

PRESIDENT MESSAGE FOR CUMULUS BUDAPEST PROCEEDINGS.

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Nestled in the vibrant cultural milieu of Budapest, the Cumulus Budapest 2024 Conference took place at the esteemed Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design, an institution that proudly boasts a 143-year legacy of artistic and academic excellence. This setting seamlessly aligned with the conference's overarching theme, "P/References of Design," which encapsulates the multifaceted nature of contemporary design discourse: the shifting paradigms that influence our understanding and preferences in a world increasingly characterised by environmental degradation, social upheaval, economic instability, and the pervasive influence of data systems.

As traditional value structures erode, the design field is compelled to adapt and redefine its role. Conversely, the conference provided a fertile ground for scholarly exploration around a range of urgent topics, including: "Converging Bodies of Knowledge" as a means to enhance theoretical and practical support; global tensions between "Centres and Peripheries"; "Redefining Data Boundaries" due to the ever-shifting dynamics between data, humans, and non-humans; "Redefining Data Boundaries"; "Bridging Design and Economics" to shape and influence spaces of governance, business, and innovation; "The Power of Immersion" and its subtle impact on our daily lives; "Speculative Perspectives" to transcend established boundaries; "Taming Entropy: Systems Design for Climate and Change"; and identifying "Ways of Living Together."

These discussions resulted in a variety of paper presentations, panel discussions, keynote speeches, and networking opportunities, where participants engaged in a profound examination of the tensions and parallels that guide contemporary practices, harnessing both human and machine creativity while navigating the social, physical, and virtual realms of design.

The space for inquiry and reflection offered by Cumulus Budapest 2024 calls for a rethinking of established norms and the embrace of new perspectives. Human-centered design has long been the cornerstone of design practice, prioritizing human needs and experiences. However, the pressing challenges of climate change, geopolitical instability, and the complexities of a post-truth society necessitate a paradigm shift. Designers must recognize that the spatial-temporal dimensions of design extend beyond anthropocentric considerations, requiring an acknowledgment of the interdependencies between human and non-human entities. In this liminal age, designers are urged to embrace a more holistic perspective that redefine the foundational principles of design, including its starting points and objectives. They must engage in an ongoing reevaluation of the values that underpin their work, navigating alternative ontologies, particularly in the

context of pressing issues such as climate change, geopolitical tensions, the post-truth world, and the rise of generative content creation. Addressing this complexity requires the inclusion of various non-human agents that influence our world while transcending the established references inherited from modernism, ultimately adapting to the evolving needs and preferences of society. This requires a commitment to sustainability, inclusivity, and ethical considerations in the design process.

The Cumulus Budapest 2024 Conference catalysed a critical and speculative design culture aimed at addressing systemic global and local social issues while proposing new ways of convergence where communities can coexist. The insights gathered from this event underscore the imperative for designers to transcend traditional roles and exploit strategic design, systems thinking, co-creation, and more-than-human design approaches. The attendance from around the globe demonstrated collective resilience and commitment to fostering a design practice that engages with the complexities of our contemporary context, venturing into the realms of the speculative, the unconventional, and the transformative.

The proceedings collected in this volume stand as pillars of wisdom for the global design community, inviting reflection on the past while charting a course toward innovative and transformative futures. The enriching dialogue initiated at the Cumulus Budapest 2024 Conference establishes a trajectory toward conscientious, groundbreaking, and paradigm-shifting prospects within a global context where the threads of a sustainable, equitable, and responsive design intertwine with the fabric of our world, and the flow of information and collaboration continues to prevail.

About the Author:

Lorenzo Imbesi is Full Professor of Design at Sapienza University of Rome, where he is the Director of the Sapienza Design Research Interdepartmental Centre and the Coordinator of the PhD in Service Design for Public Sector. Currently, he is the President of the Global Association Cumulus, a member of the Board of the Italian Scientific Society of Design SID, and member of the Executive Committee of the EAD European Academy of Design.

P / REFERENCES OF DESIGN

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Conference Website

cumulusbudapest2024.mome.hu

Conference Tracks

Centres and Peripheries
Converging Bodies of Knowledge
Redefining Data Boundaries
Bridging Design and Economics
Speculative Perspectives
The Power of Immersion
The Future of Well-being
Taming Entropy: Systems Design for Climate and Change
Ways of Living Together
Cumulus PhD Network

Full Conference Proceedings

<https://cumulusbudapest2024.mome.hu/proceedings>

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