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CORA WINS GOLD PRIZE AT DESIGN EDUCATES AWARDS 2025

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A timber prototype exploring digital craft and material ecology

IAAC is pleased to announce that CORA – Cathedral of Robotic Artisans, a prototype designed and built by students of the Master in Advanced Ecological Buildings and Biocities, has won the Gold Prize in Architectural Design at the Design Educates Awards 2025.

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CORA is a vaulted timber structure located in the forested landscapes of Valldaura within the Collserola Natural Park. Conceived as a gathering place and an architectural hypothesis, CORA explores how digital fabrication and ecological materiality interact—how craft can scale up to architecture, and how robotics can align with the intelligence of organic matter.

The prototype merges ancestral construction logics with contemporary robotic precision. Built entirely from locally sourced Aleppo Pine, each element of the vault was individually milled using a KUKA KR-210 robotic arm. Far from standardizing repetition, the robotic process was used to

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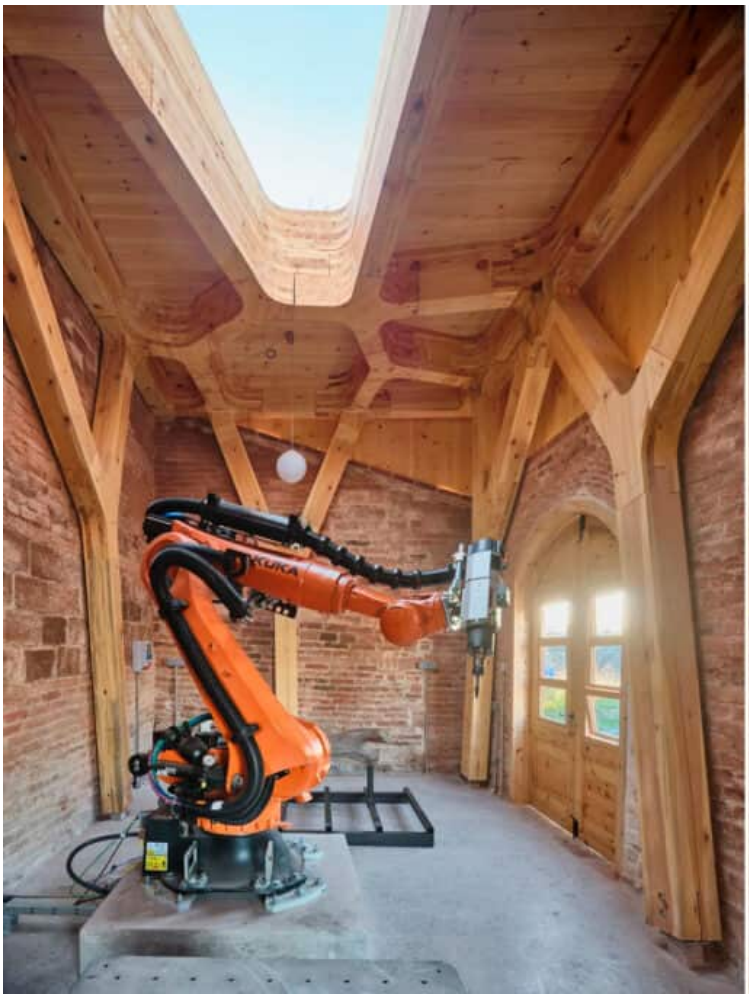
produce variation: each timber piece is unique, designed through computational methods that respect both the geometry of the vault and the constraints of the material.



The students of the 2023/24 class of MAEBB worked with an integrated system that spanned from scanning the trees felled on-site, to orienting and programming the robotic cuts, and assembling the structure in the forest. The result is a space that embodies a choreography between human gesture and digital code, matter and intent.

With a 12-metre span and a height of 4 metres, CORA is the largest structure ever realized at Valldaura Labs. Its scale frames the surrounding forest, engaging with light and inviting social interaction. By working with irregular geometries and site-sourced timber, the project develops

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tectonic systems that embrace material variation and ecological intelligence.

The gallery of all Design Educates Awards winners can be viewed here.

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