TANGIBLE - INTANGIBLE HERITAGE(S): AN INTERPLAY OF DESIGN, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CRITIQUES OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

• Paper / Proposal Title:
The Art of Labor and Collaborative Practices in the work of Eladio Dieste

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• Presentation Method. I would like to:
   i. present via skype (with/without a written paper)

• Abstract (300 words):
Eladio Dieste was an engineer – he was also an artist who organized labor. The technological consequences that this distinction has on the practice of architecture are the focus of this presentation. Through his engineering and construction practice in Uruguay, Dieste developed four structural innovations in steel reinforced masonry during the second half of the twentieth century. Like many artists, architects and other engineers who have successfully blended art and technique, the technical and collaborative framework that enabled this type of practice remains largely unexamined. This presentation highlights two under-examined factors related to material and immaterial labor in Dieste’s practice. Dieste’s audacious double-curvature structures were developed and described through numerical calculations. As a result, Dieste focused his practice on the design and construction of physical mechanisms (scaffolding and reinforcement patents) that would enable the construction of double-curvature
forms. The organization of labor and choreography of bodies on site was facilitated by his professional relationship with three job captains across three decades of work in South America. Additionally, these relationships were shaped by Dieste’s collaboration with metal workers and some unlikely industry partners (car mechanics and machinists) who designed steel reinforcement patents.

The second factor explores two personal relationships that are essential to the consideration of immaterial labor. The first relationship is between Dieste and his business partner and fellow engineer Eugenio Montanez. This relationship enabled the development of Dieste and Montanez SA. into a design, engineering, and construction practice. The second relationship is between Dieste and the world-renown Uruguayan artist, Joaquin Torres Garcia. Dieste’s relationship and friendship with Torres Garcia defined his attitude towards art. In essence, magnifying the technical effects of labor – the art of labor – on the production of architecture.

In contemporary terms, collaborative practices are essential to the construction of the built environment. However, the technical means that enable the design of collaborative practices are often ignored, resulting in a disregard for the art of labor.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Federico Garcia Lammers is an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture (DoArch) at South Dakota State University, where he helped establish the first professional architecture program in the state of South Dakota. Since 2005, has practiced with architecture studios in Minneapolis, New York, and Lisbon, Portugal. Currently, he is a partner and co-founder of mMÁS, a research and design practice in Brookings, South Dakota. In addition to teaching design studios and collaborative design workflows at DoArch, Federico is the coordinator of a study abroad program based in Montevideo, Uruguay. The program is focused on the material practices of the late Uruguayan engineer Eladio Dieste. Federico’s scholarship and research focuses on the contemporary architectural effects of the relationship between labor and historic design workflows. He has presented work nationally and internationally at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture Conference, the Construction History Society of America Biennial, and the Center for Transdisciplinary Research at the Faculty of Arts and Letters at the University of Porto in Portugal.