



Interior Ecologies

International Online Conference

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture at HEAD – Geneva
Institute for Postnatural Studies

December 20-21, 2023

Institute for
Postnatural Studies

MAIA

— HEAD
Genève

Interior Ecologies

International Online Conference

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (HEAD – Genève)

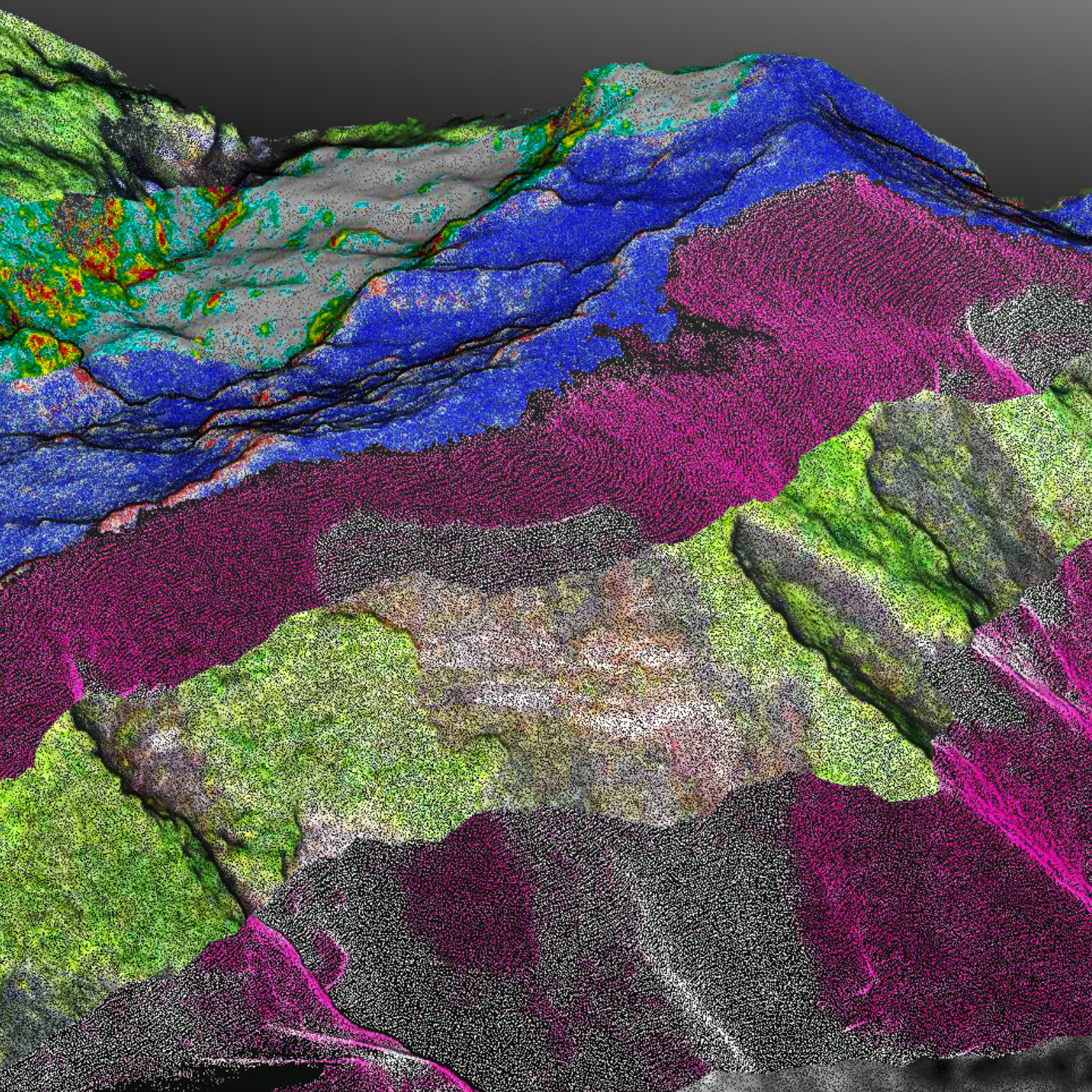
Institute for Postnatural Studies

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The second edition of the **Interior Ecologies** conference, organized by MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture at HEAD – Genève, and the Institute for Postnatural Studies, will delve into the intersection between the built environment and new emerging ecologies. It will explore the impact of digitalization on interior architecture and its relationship to computational ecologies, social media, non-human relations, postnatural territories, video games, and artificial intelligence. The conference will be fully online, with free registration and open access, and will integrate innovative formats of broadcast, fostering interaction between speakers, the audience, and AI-generated content. The event will feature a series of lectures, round tables, and experimental performances, showcasing the latest research and design approaches in architecture, ecology, and media.

The presentations will focus on various themes, including **Ecologies of Media**, which delves into the intricate relationship between digital platforms and the built environment. Challenging traditional notions of wilderness preservation, one presentation views Earth as a “rambunctious garden,” extending this approach to virtual worlds and advocating for a more environmentally intelligent game design. Additionally, **Digital Environments and Video Games** will be explored as innovative tools for designing and testing interior spaces, with a particular emphasis on discussions about the potential of virtual environments to simulate user experiences and behaviors, and the challenges involved in translating game dynamics into physical spaces. One presentation will envision a future with a massive city for Earth’s population, while a different exploration will propose a “transspecies architecture” that embraces collaboration between humans and other species.

The topic of **Artificial Intelligence** will prompt a critical examination of the use of AI algorithms in architectural design processes, the integration of smart systems into interior spaces, and the ethical and environmental considerations associated with post-natural design practices. The conference will research the intersection of human creativity and AI in post-natural design, using a custom-trained AI algorithm to study interior ecologies, including presentations exploring diverse perspectives from a multispecies viewpoint. Lastly, **Psychic Ecologies** will delve into the impact of interior architecture on human emotions, behaviors, and social relationships. The projects will investigate the meaning of space in an era of connectivity through performative lectures, with experts discussing the influence of elements such as color, texture, and sound on human and non-human cognition and perception. Overall, the conference will provide a unique online platform for interdisciplinary exchange and experimentation, fostering innovative approaches to analyze new interior ecologies.



Online Platform Access

The conference will be hosted in an independent website granting free access to all lectures, information related to the speakers, and a digital archive generated with a excerpt of contributions selected from an international open call.

Scientific Committee:

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture, HEAD – Genève
Institute for Postnatural Studies, Madrid

Program

Wednesday, Dec 20th 2023

10:00 - 10:15

Javier F. Contreras, Roberto Zancan, Pablo Ferreira Navone

Introduction

10:15 - 10:30

MAIA Students

Conference Brief

10:30 - 11:30

HPO (Riccardo Simioni)

The Low Poly Solitude

Twitch Lecture and Live Conversation

Q&A

11:30 - 12:30

María Esteban Casañas

Experimental Roundtable + Custom-Trained A.I. Algorithm

Roundtable Discussion with an A.I. Algorithm

Q&A

13:00 - 15:00

BREAK

15:00 - 15:45

Karl Kaisal

Island of Multitude

Video Screening and Presentation

Q&A

15:45 - 17:00

Alenda Y. Chang

KEYNOTE #1 - ***On Games as Rambunctious Gardens, or Ecological Game Design***

Online Lecture

Q&A

17:00 - 18:15

Liam Young

KEYNOTE #2 - ***Planet City***

Online Lecture

Q&A

Thursday, Dec 21st 2023

10:00 - 10:15

MAIA Students

Interior Ecologies

10:15 - 11:15

Uwe Brunner, Bettina Katja Lange, and Joan Soler-Adillon

#See You at Home - The Domestic Spaces as Public Encounter

Performative Online Lecture

Q&A

11:15 - 12:00

İlkyaz Samur Avcı & V. Şafak Uysal

Digital Ecologies, Performative Interiors, Pandemic Times

Performative Online Lecture

Q&A

12:00 - 13:15

Samaneh Moafi

KEYNOTE #3 - *Situated Testimonies*

Online Lecture

Q&A

13:15 - 14:15

BREAK

14:15 - 15:30

Beatriz Colomina

KEYNOTE #4 - *Towards a Transspecies Architecture*

Online Lecture

Q&A

15:30 - 16:45

Studio Meteora + MAIA Students

Interview with Studio Meteora

16:45 - 17:15

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (HEAD – Genève)

Institute for Postnatural Studies

Colophon - Online Discussion

Abstract

HPO

Ferrara, Italy

The Low Poly Solitude

A live ingame lecture and audiovisual essay about late 1990s game design culture

Videogames have only recently become part of the academic discourse in architecture. Since 2020, game design has taken center stage in various design studios, exhibition pavilions, and lectures. Game design is, in essence, the prehistory of Metaverse, to which gaming studies in our discipline are instrumental. However, architectural interest in game design emerged only in a mature phase of its development, nearly 30 years after the first notable achievements in 3D video game art. In 1996, the Nintendo 64 video game console was released, featuring the first works that provided a complete and effective gaming experience in a freely explorable three-dimensional environment. The works under the direction of Shigeru Miyamoto established a new paradigm in 3D video game art, as no reference precedent existed at that time. We are considering this case study as year 0 to examine several significant Digital Spaces in an in-game lecture via Twitch, exploring their spatial aspects and the close links between design and play.

María Esteban Casañas

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

Experimental Roundtable + Custom-Trained A.I. Algorithm

The increasingly blurred boundaries between human creativity and machine-generated content in the rapidly evolving landscape of postnatural design practices call for alternative (re)creations of new AI tools for more equitable design processes. The roundtable questions our current AI models and delves into how designers can adopt alternative approaches to designing with AI. With the hopes of generating a productive discourse, the roundtable aims to reveal insights using a custom-trained AI algorithm on interior ecologies as a tool for analysis, exploring dataset curation, power dynamics, ethical and hierarchical implications, and the complexity of the relationship between human beings and new digital regimes.

Karl Kaisel

University of Applied Arts Vienna

Island of Multitude

Storytelling As A Method For Connecting With The More-Than-Human World.

How is the world seen by an island – a place of multitudes, living and nonliving? The space and time through multispecies viewpoint is infinitely complex and narrowing it down to linear film might seem impossible. *Island of Multitude* gets entangled in the island's complex world following and building connections between different agents of the island. The contact points are observed from multiple perspectives with each new viewpoint forming an even more complex web. In the end, this film is just one story out of the millions that unfold on the island daily. *Island of Multitude* is the conclusion of a year-long research on the island of Uuluti, located in the Baltic Sea, off the coast of West Estonia. It started as an exploration of island space and the human and non-human stories that are formed on islands. One of the first things that comes to mind when thinking of islands is their defining aspects related to space – they are isolated. The experience of space is different depending on how you travel in it, therefore the first step of getting to know this island was to approach it in numerous ways – walking through the sea like the cows, flying with a drone like a seagull, or floating across the sea as the ripped-up algae.

Alenda Y. Chang

University of California, Santa Barbara

On Games as Rambunctious Gardens, or Ecological Game Design

The Oxford English Dictionary defines “rambunctious” as “uncontrollably exuberant” or “boisterous, wild, [and] unruly,” but notes that the term typically describes a person. Yet rambunctious is how environmental writer Emma Marris describes the likely future of our planet. On a globe irrevocably altered by human action and inaction, we must relinquish the myth of wilderness preservation and turn our attention to cultivating, at best, Earth as a “rambunctious garden.” Such a metaphor directs us toward a “post-wild” natural world still worthy of being cherished. It also offers an expedient way to rethink virtual worlds and to resituate digital and analog play beyond the domestic interior. Long associated with cybernetic orderliness and relations predicated on mastery and control, games and those who play them in this unsettled epoch could stand to be much, much more rambunctious. I will outline a handful of principles—and caveats—for those looking to build, play, and think through more environmentally intelligent games, for instance, by foregrounding the agency and unpredictability of game ecologies and expanding the ambient contexts for play. My talk will also showcase the growing diversity of games on aesthetic, procedural, and ethical fronts having to do with modeling, energetics, and more-than-human orientation.

Liam Young

Independent Researcher

Planet City and the Return of Global Wilderness

Online Lecture

Following centuries of colonization, globalization, and never-ending economic extraction we have remade the world from the scale of the cell to the tectonic plate. In the storytelling performance *Planet City and the Return of Global Wilderness* we go on a science fiction safari through an imaginary city for the entire population of the earth, where 10 billion people surrender the rest of the world to a globally scaled wilderness and the return of stolen lands. Set against the consistent failure of nation-states to act in any meaningful way against climate change, Planet City emerges from a global citizen consensus, a voluntary and multi-generational retreat from our vast network of cities and entangled supply chains into one hyper-dense metropolis.

Uwe Brunner, Bettina Katja Lange, and Joan Soler-Adillon

Independent Research

#See You at Home - The Domestic Spaces as Public Encounter

Performative online lecture

#See You at Home - The Domestic Spaces as Public Encounter is an interactive and immersive installation oscillating between the physical and the virtual dimensions, intending to explore the meaning of private and intimate space in times of ubiquitous connectivity. As an ongoing participatory project, it reflects on our everyday domestic life between private and public spheres, and thus on our relationship with living spaces in general. It represents the concept of a public living space, providing a stage for encounters, joint awareness, and personal exchange. The foundation piece of this work is an ever-growing global archive in Virtual Reality of glimpses into the domesticated private spheres of a digitally networked population. This VR Experience manifests a multitude of fragmented narratives of personal spaces, intimate routines, and memories; and a variety of snapshots of three-dimensional documents taken between 2020 and 2021 in over 40 different countries during the most intense periods of self-isolation and home confinement.

Ikyaz Samur Avcı & V. Safak Uysal

Akdeniz University, Turkey & Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey

Digital Ecologies, Performative Interiors, Pandemic Times

Online lecture performance

The field of performing arts has been one of the most affected sectors due to Covid-19 shutdown policies in Turkey – simply because the space-time continuum of the theatrical event (that is, the principle of being in the same space at the same time) has been subject to an inevitable disruption during the pandemic. Following the first few common and elementary ways of tackling the problem, several artists adopted more refined strategies for taking on the challenge. They started using various (preexistent or state-of-the-art) digital technologies and giving life to several novel spatial frameworks that carry the promise of transforming the way theatrical arts are practiced. In this lecture performance, we examine three such efforts, paying special attention to the overall nature of the multi-layered spatialities they offer. Barış Arman's *An Infra-Ordinary Journey* questions the audience members' relationships to their own homes by acoustically breaking open the physical integrity of domestic space. Batu Bozoğlu's *Project: Survive* welcomes the project participants to the artist's living room as he reproduces a series of daily rituals on social media. And Tibia x Fibula's *Walkthrough: Darağaç* allows the audience to direct the movements of two avatar performers through the city from a distance. All in all, we argue that these examples re-establish con-temporaneity (the synchronous occupation of a physically continuous space by a performer and an overlooker) in some form by exploring various possibilities of repairing the disrupted space-time continuum of the theatrical event.

Samaneh Moaffi

Forensic Architecture

Situated Testimonies

Online Lecture

As Forensic Architecture's Assistant Director of Research, Samaneh provides conceptual oversight across projects and oversees the Centre for Contemporary Nature. Her research is focused on developing new evidentiary techniques for environmental violence. She holds a PhD from The Architectural Association (AA), and a BA and MA in Architecture from the University of Technology, Sydney. Samaneh's PhD thesis examined struggle and resistance from the home, with a particular focus on gender and class relations in Iran.

Beatriz Colomina

Princeton University, USA

Towards a Transspecies Architecture

Online Lecture

Western architecture has always been understood in terms of the body – more precisely the athletic white male body endlessly redrawn from Renaissance treatises to modern architecture manifestoes, from Leonardo da Vinci to Le Corbusier – a perfected body immersed in geometric systems of proportions – a fiction that excludes most of humanity. Human-centered design sounds good, but it is terrible for humans, other species, and the planet. The human is not one thing but an endlessly complex changing trans-species collaboration. The human is just a bag of bacteria, and bacteria have been around for billions of years, while the human is a very recent arrival and might already be on the way out. We are nothing without all these foreigners. We live in them more than they live in us. What would a probiotic architecture be? It would be like our gut, more porous, versus the prophylactic attitude of modern architecture. We used to live intimately with all the bacteria in the soil, the plants, and other animals. And we may want to reconnect with this diversity of bacteria, embracing them.

Studio Meteora

ETH Zürich, Switzerland

Interview with Studio Meteora

Studio Meteora is a design studio and an architectural practice based in Zurich and at home around the globe. We talk about the beauties and challenges of our world today by playing with the abundance of digital information. We navigate this abundance through artificial intelligence to create architectural positions in sync with our time. We see the hyperconnected world of today as a planetary garden that gives nature its share. We celebrate recycling to keep objects and ideas alive.”

Digital Archive

The following contributions will also take part in the digital archive of the online platform hosting the conference. Video-essay, articles and multi-media investigations will be accessible throughout the conference.

Christina Doumpioti

Artificial Intelligence-Infused Images: A Manifesto

Shiila Infriccioli

Symbiotic Beauty

Agostino Nickl, Adil Bokhari

Staging Versailles

Stefano Dealessandri

J'adore Venice – on disappearing bodies

Barret Witte

The Earth is God (Mima)

Kurina Sohn

Deepest Unknown

Connor Cook

Gamespace Odyssey

López Rodríguez & Erik Eduardo

Datascape

Interior Ecologies

A conference organized by:

MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (HEAD – Genève, HES-SO)
Institute for Postnatural Studies

20-21.12.2023

Scientific Committee:

Javier F. Contreras, Roberto Zancan, Pablo Ferreira Navone

Web Development:

Fernando Estesó

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