CITIES IN A CHANGING WORLD:
QUESTIONS OF CULTURE, CLIMATE AND DESIGN

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Design paradigms for a changing architecture

• Author(s) Name:
Kevin Santus

• University or Company Affiliation:
Politecnico of Milan

• Abstract (300 words):

The global changes, together with the residues from the urban development, requires a reflection the strategies that we could apply to regeneration processes, framing the key themes that intersect design disciplines. Thomas L. Friedman highlights in his book “Thank you for being late” the convergence of changes – climatic, social, economic and technological – and the increasing speed of the transformations taking place, referring to the emerge of an incremental “Great Acceleration” in which human action influences structural changes of spaces and relationships.

These effects seem to worsen within urban areas where it is possible to find a stratification of problems due to climate-related fragilities, generally overlapped on previously unstable socio-spatial contexts such as peripheral or abandoned areas.

Due to this modified balance between human and environment, architecture and urban design in recent years had to introduce emerging strategies, in which circular economy and nature-based solutions acquired centrality and also produce alteration in the architectural form and concepts, pushing for an analysis of its theoretical and aesthetical implication.

Stated this, the presentation will focus on three design paradigms – scale, resources, and time – that, recalling the Critical Regionalism by Kenneth Frampton, could play a central
role both for the interpretation of future perspective of the urban transition and for the re-frame of the role of resilient project, defined as “inevitable actor of the place”.

Helped by the exposition of some emblematic case studies (e.g., the Luchtsingel by ZUS, De Ceuvel by Space&Matter, etc.), the presentation will underline the connection between these paradigms and the usage of circularity and nature within projects. Consequently the result will underline the importance of anchoring projects to their specific urban landscape and metabolisms, intimately entangled with the community process among the sites.

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

Kevin Santus is an Architect and PhD candidate at the Politecnico of Milan. He won an interdisciplinary grant (2020) for a research dealing with the design transition in contemporary urban areas facing climate change. In particular, the research investigates the role of circular economy and nature-based solutions in architectural and urban modification, framing new paradigms of the project, and evaluating the capacity of these strategies to contrast and/or mitigate the effects of climate change.

He graduated cum laude at the Politecnico of Milan in Architecture and Urban Design (2019) with a thesis dealing with resilience and circularity, framed as instruments for the urban regeneration of peripheral neighbourhoods, winning the honourable mention for the "Italian Sustainable Architecture Award" and nominee for the "Young Talent Architecture Award". After spending a period of study abroad at TU Delft (2018) he participated in the International Design Research “City of the future - Stad van de Toekomst” in collaboration with several European universities (POLIMI, IUAV, TUDELFT, etc.) dealing with the theme of climate change and the future of European cities.

Besides, he is a didactic tutor in Master and Bachelor Architectural studios and co-supervisor of Master thesis at Politecnico of Milan.