

FORUM

## DESIGN PARTICIPATION

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Design Participation

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The advances of the technologies of interaction and production with the advances on material and bio-engineering start to impact architecture in unprecedented ways.

Wearables that allow us to experience unbuilt spaces in real scale (virtual reality), building skins that generate/conduct electricity through our touch (smart materials) and the possibility to download files from the internet in order to print our own house (DIY digital fabrication) are scenarios that just few years back were reserved to science fiction scripts.

Technologies are transforming architecture into a more reactive and evolutionary organism, able to interact in real time with multiple agents such as the environment, time or user needs.

The emergence of these responsive environments boosts new relations among users, architects and space. If architecture of built (or unbuilt) space can be programmed to perform, the key question to deal with is: who the actuator of such a performance is. If space can be augmented by overlapping physical and virtual data, then users can experience multiple spatial realities, blurring the limits and form of physical space, and questioning the need of high-design final aesthetics. Finally, if architecture (drawings and plans) can be found in the cloud, and if Fabrication Laboratories can be reached in each neighborhood, users are given access to the design and production of their spaces, enhancing their participation and highlighting their desires.

At a moment of a novel intersection and crossing between bits (digital) and atoms (physical), static and fluid, matter becomes ubiquitous: available to be "built" by anybody that is connected to the internet or an interface.

The current forum seeks to generate discussion along the topic of user participation and empowerment in the NEXT architectural design, as well as the new emerging roles in the architectural discipline.

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