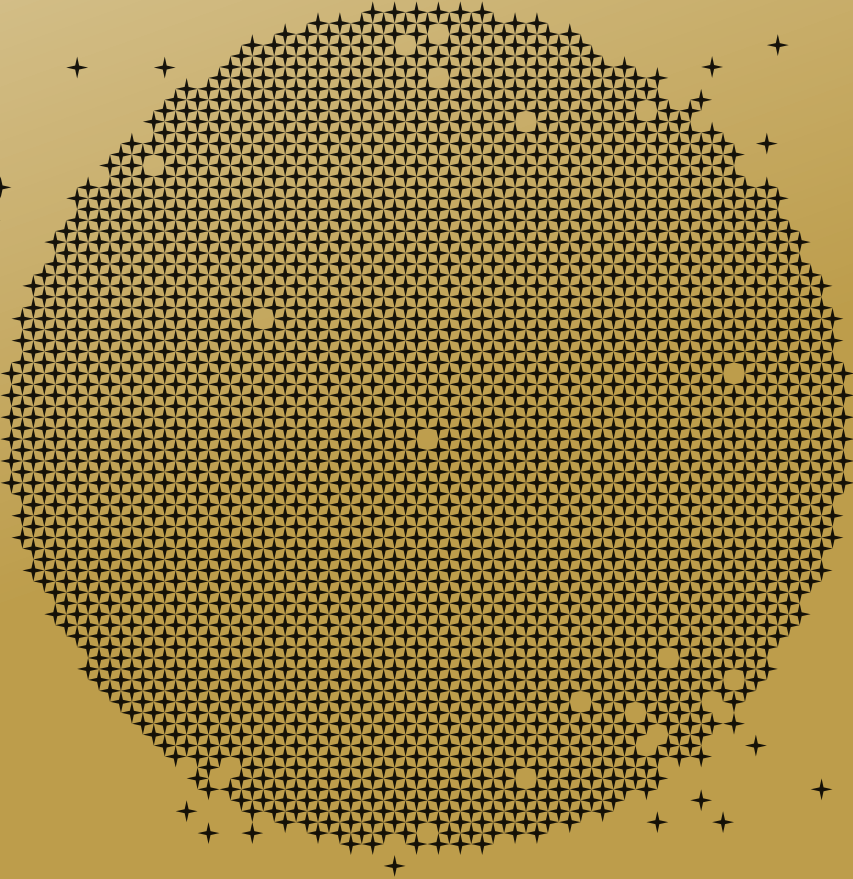
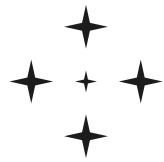


DISEEN

VII/01

journal of design culture  
\_Designing Digital Humanities





# Disegno

JOURNAL OF DESIGN CULTURE

Double-blind peer-reviewed, open access scholarly journal

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## Aims and Scope

Disegno publishes original research papers, essays, and reviews on all aspects of design cultures. We understand the notion of design culture as resolutely broad: our aim is to freely discuss the designed environment as mutually intertwined strands of sociocultural products, practices, and discourses. This attitude traverses the disciplinary boundaries between art, design, and visual culture and is therefore open to all themes related to sociocultural creativity and innovation. Our post-disciplinary endeavour welcomes intellectual contributions from all members of different design cultures. Besides providing a lively platform for debating issues of design culture, our specific aim is to consolidate and enhance the emerging field of design culture studies in the Central European academia by providing criticism of fundamental biases and misleading cultural imprinting with respect to the field of design.

All research papers published in Disegno undergo a rigorous double-blind peer review process.  
This journal does not charge APCs or submission charges.

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# INTRODUCTION

## DESIGNING DIGITAL HUMANITIES

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What is digital humanities? Some say it does not exist, some say it is contemporaneous with the humanities—as collection, organisation and formalisation were part of it from the very beginning—and there are many advocates who say it is a new discipline. One thing is for sure: in the last seven decades, the arts and humanities have drawn a lot from the methodology and toolkit of computational technology. As the two domains linked and influenced each other, new research areas were defined under the terms of computational humanities, humanities informatics, and, from the 2000s onwards, digital humanities (DH).

How could we outline the role of design in DH? The articles of this Special Issue answer this question in numerous ways. Design may refer to the methodology (how we create models of knowledge), to the toolkit (how we design real or virtual objects and spaces), or to the object of a DH research (how we curate and analyse the memories of design history).

The latter approach can be observed in the papers of Ágnes Anna Sebestyén on literary networks, and of Dorottya Kun on art repositories. Sebestyén approaches the Hungarian architectural journal *Tér és Forma* with one of the now traditional methods of digital humanities, network analysis and visualisation. The paper analyses the social network of the editor Virgil Bierbauer and other authors connected to the journal. It demonstrates what content analysis possibilities the Croatian Artists' Networks Information System offered on the examined corpus, and how the extracted data can be structured and visualised using Gephi.

Kun deals with a specific area of formalisation, the cataloguing and digital archiving of design objects. In her study, she provides a literature review on this topic, and presents institutional practices on the use of different metadata standards. She introduces the challenges of preservation, document or object description and curation. The paper concludes, among other things, that research repositories have a key role to play in making outputs visible and open access in the arts and humanities.

Designing real or virtual objects and spaces, and the impact of the digitisation on architecture, are discussed in the project report

of Iacopo Neri, Darío Negueruela del Castillo, Pepe Ballesteros Zapata, Valentine Bernasconi, and Ludovica Schaerf; Stefano Corbo's essay dealing with the history of architecture, and Merve Pekdemir Başığmez' study on Industry 4.0. The article of Neri et al. shows how they brought the Helsinki Art Museum's collection into urban space, creating a dialogue between artworks and public spaces. The project created virtual spaces by digitising outdoor and museum objects, using digital catalogue data, image-to-text tool, and the resulting prompts of this. The virtual exhibition was thus created using a combination of big data, AI and VR methods and tools.

AI also appears from a distance in Corbo's essay on architecture, which depicts the era of digital creation from a historical perspective. His work uses Jacopo de Barbari's *Portrait of Luca Pacioli* from around 1500 and Caravaggio's *Basket of Fruit* from around 1600 to show the influence of geometric construction in architecture and representation. As Corbo sees, the next turning point in architecture is the influence of the computer – both as a designing tool and as an integral part of the buildings. Pekdemir Başığmez, focusing on the integration of computers, addresses a very different domain of digital transformation, the architectural and design approach of the Industry 4.0 phenomenon. As the author discusses, smart factories deal primarily with the design of production space, but also covers human-machine interaction.

The methodological approach is represented by Dinara Gagarina, who deals with the topic of modelling in DH research, and Zsolt Almási, who investigates text-to-image AI tools by reflecting on the artistic value of generated images. Gagarina's literature review shows how formalisation and modelling play an important role in digital humanities. As indicated above, a key question in the definition of digital humanities is whether it is seen as a discipline in its own right or rather as a new toolkit for traditional humanities. In Gagarina's work, it is primarily the former approach that prevails, positioning (computer) modelling through her examples as an indispensable foundation of DH as a discipline.

In his essay, Zsolt Almási takes the opposite path that Neri et al. took regarding the link of text and image. The author approaches the images created by image-generating algorithms and services as works of art. This essay, which is not without a sociological viewpoint, focuses on text-image generation and shows how artists and art critics have reacted in recent years to image-generating tools that are also available to the general public. The spectrum ranges from rejection through the cooperation or collaboration, to the praise of technology.

The issue concludes with an interview with Iván Horváth, a pioneering computational humanist (or humanistic informatics specialist), who worked in the field of computational literary studies as early as the 1970s. His achievements, personal story and unique vision illustrate the complex relationship between design and DH. In a conversation that meanders into literature, music, electrical engineering and history,

Horváth points to the turnaround in science, humanities – and also in HiFi design – that took place in the late 1960s, by giving a number of vivid examples of the technological and social changes that have influenced the reception of art and literature in different eras.

If design culture studies is a historically grounded but practice-oriented new “humanistic discipline” in Panofskyan terms, then several of its approaches to design culture have a lot to do with computational and digital humanities in the digital era. Especially, if we take into consideration that contemporary design culture studies does not focus on singularities but on continuous flows and waves of discourses, social practices and cultural products, that is on the pluralities of complex networks of creative human beings, assemblies, nodes and socio-cultural spheres in such a multidimensional way, which presuppose an understanding of culture that is as architectonic and sensual as discursive or pictorial. Further, these teleidoscopic lifeworlds are embedded in, enacted in, embodied in and extended into techno-aesthetic dimensions which are often virtual or digital themselves and way too complex to understand them without big data mining and AI technologies. The current issue of *Disegno* collected papers representing some of these emerging practices and approaches, however, several other aspects could have been touched upon, so the floor is still open for discussion and research in the field to which we would like to return every once in a while to critically observe new phenomena and understandings of the digital in design.

***Szilvia Maróthy and Márton Szentpéteri***

