, or acts in accordance with it, we are led to a new understanding of the world.

Book 3 is covered in Summary by the points from 25 to 36, here summarised as follows.

The fundamental quality of an environment that develops through unfolding transformations is deeply related to the presence and work of human beings throughout the process. It is on this ground that it is possible to speak of "belonging". This belonging emerges only in relation to people's feelings, as continuously activated in the building process' practice. The relationship with inner feelings is not be trivial, but rather leads to a much deeper meaning than what is currently superficially considered as "art".

It is likely that the structures created by a process of unfolding have a wider range of physical and human characteristics than those visible in the homogeneous commercial projects of our time. The additional quality that comes from this is that the environment created through these generative processes of making is "sustainable" as a whole, in a deeper and more complete sense. This is substantially different from the technological approach to sustainability that has become mainstream in the past few decades.

In the cases presented in Book 3, a rich variety and a large number of centres, at all scales, ranging from very large to very small, is always generated. That seems to be approaching a new form of collective art, which reflects the true nature of people who are able to express and live their aspirations, in whatever cultural context they may be. All these examples encourage people who live and work in a place to increase their self-esteem and that of the others. Places generated out of a living building process, in their physical and concrete character promote and support new spiritual depths in the people who made them and for whom are produced.

These "good practices" have never previously been the subject of a scientific study. The in-depth analysis and description of environments created through an unfolding process allow to progress our understanding of the qualities and fundamental characteristics of the environment while offering an approach to "healing" it. In short, beautiful places are lived by the people who reside there, work there or visit them as something that establishes a deeper connection with their being. The theoretical framework presented in Book I and 2 is supported by the evidence of good practices presented in Book 3, and

the way such good cases work in comparison to conventional constructions and plans realized in mainstream contemporary city production. It is hoped that this empirical basis would not only provide a solid foundation for a new way of looking at the world we live in, but may also be a basis for reformed social and political transformations capable to achieving the same results on a large scale.

Book 4: "The Luminous Ground". In this last book of the NoO series the living building process is once more observed and described, but from the point of view of the cognitive state that only makes it possible in practice. This discussion takes up the concept of centres with a deeper look at their nature. In Book I, a "centre" was been defined as a centrality similar to an area that occurs in space. It is not a point, but rather a holistic phenomenon that appears within a larger whole. Each centre has a certain degree of life. The life that a centre has is a function of the configuration of the centres that surround it and the degree of life that these surrounding centres have. In a slightly different language, a centre of life is a centre that is unusually dense in other centres of life.

Conceptually, it is not easy to conceive and act in deep relation to this huge multiplicity of interconnected centres of life, each of which continuously works on other centres through the Fifteen Transformations (the translation of the Fifteen Properties as agents in the making process rather than characters of the final product). In order to understand this phenomenon, Alexander uses now the word "being" to describe the living centre, albeit this language may result excessive. However, this word is particularly helpful to avoid the aseptic language typical of mathematics and admit that, in the phenomenon of living structures, life in any form — mythical, poetic, artistic, biological — is a real thing, a thing that has a soul. Conceiving a living structure made up of a multitude of beings, allows us to give dignity to the fact that it is really life that is creating itself and has established its presence there: life is not conceived only as an aseptic shell.

In the first part of Book 4, the manifestation of life in things is described. That is the way in which an inanimate configuration comes to life and recalls life in us: this is what brings us face to face with the meaning of the phenomenon. The term "being" emphasizes that space itself is in some way a being and has the potential of appearing in the being and for the beings, not in the mechanistic way of assembling components. There is something in space and matter that can be awakened with the correct configurations. We need to aim for a much deeper nature of the matter and the space than we are used to.

In Book 4, the NoO argumentative sequence is completed. The empirical arguments presented in Books I, 2 and 3 are quite simple. They provide a concrete and substantial way to understand the quality of the artefacts, the works of nature, the construction works. What is emphasised at the end of this journey in Book 4, is that the intricate web of these empirical findings leads to a deeper and somehow mysterious image of the reality. This is to be understood so that the meaning of the previous empirical material can be fully grasped. Such image of reality is covered in the concluding points in Summary, and is reported below.

The nature of the living whole consists in the way each part of a specific intervention acts in relation to a broader whole, that is: binding everything together. What is the meaning

of the unfolding process in the broader scheme of things?

It was suggested that living structures occur when centres unfold completely and form complex binding schemes in which larger centres emerge from the whole, intensify whole's life and are themselves formed by smaller centres. Furthermore, it was maintained that all living structures create a connection with the human self, hence are, in a sense, "personal". These two conclusions combined suggest that what is called a living structure — whether it manifests itself in nature or culture — implies a close relationship with the human self, in a way never previously conceived. More specifically, each of the living centres that repeatedly appear in the living structure, across many overlapping scales, has a character connected to the human self.

In any environment where the quality of life is contemplated (or in any subject, in any system or work of art that has life in) there may be a very large number of centres of life that seem to be similar to themselves: this is a fact of nature, not just a psychological or cognitive interpretation of what is happening.

The experiments, observations and descriptions of these phenomena finally lead to state

a strong need to change the way the nature of matter is conceived. The process of creating a living environment is successful insofar as the decision-making process is based on the question: how much this part, or that part, or that whole is like my true, inner self? Here a profound and empirical core is found to the creation of ecologically healthy places, which support human beings spiritually and are energetically self-sufficient. According to the empirical standards, this appears to be a surprising conclusion. All these living forms of creation depend on perceptions and actions that are far away from the current scientific vision of the late 20th century. Since it is true that the given vision is a healthy and verifiable image of reality, as the experiments presented in NoO seem to prove, we must be prepared to contemplate and perhaps eventually accept a substantial renewal of our present cosmology. In any case, whether or not this renewal occurs it seems that there are good reasons to reconsider our perception of the nature of the living structure and our conception of the matter we are made of and that surrounds us. People who have taken into consideration these problems and thought about them carefully have found, sometimes with a sigh of acceptance and relief, that by drawing on

This image of the world is coherent with modern science and yet questions some of the most deeply rooted hypotheses of science itself. It is a new way of thinking about the matter, a way associated with the idea of "healing" the world. With regards to this view, our relationship with the world itself must be understood through one's self. In such a new way to perceive the world, science may perhaps be aligned with human feelings and awareness.

these principles it is finally possible to live in a world that makes sense and can transmit

values, without being based on any current standard of morality.

Finally, the objective of creating a world that is literally made by the "self", is defined. This term refers to the eternal self which resides in each of us, often manifested in the living structure, that seems to want the world to be made of this substance.

Alexander hypothesizes new ways of understanding physics and biology based on the

following terms: space and matter are connected and intertwined, literally, with the source of all consciousness, referring to the Wholeness and its properties so far misunderstood. The empirical results – those marked as "proven" in Summary – are expressed in the four books of NoO with a background that allows them to be testable. He finally claims that he spent most of his last thirty years working to make the chain of arguments clear and doing sufficient pilot experiments to establish the logic of all this chain elements. He maintains that his experiments brought results that proved to be convincing, reasonable and plausible, and yet should benefit from further experiments, for which he looks to a new generation of scientists to carry out further research work with the necessary rigour.

# 2.1.4. Exploring Alexander's World

A second strategy that I put in place to better understand Alexander's work involved a range of personal contacts with scholars and practitioners who had long been part of Alexander's inner circle of friends and collaborators. Luckily, I had the opportunity to meet—both in person and remotely, exchange emails and have skype meetings with many of them. I also had the privilege of being received at Alexander's home and exchange ideas and documents directly with him and his wife and co- author, Maggie Moore Alexander. The impact that this long activity of personal exchange has had on my work has been enormous. It gave me the chance to deepen, consolidate and compare my own understandings with the first-hand human experiences which generated those ideas in the first place, and developed them in decades of collective work. Moreover, it allowed me access to non-published materials which otherwise would have been impossible to reach, some of which have played a crucial part in my own work, and stimulated the generous production of new materials as part of that intellectual intercourse.

# Maggie Moore Alexander

Maggie Moore Alexander, in particular, followed my research work constantly and carefully, helping me out a lot on various occasions.

# The Land Exploration

Maggie supported me since the very beginning of my research, that is when I was trying to translate the search for the centres in the land (the written work performed and described by Alexander) in a practical method. I sent her my writings concerning what I came to call "Land Exploration", and I have repeatedly addressed her to have confirmations or corrections on this "new" part of the construction process as it was unfolding along my route.

The "Quality Without a Name" in the Pattern Language

During my research, and through the subsequent workshops, readings and discussions I took part in, I paid particular attention to comparing the description the PL as presented in APL (1977) with the one in Battle (2012). Through this long and very important part of my exploration, introduced above with some detail, I gradually became aware of the fact that the very notion of the PL had evolved considerably in Alexander's theory and practice.

Maggie was essential in leading me to identify the vision of the PL as a process rather than a "catalogue" of solutions, and was also very supportive, along with Chris himself, in deepening my understanding of the "Quality without a name" in the PL itself. This investigation was fundamental in my contribution to the PL symposium at UCL in London and for the design of my own application of the PL in the Rodari project, which I will fully present in Chapter 4.

#### System A and System B: Basic Rules for Dealing with Complexity

When Yodan Rofè, Sergio Porta and I wrote the paper "The Production of Cities: Alexander and the Problem of 'System A' at Large Scale", Maggie wrote that Alexander, albeit doing everything to deepen the question of System A and System B, reached a point where he felt to be close to a dead end when he realized that System B could hardly be overcome. He felt that moving the dialogue to something else would be particularly useful because it would bring a new creative vitality to the subject. She argued that there was a great propensity for change in the urban planning by professionals: planners know that cities are in trouble and seek solutions in order to resolve the problem.

Maggie also wrote that, to plan according to System A, it is useful to identify the basic "rules" (or conditions or characteristics) that interact to produce a complex behaviour: by organizing and considering these few simple rules, you can get to set other rules in order to improve the resolution of creative problems and to overcome the obstacles. In System A, therefore, it is necessary to identify such basic rules, which generate beauty and life over time, through co-action, following the initial design stage. Planning groups may be asked questions to help them to know how to "plan less and better" as well as support informal participation and cooperation in their specific contexts. We must therefore aim at creating the "basic framework" that at the same time protects the common good and leave to individuals and groups room to build and create their own initiatives, and bring life to the evolution of the city. System A can only thrive when opportunities are always available for modifying the construction process along its way, so that informal participation and cooperation can actually have an impact on the ground.

# Alexander's inner circle and CES

I was involved in the work carried out by the Center for Environmental Structures (CES, https://ced.berkeley.edu/). Maggie put me in touch with CES members she thought

could help me, and kindly asked to make themselves available to collaborate with me. This was fundamental to the development of my research.

Among the many I got in touch with along the way, those I worked with the most were: Yodan Rofe, Michael Mehaffy, Howard Davis, Hajo Neis and Susan Ingham.

#### Yodan Rofé

I first met Yodan Rofè<sup>4</sup> at the Symposium on the "Urban Pattern Language" that was held at the Bartlett School of Planning on Tuesday 29th of April 2014. Yodan presented methods of urban analysis, in particular the "Feeling Maps" (his own PhD thesis was entitled "The Meaning and Usefulness of the 'Feeling Map' as a Tool in Planning and Urban Design"). I elaborated on his ideas on how to create feeling maps, which turned out to be very helpful in the 2012/2013 VIP program (see Chapter 3) as well as the Rodari project (as explained in Chapter 4). In particular Yodan shared with me his paper "Mapping Feeling: an Approach to the Study of Emotional Response to the Built Environment and Landscape". This essay, co-authored by Amelia Rosenberg Weinreb, allowed me to understand how my starting point to get to the feeling maps was different from theirs: they focused on the observation of people's daily lives, while I worked on interiority, on the Self. However, I found that both works were aimed at understanding where feelings about places were shared and why.

I had the great opportunity to meet Yodan Rofè several times and talk about his experience with Alexander and the studies that originated from that. Furthermore, together with Sergio Porta, we had the idea to investigate how System A could be implemented at large scale, the of the urban system. From these meetings and reflections two papers were published, entitled: "The Production of Cities: Alexander and the Problem of 'System A' at Large Scale" and "The City and the Grid: Building Beauty at Large Scale." These two papers are effectively part of the same investigation, which stemmed from my collaboration with Yodan and I shortly summarise in the following section.

#### System A at Large Scale

The passage from the small to the large scale implies a new conception of the "project" that must be re-conceptualised in an evolutionary framework. System A and System B appeared as a binary system, but in real life it happens that System B is merged, erroneously, in System A and therefore they are mixed. In today's society System B is dominant over System A and the latter has almost disappeared. It is therefore necessary to start thinking about System A more extensively and with the possibility of being rooted in the society itself, and this can only be done by conceiving System A at large scale.

<sup>4</sup>Yodan Rofè is an architect and urban planner with over 20 years professional teaching and research experience. He was founder and Board Member of the Movement for Israeli Urbanism (MIU) and served for five years as Head of Urban Design at Israel's Ministry of Construction and Housing. His research interests include the building processes and structure of informal settlements, urban form and movement, accessibility and equity, cognition and feeling in the built environment and urban public space and street design. Together with Allan Jacobs and Elizabeth Macdonald, he authored The Boulevard Book: history, evolution, design of multi-way boulevards published by MIT Press. Recently edited together with Kyriakos Pontikis the book: In Pursuit of a Living Architecture: Continuing Alexander's Quest for a Humane and Sustainable Building Culture published by Common Ground Publishers.

To do this we decided to analyse the "beautiful" cities that had formed in history and how that happened. It was important not to idealise the spontaneous process, but to pay attention to "something" that is capable of transforming over time a small settlement in a great and beautiful city, a path that is completely ordinary in the evolution of our historical settlements. We realized that this "something" had to be relatively stable over time and take place at a structural level, to be able to keep up the extreme diversity of the visible expressions in a framework of overall coherence. Another important point was to understand how human labour is not perceived only in utilitarian terms, since a purely mechanistic process cannot lead to a good result.

Yodan proposed to start from the results, with the analysis of consolidated historical cities, in order to identify the processes that originated them. They are partly the result of spontaneous design and partly of regulations and statutory constraints; this mixture allows the creation of a spontaneous consciousness with respect to the place we live in, and is stimulus to develop the ability to build on experience. Such spontaneous consciousness is no longer present in the contemporary world, famously a lesson coming from the fathers of Italian urban morphology (Caniggia and Maffei, 2001, c.1979). Yodan highlighted how a functioning city has parallels with biological systems in the way both change in time.

Afterwards, we dealt with the subject of the Master Plan. We questioned what exactly is meant by this term and what it could mean in a System A process of urban generation. In historical cities, a degree of masterplanning has always been part of the evolution of the city, which cannot be unified in a large-scale unitary blue-print design, but nevertheless leaves room for a variety of transformations with different degrees of top-down control. They are therefore configured as systems that organize themselves autonomously in an organic process, which the Masterplan is part of. However, the Masterplan itself can actually be conceived in a variety of ways. In particular, masterplans can be laid out so to hold a specifically evolutionary nature in such a way as to favour the vital processes and among these the more properly informal ones. Sergio claimed that the beauty at large scale arises only over a long period of time, which allows the creation of a structure within which spontaneous processes can exist. The evolutionary process need respect of the timeframe that allows space and shape to life to emerge in the Wholeness of the land. In this regard, we agreed that there must in any case be a code and a controlled regulation which ensure a "minimum value of the necessary".

# Michael Mehaffy

Michael Mehaffy<sup>5</sup>, Alexander's student at the University of Berkeley in the early 1980s, worked with him at Martinez House, near Berkeley. He recognizes Alexander's great educational influence on his life and work.

<sup>5</sup>Michael W. Mehaffy, Ph.D., is a designer, builder, author, researcher, educator, and consultant in building and development, with an international practice based in Portland, Oregon. He has held teaching and/or research appointments at six universities in five countries, and he is on the editorial boards of two international journals. He is also on the boards of four NGOs including Portland-based Sustasis Foundation, where he is Executive Director, and the London-based International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture and Urbanism (INTBAU). Michael studied and worked closely with Alexander, and has published extensively on his work.

#### Land Exploration and the Fifteen Properties

Michael and I talked in particular of the Land Exploration (LE). The LE and the PL are complementary and integral. He considers the LE necessary as the conventional approaches are no longer able to make the construction process adaptive. It was crucial to understand Michael's ideas about the role of architects in the PL as facilitators and translators of the schemes into appropriate forms, and the Fifteen Properties as guiding principles for subsequent action on the ground. According to Michael, the Fifteen Properties are functional to translate the PL into a specific physical form. While working at the Rodari school, Michael's ideas that the quality of the relations between design staff and builders/inhabitants shows up in the final building, enriching it and making it more suitable for life, recurred in and informed my work.

In 2015 Michael edited a book entitled "A City is Not a Tree: 50th Anniversary Edition", which deals with Alexander's homonymous essay published in 1965. It includes new comments by Mehaffy and others in urban planning, architecture and beyond. Among these, I also published with Yodan and Sergio the paper "The City and the Grid: Building Beauty at Large Scale" discussed before.

The latest book by Michel Mehaffy "Cities Alive: Jane Jacobs, Alexander, and the Roots of the New Urban Renaissance" (2017). The book is an account which explores the figures of Jane Jacobs and Alexander and how their most significant insights shaped several generations of scholars, professionals and activists.

# Howard Davis

Howard Davis<sup>6</sup> is co-author of Alexander's "The Production of Houses", published in 1985. The book tells the story of a cluster of buildings built in 1976 by Alexander the CES in Mexicali, Northern Mexico. Each house is different from the others and the book shows how each family was helpful in building and conceiving their home according to the needs of the family and through the PL. The Mexican project, however, is only the starting point for a complete theory of house production. It describes seven principles that are applied to any production system anywhere in the world, for housing at any cost, in any climate, culture or population density<sup>7</sup>.

# Experiencing Alexander's Pattern Language

The conversation with Howard Davis focused mainly on the PL. I asked him what were the questions usually asked during interviews and he replied that they were conversations aimed to understand what was the place that the end-users most wanted to protect and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup>Howard Davis is an American writer and professor of architecture at the University of Oregon in Eugene. A native of New York City, he studied physics at Cooper Union and at Northwestern University and received a master's degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, where he worked with Alexander. He has worked on projects in the Pacific Northwest, India, England, Mexico and Israel.

7The Production of Houses by Alexander with Howard Davis, Julio Martinez and Don Corner Oxford University Press, 1985

which one they wanted to change. Moreover, the questions sought to investigate what were the most important things considered in their life, which of these were purely individual and which could be shared collectively.

It's necessary that the people involved understand what you are doing during the PL and that the PL is in itself a never-ending process. Participants also need to know that the interviews are just a starting point that is itself part of the knowledge of the land. A good design process must provide for the involvement of people: this is what allows to work within a process that is based on the reflection of life in designing and building.

Talking about the interpretation of APL over the years, Howard told me an anecdote about the reaction that Alexander had after noting how his work was used (as a mere manual of application of constructive models). Alexander spent years writing thousands of notes trying to unravel and explain what he meant by PL; this misinterpretation of his words was something that really harassed him. Then one day, when it seemed to him there was no possibility of making clear the profound meaning of the PL, he threw all his notes into the fireplace. Luckily, albeit the notes got burned, his ideas remained perfectly clear in his mind, which were ultimately transferred in NoO.

# Hajo Neis

Hajo Neis<sup>8</sup> is co-author of Battle and collaborated, as supervisor, to the construction of the Eishin Campus in Japan, as part of CES. He also took part in the drafting of NoO.

#### PURPLSOC - Pursuit of Pattern Languages for Societal Change

Hajo's contribution to my conception and understanding of the PL was key. He is part of the group that organizes and manages the Pursuit of Pattern Languages for Societal Change series of conferences (PURPLSOC https://www.purplsoc.org/). Thanks to his generous help I have been able to present two publications, written with Yodan Rofè and Sergio Porta, at the conferences held in Austria in July 2016 and San Francisco in October of the same year.

I discussed with him the critical relationship between planning rules and informal participation, hence the role of urban planners in bottom up generative and participatory processes of interaction and cooperation; we investigated conventional requirements, procedures and practices still mainstream in urban planning in large part of the world, and which new practices should be proposed and tested. We discussed about which experiments were feasible. Furthermore, we talked about how to identify and support informal participation and cooperation, what obstacles would stand in the way of establishing constructive conditions for that, the manner in which professionals

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup>Hajo Nais PhD (Architecture) University of California, Berkeley, 1989; MCP (City Planning) University of California, Berkeley, 1980; MArch University of California, Berkeley, 1979 Dipl. Ing. (Architecture and Urban Design) Technical University of Darmstadt, Germany, 1976; Hajo Neis, Associate Professor examines the concepts of quality and value in architecture and urban structure. The director of the University's architectural studies program in Portland, he teaches design studios, courses, and seminars in urban architecture and theory with an emphasis on the art of building.

continue to explore the idea of planning, and how to incentivize and allow genuine postdesign collaboration.

# Living Systems and Living Architecture

Also, the discussion covered the relationship between living systems and living architecture, from which three important ideas emerged:

- The "Old View:" which is based on a dichotomy between life and non-life.
- The "Vision of the Living Systems" and the consequences of non-living the elements that are part of the living systems themselves.
- The "Living Architecture View" or rather, the idea that everything has a certain quantity of life inherent to itself.

All three ideas have at their core the notion that life is generated and manifested in the everyday: architecture here is considered the vehicle and instrument of expression of this quality. We concluded that a living system can only be served by a living architecture, which is necessary to it. In order to get to a combination of living systems and living architecture, the theories to keep into account are the following:

- · Conservation of organic life;
- · Understanding of the living system;
- Conception of a living architecture.

# Susan Ingham

Susan Ingham<sup>9</sup> was particularly helpful to clarify my understanding of the phase of a living building process that we came to name "Conception and Construction", hence reuniting in one single indivisible experience the act of design and that of construction, which conversely are strictly separated in the industrial processes of making. This stage is configured as the synthesis of Land Exploration and Pattern Language in a creative activity of making that is anchored to the project site.

#### The Project Language

Susan introduced me to the notion of Project Language. This a particular way to put together the LE and PL to inform the start of the actual making phase in a living building process. This phase was descripted by Alexander in particular in Battle; however, Susan's application of this particular element of the process, delivered in partnership with

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Susan Ingham is a licensed architect practicing in Seattle, Washington. Her firm, KASA Architecture, was founded in 2004 and specializes in residential design. The main focus of her work is to try to create environments with beauty where her clients can feel a deep sense of belonging. Susan obtained both her bachelor's and master's degrees in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley, where she studied and worked intensively with Alexander and his colleagues. Susan has given lectures at national and international conferences, and her work has been published in several books and periodicals.

Hajo Neis, offers a peculiar take to the subject that is of great relevance especially in a professional framework.

LE and PL are two different processes of interactive analysis respectively looking at the centres in the actual project site (the land) and those in our dreams (the ideal building that is to be built). Once the reality of these two structures are identified, it is on the synthesis of both that the design and construction of the new building operates, since the structure of the new building is to expand and reinforce the existing structure in the land. This synthesis, which initially in the VIP Construction & Therapy was articulated in interactive sessions of discussion and feedback with the community involved in the process, in Susan and Hajo's Project Language achieved a more sophisticated and yet simple form, closer to what conventionally would be termed a "preliminary design".

#### 2.2. INTERDISCIPLINARY EXPLORATIONS

While reading and examining in depth the works of Alexander together with his inner circle and closest collaborators, I also dedicated myself to the exploration of different disciplines, apparently distant from architecture and construction, which were recalled in different ways by the knowledge I was gradually achieving along the way. These explorations led me first to look at psychology and psychiatry in relation to Self and collective unconsciousness. Then I dealt with anthropology, since it turned out to be essential to articulate the process of inhabitation that relates people and place, and its collective rituals and behavioural patterns. Afterwards, I turned to art-therapy and psychomotricity in order to understand how the body-mind could be put centre stage in the construction process. Below, I will describe the main written works that I have perused in this interdisciplinary journey, always keeping a focus on concepts and method of practical use in my search for a living building model process.

# 2.2.1. Psychology and psychiatry:

# From Analytic Psychology to Gestalt and Humanistic Psychology

The Analytical Psychology of Carl Gustav Jung

Analytical psychology in Carl Gustav Jung has the clinical purpose of bringing the subject back to reality, freeing him from pathogenic disorders. In 1928, Jung claimed that the unconscious is composed of images, the archetypes, which determine the psychism, whose symbolic representation is expressed in dreams, art and religion.

Personality is considered as made up of a number of separate but interacting systems. They are:

- The ego, namely the conscious mind.
- The personal unconscious, which contains forgotten or repressed information, too weak to leave a conscious trace in the person and the complexes.

• The collective (or transpersonal) unconscious, the basis of the psyche, is conceived as an immutable structure proper to the whole of humanity. It is the agglomeration of latent memories from the past as well as the psychic residue of the evolutionary development of man, layered after the repeated experiences of countless generations.

Personal experience is therefore filtered by a collective unconscious which in turn directly influences the behaviour of the individual from the beginning of his life. In the collective unconscious there are archetypes, or universal forms of thought holding affective content. These forms of thought generate images or visions that correspond, in the normal state of vigilance, to some aspects of conscious life. Among the archetypes there are: the animus, image of the masculine; the anima, image of the feminine; the Self, the true centre of personality; the "persona" (or mask), which is the public face or role that a person presents to others in order to adapt and satisfy the needs of the society in which he lives (it constitutes the role that the individual performs). The public face represents the person in all those aspects that are shown to the world or that the public opinion attributes to the individual, in opposition to the private face that exists behind the social facade. The shadow, which consists of animal instincts inherited from man during his evolution, or the animal side of human nature.

A crucial element for my research work, also with regard to the PL and the LE, is Jung's conception of the dream. He soon realized that the best way to interpret dreams was to consider them just as a true reality: the reality from which we must start. To this regard he argues: "The dream is a little hidden door in the innermost and most secret recesses of the soul, opening into that cosmic night which was psyche long before there was any ego consciousness, and which will remain psyche no matter how far our ego-consciousness extends. [...] All consciousness separates; but in dreams we put on the likeness of that more universal, truer, more eternal man dwelling in the darkness of primordial night. There he is still the whole, and the whole is in him, indistinguishable from nature and bare of all ego-hood. It is from these all-uniting depths that the dream arises, be it never so childish, grotesque, and immoral" ("The Meaning of Psychology for Modern Man", 1933. In CW 10: Civilization in Transition, pg. 304).

On the dreams Jung grounded the design and actual construction of his own house, a building that lasted a lifetime. Jung argues: "That was the beginning of the 'Tower', the house which I built for myself at Bollingen. [...] At first I did not plan a proper house, but merely a kind of primitive one-storey dwelling. It was to be a round structure with a hearth in the centre and bunks along the walls. I more or less had in mind an African hut where the fire, ringed by a few stones, burns in the middle, and the whole life of the family revolves around this centre. Primitive huts concretize an idea of wholeness, a familial wholeness in which all sorts of small domestic animals likewise participate. [...] So, in 1923 the first round house was built, and when it was finished I saw that it had become a suitable dwelling tower. [...] And so, four years later, in 1927, the central structure was added, with a tower-like annex. [...] In 1935 the desire arose in me for a piece of fenced-in land, I needed a larger space that would stand open to the sky and to nature. And so – once again after an interval of four years – I added a courtyard

and a loggia by the lake, which formed a fourth element that was separated from the unitary threeness of the house. Thus, a quaternity had arisen, four different parts of the building, and, moreover, in the course of twelve years" (Carl Jung, Memories, Dreams and Reflections, pp. 223–225).

Further on in this extraordinary piece, the consonance of which with Alexander's language cannot be underestimated, Jung writes that in Bollingen he was in his true nature, where he could deeply express himself. The tower represented a place of maturation, namely the womb in which it is possible to become what one has been, is and will be. He states that in that place he felt as if he were expanding into the landscape and that there was nothing around him that was not grown and developed over the decades, nothing to which he did not feel bound. Therefore, everything had its own history, and that of Jung himself; there was space for the infinite subterranean realm of the psyche.

During the Eranos meetings, among other things, Jung presented his idea of "archetype", which etymologically means "first imprint". He observed that in myths, legends and fairy tales of every culture, regardless of their place of origin, dominant themes and images frequently recur. Jung found these same images with surprising precision in his patients' dreams, hallucinations and fantasies. He deduced that they represented the building blocks of our original psyche. According to Jung, our body, as well as our mind, has its own history, and in both the unconscious and the body elements of the past are deposited. By "exploring" these sediments we sometimes succeed in reconnecting the consciousness to its deep origins, its distant past, its roots.

#### The Evolutionary School

The Jungian analytical psychology indicates the archetypal identification process as the purpose of each person's existence. It follows, in its investigation analysis, a finalistic method whose intent is the search for the sense of the unconscious processes and psychic suffering. The symbol theory assumes a fundamental importance, since Jung considers it the engine of the psychic development and an instrument for the transformation of the psychic energy. The symbol originates from the encounter between the conscious and the unconscious and its contents. The analytic path is outlined by the dialectic between the conscious and the unconscious.

Since Jung, the evolutionary approach has evolved and, to date, there are three main "schools" which have developed from the original analytical psychology. The Classical school, which is mainly identified in the activity of the C.G. Jung Institute of Zurich, continues to articulate and carry forward the original tradition of analytical psychology, emphasizing in particular the aspects related to the individuation process. The Evolutionary school, mainly developed in England thanks to Michael Fordham, proposes a deeper relationship between the relational psychoanalytic models and those proper of analytic psychology.

The Archetypal school, which is known in the psychological and philosophical world above all through the critical writings of James Hillman, its founder and main exponent,

where great attention is paid to the archetypal symbolic meanings.

# The Characteristics of the Therapeutic Process and the Role of the Therapist

According to Jung, the psychotherapy work is preparatory to a more complete psychoanalysis. He elaborated the theory of the psychic energy, according to which, libido is not only a pure sexual appetite, but also a real general psychic energy that appears in human beings in the form of tendencies and desires. It represents for him the vital impulse that drives every mankind towards his own realization and not only towards the satisfaction of his sexual drives (as Freud stated). The sexual drive is psychic energy, namely a spontaneous tendency that moves human beings towards their personal development, their "individuation".

Jung brought a great innovation in psychiatric practice by reaching the awareness that the therapist's function consists not only in the rigid application of a "mechanical method", but in giving attention and importance to the patient's "life story" and to the stories he tells. As a consequence, analytic psychotherapy aims to reduce and transform the mental and existential discomfort of a symptom. It does not focus on the symptom as such, but aspires to the unconscious dynamics underlying the symptom, or rather to all those movements within the psychic life that do not come to consciousness, but which strongly influence the individual's life.

Analytic psychotherapy works above all on relationships and therefore aims to identify what is dysfunctional in the areas of relation and communication, since this contributes to nourishing the symptom and the psychic discomfort. This action takes place through a process of progressive awareness of the individual with respect to its parts, usually denied, buried and removed on a subconscious level. Analytic psychology considers the individual not as one, but as composed of several parts and it contemplates the disharmony between these parts as generating conflicts. The fact that the individual is aware of this, leads him to elaborate and implement the conflict itself. Usually, internal disharmonies are projected into emotionally significant "external" relationships, such as love or work relationships, where affectivity (or even negative affectivity) is forgotten and removed.

#### The Gestalt

The Gestalt or 'whole form' approach is a school of thought founded in Berlin at the beginning of the 20th century in opposition to Structuralism<sup>10</sup>, widespread at the time. The central principle is: "The whole is other than the sum of the parts" (Zerbetto, 1998). This means that the whole perceived is characterized not only by the sum of the individual sensory stimuli (the parts), but by a greater meaning that allows us to understand the whole form.

According to Gestalt psychology, perceptual experience is not preceded by a sensation but is a process governed by innate mental laws. These laws determine the way objects are

perceived breaking down what human beings perceive in schemes capable of organizing and detecting the whole form. The perceived is part of a system of more complex meanings present in the central nervous system. Thus, perception occurs in two phases: form analysis and cognitive processing. The Gestalt says that we can only see what is processed after we perceive and give meaning to it.

#### Kurt Lewin

Kurt Lewin used information from the field of physics to explain the relationship between the individual and the total field, or environment. He developed in psychology the "Field Theory", according to which every object cannot be understood if not in relation to the context in which it is included. He distinguished the field from the perceptive field: the first is the reality that surrounds us and in which the individual acts in order to achieve his objectives, while the second is a frame from which new figures perceived as relevant to be able to pursue our objectives or goals emerge. Therefore, the same object can assume different meanings depending on the need expressed by the individual at that precise moment. According to Lewin, needs determine and give meaning to what the human being perceives in a field.

# Humanistic Psychology

# Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow

Through his clinical and therapeutic experiences, Carl Rogers identified a new series of motivations, not completely attributable to the psychoanalytic paradigm of the sexual conflict, that triggered him to explore, together with Abraham Maslow, a richer series of motivations of primary and physiological needs in human conduct. Maslow's humanistic psychology, coupled with Rogers' psychotherapy, identifies an alternative attitude to both the psychoanalytical and behavioural therapies of the period.

Rogers' point of reference is the School of Anthropology that assumed an attitude of protest towards the industrial society and the scientific thought. Rogers mediated this behaviour by introducing a theory based on the belief in the positivity of human development.

According to Rogers, the personality has innate tendencies to the integration, to the implementation of oneself, to the relationship with others. The unity of personality is not structural but dynamic and can only be understood in its becoming and changing. Often, however, the change is hindered by the fear of the new, in fact, since childhood, the human being is urged to accept and assimilate the values of his environment in order not to lose the love of his people of reference. These norms constitute a barrier that compel him to refuse everything that appears incompatible with the norms themselves. During therapy this defensive structure must be overcome, allowing the patient to become able to bring to consciousness an ever-increasing number of meaningful experiences and to

include them in a broader concept of Self. A Self open to new experiences and to all the changes brought by the flow of life itself.

In order to solicit openness towards changes, Rogers rejects the whole "codified technical arsenal" and the very concept of "method" in psychotherapy. He firmly thinks that the treatment can only take place in a meeting between two people: the therapist and the patient.

The historical value of Rogers' model consists in denouncing every technicality and in shifting the attention from the symptom to the interpersonal and human relationship. The individual is once again the one who is able to give meaning, to think and implement an existential project. The human being, if necessary, must be helped to recreate this sense, searching for it within himself. The therapist's task is to encourage the free expression of the patient's sensitivity by supporting him, without influencing him, in the autonomous process of understanding his own psychic reality. In order to do this, not another method is suggested, but an interior attitude towards life, others and, above all, towards oneself.

Maslow introduces a vision of the individual based on researches conducted on healthy subjects. He believes that we all have an essential inner nature, seen as a set of innate inclinations and tendencies, which are however weak and easily swayed by cultural pressure and habit. In this way some aspects of our inner nature are removed or forgotten, while remaining latent at the level of the unconscious. Only if this essential nucleus is denied, the person manifests a psychological illness.

He firmly thinks that the intimate nature of the human being is not originally evil, but good or neutral (pre-moral) and from this we gather that it is necessary to support the intimate nucleus of individuals, rather than repress it: there's no psychological health without the acceptance and manifestation of it.

Marlow evokes the theory of the pyramid of needs focusing on what is beyond and emerges, once the primary (or "physiological") needs are satisfied, namely the "Selfactualization", motivated by a non-charitable motivation, but of growth. That is what leads the individual toward health and fulfilment of the Selfand his highest needs. For the masses, the focal point is the gratification of basic needs, rather than their frustration: "People who have been satisfied in their basic needs throughout their lives, particularly

in their earlier years, seem to develop exceptional power to withstand present or future thwarting of these needs simply because they have strong, healthy character structure as a result of basic satisfaction" (p. 388, A Theory of Human Motivation).

In his hierarchy of needs theory, the author focuses on "self-actualizing" people and tries to define their peculiarities with respect to those driven by "physiological needs". Self- actualizing people have a different, less ego-centred, more objective and more creative way to relate to the world, to know, to love; they rely on intuitive and aesthetic intuitions, certain that language and concepts are unsuitable to express the totality of the reality. They face more frequently the so-called "peak experiences", those fundamental moments of love, mystical, naturalistic, aesthetic, intellectual experience that make life worth living. They live suffering but through maturity and they are able to move from

the neurotic pseudo-problems to real problems inherent in the human condition. Moreover, a paradoxical characteristic is highlighted: self-actualization, which is a form of autonomy, allows one to transcend the self, to be less selfish.

# 2.1.6. Art therapy: from the mind-body to the creation

#### Winnicott

Donald Winnicott writes about the relationship between playing and reality, namely play and the creative act, relating both to the fundamental experiences peculiar of the first period of life of the child. He defined the concept of "transitional objects", to indicate particular objects, which represent "the infant's transition from a state of being merged with the mother to a state of being in relation to the mother as something outside and separate". The transitional object enters into a "potential space". This intermediate area between the subjective dimension and the objective one represents that same illusion that in adult life is an intrinsic part of art and religion. It is where the creative living originates, which manifests itself, first in the game, and then in the cultural life.

According to Winnicott, playing is always a creative experience. The ability to play creatively allows the subject to fully express the potential of his personality, "thanks to a suspension of the judgment of truth on the world, to a truce from the tiring and painful process of distinction between oneself, one's own desires, and reality, his frustrations" (Winnicott, 1971).

Winnicott believes that creativity does not consist in the production of artistic works, but it is the way in which the individual relates himself to the external reality: "the creativity that concerns me here is a universal. It belongs to being alive" and "is therefore something that can be looked at as a thing in itself, something that of course is necessary if an artist is to produce a work of art, but also as something that is present when anyone [...] looks in a healthy way at anything or does anything deliberately".

The entire cultural life of the human being also originates in the potential space, as Winnicott states: "Cultural experience begins with creative living first manifested as play".

The potential space, the third area of human living, which is neither within the individual nor outside, in the worlds of shared reality, is the "leitmotif" that connects play and cultural experience and determines the quality of both. Creativity is conceived as a state of existential vitality, common to every human being, children, adolescents and adults alike, and that is why, according to Winnicott, the play, seen as a playful and creative attitude towards the world, has no age: "It will be observed that I am looking at the highly sophisticated adult's enjoyment of living or of beauty or of abstract human contrivance, and at the same time at the creative gesture of a baby who reaches out for the mother's mouth and feels her teeth, and at the same looks into her eyes, seeing her creatively. For me, playing leads on naturally to cultural experience, forming its foundations.

# Daria Halprin

In her book "The expressive body in life, art and therapy", published in 2002, Daria Halprin talks about the ability to consciously live emotions and personal and social relationships as a human instrument to express movement, that is the action of creating. In this book Architecture is specifically called to collaborate with human sciences; in fact, if space has to be recognized and recreated or filled by the physicality of what the individual creates with movement, all those involved in the creative/making process must rely on disciplines of making to be able to implement it.

# 2.1.7. Anthropology: The field work and the creative process

#### Bronislaw Malinowski and Franz Boas

The fieldwork develops in anthropological schools thanks to the contribution of F. Boas and B. Malinowski, who opposed "desk-sized anthropology". In particular, Malinowski introduces a new method coining the term of "participatory observation", that is anthropology understood as direct participation (lived, empathic) and the objectification of experience through data. With this regard, Malinowski writes that to judge something you have to be in place, pointing out the "pragmatic function" of the language.

He affirms that there is a whole range of phenomena of great importance that cannot be recorded by consulting or perusing documents but must be observed in its full reality. He defines these phenomena "the imponderables of everyday life". These are things such as the daily working routine of a man, the steps of the body care, the way of getting food and preparing it, the spirit that social life has while talking gathered around the village's fire, the existence of strong friendships or hostility, or fleeting sympathy and antipathies among people, the elusive but unequivocal way in which personal vanities and ambitions are reflected in the behaviour of the individual and the emotional relationships of those around him. According to the anthropologist, all these facts can and must be theorized and recorded scientifically. However, this must be done not by a superficial annotation of the details, but rather by focusing on the mental attitude behind them.

Boas conceived the inductive method, his motto was "all on the ground". His research was referred to the natural science method and was based mainly on three key concepts: direct observation of concrete (observable) facts, data collection and analysis, and the formulation of theories and laws.

The fieldwork in today's anthropology no longer considers the field as a circumscribed place in which a community (an ethnic group), a language or a culture coexist, and in which there are no pre-existing specialized knowledge and self-interpretations (a native anthropology).

# 2.1.8. Pedagogy: teaching through experience

#### Enzo Zecchi

I have personally engaged Enzo Zecchi in conversations in the course of my research work. Zecchi is an Italian theoretical physicist, creator of the "Lepida Scuola" method. He combines the rigor of scientific method with the richness of the human sciences for a pedagogy consistent with the 21st Century challenges.

In "Verso una didattica per competenze" Zecchi places the Project Based Learning at the centre of didactics, which is based on the development of learning through the implementation of projects.

In his 2010 paper "Progettare la scuola. Il momento della ideazione" ("Designing the School. The Conception Moment") Enzo writes about the realization of projects, treated as teaching and learning tools. There are four phases in which the life of a project can conceptually be articulated, namely conception, planning/definition, implementation and conclusion. According to Zecchi, what really matters is not the final product, but the process itself.

# Juhani Pallasmaa

In "The Thinking Hand" (2010) Pallasmaa maintains that the duty of education is to cultivate and support the human capacities of imagination and empathy, despite the prevalent values of contemporary culture tend to discourage imagination, suppress the senses and petrify the boundary between the world and the Self. It follows that education in every creative field must begin to question the Wholeness of the experienced world and confront the re-sensitization of the boundary of the Self. The main goal of artistic education cannot lie directly in the principles of artistic doing, but also in student's emancipation and openness, as well as her/his self-awareness and self-image in relation to the traditions of art and the experienced world, in general. He believes that an educational change is necessary with regard to the meaning of the sensory part of the human being to let him rediscover himself as a complete physical and mental being and to let him make full use of his capabilities.

Needless to say, the re-unification of these two aspects of the human experience resonates profoundly with the concept of Wholeness in Alexander.

# 2.2. CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS ALEXANDER'S BUILDING MODEL PROCESS

The various aspects of my literature review highlighted in the previous sections, cover some of the many I perused, selected for their importance in shedding light on the living process of making as I was at the same time experimenting in practice. They helped me formulating provisional answers to the needs that were emerging during the course of the practical experiences, that I then subjected to further practical testing. This corresponds to the "learning by doing" strategy which I have purposefully undertaken in my studies,

as discussed in the Introduction. Here, in particular, I would highlight some important impacts that these aspects have had in practice.

The part related to psychology as a whole was fundamental for the re-conceptualization of the building process as a living one, based on the reconciliation between architecture and the body-mind. In particular, it was useful to identify the right ways of approaching the human being in his complexity, avoiding the rigidity of a certain part of psychotherapeutic approaches. My psychology and art-therapy explorations were also essential in the various experiments related to the PL. Moreover, anthropology studies were extremely significant for the PL as well, especially in the Rwanda case. The whole part related to psychomotricity and art therapy was the basis on which to Land and Self Exploration activities were then designed and tested.

These connections between literature review, practical testing and Alexander's theory are presented in the next section with some detail.

# 2.2.I. Type of Research

Alexander always conducted a type of interdisciplinary research that was also highly and restlessly empirical, always fed into a circular loop between field observation, theoretical reflection, modelling and testing. All his writings are based on empirical research and rigorous observation, with constant reference to historical processes and spatial recurrences investigated cross-culturally. In his research process all this is strictly connected to art and architecture, but also to a continuous reference to other domains of science such as quantum physics and biology.

I reckon that in NoO in particular, Alexander found the synthesis of the relationship between the scientific and humanistic approaches to knowledge that establishes the peculiar position of architecture in the generation of a new cosmology. A life-long pathway at the end of which the magnitude of the perspective opened up onto the matter which everything that is is made of, is astounding, and transcends the limits of the tangible touching the mystical. As Alexander states in his last published lines: "Taking architecture seriously leads us to the proper treatment of tiny details, to an understanding of the unfolding whole, and to an understanding—mystical in part—of the entity that underpins that wholeness. The path of architecture thus leads inexorably towards a renewed understanding of God. This is an understanding true within the canon of every religion, not connected with any one religion in particular, something which therefore moves us beyond the secularism and strife that has torn the world for more than a thousand years." (Alexander, 2016).

The convergence of theory and practice in one single undivided experience of the world and ourselves is a profound trait of his work, one that goes far beyond the boundaries of a "method". It is expressed though also, and importantly, in the importance of designing and constructing buildings on the site rather than in a studio; that is, it leads to the involvement of the community in the generative processes and the use of large-scale work models to assess quality and costs, thus allowing the identification

of a different design and construction process that is opposite and irreconcilable to the one through which contemporary space are conventionally produced. The actual projects carried out by Alexander are more than 200, all over the world. They gave a strong contribution to the definition of his "generative" method of construction and strengthened his empirical results even further. He repeatedly claimed the importance of a morphogenetic understanding of the environment and its transformations during the construction process. He therefore placed at the core of his observation, since the very beginning, the relationship between those who design and build and the creative process itself, linked by its nature to life and to generate life.

# 2.2.2. The Question of the "Model Process"

In my search for a model of living building process, first and foremost looking at Alexanders' own work, I have quickly understood and never forgotten that with all his restless efforts to clarify and define at both the conceptual and practical level his conclusions, Alexander never explicitly tried to put forth a model process of construction, nor did he ever conceptualize one. He has always endeavoured to make his ideas empirically demonstrable and logically consistent, and nevertheless one would search in vain across his gigantic intellectual production a conclusive "reductio ad unum" of the complex body of his observations.

Since nothing happens by chance in Alexander's work, it is quite evident that the overwhelming risks of the reduction inherent to any modelling are to be taken in the most careful consideration. And yet, by carefully reading his writings and focusing in particular on the sections specifically dedicated to the method, I proceeded with a synthesis of the recursive elements of his work, from which I deducted the model of the living building process that I named "Construction and Therapy". Such elements, which have to be understood as triggers of research and as such constituted the opening of my own exploration, are presented below.

# 2.2.3. Elements of Alexander's Model Process

#### Centres in the land and feelings

All Alexander's interventions began with a careful exploration of the project site ("the land") and the life webs that filled the space. This exploration aimed at identifying the centres in the land. Centres were put in relation to each other till constituting regions of degrading intensity around them. Centres were at the same time measured in terms of intensity and coherence.

Centres in the land are organized areas of space characterized by a level of inner coherence that makes them recognizable as whole spatial entities. Such inner coherence manifests itself in the physical shape of the space (or the thing) and in the way it works (is used, or functions). Centres may be punctual, linear and areal. They do not have precisely

definite boundaries; therefore, it is not possible to univocally define what sits outside and within the centre. However, centres are factual formations; their reality and strength is recognized by human beings individually and collectively. Centres are constituted by smaller centres, contribute to larger centres, and are never isolated in space: space is made of variously overlapping centres of different size and level of coherence (strength) in mutual relationship with each other. The system of overlapping centres in the land constitutes its spatial structure, or Wholeness (W). Every physical component of a place contributes to the Wholeness, no matter its size, with a strength that depends on its own level of inner coherence. Therefore, the Wholeness of a place constantly evolves according to the variations in space introduced by new entities. Variations to the Wholeness of a place can be positive or negative, depending on whether they add or detract to the Wholeness existing in the land before them. That is why developing an ability to understand Wholeness is fundamentally important for architects: it is the continuity and harmony of the Wholeness that allows a place to be liveable and enjoyable by human beings, ultimately determining its beauty. Construction is modification of the Wholeness of space. By constructing we either expand the structure of centres, reduce or even break it, affecting the beauty of the land and its ability to host and nurture human life.

The identification of centres can only take place through the recognition of feelings. Feelings are constructs of the soul that are affectively connotated and, if interrogated at the right level, are shared by most human beings. In this sense, they are objective. In particular, feelings are not preferences, or opinions. They are essential components of our embodied cognitive processes. The interface between the land and ourselves as human beings is our feelings.

#### Pattern Language

The Pattern Language (PL) is an essential element of all construction processes carried out by Alexander. The aim of the PL is to identify the archetypes of what-is-to-be-built that reside deep in ourselves. In the everyday practice of the relationship between humans and their physical environment, those archetypal construct take the form of recurrent behaviours, or "patterns", that emerge every time a practical problem faces us. Patterns can be access through two distinct forms of analysis: the first is based on the observation and annotations of the recursive answers to typical problems of the project area, while the second uses the direct interaction (interview) with the end-users and seeks to reveal the profound expression of the Self in terms of needs and desires.

The two Pattern Languages work at two different levels: the first is that of behaviours; the second that of the deep self. Behaviours are accessible through observation, while the deep self through the exploration of dreams. Hence, the second type of PL aims at understanding the dreams and the most basic needs of the human being as related to what-is-to-be-built, since they are a constituent part of the generative process of life and beauty, of the construction process itself. In this second form, the PL sits in

the process of interaction between the design team and the community, which takes place through a series of face-to-face interviews. Here, the aim is to gradually bring the conversation out from the realm of the "building program", into that of the authentic self. Dreams are the gate.

Over the years Alexander's work has increasingly and purposefully shifted from the first to the second type of PL. The following extracts from Battle proves this:

"...the possibility of doing things that people have dreams about even today. That is why Hosoi came to visit me in 1981. [...] This was Hosoi's dream. At root, he had a burning conviction that the people who lived and worked in the school would put all their knowledge – individual knowledge about myriad circumstances – into the design process". Battle, p. 99.

"Hosoi [...] looking for a group of architects who would genuinely – not with lip service but with sincerity, desire the involvement of the teachers and students in the creation of the school design". Battle, p. 102.

"Hosoi came, and for two days sat by my bed, telling me about his dreams for his project, his feelings about necessary changes in the society and architecture. [...] I realized that [...] the kind of buildings he wanted, were in a mental universe". Battle, p. 103.

"All this time was spent talking through the human details, discussing them, until we saw what might be the problem. It was a fascinating way of working in human society, and tremendously effective. I learned an enormous amount from him. He cared about everyone, and he was very careful. [...] it became very clear that the dream would be challenged in many ways before it took shape in the campus that we built". Battle, p. 106. "I told him that I wished to spend the first few days having some serious and deep talks with faculty members, about their hopes, dreams, and visions of the school, and that I also wanted to spend many hours by myself sitting on the site. [...] the process of becoming friends with the teachers, and really understanding their hopes and dreams, was of fundamental importance". Battle, p. 108.

#### Creative Construction

For Alexander the actual construction of a building is never conceived as a mere execution of a design project aseptically produced elsewhere (for example in a studio). Rather, it is a creative activity that vivifies the place and people who take part to the construction itself. This has always been explicitly affirmed and expressed through various publications, such as "The Oregon Experience", "The Construction of Houses" and especially in Battle. What he writes about System A and System B at p. 19 of Battle proves the point. He argues that there are two types of building production. Type (A) is a type of production that relies on feedback and correction, so that each phase allows to refine the elements as they are made. Type (B) is a type of production that is based on a fixed system of rigidly prefabricated elements and the assembly sequence is programmed even more rigidly. In System A, we see an integrated way of making decision that is based on eliminating the barriers between people, time and place of decision. Quite

on the contrary, in System B we see an increasing separation between people, time and places of decision that generates a highly fragmented process. Alexander deems that only System A responds to what profoundly characterizes the living building process which is, by its same nature, integrated and continuous. Even small buildings take years to grow and often centuries before they reach their peak. The living building process cannot be rushed.

# APPENDIX B

# 3.1 SYNTHESIS OF P.L. IN THE FINAL MASTER THESIS - "THE COLLECTIVE VISIONS AND OUR SHARED EXPERIENCE" KIM C. LIM AND JUN HOE WANG, VIP C&T STUDENTS

The Synthesis Phase of the PL exercise is the production of a visual word-picture diagram — Qualified List and Dream map from the individual dreams gathered. As Jung believed that a person's unconscious or in other words dreams comprised of both a person unconscious as well as a collective unconscious — 'pattern of behavior' that is common to all humanity (Jung, Who is Carl Jung?, N.A), hence it could be and is evidently noted that these individual dreams all contained certain elements of similarity. And in a collective list and map, these similar components and patters that are recursively mentioned in all of the dreams are mapped along with their shared qualities and feelings. Jung's research of the collective unconscious was also subsequently in later years developed and deepen in various aspects and topic of research by analysts, psychologists, and other professionals such as Joseph L. Henderson, James Hillman, Dolores Brien, Dr. Thomas B. Kirsch and numerous more.

By laying out every single qualified lists and dream maps where only 8 were useable and achieved the level of information sought, co-operatively Studio S.K. identified common patterns and feelings of a space. In each of the examples shown above, elements, feelings and spatial quality as described by the dreamer are noted at the bottom of the examples. These elements are then compared and those with a majority occurrence in the maps which can be seen in the diagram below are then voted into the synthesis qualified list and dream map. The synthesis visual and word diagram in summary represents the collective vision of an ideal pavilion for all the end-user where this vision is then written and conveyed through a story created by Studio S.K.

Identifying Common Patterns in Each Dream
Example I:
Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion
Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion
Reception / Welcoming space
Main Space
Main Object in center of attention
Space for individual thoughts and reflection
Exit Route
Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

#### Example II:

Visual connection to exterior

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example III:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example IV:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example V:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example VI:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example VII:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

# Example VIII:

Not Applicable

# Example IX:

Not Applicable

#### Example X:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the

Pavilion

Reception / Welcoming space

Main Space

Main Object in center of attention

Space for individual thoughts and reflection

Exit Route

Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior

Visual connection to exterior

#### Common Patterns:

Transitional Path / Route from Landscape to Pavilion

Symbolic element that marks the entrance of the Pavilion	7/8
Reception / Welcoming space	5/8
Main Space	7/8
Main Object in center of attention	6/8
Space for individual thoughts and reflection	6/8
Exit Route	1/8
Pavilion served as shelter and security from exterior	3/8
Visual connection to exterior	2/8

Hence the common patterns that formed the basis of the synthesis results are bolded in the list above.

#### Synthesis Dream / Story

For our dream pavilion, we envision it to be surrounded with nature; with the warm sunlight shining through a green leaves canopy, and steps that form a path that leads up to the pavilion. As we walk

along the path there is a sense of enlightenment. As we approach the pavilion, the path leads to a welcoming space that almost acts like a transition between the outside world and the inside of the pavilion - a place where we can feel comfortable with ourselves. We imagine the entrance to the pavilion to be a door of some sort - preferably a warm and woody feel - or it could just be an opening that acts as a threshold. Upon entering, a route will then direct us towards the center of the pavilion, where the main focus will be displayed. The main display object will be showered in light, a contrast to the dimmer surroundings of the space we have entered to, as if beckoning us towards it. As we gravitate towards the display object, the surrounding - the room, our sense of self - will gradually fade away into the darkness, leaving us entirely focused on the object. As we retreat from the main display object towards the edge of the room; where it is darker and we are able to feel/touch the boundaries of the wall, we can feel that we have returned to a tangible world where we feel grounded - as opposed to the experience moments ago at the display object that is almost as if we have left the physical world and entered a spiritual realm. With the darkness surrounding ourselves, we feel more enclosed and private, where we can then reflect on our thoughts and the experience we have just gone through. Slight movements by other users are perceivable, but just barely, in the dimly lit room, away from the center where it is bright. After a moment of reflection, we then slowly make our way to the

#### Synthesis Qualified List

exit.

The path leading to pavilion (outer):[surrounded by nature, warm, natural light, usually with steps leading up to

pavilion – a sense of reaching to higher grounds / path to achieving enlightenment]

#### 2. Transitional / Welcoming Space:

[simple with one or two feature e.g.: water feature / desk, smaller and darker than main space, with certain attraction towards main source, e.g.: only source of light coming from door to main space]

#### 3. Entrance:

[usually a door – warm and wooden feeling, or an opening]

4. Path / route leading to main exhibition / space:
directional, connecting and guiding the journey from space after entrance to main space]

#### 5. Main Space:

[space of medium scale, enclosed, circular / square space, warm, with spotlight focusing on main object usually in the center, with views/ sound that gives a sense of connection to outdoor thought not directly accessible from main space, free moving space with little furniture / objects, quiet and calm with no background music]

#### 6. Reflection space:

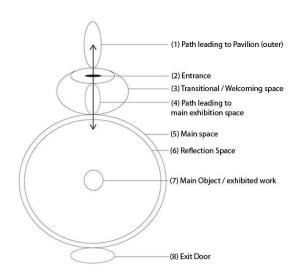
[dark, enclosed, private, individual, with seating, at the periphery of room, with direct view towards main object exhibited, a retreat space where one could quietly enjoy the exhibited object]

#### 7. Main object, exhibited work:

[just one object, emphasized by light directly on object- giving off a sense of it being a sacred object, main focus in the space, usually in the center of the room, elevated / lifted or ground- restricted from touching by visitors]

#### 8. Exit Door:

[either through main door or another exit door, usually dark and hidden from sight]



Synthesis Dream Map

# 3.2. WORKSHOP AT ROSS PRIORY: RESULTS – QUESTION AND RESPONSE

Please discuss and respond to the following questions about the process of P.L. Feel free to write any other comments / feedback you think may be worth sharing.

#### I. What is your understanding of P.L.?

A method design focused on the emotional experience of the user and a system of communicating patterns responsible for the design of the built environment. The architect takes the role of the enabler.

- A system of communication patterns responsible for informing the design of the build environment.
- A set of alternative approaches and unconventional tools for building for people. A HUMAN SCALE APPROCH TO AN NOT SO HUMAN PRATICES. The end users (or the client) is being given a much higher priority than normal, and the 'Architect' has a human character rather than the narcissistic 'Ego' of a creator.
- · A method of design more including to the physical experience of end user.

# 2. Why is it necessary & what do you think one stands to gain by using the PL process?

We do not believe is necessary the only way to achieve better architecture but it provides a structured method to achieve good experiential architecture. I should also result in an architecture more suited to the end user. It breaks down the barrier between architecture and end user, thus changing the public image of architecture. It is also necessary to introduce new/upcoming professionals to this process early in architectural education.

- It's very important to learn it as a theory processin the early steages of the architectural rieducation. It indruduce the future professionals to a more human ways of driving the standard design and build process. It also necessary to remind the future professionals to the alternative approach of building for the end user, as it is getting more difficult in the fast paced globalised world.
- One gains a greater volume of user input into the designer project and a set of design criteria/objectives to meet. The sould result in a building more suited/more satisfing to the end users.
- It's the right way to produce good architecture, but perhaps is a bornified structured method to do it. It breaks down the barriers of architecture and user, ensuraging the user to take an active role in forming their physical environment to thus, changing the pubblic image of architecture.

#### 3. Can you critically evaluate the flaws in P.L., from your experience?

The concept of time is crucial in the pattern language. In our experience time was a crucial constraint that may have affected our experience of it but in real life adaptation of this time will likely be a concern also. Data from interviews (qualitative) is not quantifiable, and it makes it difficult to what is important. We have also identified a number of situation/effects to be aware of from the perspective of different individuals,

The interviewee

Not knowing their desires,

Not effectively communicating in the desires that they do know,

Providing answers they feel are 'expected' of them,

Being unable to interpolate their needs.

Interviewer

Hearing what they want to hear,

Putting words/concepts in the interviewees mind,

Not conveying the intent/importance of the exercise,

Being aware of the impact of setting on the answers.

The designer,

Misinterpretation of needs,

Misinterpretation of responses,

Designing with ones own style or dispositions.

- TIME IS A KAY ASPECT IN ANY STEP, FROM L.E. to developing and working
  with the end user. During our academy project we had certain time restrictions,
  therefore the results were not perhaps that adequate. Time will also to difficult to
  allow in an actual life project.
- · Perhaps a large sample must be taken, more all prepped in a communication workshop, brought to a level of equality and openness.
- It will be an ongoing test to measure if this is consisting successful way to practicing good architecture.

# 4. How could a P.L. work out with an interview format but achieve the same objective of the PL interview?

Alternative interview techniques, ideally in a much more casual manner, engaging them in the environment of concern, ideally their own to be replaced a place of work/activity the emotional connection to this place is important. Observation is believed to be significant in limiting the losses of a no formal interview. Engaging with end users is still significant in this but carefully observation and analysis in a big brother style setup could be advantageous in avoiding corrupted interview answers.

- The interview should be prepared in advance. Minimizing the element of surprise and in unknown will allow for optimizing the input from the interviewed.
- Analysis of users based around observation of activities than interviewer could have some advantages. The responses are much arder to corrupt. However this requires an interactive real build method, which would require a flexibly/mock up working

5. Jung felt he was able to build a physical representation of his fantasies and dreams through his Bollingen home. How can we understand our desires and dreams today in a way that allows them to transcend the realm of the unconscious into the form of something built?

Desires and dreams are not something that 'appear' in a lumps sum. The act of recording them draws out further ideas and dreams. Manifesting these into a physical way, creative way should be conducive to this process. This process should/ will take a long period of time.

- Most people don't really realize what they want or like the most. Defining what is the 'dream' home for you is very difficult. However, people know clearly what they don't like and what is not functioning for them so by identifying those flowsone can find the best working solutions. As life is never black and white, the notion of 'perfect' or 'dream' home doesn't exist. However, allowing enough time to find and test thing would bring the most desired and functional live built from.
- Try to draw them. Make an attempt to put them into physical form (as Music Art) to recruit the feeling in mock up.
- Inception stile creativity could be emulated via rendering/3D programmed, with virtual realty program.

#### 6. Please comment the following passage of Gordon Murray:

Many of our most crucial skills are internalized as automatic reactions that we are not consciously aware of. Even in the case of learning skills, the sequence of movements in a task is internalized and embodied rather than understood and remembered intellectually. Prevailing educational philosophies continue to emphasize conceptual, intellectual and verbal knowledge over this tacit and non—conceptual wisdom of our embodied processes, which is so essential to our experience and understanding of the physical and the built.

The passage illustrates the tragic difference between the conceptual professional design process and a more unconscious design process of the layman where people edit their surroundings to suit. We feel it a failing in the education process that these concepts have been introduced so late or as additional options rather than fundamental concepts of design.

Prevailing educational philosophic in the architectural training d not focus enough
on the tacit and non-conceptual ways. In our case, we were only introduced to the
work of Christopher Alexander in the find stages of our education, which indicates
the former notion. The natural, embodied process of the Pattern Language is equally

- important to forming a better understanding of our built environment.
- Our in built instructive "learning" mechanism will continue to inform our use and reaction to the environment. Our understanding on these "Instructions" should be in parallel with our understanding of the intellectual.

# 3.3 PRESENTATION USED AT UCL BARTLETT FACULTY OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT BARTLETT SCHOOL OF PLANNING - SYMPOSIUM AND WORKSHOP ON URBAN 'PATTERN LANGUAGE' APPLICATIONS



PLACES THAT WORK: WHAT IS THE "QUALITY WITHOUT A NAME" THAT MAKES PLACES GREAT FOR PEOPLE?

IT DOES NOT COME BY DESIGN

IT COMES BY A PROCESS OF "UNFOLDING"

BEAUX

The "Quality Without a Name" Maggie Moore Alexander, 2014.

#### LAND EXPLORATION: THE WORKSHOP





**FW** 

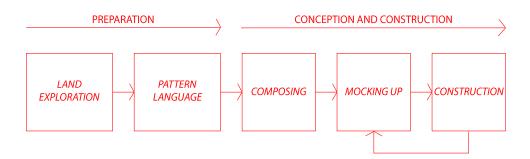
- Awareness of your own feelings (individual self)

  Awareness of the feelings of the others (sellective self)
- Awareness of the feelings of the others (collective self)
- Awareness of the feelings in a space (feeling centers)

• Authentic relationships with others PL



#### CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY: GENERATING BEAUTY

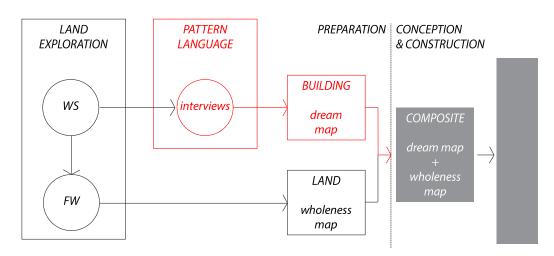


"It's immensely hard to help people tell you what they want. Even in the simple practical issue of a building, its entrance, its gradens... people cannot easily formulate their vision or their desire. Since we wanted people to have their heart's desire, we must help them and teach them to see their own visions, drawn out by our words and by their own words. If we learn to do this well, we will help their dreams to materialize. Their dreams will take concrete, outward form"

Cristopher Alexander, The Battle, 2012.

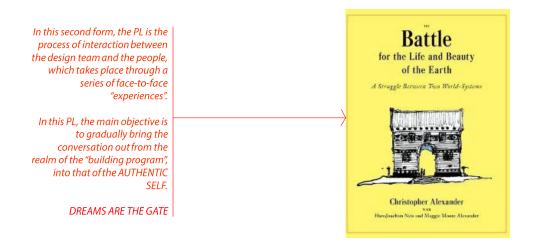


#### STRUCTURE OF THE PREPARATION PHASE



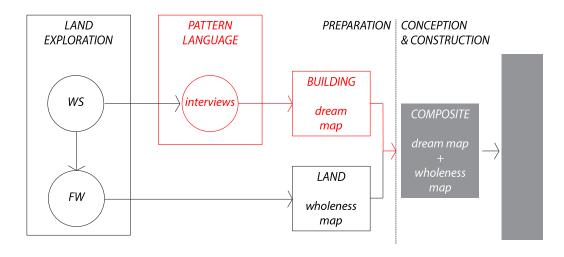


#### THERE IS NO ONE SINGLE PATTERN LANGUAGE



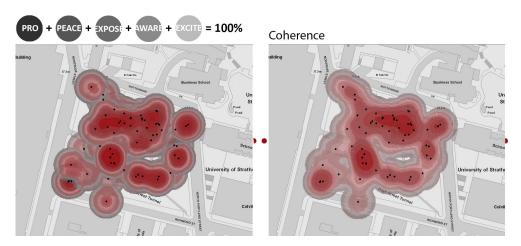


#### STRUCTURE OF THE PREPARATION PHASE





#### LAND EXPLORATION: THE FIELD WORK



Mapping the wholeness in the land



#### THE PATTERN LANGUAGE

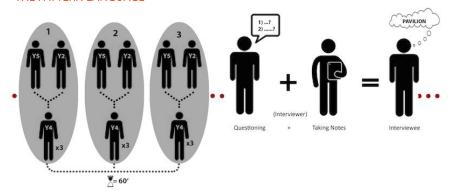
SETTING THE SCENE: Baby language and environment

- Learning non verbal language
- The others might just not feel as you do
- A good relaxing environment





#### THE PATTERN LANGUAGE



INTERVIEW SCENE: 3 teams | 10 interviewees

TEAM STRUCTURE: 2 interviewers | 1 interviewee



#### THE PATTERN LANGUAGE

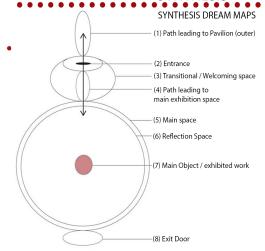


INTERVIEW STRUCTURE



#### THE PATTERN LANGUAGE

#### **SYNTHESIS**



**EXAMPLE OF SYNTHESIS DREAM MAP** 

#### SYNTHESIS QUALIFIED LISTS

(1) The path leading to pavilion (outer): [ surrounded by nature, warm, natural light, usually with steps leading up to pavilion – a sense of reaching to higher grounds / path

to achieving enlightenment]
(3) Transitional / Welcoming Space : [ simple with one or two feature eg: water feature / desk, smaller and darker than main space, with certain attraction towards main sorce, eg: only source of light coming from door to main space ]

- (2) Entrance : [ usually a door warm and wooden feeling, or an opening ]
  (4) Path / route leading to main exhibition / space : [ directional , connecting and

guiding the journey from space after entrance to main space ] (5) Main Space: [ space of medium scale, enclosed, circular / square space, warm, with spotlight focusing on main object usually in the center, with views/ sound that gives a sense of connection to outdoor thought not directly accessible from main space, free moving space with little furniture /objects, quiet and calm with no background music ] (6) Reflection space: [ dark, enclosed, private, individual, with seating, at the periph

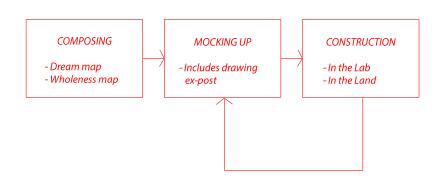
- ery of room, with direct view towards main object exhibited, a retreat space where one could quietly enjoy the exhibited object]
- (7) Main object, exhibited work: I just one object, emphasized by light directly on object-giving off a sense of it being a sacred object, main focus in the space, usu ally in the centre of the room, elevated / lifted of ground- restricted from touch ing by visitors]

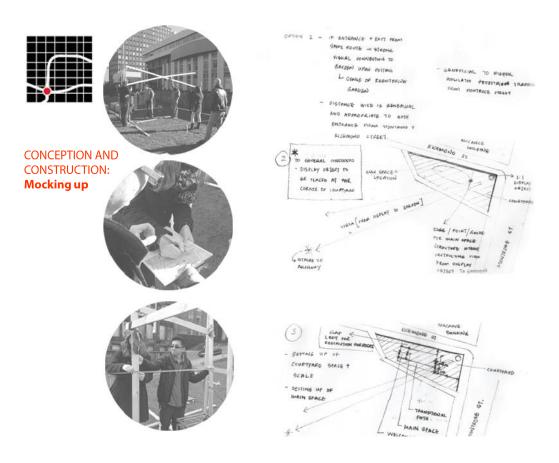
(8) Exit Door: [either through main door or another exit door, usually dark and hidden from sight]

> EXAMPLE OF **SYNTHESIS QUALIFIED LIST**



#### **CONCEPTION AND CONSTRUCTION**







## CONCEPTION AND CONSTRUCTION: **Building in the Lab**





### CONCEPTION AND CONSTRUCTION: **Building in the Land**









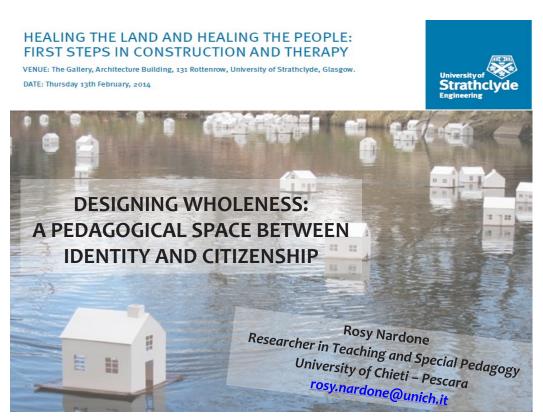






# **3.4 RELATORS' MATERIALS FROM THE SEMINAR:** 'Healing the Land and Healing the people: first steps into Construction and Therapy'

Mariarosaria Nardone, DESIGNING WHOLENESS:
A PEDAGOGICAL SPACE BETWEEN IDENTITY AND CITIZENSHIP.



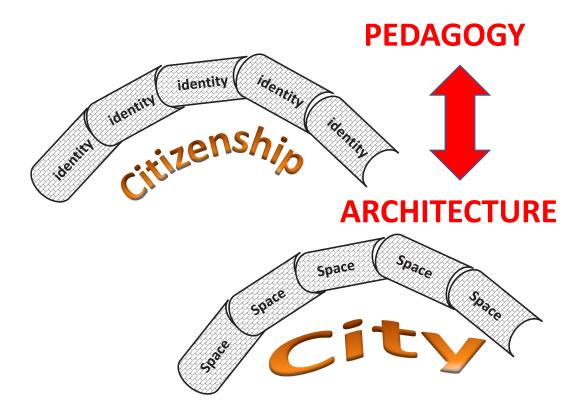


"But which is the stone that supports the bridge?" – Kublai Khan asks.
"The bridge is not supported by one stone or another," – Marco answers,
"but by the line of the arch that they form."

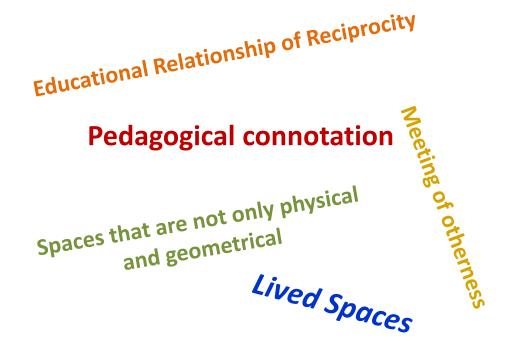
Kublai Khan remains silent, reflecting. Then he adds: – "Why do you speak to me of the stones? It is only the arch that matters to me." Marco Polo answers: "Without stones there is no arch."»

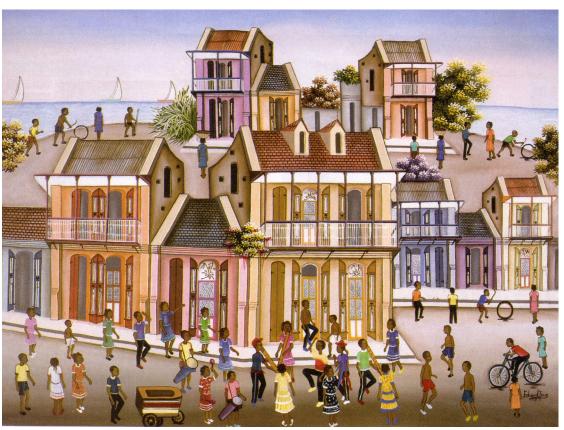
I. Calvino, The Invisible Cities



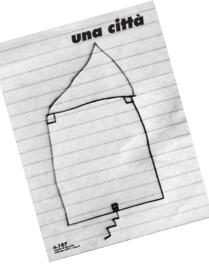














The home, a nest-space, is one of the most common figures reproduced in any culture or time: representing the living space is first and foremost a process of building one's own identity, one's own way of being in the world...

### **Boundaries and Frontiers...**

Visible|invisible

Limits/possibilities

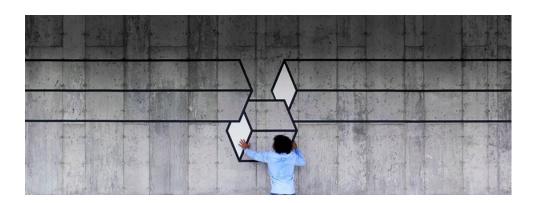
physical/abstract

Fixed/Mobile

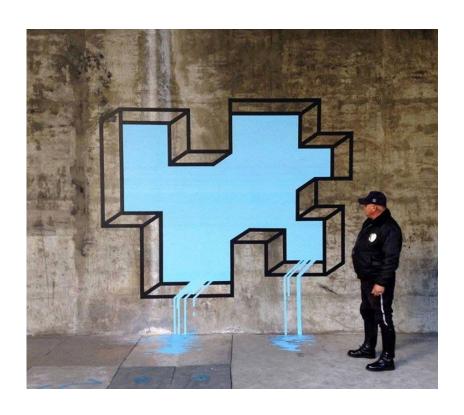
Exclude/Include

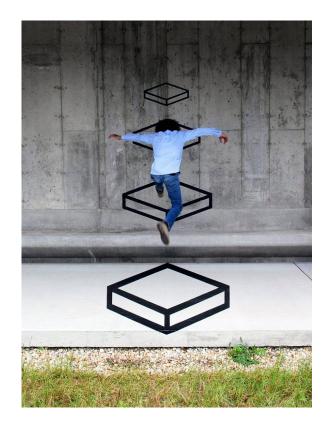
Defend|Attack

Close off/Join together



Aakash Nihalani



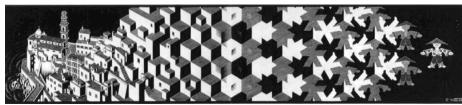




Murales of Bansky, Palestine



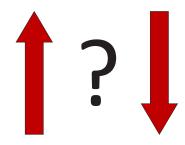
## **World-city & Cities-world**







isolation of the modern citizen



"cities", spaces to inhabit but NOT to live in with less spaces of transition [stairways, courtyards, corridors, landings, neighbourhood social centres

"Space exists only thanks to what fills it"

# Partecipatory planning

# Involvement of citizens

### **Designing wholeness**

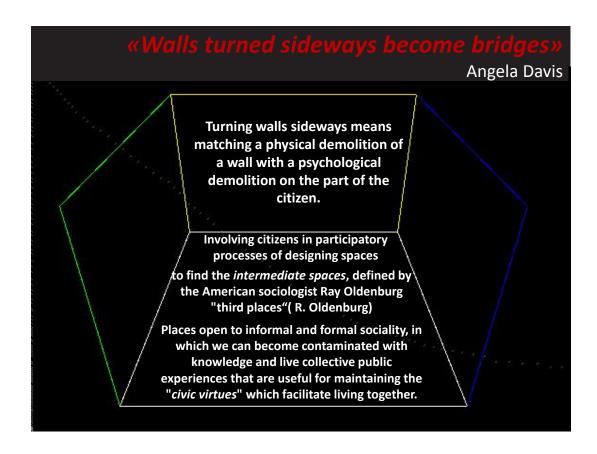
Liveable city

Community

City as «space-laboratory»

### 3 key concepts of pedagogy for the wholeness:

- **Reciprocity**: the territory which considers its citizens as a resource..."The community is not the place where identity is formed on the basis of membership recognized and defended, it is the place where our turns out to be missing and it is accepted. Before the claim of rights, citizenship appears in the perspective of mutual debt!" P. Raciti, La cittadinanza e le sue strutture di significato
- **Inclusion**: meaning "closing inside" (different from the concept of integration). From an educational viewpoint, it is this opening to diversity that allows us to transform and initiate a process of change in all the stakeholders of a community. It is a process that can never be totally realised, a continuous search for wholeness that refers to the **globality** of an individual's educational, social and political dimensions, and above all sees the context as the first element to work on, to be modified and adapted.
- **Belonging**: the need to recognise ourselves in our life places, knocking down the walls of extraneousness, of not feeling part of the city and its cultural places. We must increasingly design with citizens in order to build new, pro-active citizenships. In this way, the spaces become our own, and we take care of them.



"The post-modern imagination is bursting with the need to participate in the events of one's own social community. This is the participation ethnologists talk of: in primitive tribes they participated in the totem, I was it and it was me. A new style of community life is therefore envisaged, marked by amor fati – the love of what there is, the fate I am living with others – and amor mundi, the love of this world. The process of participation is the way in which we feel affection for that which we live with others in a given place."

Michel Maffesoli

Some possible experience of «design wholeness»

3

# **Pontelagoscuro** (Ferrara) **Community Theatre Group**

project of **rebuilding a community**, a citizenship that no longer recognized in his home town

#### PHYSICAL SPACE IS THE WHOLE COUNTRY

- Country destroyed and constructed without regards to how it was [NO MEMORY]
- Cancellation of collective identity of citizens
- The Theatre involved citizenship to reconstruct the memory of a territory to re-design a new membership, a new wholeness



The Pontelagoscuro Community Theatre Group becomes a space of conviviality, identity construction, the wholeness of the inhabitants in the territory.

They are pensioners and children, teachers and workers, students and shopkeepers, actors and office workers who have come together, transcending generational and social divides, for the common goal of seeking a shared identity in our multiple roots, in the conviction that any community wanting to call itself as such can neither live a worthy present nor plan a harmonious future without remembering the past.

http://www.teatronucleo.org/1969-2/teatro-comunitario/community-theatre/?lang=enhttps://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL59D1946DB1A36A2E

### **Ex-Manifatture Knos - Lecce**

- experiment born from the restoration of an old engineering workers' training school that was abandoned for years
- The independent International cultural centre was established thanks to the spontaneous involvement of all citizens, artists and professional figures who were committed to return this precious gift to the community
- · activating a urban project that involved many citizens
- Reciprocity inclusion belonging

http://www.manifattureknos.org/knos/storia.php?setLanguage=eng

• "Ex-Fadda" - Brindisi

project is also about social inclusion

http://www.exfadda.it/ - http://www.buonenotizie.it/in-evidenza/2014/02/04/puglia-il-project-manager-che-hatrasformato-unex-fabbrica-officina-di-idee/

- The LUA Laboratorio Urbano Aperto http://laboratoriourbanoaperto.wordpress.com/
- FAVARA- farm cultural project "the art project that saved the town" http://www.farm-culturalpark.com
- The Urban experience: "is a cultural association built on the interest in relationships between land development, urban/human landscapes and the infinite opportunities given by the new 2.0 media devices; from smartphones/applications to social networking, from human experiences to smart development of cities.

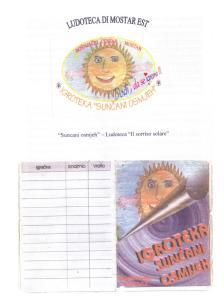
In order to encourage new ways for the citizens to explore and discover urban realities we decided we needed site specific urban performances, that we then designed with "edutainment" in mind.

http://www.urbanexperience.it/eventi/partecipazione-davvero/

• The Library for the community of Muyinga is a library and school for deaf children: it is a truly social space, constitutive for community relations <a href="http://www.dezeen.com/2014/01/14/childrens-library-muyinga-africa-rammed-earth-walls-bc-architects/">http://www.dezeen.com/2014/01/14/childrens-library-muyinga-africa-rammed-earth-walls-bc-architects/</a>

# The two Toy libraries / playrooms of Mostar











The Toys libraries are really represented a space of **inclusion**, **reciprocity**, construction of an identity of citizenship, where it had been broken in the "architecture" physical space.

A way to design WHOLENESS...

ILARIA MUSSINI, "Educational contexts, creative processes and the construction of well-being: the role of teachers and children's perspective". PRE-SCHOOL – GIANNI RODARI / Creativity in pre-school education / The perspective of children: a project about the concept of well-being at school



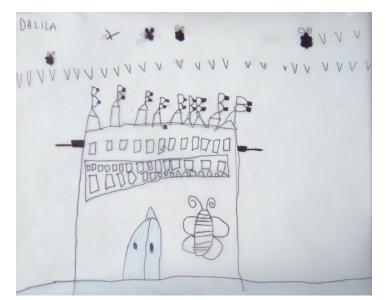


Knowledge









Individual



Group







Sharing







Listening









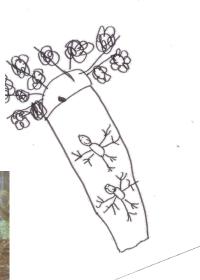


Reciprocity









Empathy



Negotiations



## Collaboratios



Discoveries



Learning













## Transformations









# The Infinity city









Big-Constructiveness







Landscapes















Ideations



# Care













Generations



# Living other places



Memories of the time





# Creativity in pre-school education



"Although not bold enough to think I understand the heart of creativity I'm intrigued to delve into it as much as possible" P.Klee

## **About CREANET**

CREANET is a Comenius network aimed at developing a european forum for discussion research and exchange of best practices on creativity in preschool education from a multidisciplinary and cross-institutional perspective.

# What is Creativity?

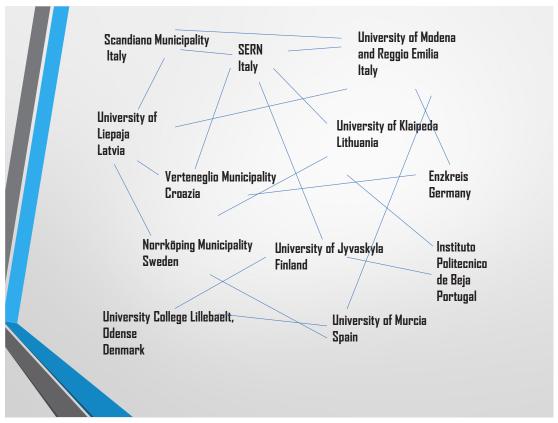
Multifaceted concept, which is connected to a number of factors

Used in various fields

Difficult today to elaborate a unique definition

Creativity: Ability, attitude of all individuals. the ability to create / produce something new (ORIGINAL) and appropriate (ADJUSTED TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES)





## **Associated Partners**



41 Associated partners (preschools, municipalities, creative center, etc)

## Specific objectives of CREANET

1.To create a European forum for discussion among practitioners and academics;

1.To identify, compare and exchange methodologies, approaches and experiences that promote creativity;

1.To improve the quality of the educational offer and improve the competences/skills of the teaching staff;

1.To use creativity as a means to boost the educational and social inclusion of the children and families belonging to minorities and/or disadvanteged groups;

>To strengthen the European dimension of lifelong learning and to stimulate creativity at the early stages of childhood;

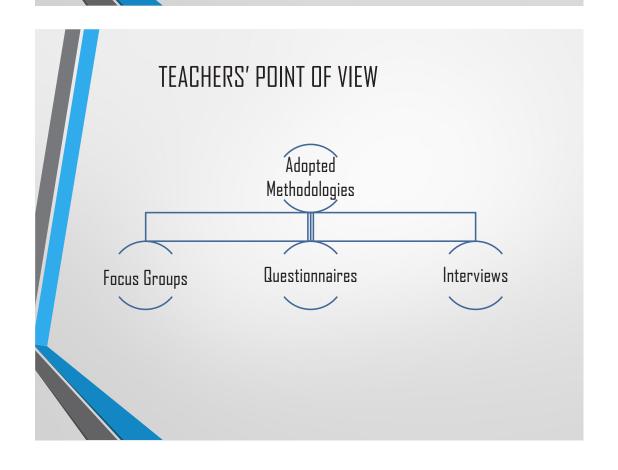
## **Networking Strategy**

- 1. **Research activities** aimed at developing a european approach toward creativity in pre-school through litterature reviews, fieldwork and action-research
- 2. **Exchange of best practices** structured in two working groups dealing respectively with creativity and "contexts" and "expressive languages";
- 3. **Annual conferences** aimed at exchanging best practices and at developing new projects based on the results of the research

## Research Activities

- → European literature review on creativity on pre-school education;
  - "National literature review
  - ... International thematic literature review
  - (Creativity and technologies, creativity and science, creativity and art, creativity and teacher's role, creativity and materials, creativity in children and adults)
- → Identification of the perspective of the teachers on creativity;
- → Analysis of the best practices;

# TEACHERS' POINT OF VIEW ON CREATIVITY



# Aim of the questionnaire

To identify the teachers' point of view on creativity through a questionnaire.

In particular, to understand what are the elements and activities that foster or hinder creativity in children



## The research sample

### Respondents:

425 pre-school teachers in 8 countries *Croatia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.* 

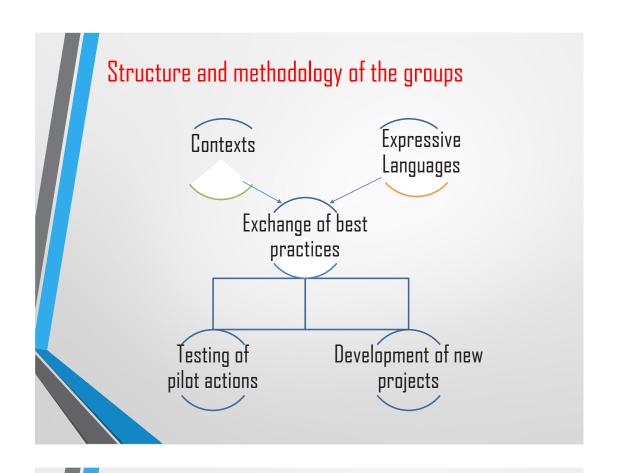


## **Circumstances that Influence Creativity**

- Appropriate pedagogical behavior of teachers
- Availability of materials
- Attractiveness of indoor/outdoor environment
- Adequate organizational structure of the school

## Working Groups' themes

EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGES
❖Outdoor environment;
❖Narrative;
❖Body;
❖ Arts: art, music, dance e theatre
❖ Graphic-expressive and manipulative





## Common Keywords

**Novelty** 

Indipendence

Self-esteem

Risk

**Self-expression** 

**Curiosity** 

Inventiveness

Providing Creative Contexts

("Creativity in pre-school education",

Roberta Cardarello and

Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013

5 SPECIFIC ELEMENTS that can encourage childhood creativity

# Exploring/experimenting with different spaces and materials

"The variety of spaces and materials to explore end experiment with is a useful condition for bringing out creative behaviour ... It represents a preparatory condition for the development and promotion of creative thinking.

The variety of spaces and materials also implies the multiplicity and multiplication of possible experiences for the child and for the development and consolidation of knowledge.

("Creativity in pre-school education", Roberta Cardarello and Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013)

## Extended and relaxed time

The temporal dimension of the experiential context, the possibility to take advantage of extended and relaxed time;

To guarantee an ample quantity of uninterrumpted time for investigation and discussion; a time that can be modulated in a flexible manner so as to respect the rhytms of the children and the different ways and times for elaborating the situations that they are experiencing. Encouraging "thinking that connects" means giving tune and providing occasions for the revision and re-elaboration of experiences,

allowing the children to construct links and associations.

("Creativity in pre-school education", Roberta Cardarello and Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013)

# Social collaboration among children in open problem-solving situations

Social interaction and collaboration between children in open problem solving situations represents a condition for the activation and promotion of creative thinking.

... a collaborative work that provides exchange of ideas, analysis of situation from different percspectives and angle, a dialogue between different hypotheses of solutions and points of view.

> ("Creativity in pre-school education", Roberta Cardarello and Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013)

# Combining different symbolic languages and codes

Combination of different symbolic langagues and systems in reference to the same experiential context.

Children are encouraged to imagine different ways of manifesting an idea or object.

("Creativity in pre-school education", Roberta Cardarello and Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013)

## The role of the teacher

Creativity is the heritage of everyone, so the teacher is a figure who supports the promotion of creativity in each child.

A positive behaviour in the adult consists in the adult's ability to listen and observe what the children say and do (listening to children, welcoming their ideas, demonstrating understanding and relaunching them back)

An encouraging educator than will be able to give positive feedback to all the children's expressions and initiatives.

The relational dimension carries out an important funcion for any educational process. In the case of creativity, the relationship with the adult must quarantee the children's safety,

guarantee them a relaxed an encouraging climate that allows them to "dare" to experiment, to "take risk" in investing new things that can be potentially criticized or be failures.

("Creativity in pre-school education", Roberta Cardarello and Antonio Gariboldi, Sern, 2013)



## Creativity in pre-school education

edited by Antonio Gariboldi and Nicola Catellani, Ed. Sern, 2013

### Providing Creative Contexts,

Educational practices on creativity in european pre-schools Ed. Sern, 2013

#### Pensare la creatività.

A cura di Antonio Gariboldi e Roberta Cardarello Ed Junior, 2012

# The perspective of children: a project about the concept of well-being at school



Ilaria Mussini, pedagogical coordinator, Town of Scandiano

The evaluation of the perceived quality is a key element in the management of educational services.

Analyzing the quality, or better the qualities that build a good service to people, means paying attention to the perceptions and the opinions of those who live every day inside an educational context: families, teachers (the staff), and children.

Thanks to the collaboration with the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, today Department of Education and Human Sciences, the municipality of Scandiano has worked for 7 years about the theme of quality.

An evaluation system and a sound pedagogical approach are very relevant elements also for the regional policies in Emilia Romagna region.

During the period 2007-2009 Scandiano has been a partner in a European Project called Quality Cities, concerning the quality in services for children and for elderly people together with local authorities from Sweden, Spain and Ceca Republic.

This project has allowed us to go deeper into the differences characterising the meaning of quality and evaluation, to compare methodologies and tools aimed to increase the general quality of a public services and the well-being of citizens.

## And what about the perspective of children?

SCUOLA

INFANZIA

GIANNI RODARI

SCANDIANO

In 2007 we started with the quality assessment of the educational staff of the preschool G. Rodari, in the 2008 we continued with the quality assessment of the families and during the 2009 we made a pilot project concerning the quality assessment made by children.

The choice was to investigate the quality perceived by the children through a methodology that respects our approach to the education of children in which the group becomes a resource for the construction of common provisional knowledge, building a culture with and for children.

The "pedagogy of listening" characterized by the observation, the documentation and the interpretation has been the driving theme through which the research has been carried out.

A pedagogy focusing to the listening of children and to all the dimension of a child (cognitive and affective).

## Section involved: children from 5 to 6 years old

The questions of the research:

- What do you prefer about our schools and what do not you like?
- Why do school exist? Why is there a school?
- Are there schools in everywhere?
- What is the difference between your home and the school?
- Why to go to school? Are you always happy to come to school?
- Who owns the school?
- What are the nicest spaces in the school?
- Who are the adults in the school? What do they do?



Children has been involved in the construction of the questions.

They had an active role in all the process of the research.

Each question has been examinated:

- at first in the big assembly with all the children of the section,
- at second making interviews by children to children to other sections or observing children during the daily routine,
- at third in the big assembly to report the results of the observation and the interviews.

This research has been documented through the transcription of the conversations of children and through pictures made by the teachers.



The analysis made by the teachers and the pedagogical coordinator shows some occurrences in the perception of what it means

## "To feel good at school"

- the school is seen as a place to play and to stay with friends
- strong attention to the relational dimension among children (empathy, cooperation, mutual support)
- pleasure of being in open spaces (park)
- aesthetic dimension of the school
- school as a place of learning how to do things: play games, draw, write, build, make difficult things)
- at school there are rules
- the school in a community of children (but there are also some adults with specific roles)
- school is a place of fun (not a boring place)
- importance of creating links between home and school

A.P.S.IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN Scuola Art.eD.O. di Roma, L'OGGETTO MEDIATORE NELLE ARTI TERAPIE E NELL'ARTIGIANATO ARTISTICO EDUCATIVO: dalla creazione di relazioni alla costruzione di una funzionalità sociale.



## L'OGGETTO MEDIATORE NELLE ARTI TERAPIE E NELL'ARTIGIANATO ARTISTICO EDUCATIVO:

DALLA CREAZIONE DI RELAZIONI ALLA COSTRUZIONE DI UNA FUNZIONALITA' SOCIALE

A cura dell' A.P.S.IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN Scuola Art.eD.O. di Roma

Psiche Armonia Natura



#### L'oggetto mediatore nelle Arti Terapie Sandra Pierpaoli , Psicologa e Psicoterapeuta

Per comprendere il ruolo e il significato dell'oggetto mediatore nelle Arti Terapie, dobbiamo fare riferimento alle prime fasi di vita del bambino e alla sua relazione con la madre. Alla nascita il bambino vive in uno stato fusionale totale con la realtà esterna e dipende completamente dalle cure materne. Per il bambino che non percepisce un mondo esterno a sé e quindi non riconosce la madre come esterna a sé, se stesso e la madre sono inizialmente la stessa cosa. Nei primi mesi di vita si sviluppa progressivamente il processo di separazione-individuazione, in base al quale dall'iniziale fusione si va gradualmente costituendo il senso del sé e dell'autonomia. Lentamente il bambino crea un involucro indipendente, attraverso una serie di passaggi che comprendono un dialogo tonico tra lui e la madre, in cui la forma, l'ampiezza e il ritmo dei gesti del neonato si vanno regolando sulle risposte materne. La madre rispecchia per esempio i versetti emessi dal bambino e i suoi gesti e nel fare questo crea dei contenitori sonori e gestuali che permettono al bambino di percepirsi come separato e di acquisire quindi l'esperienza del me e del non me

In questo percorso si colloca quella che lo psicanalista inglese Donald Winnicott ha definito "fase transizionale", uno stadio che precede la separazione del non me dal me e indica quindi la transizione del bambino dallo stato di fusione allo stato in cui sente di essere in rapporto con l'esterno come qualcosa di separato. E' perciò la fase in cui viene costruito un ponte tra soggettività e realtà oggettiva. Per la facilitazione di questo processo il bambino fa uso di qualcosa che appartiene al mondo esterno, ciò che Winnicott ha chiamato "oggetto transizionale", che può essere l'angolo di una coperta, una parola, una ninna nanna, il cui uso è di fondamentale importanza per rassicurare il bambino nell'angoscia di separazione. Il primo oggetto transizionale nella relazione madre-bambino è il seno della madre. Inizialmente il bambino crede di essere il creatore del seno e la madre lo asseconda in questa illusione. In seguito lo disillude progressivamente, dimostrandogli che il seno non è sotto il suo controllo onnipotente ma che appartiene a lei e questo a poco a poco porta all'accettazione della realtà della separazione. Il seno per Winnicott è allo stesso tempo della madre e del bambino, del dentro e del fuori, fantasmatico e reale. Infatti il paradosso dell'oggetto transizionale è che esso è contemporaneamente reale ed illusorio.

Il lavoro creativo del bambino consiste nell'integrare questi due aspetti, senza viverli come un paradosso. Anche il gioco rientra nel processo graduale di simbolizzazione di cui viene rivestito l'oggetto. Infatti quando il bambino è più grande l'angoscia della separazione viene colmata con il gioco creativo e con l'uso di simboli. Winnicott considera le esperienze creative e culturali come esperienze transizionali, lo spazio dove può prendere forma l'originalità dell'adulto e dove ha inizio la trasformazione creativa dell'ambiente. Nella vita adulta quest'area neutra ed intermedia tra il soggettivo e l'oggettivo viene sperimentata attraverso l'arte, dove può comparire l'atto creativo.

La creatività per Winnicott non consiste nel produrre lavori artistici, ma è costituita dal modo in cui la persona incontra ed elabora il mondo esterno. L'impulso creativo è presente nella stessa maniera, egli afferma, nel bambino ritardato che è contento di respirare, come

Psiche Armonia Natura



nell'architetto che sa cosa desidera costruire. Questa zona neutra, che Winnicott chiama "spazio potenziale" è il filo rosso che lega il gioco infantile all'esperienza culturale.

In un interessante articolo sulla relazione tra gli oggetti transizionali e l'attività creativa, lo psicanalista americano Arnold Modell mette in luce i meccanismi propri dell'attività creativa a partire dalle caratteristiche dell'arte paleolitica. Egli sottolinea come gli artisti paleolitici abbiano utilizzato per la creazione delle proprie opere le possibilità offerte dalla configurazione geologica naturale delle pareti, delle volte e del pavimento della caverna. In particolare, nelle grotte di Altamira sono stati ritrovati dipinti che rappresentano bisonti in varie posizioni. Nei dipinti è stata utilizzata la conformazione naturale delle grotte: le protuberanze e le cavità rocciose sono state trasformate in animali e dove le parti del corpo mancavano l'artista ha aggiunto la pittura colorata, completando l'immagine. E' come se la caverna, cioè la natura stessa, e l'artista avessero lavorato insieme. In questa compenetrazione Modell rintraccia la prima relazione creativa del bambino con l'ambiente, rappresentata dall'oggetto transizionale, dove l'aspetto reale della natura viene rivestito dal significato dell'immagine dipinta.

Nel processo creativo, infatti, vi è una prima fase di contatto con l'oggetto, che viene caricato di proiezioni e in tal modo diventa parte del mondo interno e contemporaneamente assume un valore simbolico. Segue una fase di uso dell'oggetto, e cioè di accettazione della sua realtà, del fatto che è qualcosa di separato dotato di una vita indipendente.

Nell'uso artistico della configurazione delle caverne, il fatto che l'opera non sia una realizzazione completamente nuova, ma la trasformazione di qualcosa che già esiste, suggerisce che un elemento essenziale della creatività sia l'accettazione di ciò che è fuori da sé. Secondo Modell, se l'artista non accetta ciò che è fuori da sé, si assiste al fallimento della creatività e al lato regressivo del fenomeno transizionale. La creatività matura implica infatti la capacità di riconoscere e accettare il contributo dell'esterno e degli altri

La creatività non può mai essere annullata del tutto, anche nei casi più estremi e problematici, tuttavia può rimanere nascosta e inespressa. Questa considerazione introduce il ruolo dell'oggetto mediatore nelle Arti Terapie, che si occupano di intervenire in ambiti educativi, riabilitativi, terapeutici e formativi, proprio attraverso l'attivazione o riattivazione del canale creativo. Quando parliamo di oggetti mediatori intendiamo sia oggetti reali e concreti, sia molteplici elementi che non sono oggetti fisici, ma fungono da mediatori tra realtà interna ed esterna, come possono essere il suono, la voce, il ritmo, la danza, le storie e primo fra tutti il corpo stesso, che è il primo fondamentale canale di mediazione tra interno ed esterno. Gli oggetti mediatori hanno una qualità simbolica, sono prolungamenti del sé e quindi esprimono la realtà interna attraverso una proiezione, ma portano anche il sé a compiere adattamenti, cambiamenti e trasformazioni, attraverso l'incontro con le caratteristiche proprie dell'oggetto stesso. Nelle Arti Terapie gli oggetti mediatori possono assolvere a diverse funzioni:

-una *funzione psicomotoria*, quando l'oggetto è utilizzato per stimolare percezioni e diventa un ausilio per sentire sensazioni, per esplorare movimenti poco esplorati e quindi per arricchire il proprio vocabolario psicomotorio

-una funzione transizionale quando l'oggetto mediatore aiuta la persona a esprimere il proprio mondo simbolico e a creare un rapporto con l'altro da sé

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-una *funzione relazionale*, prima di tutto con se stessi, perché permette di osservarsi in modo mediato e di accedere a contenuti emotivi, oltrepassando la barriera delle difese, poi con l'altro e con il gruppo perché facilita e media il contatto: lo facilita per creare una relazione, lo media quando il contatto diretto sarebbe troppo forte.

Un oggetto mediatore può assolvere a tutte queste funzioni , in base alla consegna, alla proposta di lavoro e al contesto. Prendiamo l'esempio di un lungo elastico da sartoria: questo può avere una funzione psicomotoria quando viene usato per sperimentare le possibilità di allungamento del corpo in tutte le direzioni , l'estensione e l'ampliamento dei confini personali; una funzione transizionale quando viene utilizzato come simbolo del legame e della relazione , rappresentando per esempio il cordone ombelicale; una funzione relazionale con se stessi quando permette alla persona di sperimentare insieme alle posizioni di apertura e di chiusura anche il proprio bisogno di protezione e raccoglimento o viceversa di espansione ed estroversione; una funzione di facilitazione e mediazione con l'altro e con il gruppo permettendo l'oggettivazione , l'esplorazione e la costruzione delle varie possibilità di rapporto, accorciando ed allungando le distanze.

Ancora nel caso della creazione di un oggetto o di un disegno, per esempio, l'oggetto mediatore può avere

- -una *funzione trasformativa*, quando la persona creando un prodotto, lo mostra all'esterno e poi riceve un feedback, che la conduce a effettuare un qualche cambiamento
- -una *funzione riparatrice* quando aiuta per esempio ad elaborare un lutto, attraverso la rappresentazione dell'oggetto perduto e delle emozioni ad esso legate
- -una *funzione sintetica* quando vengono messe in gioco forze opposte e conflittuali e attraverso il lavoro creativo queste parti possono dialogare e confrontarsi fino a trovare una soluzione e a volte un'integrazione
- -una funzione contenitrice quando l'oggetto mediatore aiuta a passare da una massa caotica di sentimenti a una forma. A volte l'oggetto aiuta a contenere sentimenti troppo intensi e può diventare compito del terapeuta rafforzare il contenimento, per esempio nel suggerire di fare una cornice ad un disegno che il paziente ha prodotto.

Infine l'oggetto mediatore nelle Arti Terapie completa la sua funzione quando è possibile accomiatarsi da esso, perché il suo valore simbolico è stato incorporato e la persona non ne ha più bisogno, perché può riconoscere come proprie le emozioni e i significati proiettati sull'oggetto e si può quindi separare da esso.

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Psiche Armonia Natura



#### L'oggetto mediatore nell' Artigianato Artistico Educativo

Tonino Aspergo, Counselor e Facilitatore di gruppi

Il mio intervento si basa su un' esperienza iniziata quattro anni fa, quando ho proposto al Comune di Morlupo di realizzare un corso per ragazzi in età preadolescenziale e adolescenziale, in cui volevo sperimentare l'integrazione di *due anime*, quella appartenente all'Artigianato Artistico e quella appartenente all'ambito relazionale, propria della mia formazione di Counselor e Facilitatore di Gruppi. Dall'incontro tra queste *due anime* e dalla disponibilità a finanziare e sostenere il progetto da parte delle Politiche Giovanili del Comune di Morlupo è nato il Corso di Artigianato Artistico Educativo, che mi ha permesso di riscontrare l'efficacia del metodo, suscitando sempre più interesse da parte dei ragazzi, che oggi sono 19, e l'entusiasmo dei loro genitori.

Normalmente nell'artigianato il ciclo produttivo si conclude con la realizzazione di un oggetto con un valore economico , che entra nel mercato attraverso lo scambio commerciale e questo scambio rappresenta la finalità ultima del processo produttivo. Nell'Artigianato Artistico Educativo invece la finalità ultima è quella di costruire una funzionalità sociale, attraverso l'aiuto di oggetti mediatori.

Nel caso della singola persona *l'oggetto mediatore* è il prodotto che ha realizzato. Il lavoro è finalizzato alla costruzione di un oggetto personale, in grado di esprimere la capacità creativa del ragazzo o in generale della persona. Per realizzare l'oggetto vengono messe in gioco abilità tecniche, apprese nel laboratorio attraverso prove, errori, esperimenti, scambi, rispecchiamenti, accrescendo l'autostima della persona con il sostegno e il contributo degli altri. L'oggetto realizzato diventa così il mediatore verso il mondo esterno della storia vissuta e costruita nel laboratorio da ogni singolo partecipante.

Nel caso del gruppo, *l'oggetto mediatore* è l'obiettivo comune che il gruppo vuole perseguire. Nell'esperienza fatta con i ragazzi di Morlupo, l'obiettivo comune è stata la costruzione di una mostra. Ciò ha permesso al lavoro di uno di diventare il lavoro di tutti e di creare *una coscienza di gruppo*, intesa come guida interiore per il raggiungimento di un bene comune.

Nel progettare e condurre un Corso di Artigianato Artistico Educativo mi sono ispirato a due concetti della comunicazione

Il primo è il concetto della *comunicazione ecologica* del Prof. Jerome Liss. Al centro delle sue teorie sulla comunicazione ecologica , Liss pone la figura del facilitatore, soggetto che una volta che si è debitamente formato, ha la funzione di trarre il meglio dai membri del gruppo e, al contempo di aiutarli ad interagire in armonia reciproca.

La comunicazione ecologica è mirata a

- favorire la potenzialità di ognuno
- a rispettare le diversità
- ad agire per il contesto, cioè per lo scopo comune dei membri del gruppo

Il secondo concetto è quello dell'ipercomunicazione, portato avanti dall'ultima ricerca scientifica russa e in particolare da Fosar e Bludorf. Questi ultimi nel loro libro Intelligenza

Psiche Armonia Natura



*in rete*, presumono che nei primi tempi l'umanità sia stata, come gli animali, molto fortemente connessa alla coscienza di gruppo e abbia agito come un gruppo.

Un esempio di ipercomunicazione si trova in natura nel mondo degli insetti: quando la regina di un formicaio viene separata dalla colonia, le formiche continuano il loro lavoro secondo un piano preciso. Ma se la regina muore, tutte smettono di lavorare e nessuna formica sa più cosa fare. Sembra che la regina trasmetta i suoi "piani di costruzione" anche se lontana, attraverso *la coscienza di gruppo* dei suoi sudditi. L'importante è che sia viva

Il gruppo di Artigianato Artistico Educativo attraversa due fasi nella costituzione e nello sviluppo della *coscienza di gruppo*. La *prima fase* è quella in cui di fondamentale importanza è la presenza del conduttore-facilitatore che rappresenta il collante, la "regina" per così dire, che conosce e trasmette i piani di costruzione al gruppo. Mentre il conduttore fa da punto di riferimento, aiuta contemporaneamente il gruppo a perseguire il suo obiettivo, la mostra. Permette così di raggiungere *una seconda fase* della coscienza di gruppo, quella in cui il ruolo della "regina" si sposta all'obiettivo, cioè alla mostra stessa, che diventa il collante, *l'oggetto mediatore del gruppo*.

Questa esperienza, la mostra, inoltre, non resta nei confini del laboratorio e del gruppo che vi ha partecipato, ma potrà essere estesa a una comunità più ampia, composta da genitori, insegnanti, cittadini e in senso lato dalla collettività, diventando così un oggetto mediatore con una funzionalità sociale.

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## 3.5 FLYERS SEMINAR E WORK SHOP 'HEALING THE LAND AND HEALING THE PEOPLE: FIRST STEPS INTO CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY"

Art Gallery Room Architecture Building 131 Rottenrow, Glasgow Thursday 13th February, 2014

#### Healing the Land and Healing the People: first steps into Construction and Therapy

#### PROFESSOR SERGIO PORTA 09.15

Professor of Urban Design, Head of Department and Director of the Urban Design Studies Unit at the Department of Architecture, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, UK.

#### AINSLIE KENNEDY 09.30

Postgradute Research Assistant on Construction & Therapy project. She has graduated at the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow with a master thesis on Construction & Therapy, spending one month in Rwanda

MARIAROSARIA NARDONE
Researcher in Education and Special Education at the
University G. D'Annunzio Chieti and Pescara, Faculty of
Science Education, Department of Philosophy, Pedagogy&Economics and Quantitative.

#### **CAMILLO BOANO**

Senior Lecturer at UCL and Director of MSc Building and Urban Design. He is the Director of Communica-tion and Coordinator of the DPUsummerLab initiative. Since 2012 he is a Co-Director of the UCL Urban Lab.

### COFFEE BREAK

#### ILARIA MUSSINI

Educator at Education and School Services Institution of the City of Scandiano(RE). She obtained a degree in Education Science and working professionaly made her an expert in clinical pedagogy, professional councilors and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a service and expending the services are services as a

#### 11.50 ALLISTER MURDOCH

Training as Humanistic Psychotherapist, with the core models being Gestalt and Formative Psychology. He is a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

#### 12.20 IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN

IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN
The A.P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan is registered with the
Lazio Regional Associations of Social Promotion. It
represents the School ArteD.O. of Rome and, thus pro-

represents the School ArteO.O. of Rome and, thus pro-motes training courses in Art Therapy. Tonino Aspergo: Biosistemic Consultant. He is co-founder and President of the Association Sandra Pierpaoli: Psychologist and Psychotherapist. She is co-founder and President of the Association

#### LUNCH BREAK 13.00

DISCUSSION 14.30 END 16.30

The seminar offers an opportunity for scientists in these different fields of knowledge to present their experiences Ine seminar oriers an opportunity for scientists in these different fleds of knowledge to present their experiences and discuss the Construction and Therapy perspective from their point of view, moving the experientation on to the next stage. The direct protagonism of the construction's beneficiaries into the act of conceiving and realizing "their" buildings firmly sits at the core of the process, in a radical interpretation of participatory design that touches the area of self-build construction.

Direct Experience of Construction & Therapy
One year ago the UDSU group at Department of Architecture initiated an experimentation on a different way of one year ago the outso' group at Department or Architecture initiated an experimentation on a dimerent way building. The idea, inspired by Christopher Alexander's life-long legacy, was to merge together the experience of building and that of "healing" in one single moment of collective and personal significance, where those "healed" would be the builders themselves. This creative way of building, named "Construction & Therapy", is particularly it to handle complex challenges like - but by no means limited to - those posed by communities hit by displacement, poverty or post-war/post-disaster challenges, typical of initiative of international cooperation.

Designing the wholeness: a pedagogy of space between identity and citizenship

Man is space and time, he inhabits and builds them. This talk aims to propose a reflection on the close relationship of reciprocity between man and the environment, the space inwhich it is placed. Thus, the city and the architecturally designed spaces should be also understood as educational projects: to shape a space, a city means first of all giving shape to oneself and its inhabitants, social relations, cultural models and forms of economic and political power. Could you think that designing the city is a synonymous of the design the completeness of its nationality, as a sort of identity?

### Design the un-designable. Urban Design, informality and critical architectural pedagogy

The talk will reflect on the epistemological and methodological elements that illuminate the spectrum of the DPU design course's engagements with informality, communities and urban design and the complex practice the continuously question the relationship between the architect and the political power, the client and the service provided and between ideology and spatial forms. Specific emphasis will be given to the reflection around participation and citywide approaches

### Educational contexts, creative processes and construction of well-being:

the role theachers and children's perspective
The speech will illustrate two practices experienced at the "G. Rodari" pre-school: the first one is related to the creation
of a European network on promotion of child creativity, promoted by the Municipality of Scandiano from 2010 to 2013;
the second is a path developed by the children aged 5/6 about the concept of well-being at school.

Building a therapeutic relationship between counsellor and client, assisting them to grow an aw The talk will be about the importance of actively listening to the client. Emphasising that the therapy is about the client not the counsellor particular model of working. It is the client's decision if the counsellor is right for them and that the out-come that the client feels satisfied with may not be what the counsellor thinks is right and that one way of working does not fit everyone. As with architecture if there was only one way we would all be living in exactly the same type of building.

Strathclyde

The mediator object in art-therapies and education handicraft:
from the creation of relationships to the construction of a social functionality
The object mediator in the Arts Therapies is a vehicle of expression and communication and is a stimulus for the enrich-The object meastor in the Arts interpies to a venice of expression and communication and as a stimulus for the entire ment of affective, cognitive and motor's vocabulary. It allows people to discover and experience the relationship with many parts of the self and allows you to create multiple relationships with the other self. In educational handicraft, the mediating object coincides with the product that you intend to accomplish. It looks after the welfare of the individual the family and the community through the promotion of educational, rehabilitative, therapeutic and training projects, with particular attention to young people.

## WORKSHOP ON "EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION" Path to healing relationship. Conducted by: Pascale Scopinich

"Hidden in each individual there is a people unharmed"

Paul Shepard



#### INTRODUCTION

The workshop will be a continuation of the experience began last academic year, during the VIP of Construction&Therapy. In February 2013, the VIP students participated in a workshop aimed at the perception of the self, the collective and the space, in preparation for the Land Exploration. This new workshop will try to explore the theme of communication, referred to as Pattern Language, as a part of the building method outlined by Construction&Therapy, in reference to the writings of Christopher Alexander.

#### **THE TOPIC**

The proposed route is designed to develop or improve the sensitivity and skills related to the listening functional to the relationships with users. Active listening is a powerful tool to help people to express, process and eventually share their problems. On the other hand, if misused, could undermine the aid relationship. The working method is interactive: everyone's participation and involvement will be constantly stimulated and assisted, in respect of their own times and ways.

### **PASCALE SCOPINICH. Clinical Consultant**

Founding member of IACP approved by GORDON TRAINING INTERNATIONAL & certified by Person-Centred Approach. Partnered with Italy World Health Organisation (WHO) to aid the promotion of health in the workplace and holder of the exclusive Gordon Itala training courses. Speciality: Pysco-motor skills & Gestalt Counselling. Credentials: International Diploma awarded by European School of Professional Training in Counselling of ASPIC.

THE VENUE THE TIME

University of Strathclyde Department of Architecture Gallery Room Tuesday the  $11^{th}$  - Wednesday the  $12^{th}$  of February 2014  $10.00 \ a.m. - 13.00 \ a.m. \\ 14.00 \ p.m. - 17.00 \ p.m.$ 

Architecture Building
131 Rottenrow, Glasgow

Pascalepql@gmail.com

## APPENDIX C

#### 4.1 RODARI PROJECT

RECONSTRUCTION OF SPACE 'ATELIER' AT THE SCHOOL OF MUNICIPAL OF SCANDIANO "G. RODARI " THROUGH C & T.

The project was born from the idea of being able to experience the process of C & T within an educational specific context characterized by the presence of experienced professionals in the field of education.

Against this background, the confrontation that ensued, partly as a result of the participation of the pedagogue of the City of Scandiano to the seminar "Healing the land and healing the people: first steps into C & T" held in Glasgow in February 13, 2014, revealed design lines that are reflected in the project that follows.

In this field of research, the term "therapy" refers to the creation of conditions for well-being and among individuals living in a given context and it isn't intended like paths of a psychological nature to persons with specific disorders or to places dedicated to treatment of certain diseases.

Considering the therapeutic values of C & T is important to emphasize that the basis of treatment is the idea of a human being understood as an harmonious and global subject, as well as designed in theories of Psychometrics and Counseling.

The term "Psychomotricity" shall mean a set of practices that use as main tool the game and especially the motion game to accompany, and if it's necessary help, the evolution and the personality development. It is conceived as the unity of body, mind and emotion in various stages of growth and life.

The Counselor, however, is the professional who, having completed a course of study at least three years, and therefore in possession of a diploma awarded by specific training schools of different theoretical orientations, is able to facilitate the resolution of existential hardships of origin psychic that does not, however, a profound restructuring of the personality.

The help of the Counseling can be defined as the ability to provide guidance or support to individuals or groups, encouraging the development and the use of the user's potentialities.

Interventions of Counseling, psychomotility, art therapy and art workshops will be used in a synergistic and integrated way into the pedagogical process of C & T, and will involve all those who, for various reasons, lives the reality of the school, but also those who will participate in the implementation of the project (researchers, local artisans, etc.).

In order to facilitate the path of the actors involved in the pursuit of a common goal, from a variegated reality, consisting of more groups of users (children, parents, teachers) and more professional, it will also be used in a therapeutic Supervision, understood as an accompaniment of the process of formation of a "group consciousness."

The Therapeutic Supervision provides the figures of a Counselor Biosystemic, creator of the method of Artistic Craftsmanship, and a Psychotherapist Bioenergetics,

Supervisor for the Arts Therapies. Biosystems, Bioenergetics, Arts and Crafts and Educational Arts Therapies are methods that have in common the particular attention paid to non-verbal communication, emotion, body language, and creative expression in body-emotional integration with the verbal reworking and returning.

Through the use of these methods will therefore be detected the modes with which we organize the balance between the individual and the group and with which it goes configuring the group as a whole.

Will also be observed and monitored the specific dynamics that will arise and from these will be valued the positive potential of each, accompanying participants in a shared creative direction and at the same time helping to dissolve any problems that may arise to hinder the construction process.

TO BE PUT ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE MATERIALS and THE PROCESS OF DESIGN AND OF CONSTRUCTION.

#### 1. STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT:

#### **GOALS:**

Design space currently characterized as 'Atelier'.

The project is an interdisciplinary training program aimed at children, families and the operators of the Municipal School of Childhood "G. Rodari", based on the experience of building together.

Will be solicited the design and manufacturing capabilities of the participants through an investigation of their inner world that will lead to the recognition of the needs in relation to the spaces and structures of the existing school.

Will be used for this the competences of Cooperative Co.re.ss, ASP "Il boschetto di Pan" and of the "Il giardino dei linguaggi."

The project capacity will also be stimulated by a direct knowledge of the materials. The project will be completed with the construction of the structure identified by the participants, who will be an active part in the construction itself. It will be realized with the help of the company "Messori Facilities", which was believed to be able to apply and show the kids a craft aimed at respecting the environment and the person.

Through this experience, there will be an opportunity to explore a new approach to building, a network of partnerships and a pedagogical structure and organization that may in the future provide the basis for future upgrades and expansion of the Municipal School "G. Rodari ".

#### TIMES:

The project will run over the course of two school years 2014/2015 -2016/2015.

### MODES:

For the realization of the new space, now called 'Atelier', we will refer to the results that emerged from the research carried out during the implementation of the European

project "Creanet", having as its object the development of creativity in children.

Will be applied to the content relating to Construction Therapy, result of research conducted by PhD Maria Pia Vidoli, from Ainslie Kennedy and Maddalena Iovene at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow.

The methodological and operational tools used will be those typical of Arts and Crafts Art Therapy Education, according to the methodology applied from ODA The Grove of Pan and in particular by its founders and leaders Tonino Aspergo and Sandra Pierpaoli. Will also be employed methods and techniques of Counseling and Psychomotility in collaboration with the Cooperative Co.re.ss and implement a musical journey led by Luca De Marchi Association "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi".

For the construction will be referred to to the company Messori Furniture of Scandiano (in particular the figure of Michele Messori) selected for the craftsmanship and value for specific skills, such as its focus to material recycling and the uniqueness of the products.

At each stage of the project the children of the section, the school staff and parents will be involved in various activities, through the intervention of experts that are part of the coordination group.

The coordination group will consist of representatives belonging to:

- Municipal Nursery School "G. Rodari "- Scandiano (RE) Italy;
- · University of Strathclyde in Glasgow UK;
- · A.S.P. "Il Boschetto di Pan" Rome Italy;
- · Cooperative Co.re.ss Reggio Emilia Italy;
- · Cultural Association "Il Giardino dei Languaggi" Reggio Emilia Italy;
- · Company "Messori Arredamenti" Scandiano (RE) Italy.

# The project will be divided according to the three steps, as identified in the construction process of C & T:

- I. Exploration of self and space:
  - Land Exploration
- 2. Identification of the material and the beginning of the design:
  - Pattern Language
- 3. Construction:
  - Conception & Construction

In the school year 2014/2015 will be activated the steps of Land Exploration and Pattern Language, while in 2015/2016 the Conception & Construction.

In therapeutic area, from the operational point of view, during the course of the proposed project will be a common thread that will represent a cohesive whole group (children, parents, teachers, administrators) and the element of continuity that connect between their experiences.

The thread will also facilitate the monitoring and supervision through periodic

interventions, which will be held both in the form of workshops (which will aim to deepen, restore and develop the path done by all the players involved during the different activities proposed), and in the form of regular coordination meetings.

The thread will be represented by the "metaphor of crossing a magic door." Each participant and the whole group involved will be able to:

- explore beyond the door a "imaginary land", its rules of space and time, its sounds, and movements of its inhabitants, revealing little-known parts of the self and the needs and desires of the most authentic;
- Bring back feelings and experiences on the "imaginary land" on the other side of the door. Give shape and voice to what is discovered through a process of restitution and processing through the sound, motion, graphic, dramatic action and verbalization.
- Realising the experiences made through the craftsmanship first of a individual product and then ones of group.
- · Focus on a common imagery able to conceive a shared goal.

#### MISSING THE POINT OF VIEW OF OPERATING FOR CONSTRUCTION

#### I STRUCTURE OF THE PROJECT:

#### **GOALS:**

Redesign of the space currently characterized as 'Atelier'.

The project is an interdisciplinary training program aimed at children, families and the operators of the Municipal School of Childhood

"G. Rodari" based on the experience of building together.

Will be solicited the design and manufacturing capabilities of the participants through an investigation of their inner world that will lead to the recognition of the needs in relation to the spaces and structures of the existing school.

It will be used for the competences of the Cooperative Co.re.ss, of ASP "Il Boschetto di Pan" and of the Cooperative "Il Girdino dei Linguaggi."

The design skills will also be stimulated by a direct knowledge of the materials. The project will be completed with the construction of the structure identified by the participants, which will be an active part of the construction itself. It will be realized with the help of the company "Messori Arredamenti," firm able to apply and to show the kids a craft designed aimed to respect the environment and the person.

Through this experience, there will be an opportunity to experience a method of building, a network of partnerships and a pedagogical structure and organization that, in the future, may provide the basis for further upgrades and expansion of the Municipal School "G. Rodari."

#### TIMES:

The project will run over the course of two school years: 2014-2015/2016 2015.

#### MODES:

For the realization of the new space, now called 'Atelier', we will refer to the results that emerged from the research carried out during the implementation of the European project "Creanet", having as its object the development of creativity in children.

Will also be apply the content relating to Construction & Therpy, wich are result of research conducted, at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, by PhD Maria Pia Vidoli, Ainslie Kennedy and Maddalena Iovene.

The methodological and operational tools used will be those typical of Arts and Crafts Art Therapy Educational, according to the methodology applied from A.S.P. "Il Boschetto di Pan" and in particular by its founders and leaders Tonino Aspergo and Sandra Pierpaoli.

Will also be used methods and techniques of Counseling and Psychomotility in collaboration with the Cooperative Co.re.ss and will take place a musical path carried out by Luca De Marchi member of to the Association "Il Giardino dei linguaggi".

For the construction will be referred to to the company "Messori Arredamenti" of Scandiano (in particular to the figure of Michele Messori) chosen for the craftsmanship's valence and for some of its specific skills, such as the attention to material recycling and the uniqueness of the products.

In each phase of the project the children of the section, the school staff and parents will be involved in various activities, through the intervention of experts that are part of the coordination group.

The coordination group will consist of representatives belonging to:

- · Municipal Nursery School "G. Rodari "- Scandiano (RE) Italy;
- · University of Strathclyde in Glasgow UK;
- · A.S.P. "Il Boschetto di Pan" Rome Italy;
- Cooperative Co.re.ss Reggio Emilia Italy;
- · Cultural Association "Il Giardino dei Languaggi" Reggio Emilia Italy;
- · Company "Messori Arredamenti" Scandiano (RE) Italy.

## The project will be divided according to the three steps, as identified in the construction process of C&T:

- I. Exploration of self and space:
  - Land Exploration
- 2. Identification of the material and the beginning of the design:
  - Pattern Language
- 3. Construction:

Conception & Construction

In the school's year 2014/2015 will be activated the steps of Land Exploration and Pattern Language, while in 2015/2016 the Conception & Construction.

In therapeutic area, from the operational point of view, during the course of the proposed project will be a common thread that will represent element of cohesion of the whole group (children, parents, teachers, administrators) and the element of continuity that connect all the experiences. The thread will also facilitate the monitoring and supervision through periodic interventions, which will be held both in the form of workshops (which will aim to deepen, restore and develop the path done by all the players involved during the different activities proposed), and in the form of regular coordination meetings.

The thread will be represented by the "metaphor of crossing a magic door." Each participant and the whole group involved will be able to:

• explore beyond the door a "imaginary land", its rules of space and time, its sounds, and the movements of its inhabitants, revealing little-known parts of the self and of the most authentic needs and desires;

MISSING THE POINT OF VIEW OF OPERATING FOR CONSTRUCTION

First step (October-December 2014):

#### LAND EXPLORATION:

#### PRESUPPOSITION:

self-perception to perceive the space around; definition of centers and emotions, with reference to the "land", where to "land" means the interior space of the school and the outside of the garden and outbuildings.

#### **CAPACITY:**

perceive and live their own person in a holistic and comprehensive way in order to be able to enjoy the space occupied by themselve.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

perceiving and living space in harmony with the completeness and perfection of our existence.

#### **TOOLS:**

- Psychomotor skills
- Musical paths.
- Integrate arts therapies with refunds deepening and development through the graphic and pictorial representation of the path taken in the various activities proposed.
- · Techniques of verbalization.
- · Final product:

MAPPING OF THE INNER AND COLLECTIVE SPACE AND OF THE SPACE OF THE SCHOOL IN CONNECTION WITH THESE.

Step 2 (January-April 2015):

#### PATTERN LANGUAGE

#### PRESUPPOSITION:

accomplished the Land Exploration will be able to start the Pattern Language.

The Pattern Language is a guided experience through the dreamlike perception of the participants focused on identifying the work to build and its symbolic architectural structure. This experience will be joined to the concrete knowledge of the material to be used in order to define its limitations and potential.

The exploration of both the fantastic part and of the material part of that experience, will be what will allow to reach the proper stage of "Design".

#### CAPACITY.

Learn to talk in reference to dreams, desires and needs of all the people involved in the construction process. Come to talk about the collective unconscious of the community building.

The dialogue will be between all the parties involved (children, school staff and parents) and will be under the supervision of the coordination group.

Learning about the potential of the materials in the processes of design and construction.

#### GOALS.

- Define the collective desire of the community called to build about the object to be built;
- · Research material and beginning of the design.

#### **TOOLS:**

- · Effective communication
- Symbolic design/architecture.
- · Path musical.
- · Psychomotility.
- Arts Integrated Therapies with refunds, deepening and elaboration through dramatization techniques of the route done in the various activities offered, from the previous drawings;
- Techniques of verbalization and use the Keyword (according to the method of Ecological Communication Prof. Jerome Liss).
  - Arts and Crafts Educational experimentation with the method of construction in two phases:
    - -construction of an individual object
    - -construction of a shared object from the group.
- · Outputs or laboratories to research and learn about the materials.

#### Final product:

COLLECTIVE MAPPING OF DESIRES REGARDING THE IDENTIFICATION OF

THE OBJECT TO BUILD AND ITS SYMBOLIC STRUCTURE / ARCHITECTURAL. MATERIAL SELECTION AND BEGINNING OF THE DESIGN.

Step 3 (school year 2015/2016):

#### CONCEPTION AND CONSTRUCTION

#### PRESUPPOSITION:

Analyze and understand the existential structures of the place and of the work is not enough. We need a process that transforms them gently and patiently detailed and constructed spaces, a process led and framed collectively by human feelings, through which the new structure to develop naturally, in stages, and each stage may constitute an expansion of the previous structure.

#### **CAPACITY:**

Learn how to "build positively" both technically and in reference to the meaning more human, instructional and teaching of the word. This includes experience collectively solutions through scale models (phase of "mocking up"), manage project finance, the relationship with suppliers and the technical skills involved, to the final work.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

Construction as an expression of a need for a collective and conscious expression of his own existence.

Reconstruction of the Atelier.

#### INSTRUMENTS.

- · Mocking up: reclaimed and recycled materials available on site at no cost.
- · Construction: construction drawing freehand.
- · Organization created in the construction process and technical skills.
- · Budgeting and reporting of the site.

The phase of C&C involves the use of a "master builder", exercising the coordination and skills through the various stages of the construction process. This key figure will be referred to Michele Messori of the company "Messori Arredamenti", project partners. This local realities works according to a craft sustainable methodology, which uses an effective and functional materials, engaging in order to enhance and preserve the nature of the material itself.

In addition, the company Messori Arredamenti has been identified for the great care that focuses on the individual value of the client, by ensuring that the objects created express the personality, the taste and the aesthetic value of the costumer, thereby it's aligning to the fundamental nature participatory and inclusive of the proposed method:

these peculiarities make possible positive expression of interiority of those involved in the construction.

#### Final product:

RECONSTRUCTION of the space currently characterized as 'Atelier'.

After the phases of Exploration and Land Pattern Language will rebuilt the current area used for creative activities.

#### **ACTIVATION PATHWAYS:**

For the School will be committed a total of 7 role's teachers, 3 and 4 auxiliary support of the educators.

It is expected to be involved in the testing section of children aged 4 to 5 years, consisting of 25 children, some with disabilities (sensory, psychological, behavioral).

#### YEAR 2014/2015:

#### FOR CHILDREN:

- Psychomotor course: 15 morning meetings from 9:30 to II:00 from October to March / April. By the Cooperative Co.re.s.s.
- Music Workshop: 10 morning meetings from October to March / April.
   Organised by "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi" in the figure of Luca De Marchi
- 3 outputs or workshops to learn the material (to be defined: ways / times);
- 2 meetings supervision of an hour and a half from October to February. Edited by A.S.P. "Il Boschetto di Pan".
- Design of space reconstruction Atelier (ways and times Maddalena, Ainslie, Michele).

#### WITH PARENTS:

- · 2 evening meetings of one hour and thirty (December, February).
- I meeting of the closing activities of the first year and the introduction of phase Conception & Construction (within April 2015).

#### **ACTIVITIES OF COORDINATION AND SUPERVISION:**

I coordination meeting between "Boschetto di Pan", Co.re.ss Cooperative Association "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi" in the person of Luca De Marchi, "Messori Arredamenti" in the person of Michele Messori, Pedagogyst of the City of Scandiano in the person of Ilaria Mussini, teaching staff responsible for the section of the 4 years and Mariapia Vidoli.

month:

SEPTEMBER

DURATION: 2 HOURS AND 30;

- 3 coordination meetings via Skype from "Boschetto di Pan", Co.re.ss Cooperative Association "Il Giardino dei Linguaggi" in the person of Luca De Marchi, "Messori Arredamenti" in the person of Michele Messori, Pedagogyst of the City of scandiano in the person of Ilaria Mussini, teaching staff responsible for the section of the 4 years and Mariapia Vidoli.

frequency:

beginning / mid November mid-January late March / early April 4 hours

year 2015/2016:

I coordination meeting between between "IL Boschetto di Pan", Co.re.ss Cooperative Association "IL giardino dei Linguaggi" in the person of Luca De Marchi, "Messori Arredamenti" in the person of Michele Messori, Pedagogist of the City of Scandiano in the person of Ilaria Mussini, teaching staff responsible for the section of the 4 years and Mariapia Vidoli.

Month: September

Duration: 2 hours and 30

- Intervention of construction with the help of local craftsmen:

the duration and methods of construction will be identified only after the first year of operations, when will be designed space to build.

At this stage it is envisaged one or more visits children's section at the laboratory of the company "Messori Arredamenti".

The pathways activated in the second year of implementation of the project will be better specified at the end of the school year 2014-2015.

COST

First year:

- Cooperative Co.re.s.s:

path of psychomotility: 10-15 dating from Ih

TOT. : 300 €

- Association "IL Giardino dei Linguaggi", Luca De Marchi: musical path: € 48 per hour for 10 hours

TOT .: 480 €

- A.S.P. "Il Boschetto di Pan":
- 15 hours of activity in the presence:

I50 euro per hour x I5 hours = € 2,250

- 4 hours of coordination via Skype:

50 euro per hour X 4 hours = € 200

TOT .: € 2.450

TOTAL = € 3,230.00

#### Second year:

costs can be quantified only after the design of the new space dedicated to creative activity and will still be relevant only to the materials used for the construction and eventual activation of additional pathways with experts already involved in the project, if necessary to achieve the objectives of the project.





LABORATORIO MOTORIO-ESPRESSIVO SCUOLA MATERNA RODARI, SCANDIANO.

#### **INTRODUZIONE**

Uno dei grandi piaceri del bambino è il gioco.

Attraverso il gioco il bambino si esprime e si realizza, si relaziona con lo spazio, con gli oggetti, con se stesso e con l'altro.

All'interno del laboratorio motorio-espressivo viene attuato un percorso che va dal piacere di agire al piacere di pensare.

1. SPAZIO e TEMPO INTERNO IN RELAZIONE ALLO SPAZIO EMOTIVO E CORPOREO:

Il bambino può sperimentare:

- la sua espressività corporea (movimento)
- la relazione con gli oggetti (interazione con essi, relazione, trasformazione)
- la relazione e conoscenza spaziale (spostamenti, esplorazioni, azioni,costruzioni)
- la relazione con l'altro (scambio, ideazione, comunicazione)
- percepirsi come unità corporea e psichica
- rappresentare le sue azioni sia nello spazio che mentalmente

SPAZIO DELL'ESPRESSIVITA' MOTORIA (quello delle azioni e del gioco) dove lo strumento è il movimento all'interno di un ambiente attrezzato con materiali morbidi (cubi, parallelpipedi, materassi) e fissi (spalliera, specchio, panche)

#### **IL TEMPO**

IL TEMPO RISERVATO ALL'ESPRESSIVITA' MOTORIA (stimolazioni, performance del movimento, esplorazione globale del corpo)

2. SPAZIO e TEMPO ESTERNO – costruzione e progetttazione

L'esperienza sensomotoria, di gioco e di rappresentazione permette al bambino di arrivare alla PROGETTAZIONE, intesa come fluidità dello scambio tra interno ed esterno di sé per riuscire a COSTRUIRE (come dare e ricevere) insieme.

SPAZIO DELL'ESPRESSIVITA' PLASTICA E DEL LINGUAGGIO (il luogo delle rappresentazioni)

dove gli strumenti sono: il disegno, le costruzioni, la manipolazione dei materiali, il linguaggio

Attraverso le attività grafico-pittoriche, costruttive e manipolative, il bambino prende distanza dalle emozioni messe in atto dal movimento e dai propri vissuti e può quindi "rappresentare" la sua esperienza.

La decentrazione è importante per il bambino poichè è il fattore fondamentale del pensiero operatorio.

In questo modo il bambino può essere disponibile alla trasformazione, all'ascolto e quindi all'apertura al mondo esterno.

IL TEMPO RISERVATO ALL'ESPRESSIVITA' PLASTICA E DEL LINGUAGGIO (disegno, costruzioni con legnetti, modellaggio con plastilina, collage, linguaggio

Per poter realizzare tutto questo il bambino ha bisogno di essere accompagnato da un adulto:

che lo lasci esprimere

lo riconosca

lo comprenda

dia significato a tutte le sue produzioni (sia verbali che non verbali).

Al fine di strutturare l'attività in modo efficace ed efficiente è importante la definizione anche degli spazi e dei tempi all'interno dell'ambiente (la sala) dove si svolge il laboratorio motorio-espressivo.

Quindi i dispositivi spazio (interni ed esterno) e tempo (interno ed esterno), con valenze sia fisiche del luogo che emotive ed interiori del bambino, sono strettamente collegati.

#### Per ogni incontro useremo una tematica:

#### 1 INCONTRO

attraversamento porta magica (fare attraversare i bambini una porta costruita dai cubi e parallelepipedi che li porta verso lo spazio dei giochi di movimento)

quindi salti dalla spalliera o dalla panca, rotolamenti, strisciare, salire, scendere. (sperimentare spazio, materiali e proprio corpo).

#### 2 INCONTRO

la sperimentazione dell'equilibrio e disequilibrio (creare varie altezze da cui saltare)

#### 3 INCONTRO

sperimentazione del distruggere e del ricostruire (buttare giù torri, muri ecc)

#### 4 INCONTRO

gioco dello spingere, quindi giochi di forza (mezzi di trasporto)

#### **5 INCONTRO**

giochi di essere trasportati/trascinati dentro un telo o materassino (gioco dell'elicottero, della nave)

#### 6 INCONTRO

giochi di competenza motoria (salire e scendere dalla spalliera, capriole, rotolamenti)

#### 7 INCONTRO

gioco della costruzione della propria casa, tane, rifugi, castello (con i cubi, parallelepipedi e teli)

#### **8 INCONTRO**

gioco del costruire insieme (progettare una casa comune dove c'è posto per tutti i bambini)

#### IL GRUPPO DI BAMBINI:

Una sezione di bambini della scuola materna di 4/5 anni per un totale di 25 unità (all'interno della sezione ci sono 3 bambini con disabilità).

Suddividere la sezione in due gruppi: uno da 13 bambini ed uno da 12.

#### IL LUOGO DOVE SVOLGERE L'ATTIVITA':

Lo spazio fisico/luogo dove svolgere il laboratorio motorio espressivo sarà la sala di Psicomotricità di SPAZIO ARTE 21 in via Gramsci 20 a Scandiano (vicino alla scuola materna, per cui i bambini possono arrivare a piedi).

#### LA DURATA DELL'ATTIVITA':

La durata dell'attività è di 1 ora, con frequenza una volta alla settimana nella giornata di giovedì mattina, per un totale di 8 incontri, suddiviso in due turni.

#### TEMPI DELLA DURATA DELL'ATTIVITA':

Con partenza il 30/10/2014 si finisce il 22/01/2015 (tenendo conto che giovedì 13 novembre salta perché Enrico è assente ed il 19 dicembre si sospende per le attività prenatalizie organizzate dalla scuola materna, salta anche la data del 7/01/2015 perché Pia è è assente).

#### Orari:

1° gruppo dalle 9.00 alle 10.00

2° gruppo dalle 10.30 alle 11.30

con 20/30minuti di stacco tra un gruppo e l'altro per riordinare la sala

#### STRUTTURAZIONE DELL'ATTIVITA':

**ORE 9.00/10.30** ARRIVO E PREPARAZIONE DOVE I BAMBINI SI CAMBIANO (TEMPO PREVISTO 10 MINUTI)

**ORE 9.10/10.40** INGRESSO IN SALA, RITUALE INIZIALE ED INZIO GIOCHI SENSOMOTORI (TEMPO PREVISTO 20 MINUTI)

**ORE 9.30/11.00** FINE DEI GIOCHI SENSOMÓTORI E PASSAGGIO AI GIOCHI DI RAPPRESENTAZIONE (TEMPO PREVISTO 20 MINUTI)

**ORE 9.50/11.20** FINE DEI GIOCHI DI RAPPRESENTAZIONE E RITUALE FINALE (SALUTI)

**ORE 10.00/11.30** USCITA DALLA SALA E MOMENTO IN CUI I BAMBINI SI RIVESTONO E RIENTRANO A SCUOLA (TEMPO PREVISTO 10 MINUTI)

## LABORATORIO CREATIVO DI REALIZZAZIONE MAPPE SENSORIALI SCUOLA COMUNALE DELL'INFANZIA GIANNI RODARI-SCANDIANO.

Il laboratorio ha l'intento di aiutare i bambini a rappresentare i luoghi simbolo attraverso la collaborazione/cooperazione insieme (ad esempio: disegnare sullo stesso foglio, accordarsi su cosa da disegnare e come colorarlo ecc), dove tutte le idee dei bambini vanno bene e <u>l'adulto ha il compito di facilitare</u> il processo creativo, esperenziale e la cooperazione.

Attraverso questa modalità sono ripresi alcuni concetti ed obiettivi del Laboratorio Motorio-Espressivo fatto lo scorso anno.

la relazione con gli oggetti (interazione con essi, relazione, trasformazione) la relazione e conoscenza spaziale (spostamenti, esplorazioni, azioni, costruzioni) la relazione con l'altro (scambio, ideazione, comunicazione)

In questo caso la **RAPPRESENTAZIONE** dovrebbe permettere ai bambini di arrivare alla **PROGETTAZIONE**/IDEAZIONE dell'oggetto/spazio desiderato con lo scopo di riuscire a **COSTRUIRE** insieme.

Durante la Land Exploration (come si evince dalle mappe) i bambini hanno identificato tre "Luoghi Simbolo":

- ▼ la casa degli elefanti
- ▼ la base dei cattivi
- ▼ i depositi di armi

Per la rappresentazione saranno utilizzati alcuni dei materiali che i bambini hanno usato durante l'esperienza del laboratorio motorio-espressivo: il disegno ed i legnetti.

#### **TEMPI E DURATA DELL'ATTIVITA':**

L'attività si svolgerà nel mese d'ottobre, con frequenza monosettimanale nella giornata del giovedì mattina, con inizio l'08/10/2015 e termine il 29/10/2015.

Il numero totale degli incontri previsti è di 4 incontri (due per gruppo).

L'attività avrà la durata di 1 ora complessiva e suddivisa nel seguente modo:

Accoglienza e consegna (tempo previsto 10 minuti) Esecuzione rappresentazioni (tempo previsto tre momenti da 15 minuti l'uno)

Per ogni mattinata si faranno 2 gruppi di bambini suddivisi in due turni:

1° turno: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30 2° turno: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30

#### IL GRUPPO DI BAMBINI:

Una sezione di bambini della scuola materna di 4/5 anni per un totale di 24 unità (all'interno della sezione ci sono tre bambini con disabilità). I gruppi di lavoro saranno formati da 4 gruppi (A, B, C, D) composti rispettivamente da 6 bambini.

#### DATE DEGLI INCONTRI E GRUPPI:

#### 1° Incontro: giovedì 8 ottobre

**GRUPPO A**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO B**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### 2°Incontro: giovedì 15 ottobre

**GRUPPO C**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO D**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### 3° Incontro: giovedì 22 ottobre

**GRUPPO A**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO B**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### 4°Incontro: giovedì 29 ottobre

**GRUPPO C**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO D**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### **LUOGO DOVE SVOLGERE L'ATTIVITA':**

Lo spazio dedicato sarà l'atelier all'interno della Scuola Comunale dell'Infanzia "Gianni Rodari"- Scandiano.

#### STRUTTURAZIONE DELL'ATTIVITA':

#### Il disegno

L'attività durerà complessivamente 1 ora per ogni gruppo.

Il gruppo di bambini sarà accolto in atelier dove sarà spiegata la consegna e consegnati gli adesivi con i propri nomi (tempo previsto 10 minuti).

In seguito i bambini saranno invitati a prendere posto nel "Luogo Simbolo" che dovranno rappresentare dove sarà consegnato il materiale (foglio grande e pennarelli) e così potranno iniziare a disegnare insieme, condividendo lo spazio (il foglio da disegno) ed il materiale (i pennarelli).

Per ogni rappresentazione i bambini avranno circa 15 minuti in modo tale che in circa 50 minuti riusciranno a rappresentare tutti e tre i "Luoghi Simbolo".

I bambini inizieranno nello spazio della Casa degli Elefanti, per poi passare al Deposito di Armi ed infine alla Base dei Cattivi. Essi percorreranno dunque i tre "Luoghi Simbolo", durante lo svolgersi della rappresentazione di questi.

(Se dovessero finire prima del tempo ed il tempo lo permette, si potrebbe cercare di farli raccontare/descrivere la loro produzione, magari registrando?).

#### La costruzione con i legnetti

L'attività durerà complessivamente 1 ora per ogni gruppo.

Il gruppo di bambini sarà accolto in atelier dove sarà spiegata la consegna consegnati gli adesivi con i propri nomi (tempo previsto 10 minuti).

In seguito i bambini saranno invitati a prendere posto, così come avvenuto durante il laboratorio di rappresentazione col disegno, nel "Luogo Simbolo" che dovranno rappresentare dove sarà consegnato il materiale (i legnetti) e potranno iniziare a costruire insieme, collaborando e condividendo sai spazio che materiale.

Per ogni rappresentazione i bambini avranno circa 15 minuti di tempo in modo tale che in circa 50 minuti riescono a rappresentare tutti e tre i "Luoghi Simbolo".

Alla fine del tempo sarà scattata una foto della costruzione in modo che ne rimanga traccia e che possa essere usata nella fase di progettazione/realizzazione, dopodiché i bambini potranno smontarla e spostarsi a costruire nello spazio successivo.

(Se dovessero finire prima del tempo ed il tempo lo permette, si potrebbe cercare di farli raccontare/descrivere la loro produzione, magari registrando?).

#### **MATERIALI:**

- per il disegno servirebbero 3 fogli abbastanza grandi per fare disegnare comodamente 6 bambini e barattoli con i pennarelli
- per i legnetti useranno tutti i legnetti a disposizione (che saranno portati da Pia)

## 4.4 CREATIVE WORKSHOP AT RODARI SCHOLL - 3' STEP CONCEPTION AND CONSTRUCTION - Y2015

### C&T terzo step. Conception and Construction

Il laboratorio ha l'intento di aiutare i bambini a rappresentare i luoghi simbolo attraverso la collaborazione/cooperazione insieme (ad esempio: disegnare sullo stesso foglio, accordarsi su cosa da disegnare e come colorarlo ecc), dove tutte le idee dei bambini vanno bene e l'adulto ha il compito di facilitare il processo creativo, esperenziale e la cooperazione.

Attraverso questa modalità sono ripresi alcuni concetti ed obiettivi del laboratorio motorio-espressivo fatto lo scorso anno.

- la relazione con gli oggetti (interazione con essi, relazione, trasformazione)
- la relazione e conoscenza spaziale (spostamenti, esplorazioni, azioni, costruzioni)
- la relazione con l'altro (scambio, ideazione, comunicazione)

In questo caso la RAPPRESENTAZIONE dovrebbe permettere ai bambini di arrivare alla PROGETTAZIONE/IDEAZIONE dell'oggetto/spazio desiderato con lo scopo di riuscire a COSTRUIRE insieme.

Durante **la Land Exploration** (come si evince dalle mappe) i bambini hanno identificato tre luoghi simbolo:

- la casa degli elefanti
- la base dei cattivi
- i depositi di armi

Per la rappresentazione saranno utilizzati alcuni dei materiali che i bambini hanno usato durante l'esperienza del laboratorio motorio-espressivo: il disegno ed i legnetti.

#### TEMPI E DURATA DELL'ATTIVITA':

L'attività si svolgerà nel mese d'ottobre, con frequenza monosettimanale nella giornata del giovedì mattina, con inizio l'08/10/2015 e termine il 29/10/2015.

Il numero totale degli incontri previsti è di 4 incontri (due per gruppo).

L'attività avrà la durata di 1 ora complessiva e suddivisa nel seguente modo:

Accoglienza e consegna (tempo previsto 10 minuti)

Esecuzione rappresentazioni (tempo previsto tre momenti da 15 minuti l'uno)

Per ogni mattinata si faranno 2 gruppi di bambini suddivisi in due turni:

1° turno: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30 2° turno: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30

#### IL GRUPPO DI BAMBINI:

Una sezione di bambini della scuola materna di 4/5 anni per un totale di 24 unità (all'interno della sezione ci sono tre bambini con disabilità). I gruppi di lavoro saranno formati da 4 gruppi (A, B, C, D) composti rispettivamente da 6 bambini.

#### **DATE DEGLI INCONTRI E GRUPPI:**

1° Incontro: giovedì 8 ottobre

**GRUPPO A**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO B**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

2°Incontro: giovedì 15 ottobre

**GRUPPO C**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO D**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: disegnare LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### 3° Incontro: giovedì 22 ottobre

**GRUPPO A**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO B**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### 4°Incontro: giovedì 29 ottobre

**GRUPPO C**: dalle 9.30 alle 10.30. Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI

ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

**GRUPPO D**: dalle 10.30 alle 11.30 Consegna: costruire LA CASA DEGLI ELEFANTI, IL DEPOSITO DELLE ARMI PER DIFENDERSI, LA CASA DEI CATTIVI

#### **LUOGO DOVE SVOLGERE L'ATTIVITA':**

Lo spazio dedicato sarà l'atelier all'interno della Scuola Comunale dell'Infanzia "G. Rodari".

#### STRUTTURAZIONE DELL'ATTIVITA':

#### Il disegno

L'attività durerà complessivamente 1 ora per ogni gruppo.

Il gruppo di bambini sarà accolto in atelier dove sarà spiegata la consegna (tempo previsto 10 minuti).

In seguito i bambini saranno invitati a prendere posto nei "Luogo Simbolo" che dovranno rappresentare dove sarà consegnato il materiale (foglio grande e pennarelli) e così potranno iniziare a disegnare (per ogni rappresentazione i bambini avranno circa 15 minuti in modo tale che in circa 50 minuti riusciranno a rappresentare tutti e tre i luoghi simbolo).

I bambini inizieranno nello spazio della Casa degli Elefanti, per poi passare al Deposito di Armi ed infine alla Base dei Cattivi. Essi percorreranno dunque i tre "Luoghi Simbolo", durante lo svolgersi della rappresentazione di questi.

(Se dovessero finire prima del tempo ed il tempo lo permette, si potrebbe cercare di farli raccontare/descrivere la loro produzione, magari registrando?).

#### La costruzione con i legnetti

L'attività durerà complessivamente 1 ora per ogni gruppo.

Il gruppo di bambini sarà accolto in atelier dove sarà spiegata la consegna (tempo previsto 10 minuti).

In seguito i bambini saranno invitati a prendere posto, così come avvenuto durante

il laboratorio di rappresentazione col disegno, nei "Luogo Simbolo" che dovranno rappresentare dove sarà consegnato il materiale (i legnetti) e potranno iniziare a costruire tutti insieme collaborando e condividendo il materiale (per ogni rappresentazione i bambini avranno circa 15 minuti di tempo in modo tale che in circa 50 minuti riescono a rappresentare tutti e tre i luoghi simbolo).

Alla fine del tempo sarà scattata una foto della costruzione in modo che ne rimanga traccia e che possa essere usata nella fase di progettazione/realizzazione, dopodiché i bambini potranno smontarla e spostarsi a costruire nello spazio successivo.

(Se dovessero finire prima del tempo ed il tempo lo permette, si potrebbe cercare di farli raccontare/descrivere la loro produzione, magari registrando?).

### MATERIALI:

- per il disegno servirebbero 3 fogli abbastanza grandi per fare disegnare comodamente 6 bambini e barattoli con i pennarelli
- per i legnetti useranno tutti i legnetti a disposizione.

# 4.5 MUSIC WORKSHOP "MUSIC IN CONSTRUCTION & THERAPY-FINDING A MUSIC IN THE PATTERN LANGUAGE" AT THE RODARI SCHOLL-Y 2015

#### CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPHY – Music dept. – II step

#### Introduzione ovvero riassunto della prima parte

Il suono ha un senso ha un significato? Innanzitutto per rispondere a questa domanda bisogna partire dal corpo che lo genera. Se esso è un corpo vivente avrà un respiro, un ritmo interiore dettato dalle naturali inclinazioni e morfologia intrinseche, dettato dai ritmi naturali del movimento e della quiete, dettato, nel nostro caso dalla libera scelta di esplorare la percussione delle proprie parti, della voce, l'uso della bocca in maniera non fonatoria, il percuotere corpi esterni.

I corpi esterni, come noi, sono fatti di materia. Materia inanimata, che si può plasmare in maniera apposita o trovare "in natura" (anche se oramai la nostra esperienza di vita cittadina ci fa imbattere prevalentemente in manufatti e strutture costruite dall'uomo) oppure può essere materiale destituito della propria funzione e utilizzato per scopi sonori o musicali.

Nella prima parte del nostro lavoro abbiamo fatto sì che i bambini potessero esplorare in maniera cosciente i suoni che le loro membra o cavità naturali producono se percosse, abbiamo studiato gli effetti della voce nella riverberazione di vari ambienti e scoperto come essa cambia in base alla morfologia della stanza in cui è prodotta e abbiamo studiato il suono dei materiali percossi, sfregati...talvolta rotti e traforati!

Il nostro lavoro di esplorazione ci è servito anche ad associare sensazioni e significati astratti associati ai luoghi ed ai materiali. Abbiamo così cercato una tana in cui passare il letargo al termine della canzone delle foglie che cadono in autunno, abbiamo costruito delle case, città, basi segrete, parchi divertimento che si potevano poi "suonare" con delle bacchette e perfino uno strumento musicale in cui ciascuno di noi ha aggiunto un pezzettino.

#### Come proseguire dopo il lavoro di Land Exploration?

Durante la fase di Land Exploration di cui faceva parte integrante il laboratorio musicale, i bambini hanno esplorato lo spazio esprimendo sensazioni e bisogni che questo spazio evocava o suscitava in loro.

A seguito di questo lavoro di estrazione è avvenuta anche la mappatura dello spazio Atelier. In base al loro sentire essi hanno deciso che la loro area di maggiore confort sarebbe stata una Casa degli Elefanti, dalla quale combattere contro il punto che per loro era di maggior disagio, la "Base dei cattivi" per fare questo avrebbero avuto bisogno di armi ed ecco pertanto nascere nel progetto 3 depositi di armi, frutto di scelte emotive, ma anche logico-strategiche. Una base delle armi, luoghi dove potersi riposare e riprendere contatto con se' stessi è costruita proprio accanto alla "Base dei cattivi" per poterla combattere meglio, ma anche per poter averne una facile via di fuga.

Ci sembra logico, dal punto di vista musicale che il lavoro che ci proporremo di fare per i prossimi incontri sarà un lavoro legato a questo schema costruttivo, che farà da quida alla costruzione vera e propria:

#### 1. Ritrovare i materiali e collocarli in base alle loro proprietà evocative

I materiali che abbiamo utilizzato l'anno scorso sono stati conosciuti inizialmente come astratti corpi sonori, da esplorare ed usare per accompagnarci nel canto e nella ricerca di suoni <u>"belli" o "brutt</u>i".

Questo lavoro di esplorazione e ricerca, di costruzione di quello che Christopher Alexander chiamerebbe probabilmente "Pattern Language" e che in C&T è stato inserito nella "Land Exploration", ci consente di riprogettare questi luoghi. Questo attraverso la catalogazione dei materiali in base al significato che essi hanno acquisito nella coscienza collettiva dei 2 gruppi di bambini. I materiali possono in questo modo veicolare un significato simbolico capace di evocare ricordi ed emozioni.

Verrà chiesto pertanto ai bambini di selezionare i materiali con cui andremo a costruire i tre centri.

Nel primo esercizio che ci proponiamo di fare loro uno o 2 a turno percuoteranno e sfregheranno i vari materiali mentre gli altri bambini decideranno di quale delle tre costruzioni/categorie potranno diventare i mattoni costitutivi.

#### 2. Costruire una "pattern language" per analizzare i fenomeni musicali della nostra civiltà

I bambini saranno chiamati a scegliere delle musiche, tra quelle che ascolteranno, capaci di evocare le tre sensazioni mappate: Sicurezza – Paura – Rassicurazione.

Scelte le musiche si costruirà un'architettura sonora corrispondente che verrà collocata nei punti identificati sulla mappa e corrispondenti alle tre sensazioni sopraelencate: Casa degli Elefanti, Base dei Cattivi e Deposito armi.

Una volta costruiti i 3 ambienti, ai bambini sarà richiesto di accompagnare tali musiche, con la guida del Conduttore.

Ogni spazio e sensazione saranno trattati singolarmente in ogni incontro.

Quello che ci aspettiamo di poter trovare è una conferma del modo in cui le caratteristiche dinamiche, armoniche, ritmiche, melodiche e agogiche della musica vengono utilizzate solitamente per evocare queste sensazioni. Siamo consapevoli che detta conferma potrebbe essere anche indotta da fattori culturali attraverso l'esposizione, dei bambini, a "colonne sonore" di cartoni animati, pubblicità e lungometraggi. Tuttavia siamo crediamo che, data la brevità del tempo di esposizione al linguaggio musicale simbolico convenzionale della nostra civiltà musicale (il nostro "pattern language" musicale) e le suggestioni suscitate di volta in volta dai commenti e dalle situazioni che potrebbero scaturire spontaneamente, i bambini potrebbero fornire risposte imprevedibili o non convenzionali.

#### 3. Emozioni collocate nel corpo

Lavorando sulle musiche scelte dai bambini essi dovranno utilizzare il corpo, la voce e il movimento per incarnare lo spirito di queste musiche, indicando anche la parte del proprio corpo che esprime di più la sensazione di maggiore confort, di agio/ stasi e di disagio/rabbia assimilabili a Sicurezza – Paura – Rassicurazione.

Questo ci permetterà di ricongiungere i fili del nostro lavoro con uno dei punti di partenza: l'esplorazione del nostro corpo come oggetto sonoro, strumento espressivo e veicolo di relazione con gli altri. Una sorta di unione percettiva di interno ed esterno che ci permetterà di "sentire l'ambiente" e le nostre sensazioni legate ad esso.

#### 4. Costruzione di uno strumento musicale che rappresenti l'unità del nostro gruppo

Anche per questo laboratorio cercheremo di far costruire ai bambini uno strumento musicale, che possa essere diverso per ognuno di loro e rappresentare una costruzione che parta dalle loro scelte e che diventa patrimonio collettivo.

Pensiamo ad un cerchio di oggetti da percuotere o a dei bastoni della pioggia o a un tavolo polimorfo, che possa contenere oggetti a frizione a percussione a pizzico, con cui poter giocare a piacere e che possa rimanere nella scuola a "portata di bambino"!

- Ogni lezione costruzione di uno strumento del sentimento
- Fotografia di ogni strumento a fine lezione prima di tornare in sezione.
- Report di ogni lezione

### 4.6 PROJECT 'CONSTRUCTION & MUSIC' AT RODARI 2014/2015

# Associazione Culturale Il giardino dei linguaggi



#### Laboratorio musicale di costruzione sonora ed esplorazione del sé e dello spazio

#### Introduzione

La musica è un linguaggio espressivo, le cui regole costitutive sono state nella storia create a posteriori rispetto alle stesse creazioni musicali. Ciò perché essa stessa è un linguaggio intuitivo, le cui regole possono essere acquisite in maniera informale e modellate a seconda delle culture, dei contesti e delle necessità espressive del singolo esecutore o compositore. Essa si manifesta come istinto primordiale, fenomeno intrinseco alla natura umana e alle diverse culture trasversali. Probabilmente esso stesso è una risposta dell'uomo ad esigenze intrinseche alla propria natura: esigenze di movimento, di espressione del sé, esigenze di tipo relazionale e... ludiche!

Il musicista che crea in primo luogo gioca e si diverte, pasticcia, perde e riprende il filo conduttore che lo aveva guidato all'inizio. Crea per se stesso ma anche per altri, in talune pratiche e civiltà musicali crea con e per gli altri. Tanti elementi della pratica musicale possono essere ricondotti alla pratica del gioco simbolico o della ricerca/esplorazione del sé attraverso ciò che si può produrre o modificare, non tanto in una materia plastica o in forma pittorica, quanto nell'aria che ci circonda.

Il bambino è un'entità le cui capacità di apprendimento, necessità di relazione, di sperimentazione si esprimono e si realizzano in un percorso per lo più autonomo, attraverso l'imitazione, il gioco, l'immedesimazione, la sperimentazione. Il maestro di musica diverrà pertanto nel percorso proposto una guida, una fonte di proposte più che un *conductor* (direttore di esecuzioni, le cui scelte estetiche nell'orchestra sono legge). Guideremo i bambini attraverso l'esplorazione sonora di materiali e spazi differenti, chiedendo loro di esprimere delle scelte in base alle emozioni che tali esplorazioni susciteranno in loro, per poi chiamarli a scegliere e a giocare con tali materiali e soprattutto con una nuova consapevolezza e nuovi strumenti espressivi, che saranno utilizzati in maniera organizzata.

Partiremo dal suono e dall'ambiente per creare musiche (produzione sonora organizzata nel tempo) ma anche contesti che potranno diventare ambiti esecutivi e costruzioni.

In base alle scelte dei bambini stileremo un repertorio di materiali e relative reazioni emotive da poter utilizzare nell'ambito del progetto Construction & Therapy per partire da un concetto di ambiente ideale che possa essere utilizzato dai progettisti come punto di partenza per una costruzione reale che si adatti il più possibile alle aspirazioni e alle caratteristiche fisiche ed emotive dei bambini che andranno ad abitarlo, perseguendo la soddisfazione dei bisogni, dei desideri di questi ultimi, cioè la realizzazione dei loro SOGNI.

#### Modalità

Il nostro intervento si dipanerà secondo 3 direttrici principali:

- LAND EXPLORATION ovvero SPAZIO INTERNO IN RELAZIONE ALLO SPAZIO EMOTIVO (conseguenza del fatto sonoro presentato o prodotto e rielaborato) E CORPOREO consapevolezza delle "feelings" e del proprio corpo.
  - FIELD WORK: il corpo capace di produrre suoni diversi in ogni sua parte, ciascuno può sperimentare scegliere e rappresentarsi attraverso la pratica della Body Percussion: trasferiremo in un secondo momento la produzione dal corpo allo spazio circostante, percuotendone le parti costitutive con delle "bacchette magiche" (mallets per piastre sonore) che ne "rivelano la voce". Assoceremo i suoni del nostro corpo ad un animale e quelli dell'ambiente ad ipotetiche tane dei nostri animali. Ciascun animale avrà un significato simbolico riconducibile ad uno stato d'animo o ad un'emozione evocata o indotta.
- 2. SPAZIO ESTERNO E SPAZIO INTERNO/ SUONI e MOVIMENTO ovvero LO SPAZIO ESTERNO come "materiale" di sperimentazione sonora, ascolto, momento di presa di coscienza del sé.
  - SUONO E MOVIMENTO/SUONO E AMBIENTE: sarà fatto notare ai bambini come l'avvicinarsi e l'allontanarsi di una fonte sonora contribuisca alla dinamica: uno di noi si avvicinerà o si allontanerà dal gruppo suonando e battendo le mani. Ciò si otterrà dividendo i bambini in due gruppi, che poi saranno fatti avvicinare ed allontanare assieme. Il suono è come un'onda nel mare e, secondo lo spazio in cui siamo, quest'onda ci viene riflessa indietro. Ascoltiamo i suoni da noi prodotti nello spazio: in atelier, nella stanza della musica, all'aperto. Negli stessi luoghi ascoltiamo i suoni che vi si possono ascoltare senza il nostro intervento. Quali sono i primi 3 suoni che sentiamo? Come sono questi suoni? Belli, brutti, amici, nemici. Utilizzo di suoni registrati: traffico, fabbrica, scuola con bambini e loro analisi oggettiva e soggettiva (Dove siamo? E' un posto bello? Perché?).

#### 3. COSTRUZIONI SONORE/PROGETTAZIONE

• IL SUONO COME PROPRIETA' INTRINSECA DEI MATERIALI: alcuni oggetti diverranno dei corpi sonori. Essi avranno suoni diversi, non solo dovuti al materiale che li costituisce, ma anche alla loro forma. Scopriremo che oggetti grossi e pieni avranno un suono sordo e che oggetti piccoli o vuoti risuoneranno meglio. Una misura grande ci darà suoni gravi, una misura piccola ci darà suoni acuti. Costruiremo lo xilofono: il legno è lo stesso, ma la lunghezza differente dei tasselli ci permette di ottenere suoni differenti.

Costruiremo anche una città dei materiali, dove ci saranno differenti quartieri secondo il suono o dei materiali.

#### **Svolgimento**

Ciascuna lezione sarà concepita come una struttura a Climax, in una sorta di curva a campana del livello di impegno/difficoltà dove la parte più corposa sarà affrontata nella parte centrale, lasciano a margine le attività più libere o di "scaricamento" emotivo. La durata di ogni incontro sarà di circa 45 minuti.

- 1. Benvenuti nel paese della musica, dove si parla poco e si canta molto, dove si ascoltano le voci degli altri degli strumenti e degli oggetti. Introduzione di alcune canzoni che diverranno catalizzatrici dei vari momenti (saluto, movimento e relative invenzioni, ritmi con strumenti etc).
- 2. Ognuno di noi ha un corpo che produce un suono in vari modi: li esploriamo e ne prendiamo coscienza associandoli al nome di un animale. Come sul nostro corpo anche la stanza della musica ha dei suoni: ecco delle bacchette magiche (mallets) con cui esplorare l'ambiente della stanza. Trovato un suono lo associamo alla tana di un animale. Dove potrebbe essere la tana del NOSTRO animale? Ci appoggiamo l'orecchio per sentire cosa sente un animale "rintanato".
- 3. Studio sul movimento e sui movimenti: su una canzone di volta in volta cantata inventiamo dei movimenti: che cosa siamo con quel movimento? Esploriamo l'atelier con le bacchette magiche.
- 4. Sperimentiamo i materiali! In atelier il maestro di musica avrà disposto vari materiali. Con le bacchette magiche ne esploriamo il suono e poi proviamo ad inventare delle canzoni. Cosa ci evocano i vari materiali presentati?
- 5. Esploriamo altri materiali, soprattutto il legno. Dopo un poco il maestro ci presenta le gambe dei tavoli segate a segmenti di diversa lunghezza, con i sostegni e le bacchette costruiamo assieme uno xilofono (i tasselli li mettiamo in ordine sparso e poi proviamo ad inventare una canzone). Poi li mettiamo dal più piccolo al più grande e suoniamo la NOSTRA scala.
- Xilofoni di metallo: gioco con gli xilofoni e parallelismi con la scala della lezione precedente. Invenzione di una canzone con poche note.
- 7. Mostriamo ai bambini una bacinella piena d'acqua: quando cantiamo il suono esce dalla nostra bocca e rimbalza come un'onda nella stanza per poi tornare nelle nostre orecchie. Andiamo a vedere cosa succede se cantiamo nelle scatole, negli armadietti, all'esterno e...attraverso un tubo!!!
- 8. Se cantiamo emettiamo dei suoni artificiali, se ascoltiamo invece possiamo sentire i suoni naturali delle stanze, come gli animaletti nelle nostre tane. Andiamo in ciascun ambiente contiamo alla rovescia e scriviamo i primi 3, 4 o 5 suoni che sentiamo. Rientrati componiamo una canzone con i foulards e ci addormentiamo per poi tornare in uno dei posti visitati. Non lo dobbiamo dire al maestro: lo indovina lui perché noi glielo faremo indovinare imitando una delle cose che abbiamo sentito.
- 9. Città della musica: disponiamo noi i corpi sonori per costruire la MAPPA di una città. Chiediamo ai bambini cosa c'è in ogni quartiere, cos'è ogni cosa.
- 10. Ricapitolazione dell'esperienza, riproposizione e rilettura della città ed eventuale serata con i genitori.

#### Risorse umane e materiali

Chi coordina gli incontri:

#### Luca De Marchi



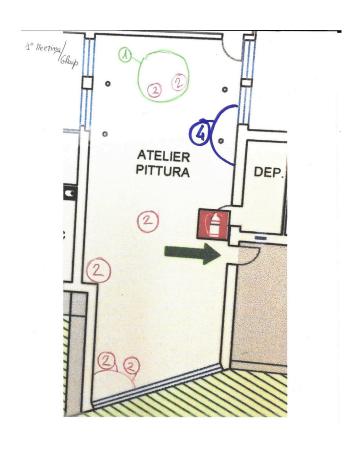
Insegnante di musica, propedeutica musicale, musicista e musicologo. Progetta e realizza laboratori musicali per scuole dell'infanzia, asili nido, centri per la famiglia, scuole elementari e superiori.

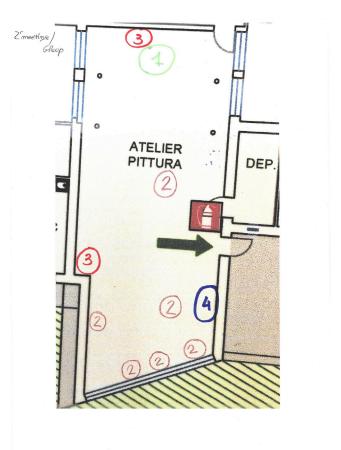
Nel 2007 si è laureato in Discipline dell'Arte, della Musica e dello Spettacolo presso l'Università degli studi di Bologna. Nel 2008 ha conseguito la licenza di Teoria e solfeggio presso il conservatorio G. Frescobaldi di Ferrara. Nel 2009 ha frequentato il corso di formazione per insegnanti presso l'associazione culturale *Music Together* di Bologna. Dal 2010 è insegnante e coordinatore dei corsi pomeridiani per bambini dai 6 mesi ai 6 anni di età col programma *Music Together* a Reggio Emilia, Verona e Mantova, ideatore e conduttore di progetti musicali presso asili nido, scuole dell'infanzia e primarie.

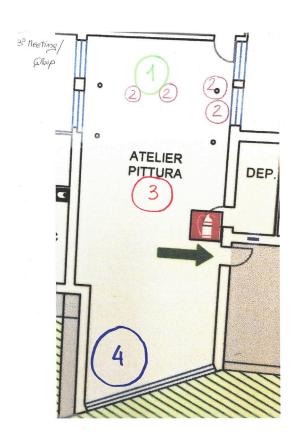
#### Materiali:

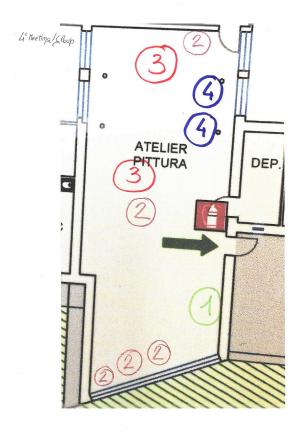
I materiali che saranno utilizzati per le esplorazioni sonore sono forniti dal centro di riciclaggio creativo "Re Mida" e dalla ditta "Messori Arredamenti" di Scandiano. Essi comprendono, vari tagli di legno alcuni creati ad hoc per il laboratorio, altri presi da materiale di scarto. Piastrelle di varie misure e dimensioni, tubi di carta, pannelli di cartone, ritagli di pvc e propilene espanso, scatole ed imballaggi di carta, cartone e materie plastiche.

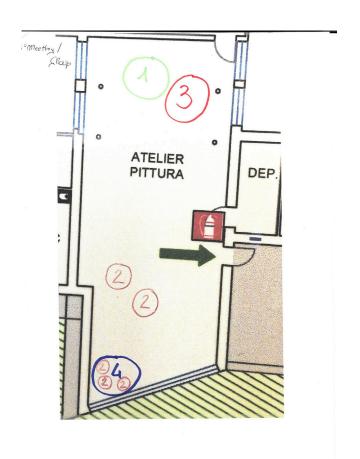
### 4.7 RODARI' MAPS

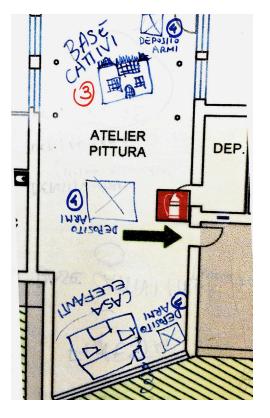






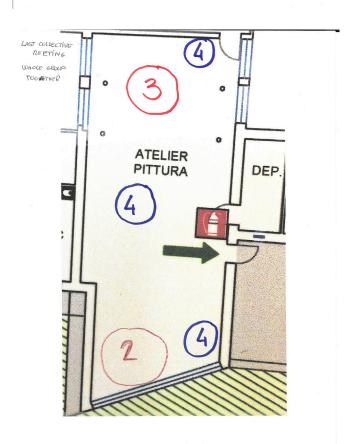




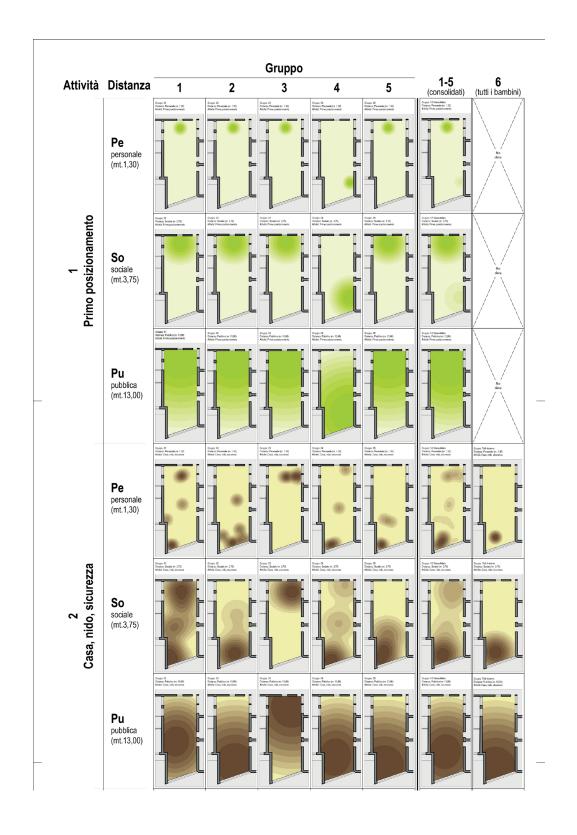


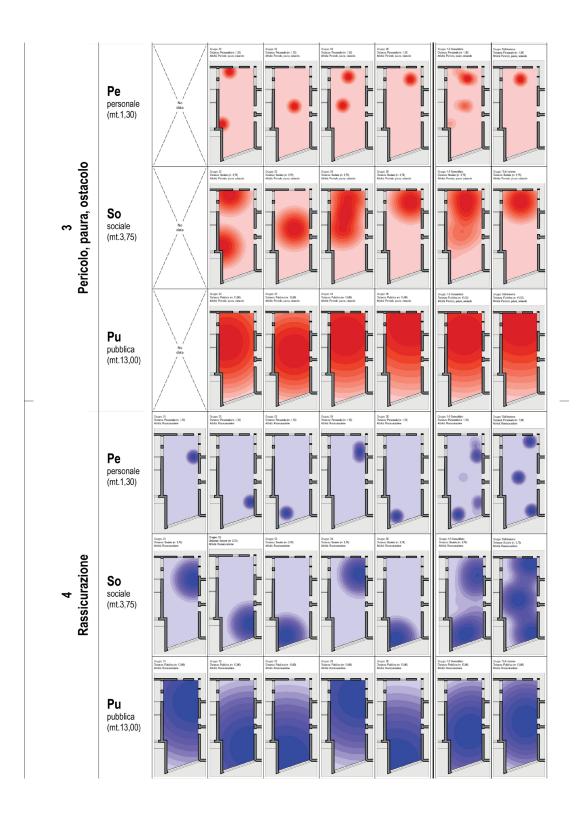
- PRIHO POSIZIONAMENTO
- 2) NIDO \_ CASA \_ SICUREZZA

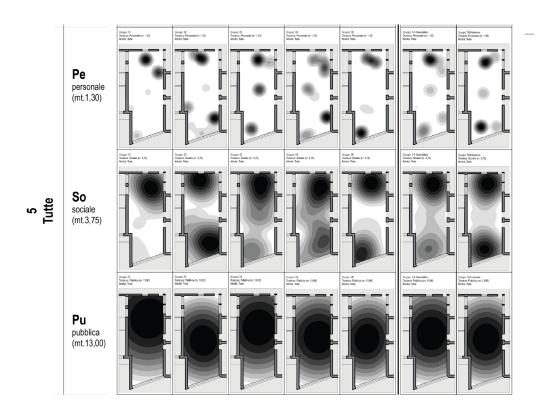
  NEST \_ HOME SELF. CONFIDENCE
- 3) PERICOLO PAURA OSTA COLO
  PLACE of DANGEROUS, SCARED,
  STUMBLING BLOCK
- (4) LUOGHI DI RASSICURAZIONE
  PLACES OF SAFETY



#### 4.8 RODARI'DENSITY MAP







4.9 REPORT RODARI' WORKSHOPS - BOSCHETTO DI PAN - REPORT OF THE LABORATORIES CARRIED OUT AT THE "G. RODARI " OF SCANDIANO BY THE ASSOCIATION. P.S. IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN ON 2015 2/3' OCTOBER

#### IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN

Psiche Armonia Natura



### Relazione dei laboratori svolti presso la Scuola "G. Rodari" di Scandiano a cura dell'Associazione. P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan 2/3 ottobre 2015

Le due giornate di laboratorio proposte dall' A. P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan hanno avuto lo scopo di accompagnare bambini, genitori e insegnanti della Scuola G. Rodari in un processo di progettazione e costruzione creative, basato sul dialogo analogico e sulla collaborazione reciproca, a partire da esperienze psicocorporee percettive e relazionali, mirate a facilitare, attraverso il gioco simbolico, il contatto corporeo e la comunicazione non verbale, lo sviluppo della fiducia e della connessione tra i partecipanti, dando vita alla formazione di un gruppo, orientato al raggiungimento di un obiettivo condiviso. La ricerca, la scoperta e il dialogo tra "forme" prima corporee e poi grafiche ha permesso a ogni coppia genitore/bambino e a coppie di insegnanti di progettare e costruire insieme un oggetto artistico, attraverso l'attivazione di più canali: percettivo -sensoriale/ emotivo -relazionale/ cognitivo - verbale.

### VENERDI 2 OTTOBRE DALLA PERCEZIONE ALLA FORMA

laboratorio corporeo-artistico condotto da Sandra Pierpaoli, Psicologa, Psicoterapeuta a orientamento bioenergetico, Teatro Terapeuta (A.P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan)

Questo laboratorio è stato rivolto separatamente a bambini e genitori. Nella mattinata si sono susseguiti due gruppi di 10/12 bambini ciascuno per la durata di un'ora per ogni gruppo, mentre nel pomeriggio si è svolto un laboratorio rivolto ai genitori della durata di 2 ore. Le insegnanti e la coordinatrice del progetto hanno attivamente partecipato a tutti i laboratori . Al gruppo con i genitori ha preso parte anche la psicopedagogista. In tutte le attività proposte è stata usata la musica per facilitare la comunicazione non verbale, il coordinamento e la continuità del percorso, il rilassamento muscolare e la ricettività . Le tecniche usate in questo laboratorio sono state quelle psicocorporee dell'Analisi Bioenergetica e delle Arti Terapie Integrate (Danzamovimentoterapia, Teatroterapia, Arte Terapia, Musicoterapia). I materiali utilizzati sono stati fogli e pennarelli.

#### Attività proposte ai 3 gruppi:

#### Presentazione in gruppo di ogni partecipante

I partecipanti sono stati invitati a formare un cerchio e presentarsi pronunciando il proprio nome che è stato ripetuto a voce alta da tutto il gruppo , poi attraverso un gesto espressivo anch'esso rispecchiato da tutto il gruppo, infine attraverso nome e gesto insieme con l'eco del gruppo per ogni partecipante.

#### obiettivi

- -presentazione ed inclusione dell'identità di ognuno nel gruppo
- -riconoscimento di ognuno da parte del gruppo
- -espressione e riconoscimento della creatività spontanea di ognuno all'interno del gruppo

#### IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN

#### Psiche Armonia Natura



#### Gioco dell'auto lavaggio

In gruppi di tre , ognuno ha rappresentato a turno un automobile e i due compagni l'auto lavaggio, nel susseguirsi delle azioni di insaponare-passare con le spazzole-sciacquare-asciugare. Questo gioco ha permesso di avvicinarsi al proprio corpo e a quello dell'altro con una modalità simbolica facilitante.

- -facilitare la percezione di sé, dei propri limiti corporei e del proprio schema corporeo
- -facilitare il contatto e la fiducia reciproca attraverso il gioco simbolico

Gioco del burattino/burattinaio
Questo gioco si è svolto in coppie, con l'assunzione a turno del ruolo attivo del burattinaio e del ruolo ricettivo del burattino. Il burattinaio ha "mosso il burattino, facendogli assumere diverse posizioni a suo piacimento, con l'accortezza di muovere il burattino con delicatezza. Il burattino ha assunto così diverse forme, finché il burattinaio lo ha collocato in una forma conclusiva, che il burattino ha mantenuto per un tempo più lungo, permettendo ai burattinai di osservare le loro creazioni.

#### obiettivi

- -sviluppare ricettività e fiducia tra i partecipanti
- -percepire, scoprire ed osservare le diverse forme possibili che può assumere il corpo, ampliando le potenzialità espressive di ognuno e sviluppando la flessibilità rispetto alla percezione del proprio schema
- -sviluppare la fiducia nelle proprie risorse creative
- -operare scelte intuitive tra le forme sentite come più significative

#### Elaborazione grafica

I partecipanti sono stati invitati a disegnare su un foglio la forma o l'insieme di forme che hanno percepito come maggiormente significative durante le esperienze fatte, con la consegna di rappresentare sul foglio le proprie sensazioni

- -rappresentare e rielaborare graficamente la propria esperienza corporea
- -creare la base per la progettazione dell'oggetto da costruire nel laboratorio successivo

#### Con il gruppo di genitori

Le attività fin qui proposte proposte sono state maggiormente approfondite nelle seguenti fasi:

#### Presentazione iniziale in cerchio

E ' stata proposta una breve presentazione verbale da parte dei conduttori e una breve presentazione verbale di ogni partecipante, che ha potuto così iniziare ad entrare a far parte del gruppo, a partire dal canale maggiormente utilizzato dagli adulti, che è quello cognitivo - verbale. Il gioco della presentazione di sé e del riconoscimento dell'altro è stato quindi proposto in modo più graduale, passando attraverso una fase di attivazione corporea mediante lo scambio di posti, prima pronunciando il proprio nome e poi pronunciando il nome dell'altro

#### obiettivi

-preparare gli adulti alla messa in gioco del corpo e all'attivazione dei canali percettivo -sensoriale ed emotivo -relazionale

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#### IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN

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#### Camminare nello spazio

Questa esperienza è stata proposta subito dopo il cerchio iniziale e prima di iniziare i giochi, per "riscaldare" il corpo e per facilitare la comunicazione non verbale tra i partecipanti. E' stato proposto di sperimentare vari modi di camminare e di incontrarsi nello spazio, sperimentando ritmi, modalità e qualità diversi e momenti di stop, intesi come occasioni di percezione di se stessi e della propria forma nello spazio. Sono state proposte esperienze di facilitazione di incontro con l'altro, attraverso il collegamento dello sguardo

#### obiettivi

- -facilitare il contatto con il proprio corpo
- -facilitare il contatto tra i partecipanti
- -sviluppare l'uso di più qualità di movimento
- arricchire il vocabolario espressivo

#### Giocare con le forme

Questa serie di esperienze è stata proposta agli adulti dopo il gioco a coppie burattino-burattinaio. I burattini hanno fatto l'esperienza di mantenere più a lungo la posizione conclusiva in cui i burattinai l'hanno messi. I burattinai prima uno per volta e poi tutti insieme si sono mossi nello spazio, cambiando le posizioni di tutti i burattini. Tutti i partecipanti contemporaneamente hanno poi iniziato a cambiare da soli la propria forma a proprio piacimento. Hanno poi iniziato a comporre forme prima a coppie e poi in più persone, fino a che tutto il gruppo ha composto una forma unica

#### obiettivi

- -approfondire la percezione e l'osservazione delle forme in sé e nell'altro
- -assumere il ruolo attivo e creativo di creazione di forme
- -creare una connessione tra i partecipanti e nel gruppo

#### Con tutti

#### Cerchio finale

Nel cerchio finale è stata proposta la chiusura dell'esperienza, con consegne adattate alle esigenze diversificate di ogni gruppo

#### Primo gruppo di bambini

L'esperienza si è conclusa attraverso la creazione di un cerchio che si è preso per mano e si è poi salutato lasciandosi la mano al tre con un grande ciao. In questo gruppo infatti il bisogno prevalente percepito al conduttore è stato quello di far sentire ai bambini il senso e la continuità del gruppo, creando l'esperienza finale di un contenitore

#### Secondo gruppo di bambini

Oltre all'esperienza conclusiva descritta per il primo gruppo, è stato proposto a ogni bambino di rappresentare con il corpo la forma disegnata, sottolineando così l'aspetto trasformativo dall'esperienza iniziale spontanea proposta durante il cerchio di apertura all'esperienza di una forma riconoscibile e canalizzata. Ciò è stato possibile perché questo gruppo si è mostrato maggiormente coordinato e connesso

### Gruppo dei genitori

E' stata proposta una condivisione verbale dei vissuti sperimentati durante le esperienze, nella quale il gruppo di adulti (genitori e operatori) ha rimandato in modo unanime la facilità con cui il gruppo si è

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### IL BOSCHETTO DI PAN

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relazionato, il piacere di ritrovare la possibilità di giocare e l'importanza di questa esperienza per la comunicazione con i propri figli.

## **SABATO 3 OTTOBRE**

#### IMMAGINO, CREO, COSTRUISCO.. CON TE

laboratorio di Artigianato Artistico Educativo condotto da Tonino Aspergo,
Counselor Biosistemico e Facilitatore di gruppi, Esperto in Artigianato Artistico Educativo (A.P.S. Il Boschetto di Pan)

Il laboratorio è stato rivolto a genitori, bambini e insegnanti per la durata di 2 ore il sabato mattina. Vi ha preso parte anche la Coordinatrice del progetto . E' stato proposto un lavoro a coppie bambinogenitore e operatore-operatore. Le tecniche usate in questo laboratorio sono state l'Arte Terapia e l'Artigianato Artistico Educativo, che coniuga il Counseling Biosistemico e la Comunicazione Ecologica con l'utilizzo di tecniche di Artigianato Artistico. E' stata usata una musica di sottofondo, che ha facilitato la concentrazione e il contenimento del gruppo. I materiali utilizzati sono stati: forme di legno triangolari, circolari, pentagonali, trapezoidali, ovali , quadrate dello spessore di 1 cm ., colla, forbici, fogli, pennarelli, trucioli di legno, riviste, bottoni, fili colorati, porporina, perline ecc. ecc.

Lo spazio è stato predisposto con tavolini di legno e sedie, ognuno per due coppie.

All'inizio dell'attività è stato proposto ai bambini di presentare ognuno il proprio genitore al gruppo. Il Conduttore ha stretto la mano ad ogni singolo genitore man mano che i bambini lo presentavano al gruppo. Ciò ha consentito di creare una continuità tra i gruppi separati di bambini e genitori del giorno precedente e di far sentire ai bambini che stavano acconsentendo ad accogliere nel proprio mondo i propri genitori.

E' iniziato poi il dialogo analogico di ogni coppia, a partire dagli elaborati grafici del giorno precedente.

In una prima fase sono stati collocati vicini i disegni elaborati da ognuno nei laboratori separati, invitando i partecipanti ad osservare il disegno dell'altro e ad accorgersi di somiglianze e differenze.

Ogni partecipante è stato poi invitato ad evidenziare all'interno del proprio disegno una forma sentita come più significativa e a creare così una sagoma con un pennarello.

Ogni partecipante ha poi disegnato la sagoma così ottenuta su un nuovo foglio, l'ha maggiormente definita e colorata e l'ha infine ritagliata

Le coppie genitore/bambino e operatore/operatore hanno composto le due sagome incollandole su un foglio più grande, andando a definire una forma nuova comune

Ogni coppia ha rappresentato con il corpo la forma creata sul foglio, dando vita ad una composizione "vivente" tra i due partecipanti della coppia.

Ogni coppia ha poi iniziato la fase di costruzione degli oggetti , a partire dalla forma composta sul foglio e rappresentata con il corpo. A questo scopo sono state utilizzate a piacere le forme geometriche di legno da incollare e il materiale da decorazione messo a disposizione.

Una volta conclusa la fase di costruzione dell'oggetto, ogni coppia è stata invitata a dare un titolo al proprio lavoro. Ciò ha consentito il passaggio dall'esperienza sensoriale, affettiva e manuale a quella di definizione cognitiva e di restituzione verbale.

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Gli oggetti creati sono stati esposti al centro della stanza, avvicinando alcuni tavoli e liberando lo spazio circostante.

E' stato proposto un cerchio intorno agli oggetti esposti che ha girato lentamente tenendosi tutti per mano, per permettere a ogni partecipante di poter osservare ogni oggetto

Ogni coppia è stata poi invitata ad andare al centro , a ripetere i propri nomi e a presentare il proprio oggetto con il titolo. Ciò ha consentito il riconoscimento da parte del gruppo di ogni lavoro svolto.

E' stata proposta una breve verbalizzazione finale che ha visti attivi anche i bambini, che hanno brevemente riportato la loro esperienza. Particolarmente rilevante è stata la restituzione di alcuni genitori, che hanno trovato questo percorso molto significativo per la condivisione con il proprio figlio di un'esperienza costruttiva comune.

Infine è stata proposta una musica di chiusura come saluto

#### obiettivi

- -sviluppare il dialogo analogico tra bambino e genitore e tra operatori
- -facilitare il riconoscimento e il rispetto della specificità di ognuno
- -sviluppare la collaborazione e la cooperazione per il raggiungimento di un obiettivo comune
- -promuovere un processo di progettazione e costruzione basato sull'attivazione della creatività personale , sulla partecipazione ad un progetto d'insieme e sul coinvolgimento reciproco
- -sviluppare la conoscenza e la collaborazione tra i genitori al fine di rafforzare il senso di appartenenza delle famiglie coinvolte alla comunità

## 4.10 "LUOGHI DI BENESSERE 2014-2015" – LUOGHI DI BENESSERE 2015-2016



Pubblicazione del progetto annuale a.s. 2015\_2016 sezione 5\_6 anni a cura di Simonetta Paltrinieri

# Luoghi di benessere

Le bambine e i bambini dai 5 ai 6 anni a.s. 2015 2016 Scuola comunale dell'infanzia Gianni Rodari Scandiano RE

#### autori

bambine e bambini fra i cinque e i sei anni

Serena Anceschi, Emanuele Bassissi, Lavinia Bianco, Chiara Bondani, Gabriele Bononi, Viola Capone, Carlo Carugo, Elisa Cavallini, Ariel Corradini, Alessandro Ferrari, Jacopo Gilioli, Daniele Immovilli, Francesco Incerti, Iris Mema, Marvis Moses, Miriam Moses, Marcello Pagliarin, Emanuele Retrivi, Patrizia Riccò, Niccolò Rocco, Mattia Ronchetti, Mattia Samà, Ivan Sica, Samuele Venturi

Nicoletta Bedeschi, Enrica Casotti, Elisa Ferrari Stefania Lo Presti, Simonetta Paltrinieri

coordinamento pedagogico Stefania Pizzetti e Cristina Chiari

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La scuola Rodari ha accolto negli anni diverse collaborazioni con centri universitari sia italiani sia europei. In queste collaborazioni abbiamo sempre voluto rispettare l'approccio che fa da sfondo alle esperienze educative e insieme aprirci al nuovo.

Un tratto fondamentale rilevato dalla proposta di collaborazione è stato quello di trovare diversi elementi di connessione tra Construction & Therapy e l'approccio educativo della scuola, come ad esempio lavorare contemporaneamente in un contesto educativo attraverso una metodologioa multidisciplinare: urbanisticae architettura, counseling e approccio psicologico, musicale e teatrale, artigianale e psicomotoria.

Altro aspetto importante è dare valore e visibilità ai tre soggetti che costituiscono il sistema scuola: bambini, genitori, insegnanti offrendo l'opportunità di essere protagonisti e favorire il senso di appartenenza ad un luogo che viviamo per lungo tempo.

Inoltre ci sono elementi che ritornano: attenzione al processo, allo sviluppo della personalità e

Inoltre ci sono elementi che ritornano: attenzione al processo, allo sviluppo della personalità e dimensione di sé, al consolidarsi dell'autostima, che porta alla costruzione di un processo interiore e poi di un luogo fisico. Tutto questo impegna diversi linguaggi come è proprio della nostra scuola, oltre al pensiero investigativo.

Infine il progetto sottolinea un'attenzione estetica alla bellezza, diritto che i bambini hanno di vivere in un luogo bello, e il significato di luogo bello per un bambino.

Sintesi dell'intervento di Ilaria Mussini all'incontro presso la Sala del Centro Studi Matteo Maria Boiardo lunedi 21 settembre 2015

Premessa

Construction & Therapy ovvero healing the land, healing the people, significa che curando l'ambiente ci si prende cura anche delle persone.

Un curare che ha il senso di rimettere insieme i pezzi di ciò che prima era una cosa sola, alleviare quel "malessere" dovuto alla separazione, alla scissione di una unità.

Un individuo quando nasce è un tutt'uno con il proprio corpo, non ci sono scollamenti tra percezioni sensoriali e percezioni emotive. Poi crescendo la complessità del nostro stile di vita e la necessità di attenersi a regole di convivenza portano le persone a vivere una sorta di scissione tra mente, corpo ed emozioni al punto che solo raramente possiamo rivivere l'esperienza di percepirci un intero.

BEAUY Elemento vitale

Bellezza

## **Prosegue Construction**

Completezza

"It's immensely hard to help people tell you what they want. Even in the simple practical issue of a building, its entrance, its rooms, its gardens... people cannot easily formulate their vision or their desire. Since we wanted people to have their heart's desire, we must help them and teach them to see their own visions, drawn out by our words and by their own words. If we learn to do this well, we will help their dreams to materialize. Their dreams will take concrete, outward form'

Christopher Alexander, The Battle, 2012.

spiegarti quello che desiderano persino in una situazione semplice e pratica come quella di un edificio, del suo ingresso, delle sue stanze o dei

eunicio, dei suo ingresso, dene sue stanze o dei suoi giardini. La gente non riesce a formulare in modo semplice quello che è il proprio desiderio o la propria visione.

visione.

Se permettiamo che le persone realizzino quello che gli detta il cuore, dobbiamo aiutaril ed insegnargli a dare forma a quelle che sono le loro visioni attraverso le loro e le nostre parole.

Se gli insegniamo a fare tutto ciò, li aiuteremo a realizzare i propri sogni. I loro sogni assumeranno una forma tangibile e concreta.

Christopher Alexander, The Battle, 2012.

E' incredibilmente difficile aiutare le persone a

Con i bambini abbiamo sostenuto l'esplorazione interiore con le esperienze laboratoriali partendo quindi da un vissuto esperienziale per poi arrivare ad un piano più reale e cognitivo con la realizzazione di oggetti con le forme di legno e con la futura progettazione.

Mentre con gli adulti l'approccio al progetto è stato quello di raccogliere pensieri e desideri restando su un piano più cognitivo\_razionale, per poi passare ad un piano più intimo ed emotivo con la partecipazione ai laboratori proposti da Il Boschetto di Pan che sostengono esperienze psicocorporee\_percettive mirate a sviluppare il contatto con se stessi e la fiducia verso l'altro.

& Therapy

I laboratori corporeo\_artistico proposti dall'ass. Il Boschetto di Pan hanno avuto lo scopo di accompagnare bambini, genitori, insegnanti della scuola in un processo di progettazione e costruzione creative, basato sul dialogo analogico e sulla collaborazione reciproca, a partire da esperienze psicocorporee\_percettive e sensoriali, mirate a sostenere, attraverso il gioco simbolico, il contatto corporeo e la comunicazione non verbale, lo sviluppo della fiducia e della connessione tra i partecipanti, dando vita alla formazione di un obiettivo condiviso.



## Intreccio di

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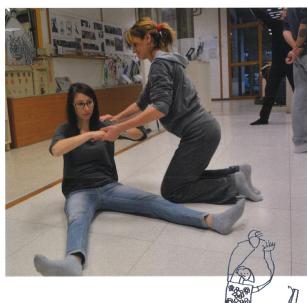


## esperienze







































La visita al laboratorio dei falegnami Francesca, Davide e Michele Messori, gli artigiani coinvolti nel nostro progetto, che ci hanno accolto con attenzione e spontanea competenza, ha rappresentato una esperienza significativa nel percorso di evoluzione dei bambini.

I falegnami hanno raccontano del loro lavoro e mostrato ai bambini un pezzo di tronco d'albero e come, con l'utilizzo di ciascuna macchina e attrezzo quel pezzo di albero si poteva trasformare in tavolo, sedia, giocattolo...I bambini coinvolti e attenti hanno posto domande e provato direttamente alcuni attrezzi dei falegnami.

Questa esperienza sostiene i bambini nel loro processo di conoscenza ed in particolare permette loro di essere protagonisti nel trasformare le idee in oggetti, le tavole di legno nelle forme immaginate.



















Abbiamo usato quel coso che avvita le viti e le toglie.

II trapano!

Il chiodo l'ho piantato con il trapano.

No! Le viti, si montano con il trapano!

Mi è piaciuto il trapano, che siamo andati in profondità che poi abbiamo fatto la vite, l'abbiamo schiacciata troppo ed è andata nel tavolo e che poi il tavolo faceva tante pernacchie!













La mia cosa che mi è piaciuta di più è quello che allisciava i bordi...quello del bordo ruvido dopo andava nella macchina e ci attaccava il bordo liscio.

C'era una macchina che ha fatto diventare un pezzo di legno dentro a un quadrato...poi abbiamo visto una macchina con dei denti e una lama che poteva dividere i pezzi di legno in due.









A me la cosa che mi è piaciuta di più sono gli animali... faceva il camion, il treno, l'elefante, l'aereo...

Avendo già sperimentato il contatto con se stessi con il lavoro svolto nei laboratori esperienziali e forti della relazione significativa con l'adulto, i bambini riescono a raccontarsi e a raccontare ciò che desiderano, che sognano. Esprimendosi liberamente nel gioco dell'intervista emergono i desideri più intimi.

Secondo te qual è il posto più bello, più comodo, dove stai bene, in questa stanza?

Dove vorresti costruire qualcosa?

Cosa vorresti costruire?

C'è qualcosa che non ti piace in questa stanza e che vorresti far diventare più bella?

Chiudi gli occhi e racconta come immagini questa stanza se fosse il posto più bello che c'è...



## Percorso di indagine

24



Mi piace perché ci sono gli elefanti perché si può giocara...Perché ci sono i sassi perché sono comoda così seduta...Lo trovo bello perché si vede funril

Sceglierei il calcio... un palo lì, un palo lì, un palo lì, un palo lì...sono quattro pali...dopo ci sono i portieri e poi i calciatori.



sui desideri



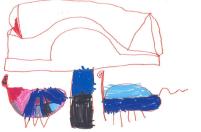
...li parco si vede da quella porta là e anche un po' li... una tapparella dalle righe...si vede fuori quando è aperta...è fatta di vetro per guardare... è chiaro, è argento perché è bello vedere il parco.



Vorrei essere a un luna park che non finisse più ...c'è la ruota panoramica e poi anche una nave pirata che ci puoi andare a bordo e dopo si alza e si abbassa e poi vorrei che ci sia anche un parco giochi con lo scivolo e l'altalena i cavalli con la molla e poi dopo nel luna park ci sono anche tante bancarelle di pupazzi e di giocattoli e anche la pesca... ci arrivi con un sentiero che l'ho fatto apparire però era lungo ma poi ero stanco e ho usatò il teletrasporto per apparire dall'altra parte... È tutto dell'arcodaleno ci sono dei fili con tante luci di tutti i colori è notte e il cielo è nero con la luna e le stelle...







... è quello che mi piace di più... qui sulle rocce... qui un muro di specchi che va da una parte all'altra dei cavalletti perché sarebbe più bello e poi una porta di specchi per entrare e poi sopra quel muro che lo facciamo alto solo un pochettino ci mettiamo un tetito così sembra una casa fatta di specchi, così era più bello.

Mi piacerebbe stare al marel Ci sono gli ombrelloni poi il mare, la sabbia, un bar dei giochi ... Siamo andati in macchine e ci ho messo trecento anni...non abbiamo fatto fatica... devi fare tre autostrade poi arrivi li e vado nella sabbia



Dai racconti delle interviste personali di ogni bambino emergono elementi comuni e Pia è venuta a raccontarci quanto emerso dall'elaborazione dei dati raccolti...

Ciao bambini, vi dico cosa ho letto nelle vostre interviste e che vi piacerebbe costruire qui in Atelier: una porta, una casetta con un letto e tanti amici, che si può mangiarci insieme e saltare; ci vorreste tanta acqua e una piscina e tanti fiori e un parco giochi...

Come facciamo a costruire queste cose?

Inizia così la fase di progettazione vera e propria nella quale le idee dei bambini iniziano a prendere una forma concreta: dal pensiero alla grafica; da un concetto astratto ad un segno tangibile e riconoscibile.

Nel processo di apprendimento dei bambini riveste una grande importanza la connessione mente \_mano\_occhio poiché consente loro di dare forma ai propri pensieri, avendo fiducia in se stessi e negli altri, nel saper fare da sé e saper chiedere aiuto, nel saper creare ciò che ancora non esiste.



## Progettazione e...

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Ci vuole una gru!

Una porta..

Una casetta...

Per fare la piscina, mettiamo un tappo poi dal lavandino scende tulta l'acqua...poi ci spogliamo e ci mettiamo il costume e entriamo dentro la vasca !











Se ci facciamo un piano, ci sono i maschi su e le femmine giù!

Nel piano dove ci siamo noi maschi ci possiamo fare una palestra? Possiamo fare nel giardino due piscine: quella dei maschi più grande!

Invece che fare un piano giù e uno su, facciamo un solo piano dove ci sono sia le femmine che i maschi. Seconda idea: che ne dite se facciamo una casa

volante?

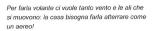
30





La casa arcobaleno, tutti i colori: giallo, viola, arancione e blu...e io voglio fare di tutti i colori.

lo la dipingo blu con le fiamme rosse. Il tetto di giallo con le fiamme verdi, la porta di marrone con le fiamme nere...così ci sono tante fiamme, così la casa è più bellissima!



lo dicevo che la casa volante può anche appoggiarsi...



Dopo la fase bidimensionale della progettazione, ed ispirandoci ad una delle fasi della metodologia costruttiva Costruction & Therapy, proponiamo ai bambini di rendere in forma tridimensionale i loro progetti, costruendo con materiali informali un modellino della casetta che hanno pensato.

I materiali informali e la dimensione della costruttività, che i bambini hanno più volte sperimentato nel loro percorso di crescita alla scuola dell'infanzia, concedono loro un sostegno per il consolidamento delle proprie competenze, imparando a riflettere sulle esperienze attraverso l'esplorazione, l'osservazione e l'agire in un clima di collaborazione e attitudine al confronto, scambio reciproco e co\_costruzione di nuovi saperi. Mentre agiscono i bambini si scambiano le proprie idee e conoscenze in merito ai materiali, ad equilibri e numerosità, uguale, diverso, peso e altezza, immersi nel piacere, determinazione ed impegno nel raggiungere obiettivi che si sono dati.





## ...costruzione

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A fare una casa: la casa degli elefanti. Per fare la casa ho usato delle cose e la colla...ho usato dei tubi, poi ho fatto un muro e delle righe.

Il tetto è fatto di spugna ...questa asse...mah non lo so!

Quello è vetro perché è trasparente.

È di plastica!

Questi tre sono di vetro, perché lo ha detto Franci...se ci dai un pugno si rompe.

Secondo me è plastica trasparente..













lo ho fatto un tunnel, il pavimento e il tavolo...e sopra un tetto steso e poi ho fatto il tetto con il camino.

Ho messo dei cucchiaini di caffè per fare il muro, così sembrano dei mattoni. Il pavimento io l'ho fatto con delle mattonelle quadrate nere.

...di cartone!

...e per fare il pavimento, per non far muovere le mattonelle, ho messo la colla!



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Questa è una plastichina che serve per non far cadere il tubino che porta l'acqua, se no si allaga il muro che serve per non far entrare i cattivi...da questa parte c'è un legno che serve per far tenere il muro... E' la base della casa e serve per tenere tutto in ordine e anche attaccato, se non ci fosse per tenere in ordine fuori, crollava facilissimo!

Questa è una spada laser fatta di cannucce, una dentro l'altra, e un bastoncino che, con la mano, tira fuori la spada laser: ho voluto ispirarmi da Marci...li divano è fatto di tanti pezzi di spugna: due rettangoli, un quadrato e uno a triangolo...questa è l'entrata: l'abbiamo fatta con una cannuccia un mezzo e due tubi che la tangono su...il pezzo di plastica trasparente e il triangolo non hanno nessun significato: li abbiamo messi per bellezza, perchè nessuna casa ha i triangoli!

...ho fatto il pavimento di carta di film...li ho voluto fare due spade laser con le cannucce: quella rossa fa il fuoco, che è rossa, questa fa l'erba perché è verde...poi abbiamo deciso di fare il divano insieme io e Miriam e abbiamo incollato questo, che è morbido come il materiale del divano...



La fase di costruzione assume una dimensione ancor più concreta quando iniziamo il montaggio della casa degli elefanti, con l'aiuto dei falegnami Michele e Davide Messori.

Con gli elementi semplici e versatili che Michele ci ha preparato e memori dell'esperienza vissuta nel suo laboratorio, possiamo assemblare la struttura con viti e utensili. I bambini ne osservano le parti, agiscono gli attrezzi, le viti e si scambiano conoscenze sulla loro funzione.

Il confronto, le negoziazioni e le decisioni alle quale il gruppo di bambini giunge, motivando le proprie opinioni, scelte e comportamenti assume atteggiamenti sempre più responsabili e consapevoli, sintomo di una pratica vissuta durante il percorso di crescita alla scuola dell'infanzia.









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Secondo voi, come facciamo ad attaccare su questo bastone di legno le strisce che compongono quella che diventerà la porta della casa degli elefanti?













...o con la colla!

Con il martello perché così sta attaccato.

Perché attacca ed è resistente.



Perché è molto adesivo e resistente e attacca bene.

Si, attacca anche della carta!

Secondo voi solo con lo scotch?

Perché è l'unica cosa che attacca le cose che abbiamo.

Sì perché quando si secca è molto adesivo.

Sì, attacca bene questo.





Le sensazioni, i desideri, le idee, i pensieri, i progetti , le esperienze, le mani nostre e di altri esperti, nel tempo, hanno contribuito a trasformare questo luogo. Ed ora la trasformazione appare inequivocabile ai nostri sensi. Gli occhi percepiscono la luminosità e il calore dell'ambiente; la mente registra la forma e la trasparenza della struttura; i piedi poggiano su un ritrovato pavimento di lucido parquet.

Come si sta in questo nuovo spazio?

#### Cosa è cambiato?

La struttura circoscrive lo spazio ritenuto di maggior benessere da bambini e adulti. E' composta di vuoti per mantenere lo sguardo sull'esterno e di materiali naturali per mantenere con esso una continuità.

L'acqua e i fiori sono elementi che verranno a far parte della casa degli elefanti in futuro.



Questa casa è grande: ci può stare anche un trattore!

Si sta benissimo! Manca solo un letto, anzi, in quanti siamo,24 letti! No! 25 x gli ospiti!

Si sta comodi. Mi piace la porta, mi piacciono queste strisce perché sono colorate.

A me mi piace tanto, e mi sarebbe venuta un'idea: attacchiamo tutti i dipinti su tutti i muri.

Quello che è cambiato è a zigo\_zago: prima era tutto dritto e adesso è così, la casa degli elefanti!

Il pavimento era azzurro poi adesso è diventato marrone di legno.

## Sensazioni di

42



A stare scalzi si sente molto liscio.

Perché è bello stare qui , perché ci sono gli animali di legno e si possono fare tantissime cose: giocare, divertirsi, e si può fare delle costruzioni.

...c'è la luce del sole! Quando viene l'estate è fortissima: si vede quasi tutto il giorno.



Mi piace perché ci sono gli elefanti e quelle carte colorate. Guardo fuori e vedo il parco.

Mi piace stare qui perché è una casa per i bambini e perché posso guardare fuori il parco bello della scuola. Io penso che mi sento tanto felice!

Anch'io! perché ci sono gli amici.





## benessere



Ringraziamo tutti coloro che hanno reso possibile la realizzazione di tutto il progetto con la loro professionalità, il loro lavoro e la loro voglia di mettersi in gioco:

Dott.ssa Cristina Chiari, coordinatore pedagogico del comune di Scandiano Dott.ssa Stefania Pizzetti, ex coordinatore pedagogico del comune di Scandiano Dott.ssa Ilaria Mussini, coordinatore pedagogico del comune di Correggio Dr. Sergio Porta, Professore di Urbanistica, Dipartimento di Architettura, Direttore di UDSU-Urban Design Studies Unit. Dott.ssa M.Pia Vidoli, ricercatrice universitaria Dott. Luca De Marchi, musicista e insegnante di musica Dott. Enrico Musatti, psicomotricista Dott.ssa Sandra Pierpaoli, psicologa e psicoterapeuta Ass. Il Boschetto di Pan Tonino Aspergo, counselor e facilitatore di gruppi Ass. Il Bosschetto di Pan

Michele, Davide, Francasca e nonno Luciano Messori, Ditta Messori Arredamenti

Angela Ruozzi e Cecilia De Donato compagnia teatrale MAMIMO I genitori e le insegnanti della Scuola Comunale dell'infanzia "G. Rodari"

Vi aspettiamo x una merenda insieme qui a scuola per arricchire la casa degli elefanti con *acqua e fiori* Mercoledi 12 ottobre 2016 alle ore 16.30



## Luoghi di benessere

Le bambine e i bambini dai 4 ai 5 anni a.s. 2014\_2015 Scuola comunale dell'infanzia *Gianni Rodari* Scandiano RE

#### autori

bambine e bambini fra i quattro e i cinque anni

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con Nicoletta Bedeschi, Elisa Ferrari Stefania Lo Presti, Simonetta Paltrinieri, Mirella Votano

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## **Indice**

La scuola dell'infanzia si pone come un grande laboratorio per l'autoapprendimento dei bambini, un luogo in grado di supportare e sollecitare i singoli e differenti percorsi di crescita; un ambiente che, modificato dalle attività e dalle progettualità di chi lo abita, influenza e alimenta a sua volta i processi cognitivi e le percezioni degli adulti e dei bambini che lo vivono.

La tematica dello spazio, esplorata dai bambini e dalle bambine dai 4 ai 5 anni durante quest'anno scolastico, si è prestata ad una pluralità di interpretazioni e letture possibili. Dare occasione ai bambini di vivere e riprogettare lo spazio circostante permette loro non solo di costruire un senso d'appartenenza per i luoghi che abitano, ma anche di creare una vera e propria relazione con l'ambiente.

Percepire, significare e rappresentare gli spazi abitativi è dunque ciò che ha impegnato i bambini e le bambine in un costante dialogo affettivo e cognitivo tra spazio interiore e spazio esterno a sé, nell'intreccio di esperienze, da quella motorio-espressiva a quella sonora, generatrici di nuove consapevolezze e contatto con sé.

Il progetto Construction & Therapy, un lavoro di gruppo a più voci, ha promosso la relazione comunicativa tra bambini e adulti, spazi e materiali in una dimensione di ascolto rivolto a ciò che ci fa stare bene con l'intento di disegnare attorno a noi contesti di benessere.

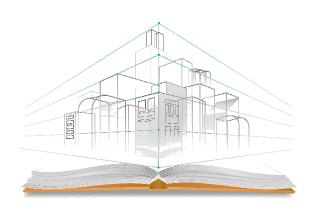
Stefania Pizzetti

## Premessa

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Construction & Therapy consiste in un particolare metodo di progettazione di spazi abitativi che coinvolge diverse tipologie di esperti per realizzare un approccio olistico nella costruzione di edifici/ spazi che permetta di tener conto del benessere psico-fisico, relazionale ed emozionale di chi li abiterà. I diversi punti di vista si mettono in rete per sostenere benessere ed architettura, estetica e funzionalità.

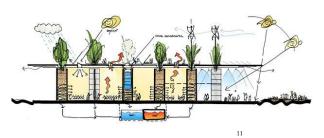
L'organizzazione fisica degli spazi ed il loro aspetto estetico, infatti, stimolano alcune percezioni, aumentando la creatività, la comunicazione e l'efficienza ossia il benessere psico-fisico.



## Construction & Therapy



Siamo stati invitati a partecipare come "gruppo sperimentante" al progetto universitario italo scozzese che ha come focus il ben-essere per e tra i soggetti che vivono un determinato contesto. Contesto inteso come spazio fisico interno ed esterno, come intreccio tra relazioni, spazi, materiali e tempi. La sperimentazione si basa sull'idea di come il diretto coinvolgimento, nella fase di costruzione di un luogo da parte dei diretti fruitori dello stesso, ne determini maggiori condizione di benessere.



Come gruppo di progettazione della sperimentazione, ci siamo chieste da dove iniziare la nostra ricerca. La risposta immediata e condivisa è stata quella di partire dall'idea di benessere e piacevolezza che i bambini hanno vivendo in questa scuola.

Ci pare quindi un'ottima opportunità quella di andare a ricercare insieme ai bambini cos'è che sostiene il nostro star bene all'interno della scuola e, più avanti, riprogettare una parte dell'ambiente scolastico seguendo le indicazioni di chi lo abita, ovvero le idee di adulti, bambini e genitori insieme

Stai bene in questa scuola? Cosa ti fa stare bene? Fare che cosa? Stare dove?





Sono contenta nel parco.

Si, giocare con l'acqua.

Si a giocare con i miei amici a giocare con la creta.

Si, giocare con la Ludovica perché mi diverto...il parco grande perché mi piace correre...giochiamo alle fate: ci divertiamo un sacco! Corriamo e facciamo finta di volare e facciamo che le ruote sono i Pegaso, i cavalli alati.



## Benessere





Della scuola mi piace proprio tutto...mi piace stare molto nel laboratorio dei libri. Mi piace molto l'atelier: si dipinge, si può giocare con dei giochi con dei giochi. Sto bene in giardino a giocare sullo



scivolo, mi fa stare bene il sole e la Viola perché lei sa giocare con me.

Mi piace costruire con le costruzioni grandi perché mi piace costruire da solo. Mi piace fare le invenzioni sul tavolino della sezione...mi piacciono tutti i posti di questa scuola

Si, a guardare i libri, così mi lasciano in pace tutti!

Mi piace costruire costruzioni nella pedana enorme: quella quadrata e nel tappeto in salone...

A me piace travestirmi.

Io sto bene in questa scuola, mi fa stare bene giocare al parco e mi piace molto la casetta.

A me piace proprio starmi dai colori perché voglio colorare...sono sempre una bella pittrice.





perché voglio disegnare una cosa per mia mamma. Giocare alla mamma e alla bimba con la Chiara e l'Elisa mi diverto.







Il giardino mi fa stare bene perché mi piace correre e saltare più in alto, ai rami più alti, e dopo li prendo al volo.

Sto bene fuori perché gioco sempre con Jacopo ai supereroi, facciamo i supereroi tutte le settimane.

Sì, mi fa star bene giocare a calcio, mi piace andare sulla nave e sullo scivolo: mi piace il parco...mi piace giocare con le macchinine con Manuele e Lele...a me piace giocare in salone

Qui dai libri...





Le parole dei bambini ci rimandano un vissuto positivo, sereno. Ed anche quando essi non sanno esprimere verbalmente la loro sensazione di benessere, di agio, e mer ge u gualmente un a piacevolezza che possiamo leggere da uno sguardo luminoso, da un sorriso complice, dal linguaggio del corpo.

Attraverso il confronto verbale e agito in piccoli gruppi cerchiamo di gettare un ponte tra il senso di benessere percepito dai bambini e i loro desideri...

Se voi poteste costruire la scuola come volete, come la fareste?

Cosa ci mettereste?



io ci metterei un campo di farfalle

tanti animali ... una giungla

la mia scuola con tutti gli addobbi di natale, con tutte le luci e l'albero...

...tutta luminosa!

Io la voglio fare grande e con il giardino.



## Desideri







Tenendo insieme la dimensione reale e la dimensione fantastica i bambini rappresentano graficamente e tridimensionalmente i loro desideri, intrecciando i loro vissuti personali con l'idea di scuola che si sono costruiti. I linguaggi espressivi sostengono ogni bambino nella rappresentazione di ciò che desidera. Ognuno si sperimenta con diverse tecniche e sceglie quella che lo sostiene maggiormente.

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Io voglio fare una piazza ... perché a me mi piacciono le piazze... perché la piazza di Scandiano mi piace di più ... perchè c'è il ponte di pietra

Io terrei un divano ...

Io voglio una tenda con dentro del mare così posso fare un salotto...







Coi mattoni!

Perché la carta si rompe, si strappa!

...e la paglia vola via!

Vuol dire che coi mattoni piccoli fa il tetto piccolo e coi mattoni piccoli fa i muri piccoli...

...coi mattoni grandi si fanno le cose grandi!

E poi diversa...una stanza verde come la maglia tua, una rosa, una casa bianca e blu.

Io vorrei la scuola tutta fatta di legno per mettere uno sopra all'altro...



Il giardino lo voglio di pelle di orso polare perché così è morbido.

Io faccio il percorso: uno scivolo e il cancello per saltare

Io faccio la piscina

Nella scuola c'è la scala nello scivolo poi questi sono i pali per arrampicarsi sopra.



Come insegnanti della scuola ci siamo chieste come sostenere nei bambini l'espressione dei propri vissuti legati alla piacevolezza, benessere, tempi, spaziosità, luminosità, arredi, possibilità di incontri che un luogo permette.

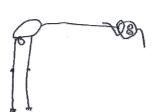
L'atelier è stato il luogo proposto per esplorare, sperimentare ...

Come adulti abbiamo condiviso il nostro sguardo sullo spazio atelier:

Atelier nel senso di officina per sperimentare e costruire apprendimenti e conoscenze; luogo

dove fantasia e scienza si intrecciano;

spazio che sappia incentivare la creatività culturale delle bambine e dei bambini.









## Esplorazione

e







Una idea di Atelier che vuole stare dentro ad una pratica di scuola come Atelier diffusa.

Scuola che si propone, attraverso la comunicazione ecologica, di:

favorire la potenzialità di ognuno; rispettare la diversità;

agire per il contesto, cioè, lo scopo in comune dei membri del gruppo. Scuola che sceglie di dotare i bambini di strumenti, di abilità, di autonomia.

Abbiamo fiducia nella capacità dei bambini di interpretare i propri bisogni e di contribuire al ripensamento di un pezzo importante della loro città: uno spazio della scuola.

Iniziamo una frequentazione quotidiana dello spazio\_atelier per permettere ai bambini di conoscerlo soggettivamente.

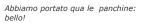
## sperimentazione

Uno degli intenti centrali di questo percorso è stato, ed è, quello di porre particolare attenzione alla comunicazione non verbale, alla emozione, al linguaggio del corpo, all' espressione creativa e alla integrazione dell'aspetto corporeo \_emozionale con la rielaborazione e restituzione verbale.









Nell'atelier ci possiamo fare pure la



Ma come facciamo che non ci sono i

Ci mettiamo tutti i tavoli...



Possiamo usare il tavolo rotondo, il tavolo alto e questo...

In quanti siamo? Se siamo tanti ne mettiamo tutti, se siamo pochi, pochi.









Abbiamo mangiato in atelier: è stato bello!

È stato così bello perché non ci abbiamo mangiato mai!

C'era poca confusione...

Mi è piaciuto perché c'erano dei pesci in alto, li guardavamo, io Jacopo la Viola, tutti li guardavamo...

Mi è piaciuto ma non so il motivo..

È stato bello perché c'era la pasta che non abbiamo mai mangiato.

L' esperienza di esplorazione sonora dello spazio, degli oggetti, del proprio corpo e il riverbero emotivo che l' incontro con i suoni, i silenzi, i ritmi, produce, è stata per ciascun bambino e per il gruppo, una occasione di conoscenza di alcune delle diverse qualità della realtà esterna ed interna.







Sembra un rockenroll...e c'era una chitarra e una batteria e un microfono.

Ho fatto una mattonella piccolina... Le bacchette...una due tre bacchette...ecco!



Ho fatto Lele, Memme, Jacopo, la Pia, Niccolò...guarda è felice! Lo sai perché? Perché gli piaceva venire a musica.

Sono i tubi quelli lì...un po' corti e un pò lunghi!



Voglio disegnare la canzone "ciao, ciao a tutti!"...faccio un cerchio...

A me faceva star bene la chitarra le mattonelle e quando mettevamo le bacchette nell'acqua perché mi faceva entrare in un razzo.



Il pic-nic è dove si prende un cestino, la tovaglia, poi si prende del pane, dei crackers, metti la tovaglia e ti metti lì a mangiare...

Qualcosa dove si va in un posto lontano dall'Italia e si mangia sopra la tovaglia.

È una cosa che si mette la tovaglia e del cibo fuori nell'erba...

È una tovaglietta dove ci si mettono sopra il mangiare e poi tu mangi il mangiare che è sopra la tovaglietta.

Eravamo felici...





Vuol dire che si sente il cuore che è molto felice: batte più piano! Nooo! Più forte!

Anche a me mi piaceva tanto stare

2.5



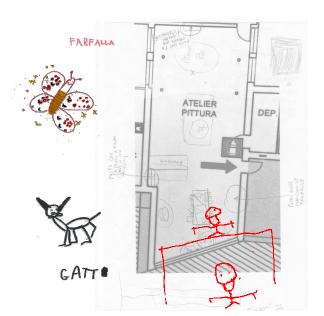
vicino agli amici fuori.

Mentre mangiavo il cuore mi batteva perché ero felice, perché la felicità fa ridere tutti!

Nell'idea di mappatura dei luoghi di benessere individuati dai bambini il nostro intento è stato quello di costruire una mappa delle sensazioni, dei sentimenti. Attraverso il gioco simbolico che ci porta in una dimensione fantastica sosteniamo i bambini nella ricerca interiore di ciò che sentono e vivono durante l'esperienza.

L'invito rivolto ai bambini è stato di trasformarsi in un animale o in un personaggio e individuare nello spazio un luogo\_tana/casa, luogo sicuro di protezione e individuare anche un luogo più incerto, meno sicuro.

Una formula magica pronunciata insieme in cerchio permette la trasformazione e da il via al gioco. La cooperazione è un esercizio quotidiano del vivere a scuola, così in questo gioco di trasformazione,



## Mappatura dei luoghi



## di benessere

si sostanzia nel riuscire a sconfiggere la strega cattiva. La conoscenza si nutre di

La conoscenza si nutre di immaginazione, logica, socializzazione, sentimento, creatività, estetica.

Vive di fatti agiti, di confronti.

Nella esperienza riconosciamo come valori:

l'agire da parte dei bambini un contesto espressivo, di drammatizzazione, di confronto e negoziazione fra pari;

la sinergia fra più linguaggi espressivi: corporeo, grafico, musicale, verbale;

l'incontro con la rappresentazione bidimensionale dello spazio (mappa dell'atelier);

l'agire sullo spazio e contemporaneamente sulla sua rappresentazione;

il coniugare l'ascolto di sé, dei propri piaceri, delle proprie preferenze con la sintetizzazione e rappresentazione simbolica degli



Cercate un angolo che vi piace. Ora ci trasformiamo in animali ed iniziamo ad esplorare questo spazio come animali poi piano piano questi animali dovranno trovare delle





cose...

da mangiare...e una tana per quando c'ha freddo.

... e un letto da dormire

... e da ber

...un posto dove dormire e stare comodi

...un posto dove possono giocare

...guardare la televisione

Ok, avete pensato a che animale siete?

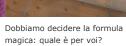
giraffa

il giaguaro di giada

il cagnaccio



un fenicottero un gatto





Qui c'è la tana del gatto... Vado sopra alle sedie perché i gatti si arrampicano sulle sedie.



Abracababra trasformati in...

E' qui la casa del gattino, sto bene, sto comodo qua. Ho inseguendo il gatto, perché se ne è andato e io l'ho inseguito.

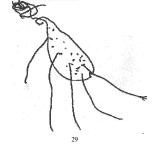
Per favore, posso entrare nella tua tana, gatto?

Certo puoi entrare.

Grazie ... Adesso andiamo nella tana della Ludo\_farfalla

Si, andiamo.







Noi eravamo due carnivori ... quindi eravamo due amici.

Questo è il nido del drago... ... dove faceva le uova.

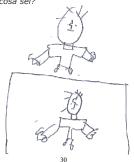




Tu sei un rospo.

No, adesso ho cambiato.

E cosa sei?





Pterodattilo.

Però devi andare nella tana con me, quella là è la mia tana.



Ho scelto questa casa perché ha i piani di sopra, a me piacciono i piani di sopra.

#### Anche a me.

Dobbiamo farci i segni perché se vanno via e vanno in questa casa dopo vedono che è di loro, ci vanno dentro e invece non è di loro, sono nostre.











Prendiamo una bacchetta magica!

Bene, io prendo qualcosa che fa male...un muletto che fa male!



Tutti alla battaglia!

Io faccio un bel fuoco....



Con la Ferrari...salvo gli amici!

Facciamo una trappola!

La magia: quella gialla!







In momenti successivi anche gli adulti che vivono quotidianamente la scuola, sono stati coinvolti nella mappatura dei luoghi di benessere. Genitori e personale della scuola sono stati invitati ad osservare l'ambiente *Atelier* portando attenzione alle sensazioni percepite, cercando di mettersi in connessione con i propri desideri. L'esperienza degli adulti è stata vissuta in modo più razionale, senza entrare nella dimensione del gioco simbolico, è stato sufficiente chiudere gli occhi ed ascoltare il canto interiore a noi caro, come sottolineano le nostre parole.













Spazi ampi ed aperti dove luce, sole e prati sono l'elemento che costruisce lo spazio stesso.

Il senso di calore e accoglienza che dà questo spazio, soprattutto nelle giornate di sole quando la luce del giorno illumina tutto l'interno.

La possibilità e l'occasione di essere in relazione.

Aperto, luminoso, con tante occasioni per toccare, annusare, accarezzare...

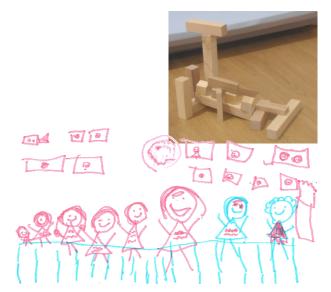
Mettendo in gioco curiosità, sensazioni, emozioni...lasciandomi attraversare e sconfinare in altri mondi.

Un luogo dove il tempo si può fermare o andare a ritroso o correre velocissimo lasciandomi affascinata e stupita...

Dove accadono magie di colori, luci ed ombre...

Le esperienze di laboratorio sostengono i bambini fin dall'inizio della sperimentazione. Gli esperti, ognuno con le sue peculiarità e specificità, sono stati invitati a far parte del gruppo di progettazione al fine di costruire i loro percorsi in maniera congiunta. In questo modo disponiamo di una serie di strumenti e risorse che sostengono tutti noi nel vivere un percorso che lavora sull'ascolto dei bambini, sul valore del gruppo come idea di progettualità condivisa, di mediazione di pareri e su un'idea di scuola come comunità dove tutti hanno un ruolo e possibilità di valorizzazione.

Il laboratorio di attività motorio espressiva al quale abbiamo preso parte, prende a prestito dalla psicomotricità un insieme di pratiche che utilizzano come



# Intreccio di esperienze



principale strumento il gioco, e soprattutto il gioco di movimento, per accompagnare l'evoluzione e lo sviluppo della personalità, intesa come unità di corpo, mente ed emozioni.

La musica è un linguaggio intuitivo, le cui regole possono essere acquisite in maniera informale e modellate a seconda delle culture, dei contesti e delle necessità espressive dei singoli.

Tanti elementi della pratica musicale possono essere ricondotti alla pratica del gioco simbolico o della ricerca\_esplorazione del sé attraverso ciò che si può produrre o modificare, non tanto in una materia plastica o in forma pittorica, quanto nell'aria che ci circonda.

37







Ho distrutto quasi tutto il muro: io e la Viola siamo partiti primi!

Facevo una costruzione alta, Mattia Samà mi aiutava.

Stanno prendendo quel cubo insieme...era una costruzione alta e lo hanno preso in due.

Fanno una casa grande... mi ha fatto entrare lui!

Perché è contento...ha la bocca felice.

È stato bellissimo perché ci faceva fare tanti giochi divertenti.







Io mi è piaciuto salire e salire e fare rotondo le capriole...

A me piace molto costruire dei castelli e dopo costruirli di nuovo e dopo ci vado ad abitare dentro e dopo metto un altro cubo sopra l'altro castello.

All'ultimo dopo che avevamo giocato facevamo i disegni.

Bello...come una meraviglia!

Stanno prendendo quel cubo insieme...era una costruzione alta e lo hanno preso in due.







Mi è piaciuto fare il laboratorio con Luca perché mi piaceva cantare "ciao ciao Luca..."

Sbattevamo così...

...con le bacchette che ci ha dato Luca...

...bim, bum,bam...

Era bello suonare e anche brutto...
quando abbiamo cominciato non mi
piaceva perchè era noioso
aspettare e poi quando abbiamo
iniziato mi piaceva perché era bello
suonare tutti insieme!







Mi è piaciuto fare il laboratorio con Luca perché mi piaceva cantare "ciao ciao Luca..."

Sbattevamo così...

...con le bacchette che ci ha dato Luca...

...bim, bum,bam...

Era bello suonare e anche brutto... quando abbiamo cominciato non mi piaceva perchè era noioso aspettare e poi quando abbiamo iniziato mi piaceva perché era bello suonare tutti insieme!











Stavamo suonando tutte le cose che trovavamo!

Facevamo le ondine...

...perché Luca ci ha dato le bacchette e facevamo il cavallo nell'acqua...

...con la voce vengono delle ondine che non si vedono...

Faceva divertire fare musica con Luca!

.



La nostra identità  $\tilde{\epsilon}$  legata indissolubilmente ai luoghi in cui viviamo e si modifica con essi.

da "Architettura e felicità" Alain de Botton



# CONSTRUCTION AND THERAPY

Healing the land and healing the people

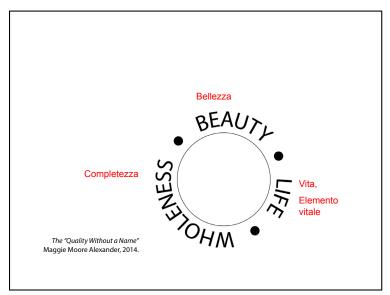


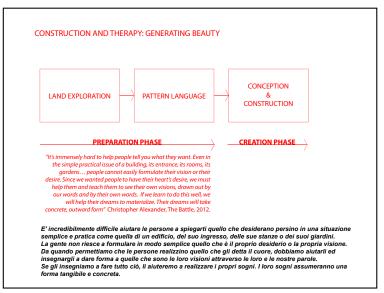
#### HEALING= CURARE, PRENDERSI CURA DI..., GUARIRE

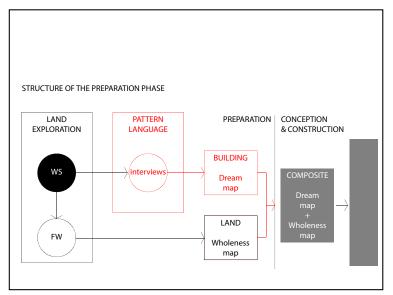
Un curare che ha il senso di rimettere insieme i pezzi di ciò che prima era una cosa sola, alleviare quel "malessere" dovuto alla separazione, alla scissione di una unità.

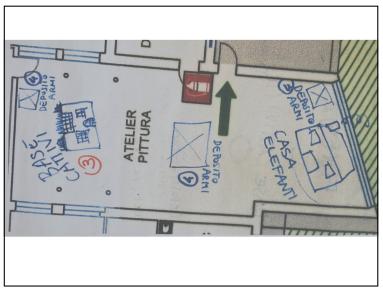
Un individuo quando nasce è un tutt'uno con il proprio corpo, non ci sono scollamenti tra percezioni sensoriali e percezioni emotive. Poi crescendo la complessità del nostro stile di vita e la necessità di attenersi a regole di convivenza portano le persone a vivere una sorta di scissione tra mente, corpo ed emozioni al punto che solo raramente possiamo rivivere l'esperienza di percepirci *un intero*.

3











Con i bambini abbiamo sostenuto l'esplorazione interiore con le esperienze laboratoriali partendo quindi da un vissuto esperienziale per poi arrivare ad un piano più reale e cognitivo con la realizzazione di oggetti con le forme di legno e con la futura progettazione.

Mentre con gli adulti l'approccio al progetto è stato quello di raccogliere pensieri e desideri restando su un piano più cognitivo\_razionale, per poi passare ad un piano più intimo ed emotivo con la partecipazione ai laboratori proposti *da Il Boschetto di Pan* che sostengono esperienze psicocorporee\_percettive mirate a sviluppare il contatto con se stessi e la fiducia verso l'altro.

### LAND EXPLORATION

# Un processo di esplorazione di noi stessi e del "territorio"

Per sapere cosa ci fa stare bene o cosa ci farebbe stare meglio, occorre partire da chi siamo, da ciò che ci piace. I bambini della nostra sezione sono in una fase di costruzione di sé, un processo evolutivo nel quale le esperienze che essi vivono quotidianamente fanno da sostegno.

Le attività laboratoriali, con i loro linguaggi trasversali, possono sostenere i bambini nel loro processo di crescita, di creazione di una propria identità e a sviluppo della propria personalità; oltre a sostenere competenze trasversali indispensabili come la capacità relazionale, la collaborazione e la solidarietà.





9

Il laboratorio di attività motorio\_espressiva al quale abbiamo preso parte, prende a prestito dalla psicomotricità un insieme di pratiche che utilizzano come principale strumento il gioco, e soprattutto il gioco di movimento, per accompagnare l'evoluzione e lo sviluppo della personalità, intesa come unità di corpo, mente ed emozioni

Dopo il tempo dedicato alla libera espressione del corpo e delle emozioni, segue un momento di "cambio di stato" e successivamente la fase di rielaborazione interiore, che può essere grafico/espressiva o costruttiva/tridimensionale.







Attraverso il gioco simbolico che ci porta in una dimensione fantastica sosteniamo i bambini nella ricerca interiore di ciò che sentono e vivono durante l'esperienza. L'invito rivolto ai bambini è stato di trasformarsi in un animale o in un personaggio fantastico ed individuare nello spazio un luogo\_tana/casa, luogo sicuro di protezione e individuare anche un luogo più incerto, meno sicuro. Una formula magica pronunciata insieme in cerchio permette la trasformazione e da il via al gioco.













Questo percorso ci ha permesso di arrivare alla mappa della "completezza", una mappa che ci sostiene nell'interpretazione del *luogo*, ovvero nella percezione emotiva dell'Atelier, evidenziando ciò che le persone (tutti gli abitanti/frequentatori della scuola) hanno in comune in termini di sensazioni/ emozioni.

15

# PATTERN LANGUAGE

Un percorso di indagine sui desideri

Avendo già sperimentato il contatto con se stessi con il lavoro svolto nei laboratori esperienziali e forti della relazione significativa con l'adulto, i bambini riescono a raccontarsi e a raccontare ciò che desiderano, che sognano. Esprimendosi liberamente nel gioco dell'intervista emergono i desideri più intimi













Ascoltando i singoli "sogni" possiamo cogliere elementi comuni che ci aiuteranno a costruire la *mappa dei sogni*, ovvero evidenziare quegli elementi di benessere che sono comuni a tutti.



...il parco si vede da quella porta là e anche un po' lì... una tapparella dalle righe...si vede fuori quando è aperta...è fatta di vetro per guardare... è chiaro, è argento perché è bello vedere il parco.

Ho pensato che ero Ironman...poi che ero un mago, poi Spiderman, poi ero invisibile...I'omino più forte è Hulk...essere sopra un tetto perché si può volare ...il suo superpotere è che salta





Mi piacerebbe stare al mare! Ci sono gli ombrelloni poi il mare, la sabbia, un bar dei giochi: una molla e uno scivolo gli scogli il pedalò poi sono con la mamma il papà Luca e la Giorgia. Siamo andati in macchina e ci ho messo trecento anni...non abbiamo fatto fatica...devi fare tre autostrade poi arrivi li e vado nella sabbia...vado dentro c'è una porta...senza porta...non c'è la porta... entri da li non c'è niente, ci sono piante belle con i fiori rosa...

23

"I laboratori corporeo\_artistico proposti dall'ass. *Il Boschetto di Pan* hanno avuto lo scopo di accompagnare bambini, genitori, insegnanti della scuola in un processo di progettazione e costruzione creative, basato sul dialogo analogico e sulla collaborazione reciproca, a partire da esperienze psicocorporee\_percettive e sensoriali, mirate a sostenere, attraverso il gioco simbolico, il contatto corporeo e la comunicazione non verbale, lo sviluppo della fiducia e della connessione tra i partecipanti, dando vita alla formazione di un gruppo orientato al raggiungimento di un obiettivo condiviso."





















3:



















Il progetto nasce dall'idea di poter sperimentare la relazione tra benessere e architettura all'interno di un contesto educativo. La sperimentazione si basa sull'idea di come il diretto coinvolgimento nella fase di progettazione e poi di realizzazione di un luogo, da parte dei diretti fruitori dello stesso, ne determinino maggiori condizioni di benessere.

Per sapere cosa ci fa stare bene o cosa ci farebbe stare meglio, occorre partire da chi siamo, da ciò che ci piace. I bambini della nostra sezione sono in una fase di costruzione di sé, un processo evolutivo nel quale le esperienze che essi vivono quotidianamente fanno da sostegno.

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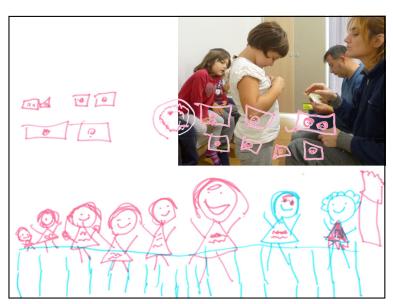








Ad ogni incontro Enrico consegna a ciascun bambino una etichetta con il proprio nome che possono attaccarsi dove desiderano, oppure anche non indossare. È un momento importante: ognuno è "visto", riconosciuto come persona, atteso all'incontro settimanale. Se un bambino è assente Enrico conserva il suo adesivo per poterglielo consegnare la volta successiva e verbalizza il nome facendolo sentire presente nei pensieri del gruppo.





Prima di partire con i giochi, Enrico propone alcuni patti e chiede ai bambini, se sono d'accordo, di rispettarli per tutto il tempo dell'incontro.

Non farsi male

Non fare male agli altri

Non distruggere le costruzioni degli

Poi Enrico conta fino a tre e via con i giochi: ognuno è libero di esprimersi liberamente.



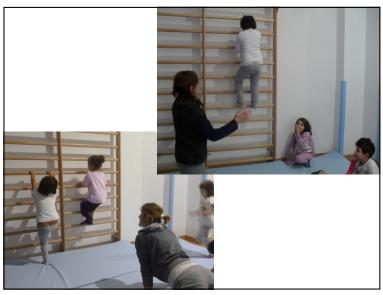
7











Io mi è piaciuto salire e salire e fare rotondo le capriole...







13







Staviamo marciando, andaviamo sulle panchine...andaviamo avanti e poi indietro e Matti scendeva giù.





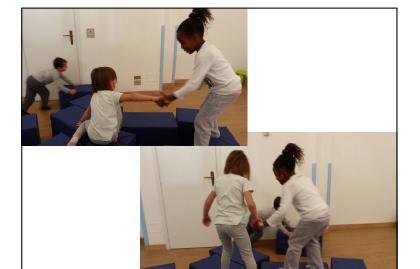


Stiamo facendo un pullman... prendevamo quei mattoncini e li spingevamo... con Lele, Mattia Samà e la Patty.































Poi all'ultimo ci faceva fare delle costruzioni bellissime!

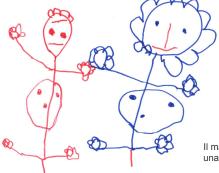






La musica è un linguaggio intuitivo, le cui regole possono essere acquisite in maniera informale e modellate a seconda delle culture, dei contesti e delle necessità espressive dei singoli.

Tanti elementi della pratica musicale possono essere ricondotti alla pratica del gioco simbolico o della ricerca- esplorazione del sé attraverso ciò che si può produrre o modificare, non tanto in una materia plastica o in forma pittorica, quanto nell'aria che ci circonda.



Il maestro di musica diverrà pertanto una guida, una fonte di proposte...

35



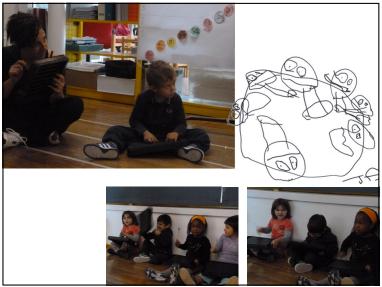


















# Facevamo le ondine...

- ...perché Luca ci ha dato le bacchette e facevamo il cavallo nell'acqua...
- ...con la voce vengono delle ondine che non si vedono...

















Suonavamo le mattonelle! Forte e piano!

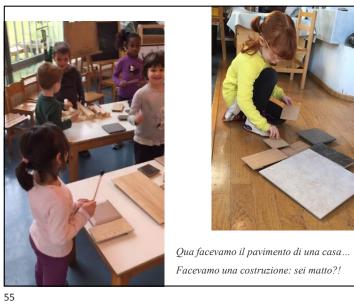
Era bello suonare e anche brutto...quando abbiamo cominciato non mi piaceva perchè era noioso aspettare e poi quando abbiamo iniziato mi piaceva perché era bello suonare tutti insieme!

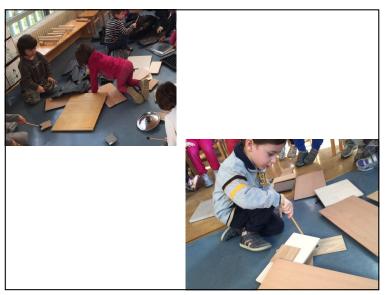
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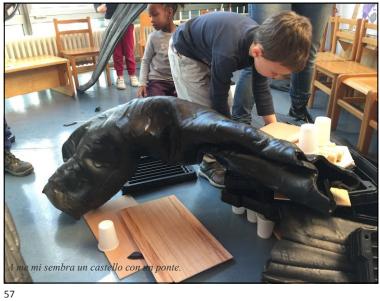








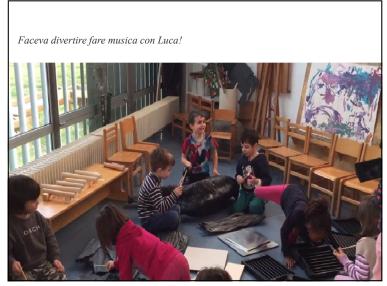












Ritorniamo sulle esperienze degli incontri di musica. In Atelier riproponiamo alcuni materiali che erano stati esplorati dal punto di vista sonoro: mattonelle di diversa dimensione e lo strumento costruito in collaborazione dai bambini e da Luca con tubetti di plastica di lunghezze diverse.

Sono i tubi...quelli lì. Un po'corti e un po'lunghi.



61

Sembra un roken\_roll e c'era una chitarra e una batteria e un microfono.





Cosa vi ricordate di quando venivamo qui a fare musica con Luca?

... a me mi faceva stare bene la chitarra, e le mattonelle e quando mettevamo le bacchette nell'acqua...perchè mi faceva entrare in un razzo.









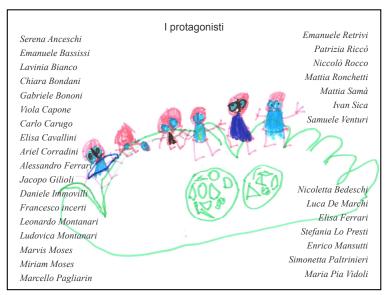












# 4.11 FULL NAPLES REPORT



REPORT ON BUILDING BEAUTY MEETINGS AT UNIVERSITÀ SUOR ORSOLA BENINCASA (UNISOB), Naples, Italy, April 12-14, 2017

## By Yodan Rofe, Susan Ingham, & Chris Andrews

This report summarizes our April 12-14, 2017 visit to the Università Suor Orsola Benincasa (UniSOB) in Naples, Italy, where we spent three intensive days discussing the Building Beauty program, as well as touring the university and parts of the historic city center. We have organized this report into four sections: Opportunity, Context, Program Development, and Challenges & Action.

### I. OPPORTUNITY:

The Building Beauty Program presents an absolutely unparalleled confluence of resources, as described in the subsequent sections of this report. These include: the overall landscape, urban, university, studio and courtyard setting, the human resources marshaled by Professor Porta and his Italian and International partners, the full UniSOB commitment and participation, as well as the same from internationally recognized architects and scholars, and the ongoing organic and agile development of the Building Beauty program by all involved. Thus we find that it is critical to act quickly and decisively, to address the challenges we have identified herein, and to fully leverage this incredible and unique opportunity to carry the legacy of Christopher Alexander, the Center for Environmental Structure, and of all those associated with this work into the 21st Century and beyond.

In essence, we found the context of the Building Beauty (BB) program able to provide excellent conditions for the program to flourish. The university, its staff and facilities, the city of Naples, and its location in a wider geo-political and cultural context provide exactly the right mix of tradition, inspiration and "rawness", openness and challenge. We see as central for the development of the program a concentration on the three dimensional reality of the Courtyard of the Camellias. However, the project of the courtyard is not mainly a problem of construction – but begins with a vision and pattern language that will have to be developed together with the university community, in parallel with the students gaining confidence in their skills and learning more about the city and its building traditions. We also believe that it is fundamental to ensure that the students learn the important insights of Christopher Alexander's Nature of Order, and that they do it, paired with the cultivation of food and its preparation and sharing, in a way that connects them to the

university, as well as the local and professional communities of Naples.

We conclude this short report with a discussion of the challenges and actions that are needed in the coming months. We strongly believe that it is important that the program have a resident "Master Builder" who is part of the core program committee spending most of the time in Naples, to oversee the smooth development of the program and coordinate the various logistical aspects. We also believe that urgent work must be done to increase the funding for the program through sponsors and donations, as well as provide scholarships that will enable students who cannot fully fund their studies to be able to participate in the program.





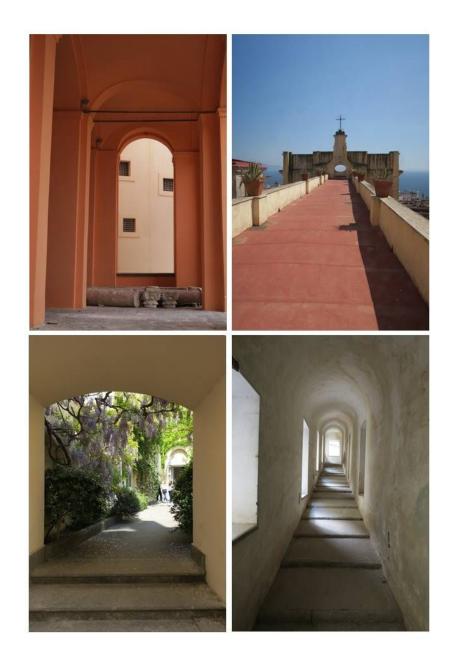
### II. CONTEXT:

### A. Universita Suor Orsola Benincasa

#### 1. The Place

Perched on the side of the San Martino hill overlooking the historic center of Naples, the gulf and Mt. Vesuvius, The Università Suor Orsola Benincasa is situated in a complex of buildings that originated as a convent founded in 1581 by Sister Orsola Benincasa. The historic complex, which has grown in time into a walled "cittadella" (small town), is comprised of two monasteries, two churches, several courtyards, terraces, annexes, gardens, vineyards and cultivated land, in addition to classroom spaces, offices, several smaller chapels, workshops, kitchens, and other ancillary spaces. The entire complex has a labyrinthine feeling as we traveled through dark corridors that were part of the thick cittadella walls, up flights of stairs and ramps, through sunny courtyards and outdoor streets, and through grand hallways to various classrooms, workshops, chapels, and lecture rooms. At many turns, we caught glimpses of the shining gulf of Naples and the historic city spread out below. There are so many layers of building here, and so much that has happened piecemeal over hundreds of years that it is difficult to get a sense of the whole complex. Yet the overall feeling of the place, a feeling of quiet reverence and tranquility, paired with a feeling of grandness and expansiveness in some of the larger courtyards but especially as one looks out to the city and the sea, permeates every part of the complex. Moreover, some of the laboratories of the university, as well as the residences of the students are located further down the hill in the heart of the Spanish Quarter, and on Via Chiaia, its major street, providing interconnections with the local community and the city as a whole.

The fifteen properties of wholeness described by Alexander abound here, especially "Levels of Scale", "Boundaries", "Positive Space", "Local Symmetries", "Roughness", "Inner Calm", and "Not Separateness". We were in awe at the incredible richness and deep beauty of the place. It is the kind of place that will take time to fully understand; a place of mystery, discovery, and delight as the students study and document its evolving structure. It is an incredible resource and laboratory for the Building Beauty program, serving as both a foundation and a fount of learning that will inspire both students and faculty throughout their time living and working there.





## 2. The People

Our visit began with Maggie Alexander and Sergio Porta making a formal presentation of the Building Beauty program to the UniSOB community and the formal welcoming and recognition of the connection of this program by the University to its mission and resources. There were about 30 people in attendance, including faculty and current students. This presentation was followed by additional remarks and responses by several UniSOB faculty, facilitated by Professor Roberto Montanari. Each faculty member who spoke expressed strong support and enthusiasm for the program, and many were interested in forming connections with the Building Beauty program and their own programs and individual research work. After the formal presentations, we were warmly welcomed to the community by many individuals. Our sense was that the Building Beauty program shared many values with various departments of the university, and that it would fit in well with the overall purpose of the school.



#### 3. The Facilities

From what we were told, UniSOB has one of the strongest art restoration programs in Italy. Thanks to Professor Pasquale Rossi, the head of the entire UniSOB restoration program, we were able to tour many of UniSOB's labs and workshops, including painting restoration, metals, glass, ceramics, and materials analysis and research, and also speak with the directors of the individual programs (we did not tour carpentry and masonry, but we have been assured that those resources will also be made fully available to BB). We asked many questions, and in particular we asked if the Building Beauty students could utilize these labs and resources. In every case, the answers were yes to all of our questions. It is possible for our students to use the facilities, as well as learn from the students who are enrolled in those particular restoration programs. Later that evening, and early the next morning, with Prof. Roberto Montanari, Professor of Human Machine Interface and Interaction Design, we toured a sophisticated user-interface computer lab that focused on recording user responses as people moved through space and interacted with others. There may be applications that would be beneficial to the Building Beauty program with this technology as well, especially for the Self & Space modules. Again, we were amazed at the level of support that was communicated, and how willing each faculty member was in sharing their knowledge and resources with us and the Building Beauty students.





#### B. CITY OF NAPLES

The university is located in the Spanish Quarter in the historic heart of the city of Naples, a vibrant city of about one million inhabitants and one of the most dense cities in Europe. The city form, with its narrow streets, tall buildings, semi-private courtyards, public piazzas, and network of Roman and medieval streets, provides a layered and complex urban context with the wide sweep of the gulf of Naples to the south, and the beautiful curving silhouette of Vesuvius to the east. In addition to this rich urban morphology, the city also has a long history and distinctive culture of crafts and food that contribute to the city's unique identity. These include crafts such as Majolica ceramics and tiles, the famous presepi Nativity sets, and silk textiles from nearby San Leucio. Food items include Neapolitan pizza, and local pastries such as sfogliatella and babà.

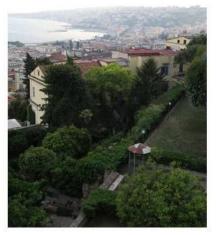
While the focus of the first semester will be more on the monastery, the courtyard, and smaller projects such as the making of a tile, the work of the second semester will look beyond the walls of the cittadella and engage more of the actual city itself. This may be done in various ways, including understanding the form and place of the monastery and courtyard as part of the overall city fabric, working with local chefs and food producers to prepare special dinners, and hosting seminars open to the public, and possible architectural or urban design projects that respond to a need in the community. While actual urban projects may not happen in the first year or two, we think that it is important at some point to venture out of the cittadella and create something positive in the real life of the city.











#### C. THE LARGER CONTEXT

The city of Naples is also an ideal location for making the Building Beauty program real and meaningful in the context of the world of the 21st century. Located at the heart of the less developed part of Italy, it exhibits many characteristics of the developing world. It's on the route of immigrants from Africa and the Middle East to Northern Europe, and it shares with many of these contexts the juxtaposition of extreme poverty and wealth, the formal and informal economy, legality and illegality. It is both a very old and historic city, but at the same time one which has never lost population at its center – and where the traditions of living in an urban setting are millennial. The reconstruction of sustainable living, local crafts, local food, and community self-reliance in such a context can serve as models that could be emulated and transferred to cities in both developed and developing countries. Moreover, Naples is already doing this, in the renewal of its city center, the exemplary improvement of its transportation system, and in the work of many organizations with youth and immigrants which are present in the university and the social world around it.

Learning to change places for the better, to make a place more beautiful, takes time and practice. It also helps to have a deep awareness of context, at many levels of scale, from an individual tile, to the scale of the courtyard, the monastery, the neighborhood, the city, the surrounding sea and landscape, even to the scale of the region, the country, the continent, and the world. Connections can be made between all of these levels of scale, and in fact need to be made for the nesting of centers and the unfolding of wholeness to occur. Thus, while working on a very small project such as a tile (see tile section under Program Development), it can be beneficial to think about the connection this tile has to other tiles and tile traditions in Naples, as well as to think about this tile as part of a larger field of tiles, perhaps as a part of the floor of the courtyard, while at the same time trying to make it a beautiful tile in and of itself. These multiple connections to context at many levels of scale help to heal our world one small step at a time.





#### II. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT:

#### A. COURT OF THE CAMELLIAS AND ITS CENTRALITY

The reality of building and construction is a central theme of the Building Beauty program, as well as one of the elements of its uniqueness. The university has decided to allocate to the program the improvement and rehabilitation of the courtyard with the camellia bushes at the back of the monastery. This courtyard is a backyard, that was probably used in the past for storage and work; it is completely paved in concrete, except for some tree holes. It's overlooked by the museum wing, and labs and passages within the main building, and is surrounded by ramps going up to the upper floors of the building, the church and the Garden of the Continents above it. While not in the general paths of movement within the building, it does have the potential of creating a place for repose and reflection, as well as connecting to other places that are today less used by the students and staff of the university.

One of our concerns before arriving in Naples, based on the images sent by Sergio, was that this court, like the other spaces in the monastery, was already beautiful and wholesome – in which case the problem of adding to it, or transforming it significantly would have been a difficult one, and perhaps beyond the skills of the students. Upon seeing it, we were all quite relieved. The courtyard is a strong center spatially – both in its three dimensional presence, as well as in its connections to the fabric of spaces of the university – however its role as a space is not well defined, it's underused, and it is far from having the same sense of beauty or wholeness of the rest of the spaces we visited. Therefore there is a tangible need for improvement.

However, the problem is far from being only a question of construction. Understanding the space and its functioning means understanding better the organization and movement within the university, as well as envisioning a set of functions that will attract people to use the courtyard on a regular basis, this means also engaging with the community of the university, understanding what dreams and visions it has for the courtyard, understanding its potential for engaging the community beyond the university. It is also important to study the history of the courtyard within the monastery as part of the site analysis. Furthermore, the courtyard could serve as a place for understanding the connection between self and space - perhaps not only by students themselves, but also conducting experiments and observing the activities of other people in the space. Much of the instruction and exercises going on in the first semester of studies could be conducted around the courtyard and its life. This should be accompanied by building a large scale model of the courtyard, where proposals and visions for its development could be created and tested (again receiving feedback from the university community). Thus, at the end of the first semester the objective of studies would be to have a large scale model (1:50 or 1:20), of the courtyard, analysis of its centers, a vision or pattern language for its further development, and perhaps a few suggestions for practical projects that could be carried out in the second semester by the students to begin implementing the vision. Subsequent years of the program will continue from the vision and analysis done by the year before them - revising, improving, always moving forward.







#### B. SELF AND SPACE AS ONGOING PRACTICE

A second element of uniqueness of the program is the conscious search for a practice connecting between space and self. While this is a central aspect of Alexander's thinking and his approach to building design and construction process, from the "quality without a name (QWAN)" to the mirror of the self, and is the gauge of quality at any stage of the building and design process, it has always been an implicitly learned skill, and a rather public one at that. There hasn't been explicit work on learning to know oneself better, getting better in touch with one's feelings with regard to objects or spaces, or getting better clarity on the different aspects of self encountered when doing this kind of work. What is the difference between the universal or shared substrata of self that is the one appealed to in doing this work, and the unique aspects of history and psychology of each individual self?

It was relatively easy for us to envisage exercises of connection with self as part of the learning process, either through the process of designing and producing an ornament or tile (see below), or in the process of learning from places within the monastery, or in the surrounding city, and diagnosing the state of the courtyard and its surroundings. It was harder for us, not having experienced it, to envisage the process of connecting with self that Pia and Sergio talked about, as a discipline towards improving the capacity for learning about spaces and objects. It's not clear for us yet whether this should be learned in an intensive workshop at the beginning of the course, or whether it should be practiced as a discipline at a certain frequency. Also it's not clear to us yet how it could be extended to the larger community informing its decisions and feedback to the work carried out in the courtyard. We suggested that in our next meeting Pia will lead us in such an exercise, so that we could better grasp its meaning and its power, and also asked Pia to forward to us the results of her work.

## C. TILE PROJECT – CONNECTING GEOMETRY, FORM AND SELF AND UNDERSTANDING A CRUCIAL ASPECT OF BUILDING CULTURE

In our discussions of the program, while thinking about the first project done in the Building Process introductory studio at UC Berkeley, we looked for a project which will have a similar quality of being small and manageable, personal, and connecting between the geometry of an object and the I. The idea originated during a visit to the laboratory where students study the restoration of ceramics and jewelry. We saw that the students are required to reproduce a piece of traditional craft as a first step in their learning, and YR suggested that our students will carry out in that lab, perhaps under the guidance of and partnership with an advanced student of these crafts a similar project of an ornament. After further discussion, and the visit to the monastery and various churches and cloisters in Naples, this idea evolved into the design and making of a tile – ultimately perhaps destined for the courtyard, but the emphasis at the start would be for the students to make something that truly pleases themselves. Designing the tile will enhance understanding of self and its relation to geometry, centers and the way they work together, as tiles are not usually alone but are within a field of other tiles, and will mean an immersion into an important aspect of local building culture that we could easily observe in our visit. The making of the tile and the design of a field of tiles within the context of the courtyard site will enhance the understanding of the importance of the process of making to the quality and depth of the centers achieved.









### D. NATURE OF ORDER AS THEORETICAL BACKBONE AND OUTREACH TO SCHOOL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY

There has been some discussion within the program committee of the role of the Nature of Order in teaching. Sergio's initial position was that he wanted the students to reach for the theory, or to develop it, as they need it and find it useful to support their practical work. Our experience of learning the building process with Chris and Hajo was different – and also varied. However we all found that it was important to accompany the making (in drawings, models, artefacts and mockups) with thinking and discussing the text – and in particular the concepts of Centers and the field of centers, the fifteen properties, the mirror of the self and structure preserving transformations. We felt that within a year of study it would be hard to expect students to come up with this theoretical understanding on their own. Nor can we expect all students to be familiar with the books and the theory.

Moreover, both Susan and Yodan participated as students in seminar discussions and led students in discussion groups which were meant to connect for the students the theory and the practice. Yodan's teaching of The Phenomenon of Life is also done as a reading and discussion seminar where students are asked to present a chapter, and bring examples from their own life and observations – as well as connect the theory to their field of expertise (not all his students are architecture students). Students who have taken the course have said that it transformed the way they saw the world around them.

While the entire four books of the Nature of Order will not be assigned, there are specific chapters which we think are critical and should be a fundamental part of the curriculum. These include the chapters on the Fifteen Properties, The Mirror of the Self, Structure Preserving Transformation, Incremental Growth, Patterns & Project Languages, and several chapters that describe process using real projects as examples.

Thus we envisage the teaching of the Nature of Order in the form of a seminar or "book club" where in the first semester the students read the book together with the instructors who are on site, and who will also be asked to participate and prepare a lecture relevant to the chapter in the book which is discussed at the time they are staying in the program. It may be possible for us to participate in these discussions and seminars via Skype, or other video-conferencing technology. In the second semester the students will organize a series of seminars – in coordination with the visiting faculty which will be open to the university community, and to the professional community in the city – thus opening up the program both to the university and other disciplines, as well as to the academic and professional community of designers and builders in the city. It might be a good idea if these seminars are recorded and made available on the program's website – and perhaps visiting lectures are collected and compiled or published in some way.

#### E. CULTIVATION AND FOOD AS CONNECTION TO LOCAL COMMUNITY AND MEDITERRANEAN CULTURE

While we all felt intuitively the importance of cultivation of the earth and food to the program, we had some difficulty of locating it spatially, as well as understanding it in the context of the time schedule of the students and its role within the program as a whole. Perhaps some more clarity into this issue was brought in when we began to imagine this aspect of the program as a way to connect with the local community as well as Mediterranean culture as a whole. The cooperative of Casa Tolentino (where we stayed) is getting prepared to embark on cultivation of a garden within their grounds as a community garden for the local area, and would welcome the involvement of our students (and faculty), and perhaps some daily or weekly work schedules could be organized as a beginning. There is significant work in the area done by scholars and chefs in Naples and the vicinity – which could be involved in giving the students some deeper understanding of sustainable food production – but these aspects are still to be explored in detail in terms of how they enter the curriculum in practice. This food to table aspect could also be a part of an open-door-potluck program that reaches out to the larger neighborhood and Naples community, maybe in conjunction with the Nature of

Order seminars and the seeking and effecting of a larger scale urban placemaking project or projects in the host City. While this is a potentially strong idea, it still has to be worked out practically with local partners and with members of the university community.







#### III. CHALLENGES & ACTION

In the first year of the program, starting this October, we believe strongly that it is imperative to have a Building Beauty "Master" onsite, full time, to guide the work, resolve logistical and other challenges, and leverage the potential further opportunities for cooperative interaction, especially locally. Ideally this person would have a high level of experience in university level teaching, fluency in the Italian and English languages, and a demonstrated commitment and experience in the Building Beauty program. It is critical to find the funds and other logistical support to enable the establishment of this full time position.

To date the program has seven qualified and committed students who have shown interest. We believe that a few more students (for a total of 15) would be ideal, and should still be aimed for. Local students, from Naples and the surrounding region might be the first priority for further enrollment efforts.

We are concerned about the Building Beauty financial resources and viability, especially in the short term (over the first year). We are convinced that in the medium and long-term the program will achieve financial viability and prosperity. A concerted effort should be done in the coming months until the beginning of the course in October, to boost the funds available to the program, and particularly to fund scholarships for local students.

While the details of the curriculum are under intensive development, a focused eye must be kept on maintaining a goal of more relatively compact consolidation of teaching resources over the proposed 30 weeks of the program. Rather than 30-40 people coming in for half week or full week seminars, we wonder if there couldn't be a core teaching team of closer to half dozen people who are coming in for periods of two to four weeks and taking on several of the learning modules during those periods. UniSOB staff would still be readily available, and other BB committed staff could be brought in via teleconference/Skype.

We also recommend that at some point in the life of the program, it is important to seek and establish relationships with communities in Naples, and explore tactical activities and strategic plans for placemaking and local improvement, at a more urban scale, responding to real and urgent needs, and giving students settings that are more likely to be similar to what they will encounter in real practice.

In summary, we would like to highly commend the work done so far by Professor Sergio Porta, Maggie Alexander, Antonio Caperna and many others in setting up the program at UniSOB. We believe that it is the one of the best opportunities in years to continue the legacy of Christopher Alexander, CES and the building process area of emphasis at UC Berkeley. Together with the PUARL in Oregon, PURPLSOC at Krems on the Danube, and in close cooperation with the architecture program at the University of San Francisco, it has

the potential to become a center for the continued development of these ideas and their implementation in the world. We look forward to actively contributing to the development of the teaching program, as well as helping with raising the necessary funds and connections that will enable the program to flourish.



# 4.12 "SELF, COMMUNITY AND SPACE" WORKSHOP, BUILDING BEAUTY, SORRENTO, MARCH 26-28, 2018 PERSONAL REPORT, IMPRESSIONS AND RE-FLECTION – OR ETTLINGER

#### <u>"Self, Community and Space" workshop, Building Beauty, Sorrento, March 26-28, 2018</u> Personal report, impressions and reflection – Or Ettlinger

By kind invitation of Sergio, I had the opportunity to take part in the "Self, Community and Space" workshop. Following are some personal notes from that experience for the purpose of internal discussion with the Building Beauty teaching committee.

In my understanding, the reason for the existence of this workshop in the program is to strengthen students' awareness of feeling and self in the sense that Christopher Alexander refers to as a critical factor to the process of making living architecture. This is a noble and worthy goal, and despite the reservations I may have about the extent of its success, it is surely a good beginning.

The three days of the workshop followed a similar structure while differing in their themes. The daily themes were 'bathroom', 'relation space' and 'outdoor space'. Each day included introspective exercises (sensing, imagination and memory recall), a session of psychodrama (reenactments of personal memories among the group), group dynamics exercises (decision making, role-playing, communication), creative exercises (writing, drawing, collage) and an analytic discussion in conclusion.

Overall, as a purely psychological workshop, it could be said to have worked reasonably well. It was led by three Jungian psychoanalysts who, although struggling with the need to present in English, were kind, thoughtful and honestly engaged. The exercises they led us through brought some awareness to some relevant issues at the intersection of personal experience and architectural design.

However, I noted several limitations which should be carefully considered:

- First, the daily psychodrama exercises were emotionally intrusive without warning. That is, they started with a guided process of eliciting memory (freely and privately), continued with a request to share it in the group (requiring a reasonable leap of trust), but then became the topic of public reenactment in the group (practically, a breach of trust). I noticed at least two people who from that moment on raised their defensive shields, and only continued to play along on the surface so as not to make it harder for the others. On subsequent days, then, we just brought up less meaningful memories to work with so as to maintain safer personal boundaries.
- Second, the constant note-taking by the psychologists of every word that was being said in the room created a somewhat uncomfortable atmosphere. During some of the exercises, we felt a little like laboratory animals, as objects of study and observation, which inevitably altered our behavior and actions accordingly. Also, in the context of a pleasant group atmosphere, we initially felt free to share personal thoughts that we would not have if we fully realized the level of written detail at which they were being documented (even if never read by anyone).
- Third, many of the exercises were given outside of a clearly stated context. They may have been enjoyable to a degree, but lacked an explanation or grounding as to why we are doing them at all. Granted, there is merit to the claim that experience is primary and not everything needs to be explained. But since psychology is not the end goal of this workshop but rather a means to reach personal design-related insights, such grounding of exercises is crucial both for creating motivation before them as well as for extracting value after them.

- Fourth, the analytic discussions at the end of each day, which I understood as intended to provide that missing link of grounding, ended up being mostly an analysis of the group, its dynamics, and the psychological patterns it revealed. Yet even so, this analysis was in my view skewed by the fact that students were careful not to over-involve themselves to begin with for the reasons mentioned above. The resulting content of that analysis, therefore, says not so much about the students but about the entire workshop's setup which was inseparable from it.
- Fifth, to the degree that insights of interest did arise (e.g., that bathrooms are not only functional, but that their design expresses an entire cultural mindset behind it) they mostly didn't manage to provide applicable value beyond the pale of psychology in service of psychology. This might perhaps only be a practical matter, since there was no immediate opportunity to translate such insights into practice. In an ideal setting, perhaps, the ability to reach insights would be embedded into the design process itself, and not segmented into a study unit aimed at reaching 'psychological insights' that remain detached from actual experience.
- Sixth, the three leaders of the workshop, as far as I could tell, had no design experience or any particular connection to design processes. Thus, the daily themes explored the psychological meanings of certain kinds of space (e.g., "bathrooms, through sewage, also link underground, to fear and madness"), but I think that such an analytic approach of psychological symbolism is very different from the personal, felt experience which this workshop was actually aiming for.

My main point, therefore, is a questioning of the suitability of the field of psychology in achieving the intended goal of this workshop within the wider context of the Building Beauty curriculum. The core topics of the workshop may have been 'self' and 'feeling', but the way they could be implemented is deeply dependent on what we might think is meant by 'feeling' or what is meant by 'self', and how an awareness of either of them could possibly be taught at all.

In the case of this workshop, 'self' and 'feeling' are understood as psychological phenomena and are approached as such. But that in itself is far from an obvious assumption to make. Are Alexander's notions of 'self' and 'feelings' truly a psychological matter? When Alexander speaks of the 'self' which reflects back to him from a well-developed design he just made, is that really the same 'self' which one could become more aware of by engaging in a group dynamics exercise? When he speaks of 'feeling' the life that is present in a beautiful Anatolian carpet, is that actually the same 'feeling' which one could develop by reenacting and reintegrating affective childhood memories?

In my understanding of Alexander, the answer is no. For this reason, apart from the misgivings I stated above, the workshop itself could be said to have been quite OK – it explores 'self' and 'feelings' as psychology understands them to be. But the limitation of psychology is that it too easily tends to address such topics either as abstract intellectual themes to be studied and conceptualized, or as personal idiosyncratic issues to be analyzed and processed. Yet neither of these paths approach 'self' and 'feeling' on a universal level, as core essences of being that are to be *lived* and *experienced* as such.

To be clear, I still believe that these are highly valuable themes and that it is a major achievement that they are being included in an architectural program at all. But now that this road has been opened, I think it is possible to take it much further and do it better. How exactly to do so is a matter of further discussion, but I think it can be done.

## APPENDIX D

#### **5.1 PUBLISHED WORKS**

In this Appendix, I am presenting an extended synopsis of the published papers produced in the course of my doctoral research. I will shortly highlight the theoretical issues discussed, along with the link between these and the experiences that I was carrying out in parallel on the ground.

Construction and Therapy: an Integrated Approach to Design Build. By Prof. Porta Porta, Peter Russel, Ombretta Romice, Mariapia Vidoli. Paper presented at the ACSA Conference in Halifax, NS, Dalhousie University, in October 2014.

The main purpose of the paper was the introduction of Construction and Therapy and its core principles. It stated that in Construction and Therapy the focus is the relation between the configuration of space and mental health. We specifically investigated how the environment determines, modifies and influences the behaviour and life of those who inhabit it. Behavioural approaches to therapy in the 1950s and 1960s, generated controversial practices in various fields such as social policies, wellbeing and population health, as well as security and urban planning. The writings of Jane Jacobs  $(1961)^{23}$ , Friend and Jessop  $(1969)^{24}$  and Newman  $(1972)^{25}$  looked critically to such practices. Environmental determinism led to a degeneration of housing production as a process. In it the division between the builders (the experts) and the end users (the deviants or the patients) emerges, hence the separation between the various components of the process, such as between developers, designers and end users. On an opposite side, Construction and Therapy relies on the idea that what can bring benefit and health is the process itself, rather than the product, and that the collective experience of conceiving and building one's own place has a therapeutic effect. With the term "therapy" we refer to any process designed to induce "healing", where the word "heal" contains the meaning of "recovery from separation". The etymological link between the terms "healing" and "everything" is profound and it is also present in Alexander, with reference not only to human beings but also to the land itself. In this respect, he writes: "The idea of wholeness encompasses the idea of healing. When something is a whole, we consider it healed. If we wish to heal something, we seek to make it whole. The middle-English word hale, laying as it does halfway between whole and heal, gives us a sense of this connection. Healing is making whole: that which is healed as a stronger wholeness

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup>The Death and Life of Great American Cities is a 1961 book authored by the writer and activist Jane Jacobs. The book is a critique of 1950s urban planning policy, which it holds responsible for the decline of many city neighbourhoods in the US. Going against the modernist planning dogma of the era, it proposes a newfound appreciation for organic urban vibrancy in the United States.

the modernist planning dogma of the era, it proposes a newfound appreciation for organic urban vibrancy in the United States.

24Local Government and Strategic Choice (Routledge Revivals). An operation Research Approach to the Processes of Public Planning by J. Ford, N. Jessop is first published in 1969. This book is concerned with the processes of policy-making in local government. The authors address themselves to the basic challenge of planning in a democracy and consider issues such as how those elected to exercise choice on our behalf can preserve and expand their capacity to choose discriminatingly, when the sheer complexity of the issues facing them tends to make them increasingly dependent on the skills and judgements of their professional advisers. This question is explored in relation to the many different, yet interdependent, aspects of the planning process which impinge on any local community — with particular reference to the planning of housing, transport, education, and shopping, of land use and local government finance.

land use and local government finance.

25 Creating Defensible Space, by Po. Newton. The appearance of Oscar Newman's Defensible Space in 1972 signalled the establishment of a new criminological subdiscipline that has come to be called by many Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED. Over the years, Mr. Newman's ideas have proven to have significant merit in helping the Nation's citizens reclaim their urban neighbourhoods.

than that which is not healed (...). We can reach understanding of wholeness only when we see the objective wholeness in the thing or place, and simultaneously experience the growth of wholeness in ourselves. These two must go together. That is the nature of the phenomenon" (Alexander, Battle, 2012, p. 89).

Construction and Therapy aims at a constructive model that subverts a general condition in mainstream urbanism in which decisions are made by people who do not communicate with each other, in different moments and different places. As a result of this, the end users are mostly excluded. In Construction and Therapy the end users are an integral part of the group of people involved in the construction; they are the ones playing the leading role in the process at all stages, including that of Conception & Construction. Moreover, the design and construction fall within a single phase. The paper is significant because it outlines what already was the general Construction and Therapy model process back in 2014. The paper was written immediately after the 2012/2013 VIP Construction and Therapy and its key objective is to identify, clarify and present the experimentation of the new construction process.

.The Production of Cities: Christopher Alexander and the Problem of 'System A' at Large Scale. By Yoda Rofè, Sergio Porta, Mariapia Vidoli. Published in the Proceedings of PURPLSOC Conference 2015.

The paper attempts to answer the question of whether, and how, Alexander's System A can generate beauty and life in the world at large scale. It shows that the beauty of cities depends mainly on time and not on the small or large scale. Furthermore, it is claimed that beauty is a product of morphological evolution, characterized by informal participation. System B, which relies on a codified mechanistic system developed over the last 70 years for the construction of the space, does not include informal participation which makes it unable to create beauty or life. The planning itself is not the real problem, which rather consists in understanding what the real needs are and how they can be satisfied, namely what needs are to be enhanced and improved. Hence the role of planning is redefined in terms of constructing infrastructures, both physical and regulatory, capable of including informal participation as a free expression that generates life, beauty and integrity in the built environment.

The City and the Grid: Building Beauty at Large Scale. By Yoda Rofè, Sergio Porta, Mariapia Vidoli. Chapter of "The City is not a Tree: 50th Anniversary Edition" edited by Micheal Mehaffy and published in 2016.

The great popularity of "The City is not a Tree" (Alexander, 1965) in various areas of knowledge seems to continue over time. In this paper Alexander provides a focus on the complexity of the nature of a city. As in Jane Jacobs' "The Death and Life of Great American Cities", Chapter 22 "The kind of problem a city is" (1961), Alexander introduces a profound criticism to the mainstream practices in the production of

cities of the time, that is all the more relevant today, since a profound renewal of the fundamentals of the discipline is currently increasingly pressing. The urgency of this problem is a fact in our age characterized by unprecedented urbanization, which mainly involves the poorest parts of the global population and has a very strong impact on nature. In a rapidly urbanizing world, the involvement of professionals cannot be a sufficient measure for a good urbanization: a new mainstream is needed, capable of giving different and suitable solutions to contemporary needs.

In order to look for a new answer we must redefine our notion of the city within an organic analogy, or approach the cities as if they were living systems. Until now, urban planners have mostly dealt with the architecture-nature analogy following a biomorphic approach, i.e. seeking inspiration from the visible forms of nature rather than from the structures and processes through which these forms exist, or act. In evolutionary biology two different processes of form generation are distinguished: ontogenesis, the process of development of form at the level of the individual organism, or "morphogenesis", throughout their life from birth to death (intra-generational); and phylogenesis, where the form is generated by "evolution", which applies to populations of individuals along a long-term trajectory (intergenerational). The two types of change are profoundly different, and involve different forces. Historically, planners have not taken advantage of the biomorphic/evolutionary analogy which considers nature as a matter of rigorous investigation, and this was functional to urban planning in the first half of the last century. Working in a truly evolutionary perspective requires a rethinking of the object of our investigation, focusing not as much on the shape of a well-made city as on the process that generates it, and the role that certain spatial characteristics play in that process: this requires an entirely new science of cities (Michael Batty, 2008)<sup>26</sup>. This, in turn, determines a different way of conceiving the role of the urban planners as part of an ecological process of urban evolution, which leads to a new configuration of the practices on the ground (C. Holling & Orians, 1971; C. S. Holling & Goldberg, 1971). The discussion on the organic analogy maintains that the current demand for a new disciplinary foundation can only be formulated on Alexander's concept of the city as a complex system, firstly presented in "A City is not a Tree", which is configured to respect and support the structure of urban life. The city must therefore be at service of the present life structure, sharing with it the generative principles of biological evolution. Considering this, the problem of a new discipline is to establish a new norm, or, briefly, that of System A at large scale. Alexander recognizes that the introduction of such new mainstream remains an unresolved issue. We should look for a deeper understanding of the way in which System A works in the long term or, better, include System A in an evolutionary perspective.

More specifically, we understood that what truly defines System A is its ability

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup>The New science of Cities. A proposal for a new way to understand cities and their design not as artefacts but as systems composed of flows and networks, Michael Batty, 2008. Here, Michael Batty suggests that to understand cities we must view them not simply as places in space but as systems of networks and flows. To understand space, he argues, we must understand flows, and to understand flows, we must understand networks—the relations between objects that compose the system of the city. Drawing on the complexity sciences, social physics, urban economics, transportation theory, regional science, and urban geography, and building on his own previous work, Batty introduces theories and methods that reveal the deep structure of how cities function.

to generate beauty and that its characterizing factor is the amount of life generated in the construction process. In the paper, practical cases of beauty creation, on the small and large scale, have been observed and it has been found that life emerges in completely different ways depending on the timeframe in which the process occurs. In the shortterm cycle of "project" change (sub- generational), life occurs in coordinated activities all built on the involvement of the community of builders (end users, suppliers, planning staff, developers, technicians, designers ...); on the other hand, in the long-term cycle of "urban" change (super-generational), life gradually spreads through the innumerable uncoordinated, or better self-organized, interventions of individual citizens, groups or organizations, each of which pursue their own projects or interests. This last form of intervention we called "informal participation". Alexander, as first, recognized in "The City is not a Tree" the existence of an informal decision-making level identified as a second semi-lattice-shaped structure that operates inside the structure (in the shape of a tree) of formal administrative and executive control: this informal control line changes continuously and very quickly. In the paper, we propose informal participation as a primary evolutionary force acting in urban change and an essential enabler of System A at large scale. Planners play a crucial role in this context: they define and establish, at the design stage, the spatial structure that can support and determine the occurrence of informal participation during the post-planning phase, or throughout the subsequent evolution over time.

Alexander uses the term "morphogenesis" (Alexander, 2004) to identify the process of generating beauty typical of System A (Alexander, 2003). This term is technically precise, since it refers to the process of natural growth of individual living organisms (a tree, a mollusk, a human being) as defined in evolutionary biology. The author refers to morphogenesis in opposition to the "mechanistic" process that characterizes System B; in this respect, his reflection is in contrast with the superficial formalisms of the biomorphic approach and, at the same time, remains firmly linked to the evolutionary interpretation of the analogy with nature. But Alexander does not analyse the problem of how living structures (and therefore beauty) are created in the short rather than in the long-term of the process. In contrast, we maintain that this distinction is pivotal in order to fully grasp the nature of the process that generates beauty in long-term processes through informal participation and in the way System A works in the large scale of cities.

The paper tries to identify the spatial structure that designers should deal with at the design stage, and the ways to implement it. The problem is addressed as "problem of the grid", with reference to Leslie Martin's "The Grid as a Generator" (1972). This was first published seven years after "The city is not a tree" as part of a book that Martin coedited with Lionel March (Martin and March, 1972). The reason why it was significant in the context of the paper is that this article introduces the idea that grid-iron street layouts, and more in general geometrically rigid spatial structures, may not obstruct, but can even facilitate, the creation of complex and vital urban environments, in the long-term. This conclusion is of the utmost importance as it could demonstrate that a

traditional planning system is potentially able to express the main constituency of System A. In other words, it seems that there is something that can lead us towards a "System A at large scale", not confined within the limits of an academic setting, but capable of fostering the restoration of System A as the future mainstream of a truly sustainable discipline.

This paper, together with "The Production of Cities" previously discussed, are realized in co-authorship with Yodan Rofè and Prof. Porta, and were written following the publication of Battle. They demonstrate the impact that Alexander's last publication had on the authors and myself, and eventually this PhD research. By stating the fundamental opposition between System A and B, the book influenced deeply and in many ways the work then carried out at the Rodari School. That is, in essence, a whole attempt at experimenting a System A generation process in a real-world environment, in order to understand the hurdles and nuances that practical conditions in a conventional system pose to the designer.

The Timeless Way of Educating Architects: A New Master in "Building Beauty" in Naples, Italy, by Maggie Moore Alexander; Enzo Zecchi; Peter Russell; Mariapia Vidoli; Sergio Porta; Ombretta Romice; Antonio Caperna. Paper presented at the PUARL Conference 2016 in San Francisco, CA.

The paper starts off with an account of the scenario of the so called "radical" traditions of architectural education and culture of the 1960s; additionally, it deals with the current debate on architecture in the United Kingdom and the United States. Bearing in mind all this, the postgraduate Diploma program named "Building Beauty: Experience of Ecologic Design and Construction Process", carried out in 2017/2018 in Sorrento, Italy, is presented. It suggests an alternative and innovative proposal concerning the making and teaching of architecture, based on a holistic construction practice, which includes nature and community. The pedagogical principles supporting this vision are of great importance: the pedagogical proposal is informed by constructionist principles applied to both teaching and assessing/marking. This approach is supported by Project Based Learning principles revised according to Agile Project Management. The paper illustrates and explains the innovative features of the educational program.

This paper was written in collaboration with fellow members of the Building Beauty network. Throughout the Building Beauty experience, new aspects concerning my research emerged, in particular regarding the connection between Construction and Therapy and education, the importance and difficulty of triggering an authentic multidisciplinary attitude among involved staff, and that of generating flexibility in the way participants normally position themselves in conventionally accepted roles and frameworks.