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# **A DIALOG WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD**

# Work Transit Hubs

## Art as a Tool for a Cultural Welfare in Metro Stations

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### Keywords

Artistic Integration, Strategic design, Art metro station, Cultural Welfare, Well-Being.

### Abstract

This paper explores the transformative power of European metropolitan art stations, presenting them as hubs of well-being within the contemporary urban scenario. These transit hubs, characterized by high foot traffic, offer unique opportunities to integrate art into daily life. Such interventions enrich the aesthetic and sensory experience of the users involved and contribute significantly to their well-being and mental health. This analysis is part of the broader context of cultural welfare, which integrates social and cultural well-being, recognizing the importance of access to culture and the arts as fundamental to the quality of life of individuals and communities. Through design that increasingly integrates artistic practices, uncommon art places are generated, where everyday journeys are converted into experiences of introspection and cultural connection. It is, therefore, necessary to re-imagine urban transit spaces as vital components of the cultural and health ecosystem. Through the transformative power of art, metro stations can evolve into sanctuaries of serenity and reflection, contributing to the overall well-being of city inhabitants and redefining the role of public spaces in contemporary urban life.

## 1. Introduction

In an era when the complexity of urban life seems to be constantly growing and the working dimension dominates much of everyday life, the issue of well-being, defined as the psychophysical health status of citizens, has become crucially important. The mass urbanization that has affected the contemporary city in recent years makes it as a complex node of interconnected spaces and networks, where daily routines and tight schedules follow an increasingly accelerated pace, profoundly affecting individual and collective well-being. This phenomenon has brought economic development that has not gone hand in hand with the quality and the health of the city itself and people, urban space and human relational capacity (Petrillo, 2006). While on the one hand, economic activities and new productive sectors of tangible and intangible networks have spread, on the other hand, problems and malaise related to inadequate housing, infrastructure, and work transit and spaces have ramped up exponentially (Pompei, 2019). Today's modern city represents the space where the psychological pressures and stresses associated with an increasingly fast-paced and dynamic system manifest most frequently. This complexity has reached such a level that it can no longer offer adequate answers to the problems of the *system-city*, which is continually subjected to entropy maximization processes, increasing its unlivability and chaos (Gargiulo, Papa, 1993). While in some phases of urban history, cities have grown by maintaining a balance among their parts, ensuring harmony among the various spheres of collective life, in recent decades, congestion and overload due to rapid urban transformation have generated incompatible conditions between the different functions

of the city (work, social life, travel) has gradually weakened. The interaction between the dimensions of work and personal well-being has become increasingly difficult to balance. Complex, often unpredictable phenomena have transformed the urban fabric into a field of unstable forces, where the absence of effective tools and inadequate management procedures help perpetuate a feeling of disorder and alienation. This imbalance is evident not only in the material conditions of urban spaces but also in the psychological and physical well-being of the individuals who live and work there.

In this scenario, a crucial need emerges: to create spaces and moments of pause that interrupt the incessant sequence of daily and work commitments and offer individuals the opportunity to regenerate. Indeed, in recent years, new ideas and experimentation have emerged that find an increasing relationship between urban transformations and citizen well-being. The American philosopher John Dewey, already in the 1920s, proposed to think of public space as an environment in which humans are not just passive spectators but cooperate closely with the environment around them. The growth of the individual starts from experience in its social dimension.

The individual is thus integrated with his environment, reacting and acting with it. Therefore, educational experience and individual growth must start in daily life and the social space in which the individual lives. It is thus helpful to understand what the “social” uses of public space in contemporary cities can be, or what they can become, and especially the function that artistic production can assume in these processes.

These new configurations of spaces are referred to by Edward Soja, at the beginning of the 90s, as “third space”, lived space

(Morone & Nunziante, 2012). This new paradigm involves the transformation of public places from simple transit places to social spaces of concentrated well-being through artistic, cultural, visual, and generally “symbolic” experiences. Among them, the article focuses on working transit spaces, such as subway stations, which, from being crucial nodes where urban life is concentrated, can also be transformed into unexpected well-being spaces, as in the case of *metro art*. These innovative transit hubs offer unique opportunities to integrate art and design into daily life. Such interventions enrich the aesthetic and sensory experience of the users involved and contribute significantly to their well-being and mental health. Art stations, as an essential part of urban cultural welfare, exemplify how public spaces can be rethought as functional places and as catalysts for social, cultural, and psychological benefits. They redraw the boundaries between public space and personal experience. They offer a break from routine and create a deeper connection with the surrounding environment as true *sanctuaries* of calm and introspection.

## 2. Cultural Welfare and Design

Design has long overcome the traditional concept of form and function to evolve into a powerful tool for generating well-being and cultural welfare. It is no longer a discipline concerned only with functionality but a true social actor capable of promoting non-canonical settings for creating welfare through art and culture. A science capable of abandoning, from a community perspective, the traditional, performance-based welfare model to pave the way for welfare co-designed by people (Manzoli & Paltrinieri, 2021).



In close connection with urban regeneration and placemaking, design is capable of transforming public spaces and urban contexts, contributing to the social well-being and mental health of communities in a field of application extended to places of public and collective gathering (Fig. 1). In this sense, it takes part in a design reinterpretation of spaces that are generators of physical and mental well-being and promoters of an inclusive culture. Through the application of integrated and shared design methodologies, it becomes essential to understand better how emotions, particularly positive ones, can become inputs for interaction and alignment of people's intrinsic needs toward their intentions, aspirations and goals that are not only personal but also social (De Luca, 2016).

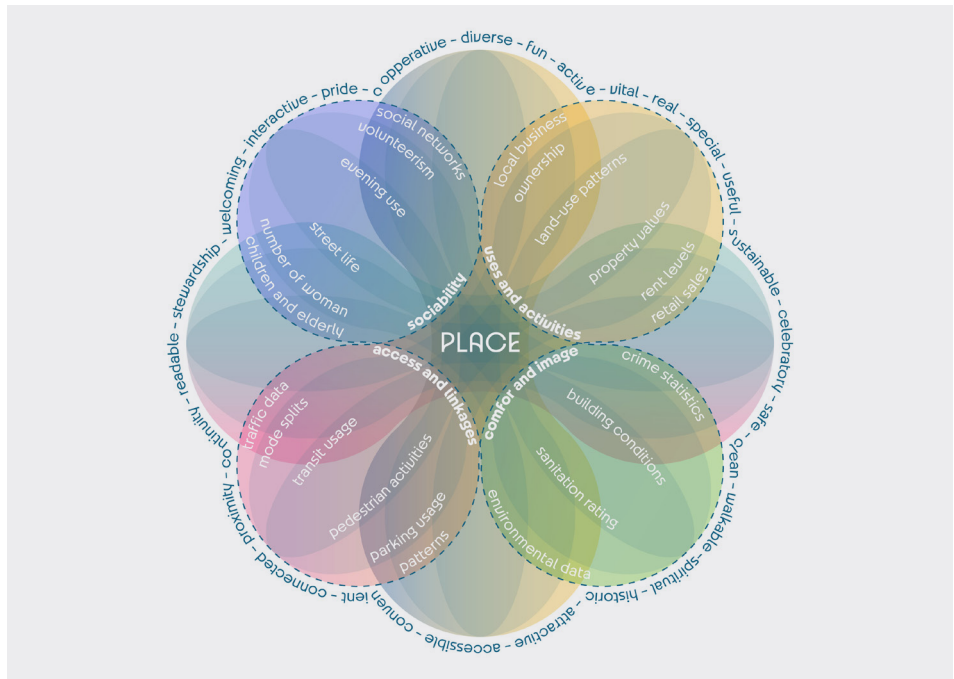


Figure 1. xxx, Placemaking: field of action, 2024.

One of the most interesting trends in this context is how it contributes to the promotion of places that are not born with a primary vocation related to culture or art but, through targeted interventions, can become catalysts for cultural innovation. These spaces, particularly workplaces and places of transit to and from work, are rethought to accommodate artistic and cultural activities, promoting widespread well-being beyond mere entertainment. Design becomes a bridge between community values through placemaking, a practice that can transform public spaces into meaningful places for the community. This process is not limited to the physical appearance of the environment but focuses on the human experience, social interactions, and the mental and physical well-being of users. By encouraging people to reimagine and reinvent public spaces collectively, this practice insists on transforming urban areas into incubators of social life in a process in which design plays the key role of a catalyst for innovation and urban regeneration. By working in synergy with urban planners, architects, psychologists and sociologists to create spaces that foster encounters, sharing and well-being, the discipline becomes a tool of empowerment for communities, allowing them to express their needs and actively contribute to the transformation of the environment. Hence, the emergence, especially in recent years, of the *One Health* concept, an approach in which the inextricable link between people's health and the ecosystem is of crucial importance.

A declining and multifaceted practice closely linked to Goal No. 11 *Urban Health* of the 2030 Agenda: making cities inclusive, safe, resilient. These are logics on the path of citizen

welfare centered on a holistic view of closely related human, animal and environmental health (De Angelis, 2023). Urban regeneration is one of the fields in which design demonstrates its social potential:

The future healthy city does not require such a radical or futuristic vision. On the contrary, it presents a more *peaceful* approach that places mental health, well-being and quality of life at the forefront of urban planning and design. An approach defined as *restorative urbanism* that is based on the principles of research on restorative environments and solid scientific evidence showing how urban design can support mental health. (Roe & McCay, 2021)

By acting on degraded or underused spaces, these places become actual platforms for community participation and the development of wellness initiatives. In this context, design becomes a tool for prevention and treatment, integrating into a holistic approach to public health that also includes the quality of the spaces in which we live and work. In this framework, the designer's role evolves into a mediator between the functional needs and the psychophysical well-being of users, becoming an interdependent figure within multidisciplinary teams engaged in the design of welfare-oriented spaces and services. This integration takes place in a transparent manner, that is, without disrupting people's daily activities, but rather enriching them through design solutions that act on the social, cultural and work spheres by raising the quality of life. One of the most illuminating examples in this field is the study *Welcoming Workplace*, carried out in collaboration with the British Council for Offices. The British research drew up workplace

well-being guidelines, exploring new trends on how to experience workspaces and crossing places, such as hallways and informal meeting spaces. Aiming to promote positive interactions among workers and improve their mental and physical well-being, the guidelines highlight how the design of these spaces can directly influence employees' mental health and sense of belonging, confirming design as a highly relevant tool that can implement determinant strategies.

*Art stations*, for example, not only represent a virtuous example of the integration of art, architecture and design, but play the crucial role of catalysts for broader social benefits, offering food for thought on the multiple functions of urban infrastructure. Indeed, these are not simply places of passage, but become spaces that invite pause and contemplation, transforming the daily experience of subway travel into an opportunity to regain one's well-being. (Salvatori, 2020, p. 266)

### 3. Art Station History

The history of subways in Europe is intertwined with the urban and social evolution of the continent's major cities. Traditionally, the subway has been conceived as a purely functional infrastructure, aimed at meeting the growing mobility needs of the urban population since the mid-19th century. However, since the 20th century, metro stations have gradually taken on a more complex and articulated role, becoming not only crucial nodes for urban transportation, but also true spaces of artistic and cultural expression, capable of reflecting the historical and social identity of the cities in which they are located. The so-called *Metro Art* is therefore part of a broader process of re-evaluation

of urban public spaces, which has seen art assume a fundamental role in the regeneration and redevelopment of modern cities. One of the most emblematic examples of this marriage of art and infrastructure is the Paris Metro, whose first line was inaugurated in 1900, on the occasion of the *Universal Exposition*. The architectural design of the stations, entrusted to Hector Guimard, was inspired by the *Art Nouveau* style, which is distinguished by its sinuous and organic forms. The wrought-iron structures, which became a symbol of Parisian modernism, evidenced an uncommon aesthetic intention for an infrastructural work, anticipating what would become, over the century, a real trend in major European capitals (Fig. 2). The Parisian metro did not only respond to urban mobility needs but also contributed to the creation of a visual and cultural identity that would be consolidated over time (De Fusco, 2000).



Figure 2. Hector Guimard, Paris Metro entrances, 1900-1912.





Figure 3. Alexey Dushkin e A.F. Strelkov, Novoslobodskaya subway station, Moscow, Russia, 1952.

Subsequently, the subway's role also assumed strategic importance in reaffirming identity values in nations. In particular, in the 1930s and 1940s, the construction of the Moscow subway was conceived as a real ideological project (Fig. 3); building *palaces of the proletariat*, underground monuments aimed at celebrating socialist ideology, using socialist realist art as a tool of political propaganda with the ideological intention of catering to the *masses' welfare* (Lee, 2022).

The innovative approach of conceiving subways not only as transportation nodes but as true underground exhibition spaces has subsequently influenced numerous European metropolises, including Paris, London, and Stockholm (Fig. 4), each developing its own interpretation of the art-public transportation union, summarized in the recurring expression *Metro Art*.



**Figure 4.** Per Olof Ultvedt, T-Centralen subway station, Stockholm, Sweden, 1957.

The integration of art into public transport infrastructure has taken many forms, ranging from permanent installations to temporary exhibitions, from architectural interventions to performance art, thus creating a continuous dialogue between urban space, passengers, and creative expression.

In this context, the case of Naples emerges as a pioneering and paradigmatic example, standing out for its ambitious vision and significant impact on the urban and social fabric of the city. This vision was realized through collaboration with internationally and locally renowned artists, who contributed site-specific installations, sculptures, mosaics and architectural interventions. The peculiarity of the Neapolitan case

lies in its ability to integrate contemporary art into a highly historically and culturally stratified urban context (Fig. 5):

The subway becomes an *underground museum* and can be referred to as *catacombs of beauty*. This is not a novelty for Naples, where the underground element is a common feature and this distinguishes it from other cities. It still retains a precious archeological heritage, which rises with every new project for a station. So, the underground but contemporary museum connects with the tradition and the history of the city. (Brenci, 2019, p. 12)

Naples' art stations are not limited to containers for works of art but take the form of actual urban regeneration interventions capable of redefining the identity of the neighborhoods in which they are inserted. Moreover, the case of Naples highlights how art metros can act as catalysts for economic and tourism development.

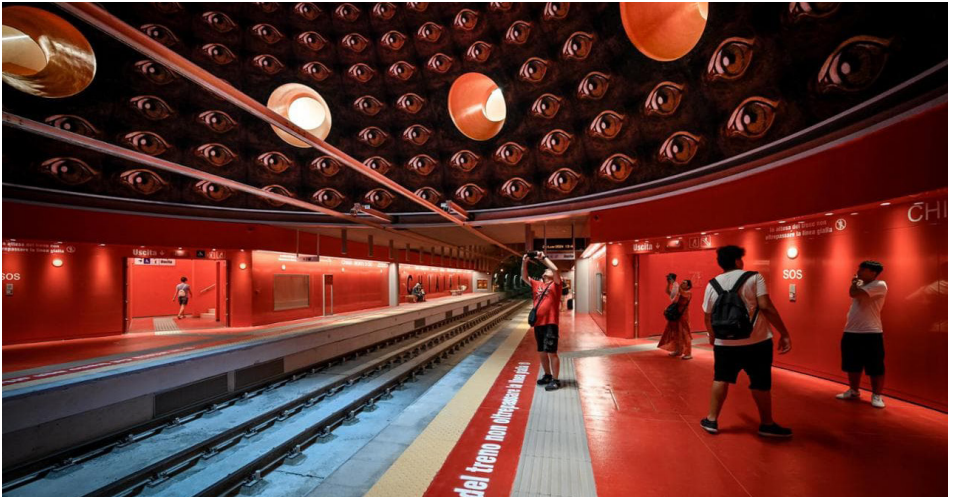


Figure 5. Peter Greenaway, Chiaia-Monte di Dio subway station, Naples, Italy, 2024.



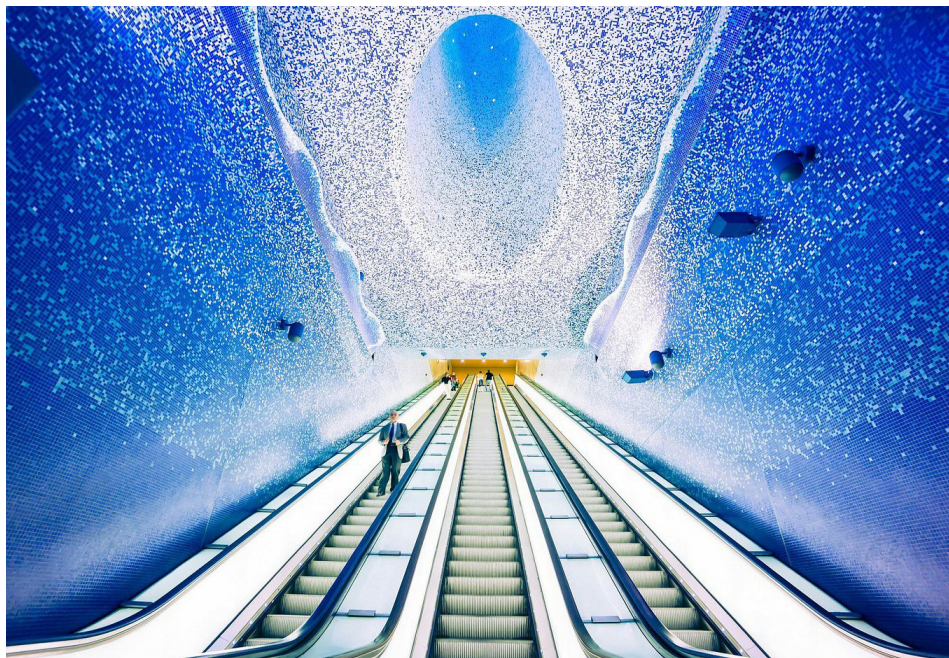


Figure 6. Óscar Tusquet, Toledo subway station, Naples, Italy, 2012.

Art stations have become attractions in their own right, helping to redefine the city's image internationally and stimulating tourist flows to areas previously considered peripheral. This phenomenon is part of a broader debate on the role of cultural infrastructure in urban development, highlighting how investments in art and culture can generate tangible economic and social benefits (Fig. 6).

Even turning our gaze eastward to the other side of the world, it becomes evident how the role of art within stations can redefine and communicate social and cultural aspects. It proves crucial for subway stations in Tokyo, Japan, a country known for pioneering advancements in progressive train systems, to



**Figure 7.** Luis Nishizawa, Keisei Ueno Station, Tokyo, Japan, 1981.

preserve traditional elements while integrating aesthetics that resonate with their distinct identity (Seangsuk & Upala, 2024). Various aspects of the marked identity of the place appear within the stations, such as the use of the colors red, yellow, and gold and the depiction of cartoons that have a mental and emotional influence on youth in the development of the country in terms of culture, customs, and traditions (Fig. 7). In this way, citizens are directly involved in everyday life in the community narrative to discover the unique cultural dimensions of the surrounding community (Jeannotte, 2016), while promoting passenger services, economic tourism and promoting social values.

#### 4. Off Spaces: The Role of the Art

I have been drawing in the subway for three years now, and although my career aboveground has skyrocketed, the subway is still my favorite place to draw. There is something very *real* about the subway system and the people who travel in it; perhaps there is not another place in the world where people of such diverse

appearance, background, and life-style have intermingled for a common purpose. In this underground environment, one can often feel a sense of oppression and struggle in the vast assortment of faces. It is in this context that an expression of hope and beauty carries the greatest rewards [...] These were not the people I saw in the museums or in the galleries but a cross section of humanity that cut across all boundaries. (Haring, 1984)

Renowned artist Keith Haring, in his collection *Art in Transit: Subway Drawings*, offers a unique perspective on the subway's role as a public space and artistic canvas (Fig. 8). Haring's insights on the subway as a unique space of encounter and artistic expression apply to the contemporary context, within which subways constitute a social microcosm. They remain one of the few urban spaces where people from different social, economic and cultural backgrounds mingle daily, constituting a mirror of urban society, with its challenges (overcrowding and alienation) and its potential (connectivity and diversity).



Figure 8. Keith Haring, New York subway, New York, United States, 1980s.

Based on these reflections, art in subways has become no longer an act of rebellion like the one carried out by Haring in the years of the insurrection of the ideology of the street and the creative ferment that from 1976 until beyond the 1980s disrupted art, music, film, and poetry, but constitutes a cultural policy that, through a conscious strategy, aims to integrate art in stations, recreating the unique identity of each city, capable of reflecting its culture and history, with the aim of enhancing the urban experience and promoting the well-being of citizens, providing an accessible platform for exhibiting art to a wide and diverse audience, overcoming the traditional barriers of museums and configuring themselves as *obligatory museums*, within which a population in transit is involuntarily forced to pass, but in which they certainly receive stimulation from works selected according to the idea of cultural nomadism, which intercepts between attention and inattention the gaze of a hasty, instantaneous and indirect public (Oliva, 2016).

Metro Art has, therefore, played a crucial role in democratizing access to art, bringing works of high cultural value into everyday spaces frequented by diverse audiences, promoting a more inclusive and participatory form of art enjoyment, and implementing an inclusive and participatory model of art appreciation that overcomes the traditional socio-economic barriers associated with conventional museums (Fig. 9). Public art is increasingly seen as a tool for social cohesion and improving the quality of urban life. Such interventions not only enrich the aesthetic and sensory experience of the users involved but also contribute significantly to their well-being and mental health by reducing the stress of commuting.





Figure 9. Julien Colombier, Châtelet subway station, Paris, France, 2024.

There is a demonstrated relationship between commuting and psychological and physical health. According to the Fifteenth General Census of Population and Housing, there are almost 29 million (48.6 percent of the resident population) people in Italy who commute daily to their place of work or study. Travel times and distances for commuters continue to increase, potentially significantly impacting the environment and mental health (Taino et al., 2019). A study by the American Psychological Association highlights how cortisol levels rise as commuting times increase (Evans & Wener, 2006). Although there is evidence that the level of perceived stress is higher in cases of car commuting, factors such as duration, control, physical and cognitive strain, and travel predicta-

bility negatively influence mental health, regardless of the mode of transportation (Wener & Evans, 2011). This obviously depends on personal travel mode preferences, transportation efficiency, proximity to stations, and other determinants. Subjective well-being (SWB), as well as mood, improves, therefore, with improvements related to different travel parameters. (Ettema et al., 2011). These factors also affect transportation policies, partly because trips that are experienced as more satisfying are more likely to be sustained for a longer period. As a result, policy evaluation should focus on factors related to the stress of commuting and, therefore, work transit hubs. Exposure to art during daily commutes can have positive effects on mental health, offering moments of reflection and beauty in otherwise hectic contexts, acting as catalysts for social cohesion, fostering a sense of community and belonging to reconnect people with their city and each other, promoting collective well-being. In a place typically characterized by swiftness and speed, the juxtaposition of museum and infrastructure can be appreciated, requiring reflection, contemplation, critical judgment; those mental activities that are seemingly antithetical to the obligatory rhythms of mobility nodes could be successfully defined as new human attitudes and behaviors (Castagnaro, 2014).

## 5. Conclusion

At a time when the speed of modern life and information overload profoundly affect psycho-physical well-being, the creation of spaces that facilitate moments of pause and reflection therefore becomes a fundamental necessity. Interventions that blend art, design and well-being, as in the case of

art stations, demonstrate their transformative potential, redefining the way public spaces are experienced and perceived by the community, attempting to provide a concrete response to the growing problem of social alienation. The transformation of these transitory places into spaces that stimulate imagination and interaction gives rise to a new context in which individual and collective well-being are nurtured and connected.

Design, as a cultural welfare actor, goes beyond its aesthetic or practical function: it becomes a tool for urban regeneration, promoting a holistic vision of well-being that can reconcile people's physical and mental dimensions. Moreover, art and design within places of everyday life and community not only improve psychophysical well-being, but also foster phenomena of social aggregation. These spaces, transformed by artistic presence, become catalysts for empathy and connection, not only between the individual and the art, but also between the people themselves. Through shared art, a sense of belonging is generated that strengthens social ties, stimulating the creation of more cohesive communities and promoting a collective well-being that goes beyond the individual dimension. Particularly in work contexts, art not only improves the work environment but also fosters creativity, productivity and interpersonal relationships, contributing to a more serene and harmonious work environment. The concept of cultural welfare, supported by increasing research, shows that art and culture are not simply tools for entertainment or decoration, but fundamental elements in people's health and well-being. It is in this perspective that European and global policies that recognize the importance of collective well-being and health

through the integration of culture and creativity in urban spaces. It is clear that the integration of art and design in urban contexts represents a fertile field for experimentation. The growing awareness of the importance of well-being in citizens, and particularly in workers, can no longer be limited to physical and material aspects, but must also include cultural and artistic aspects that can improve their capacity for connection, empathy and collaboration. This perspective paves the way for new ways of conceiving work and productivity, making culture and design central tools for building more humane and inclusive work environments and contexts.

Ultimately, art and design in places of transit and work offer a new paradigm of interaction with urban space. Art stations, like cultural workshops in work spaces, are not just places of transit or production, but become true laboratories of social innovation and catalysts for change. Investment in the integration of art into these spaces is, therefore, not merely an aesthetic issue, but a strategic choice that can have profound positive effects on the quality of life in our cities. As evidenced by the success of numerous projects around the world, the combination of art, design and well-being is one of the keys to building a more balanced, sustainable and, above all, humane urban future.

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V

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### Edoardo Amoroso

He is a PhD student in architecture developed by the Department of the University of Naples Federico II. His research focuses on design-related innovation processes through digital manufacturing, operated under his own brand and within the research team on design for all, nature-based solutions, and the use of new technologies for ecological transition and advanced processes in industrial design. He graduated with a master's degree in Architecture in 2023 from the Department Of Architecture (DiARC) of the University of Naples Federico II and, since 2024, has been a member of the Association for Industrial Design ADI Campania.

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### Eleonora D'Ascenzi

She is a post-doc research fellow with a Ph.D. at the Department of Architecture of the University of Florence, with a design curriculum. She successfully pursued a Master's in Research at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, and she now belongs to the Design Sustainability Lab at the University of Florence, where she is currently investigating the role of transformative & immersive storytelling design. She is also Project Manager PE11 (Made in Italy Circolare e sostenibile), Spoke 2 (Eco-Design strategies: from materials to Product Service Systems – PSS) within the PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan). Her fields of interest are mainly related to communication design, storytelling design, strategic design, user experience and neuro-design.

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She is an architect, designer, PhD and Professor at the School of Design of the Politecnico di Milano. Director of ESA\_LAB@Polimi\_Design at the Department of Design, where she has been responsible for confirming the strategic role of design for space through her research, projects and scientific publications. Principal Investigator of the VEST and GOAL experiments carried out with astronauts on board the International Space Station.

In 2017, she created and directs Space4Inspiration, the first and only MSc course in Space Design, recognised and supported by the European Space Agency (ESA). She is a visiting professor at many universities and has received several prestigious awards, including the Premio ADI Compasso d'Oro.

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### Silvana Donatiello

She is a PhD candidate in the international course Habitat in Transition, developed by the Department of Architecture at the University of Naples Federico II. Her research focuses on the ecological transition towards more sustainable settlement, production, and consumption patterns, specifically focusing on Nature Based Solutions, digital manufacturing, and community-based systems. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Architecture and an international Master's Degree in Design for the Built Environment at the University of Naples Federico II. She has been a visiting student at the University of Applied Sciences Fachhochschule Potsdam, Germany.

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### Paolo Franzo

After receiving his PhD in Design Sciences at the Università Iuav di Venezia in 2019, where he collaborated in post-doc research activities and teaching in fashion degree courses, since 2023 he has been a researcher in fashion design at the Department of Architecture (DIDA) of the University of Florence. His research activity focuses on the futuring practices of fashion design in Italy, with a focus on innovative materials, production chains and the relationship between handmade and tech in a vision of human, social and environmental sustainability. He has been a visiting scholar at the University of Lisbon and regularly collaborates with international research groups.

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### Mariarita Gagliardi

She is a PhD candidate in architecture, which the Department of the University of Naples Federico II developed. She graduated with honors in the international Master's Degree in Design for the Built Environment and a Bachelor's Degree

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### **Sara Iebbole**

Designer, PhD student at the University of Genoa where she graduated as Master's Degree in Product Event Design at the Department of Architecture and Design. Her research interest is centred in understanding the cultural position and the role of designers in relation to gender studies and intersectionality. Specifically, her research focuses on the bond between gender stereotypes, societal evolution and design product/processes, seeking for a design method for inclusiveness.

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### **Virginia Marano**

She is a researcher, curator, and art historian. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the Lise Meitner Group "Coded Objects". She holds a PhD in art history from the University of Zurich. Her thesis examined the diasporic dimension in the works of Jewish women sculptors in Post-war New York, previously assimilated to feminism but not yet connected to the question of exile. She was a recipient of several scholarship and research grants from the Swiss government and the University of Zurich. In 2022, she was a SNSF Doc.Mobility fellow in the Art History Department at Hunter College/CUNY. She is the co-founder and coordinator of the research project "Rethinking Art History through Disability" at the University of Zurich. In 2023, she was a fellow researcher at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, working on the PNRR-PEBA project for the Removal of Physical, Cognitive, and Sensory Barriers in Cultural Sites, funded by the NextGenerationEU program. In addition to her academic activities, she serves as curatorial assistant at MASI, Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano. Her work focuses on developing new approaches to curating exhibitions that emphasize decentralization and collaborative practices.

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### **Chiara Olivastri**

Architect, PhD in Design, Associate Professor at the University of Genoa, Architecture and Design Department, since 2023. She focuses her studies in service design strategies applied to circular economy and social innovation, collaborating with local companies and public institutions. She is referent of the Desislub Unige team (<https://desislub.unige.it/>) working on research, teaching, and workshop projects focused on urban regeneration, Blueconomy and Design for all. Since 2021, she has been the scientific manager of the research contract with the Barilla company for the development of increasingly sustainable and consumer-friendly products and packaging. In 2018 she won an Italian national "Grant for a PhD research on urban regeneration" promoted by Directorate General of Contemporary Art and Architecture, publishing her doctoral research titled "Con-temporary, Design for the reuse of vacant spaces".

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### **Pierluigi Panza**

After having obtained two degrees and a research doctorate (all three theses have been published), he started teaching in various Italian universities (continuously at the Politecnico di Milano) and became an art critic of the *Corriere della Sera*. He is a member of the Academy of the Arts of Design in Florence, of the Veneto Institute of Sciences, Letters and Arts, of the Italian Society of Aesthetics and of the Italian Society of History of Art Critics. He obtained scientific qualifications in History of Architecture (full professor), History of Art (associate professor), Aesthetics (associate professor). He is the director of the restoration magazine *Ananke. Culture, history and conservation techniques* (Anvur class A magazine), published hundreds of scientific papers especially on Italian art, architecture and 18th century furniture. He is one of the world's leading scholars on Piranesi. In 2017 his volume *Museo Piranesi* won the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage, the highest European prize for Cultural Heritage Achievements. He is the curator of exhibitions and member of a ministerial commission. He has published five novels and in 2008 he won the Campiello selection prize.

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Designer, PhD, Research Fellow at the Department Architecture and Design, Università di Genova, UNIGE. He works and teaches in the areas of product, interior and furniture design. His research interest focuses on understanding the cultural position and role of designers in relation to local heritage and contemporary production. His research focuses on the link between product design as a function of cultural transformations and identity enhancement. Currently is a visiting professor at BUCT Beijing, member of the Design Observatory and is a part of ADI Handmade in Italy Commission. In publishing, he writes for the international magazine ElleDecor.it and is a member of the editorial board of the university journal Magazine.

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Architect, PhD, Associate Professor in Product Design at the Department Architecture and Design, Università di Genova UNIGE, since 2013. Her research interests focus on design's capabilities to contribute to territorial development and transformation in relationship to health, safety and sustainability. Main issues in the research are co-design processes for social innovation and circular design strategies for making change happen towards circular economy. On this topic she coordinated in the last two years the partnership activity of the University of Genoa, in the URBACT III Action Planning Network: "2nd Chance. Waking up sleeping giants, for a sustainable urban development" and the Creative EU "Creative Food Cycles" (2018-20) as scientific manager for University of Genoa research team.

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**Gabi Scardi**

Art critic, curator, and writer. She investigates art and the public sphere, and contemporary collaborative methodologies, questioning new tendencies and practices. She collaborated internationally with museums and institutions, curating solo shows, group shows and public projects. She is co-director of the review Animot; NAHR President; a member of EoC - Ecologie of Care and of CCW - Cultural Welfare Center. Since 2011 she has been the artistic director of *nctm e l'arte*, a project by ADVANT Nctm Studio Legale. She is director of the course in Socially Engaged Art, at Accademia Unidee, Biella, and teaches Phenomenology of Contemporary Arts at Accademia di Belle Arti di Verona, and modules on Contemporary Art and Public Art at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan.

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**Irene Sanesi**

She is a chartered accountant and cultural economist. She is founder and Name Partner of BBS-pro. For 30 years she has been dealing with project and process management, third sector, advocacy, fundraising, taxation, higher education and strategic philanthropy. She has written many publications about cultural economics, sustainability and fundraising. Gestionalia is the title of her column on *Artribune*. She has held, and still holds, institutional volunteering positions in both national and international cultural institutions.

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**Marzia Tomasin**

She is a cultural manager specialized in the design and development of multidisciplinary projects for businesses and organizations. She bases her work on the belief that culture generates value and is a lever for innovation. Since 2016, she has been hosting Periscritto, a podcast dedicated to books and their authors. In 2021, she founded Atelier Cultura, a benefit corporation that integrates culture into the business landscape, guiding companies in creating ecosystems between cultural vision and business strategy. As a journalist and writer, she deals with business and culture: she co-authored *L'Alfabeto della sostenibilità* and in 2024 published *Successi a Nord-Est* (Egea Editore). In 2024, she founded and chairs Agorà, an ETS association that carries out multidisciplinary cultural and civic engagement projects.

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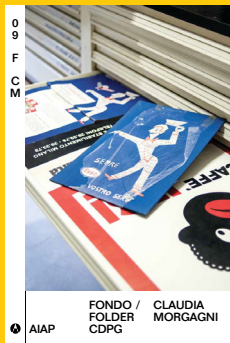
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