Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Moving toward a mindful building design

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• Abstract (300 words):
This article looks at the importance of designing for a mindful human experience as an important indicator of wellbeing in architecture. The concept of mindfulness is increasingly receiving attention in the field of wellbeing but not sufficiently discussed in the field of architecture. Mindfulness involves the awareness and consciousness about the present body experience and offers therapeutic impacts on stress reduction and improvement of life quality. If wellness involves the body, mind and spirit and their relations with the environment, then the architectural qualities of the environment form vital areas of a person’s wellbeing. The focus of this article is particularly on the awareness about the importance of bodily movement and stillness in establishing awareness of the

1 It has been proven that groups measured for stress (through cortisol response) undertaking Mindfulness-Based Movement programs responded better than those following no particular program.
The new findings in the field of wellness and mindfulness show the multitude of the benefits of movement for mental and physical wellbeing for different age groups. This is while the concept of movement is often considered as a formal attribute of the building or reduced to the notion of circulation and physical access in the literature of architecture. In order to investigate the role of design in encouraging mindful movement, the design approach in a residential building is examined in regards to the layout of the interior as well as communal and shared spaces. The design of the precedent will be studied in terms of their potential to encourage bodily movement and moments of stillness and social interaction. The study will particularly look at the impact of fluidity and flexibility of the design layout, the efficiency of open plan layout and the use of flexible furniture and fixtures in encouraging mindful movement.

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

Dr. Isun A Kazerani is an Architecture practitioner and an academic. She received her PhD in Architecture in 2017 from Melbourne University looking at the relationship between design strategy and human embodied lived experience. She has been lecturing and leading design studios at Melbourne, Swinburne and Monash University in the context of residential, mixed-use and interior architecture. She has the experience of collaborating with multiple architectural firms within Australia and internationally. She is the author of a book chapter, multiple academic journal articles and refereed conference proceedings and was featured as the keynote speaker in public events such as MPavilion18 and Melbourne Knowledge week. The areas of her research interest include contemporary architecture practice, architecture technology, Wellbeing and mindfulness in architecture, atmosphere, Housing design and the quality of human embodied lived experience. In her practice, she has a strong focus on research and sociocultural specificity of the site and users’ lived experience. She also writes reviews about architecture practice and pedagogy in online platforms.