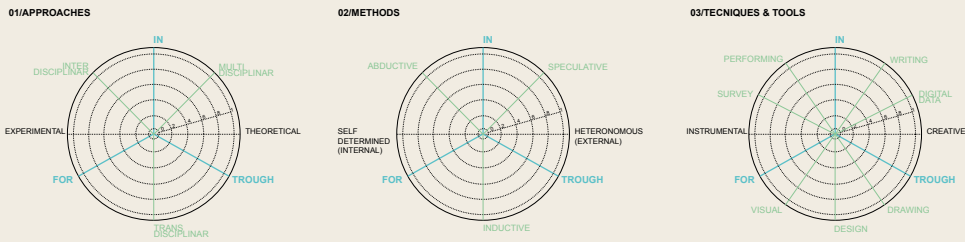


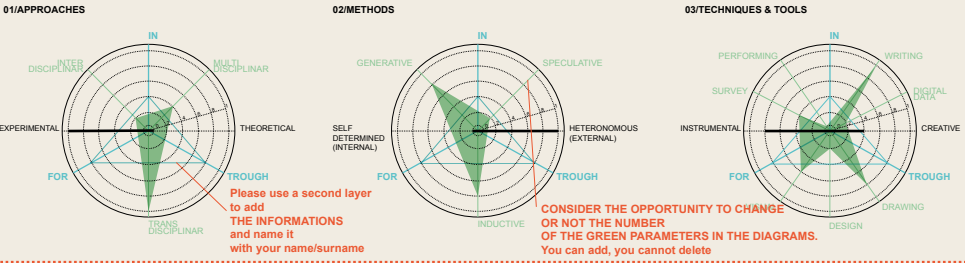
# CA<sup>2</sup>RE+

## 2 EVALUATION OF DESIGN-DRIVEN RESEARCH

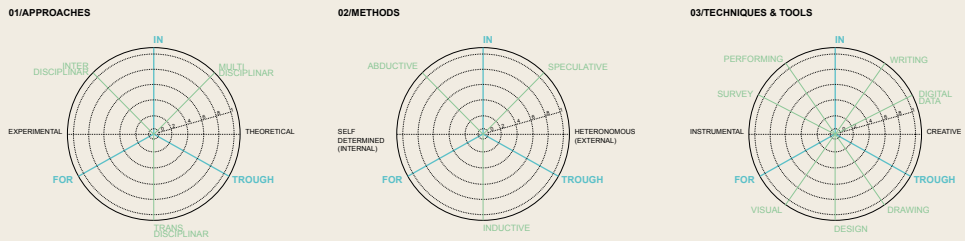
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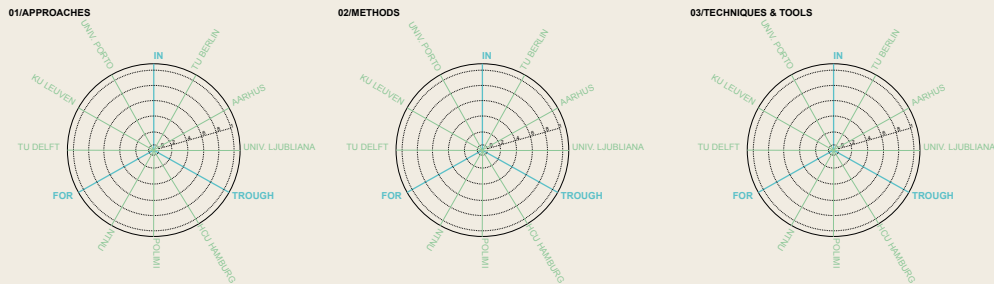
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### LEVEL 2 / PHD COMMUNITY POSITION



### LEVEL 3/ CONSORTIUM POSITION



**CA<sup>2</sup>RE+**

**2**

**EVALUATION OF  
DESIGN-DRIVEN  
RESEARCH**

## COLOPHON

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## CA<sup>2</sup>RE+ PARTNERS



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# II.1 CONSTELLATIONS FROM INVITED

# **Artistic research and practice-based methodologies in music performance studies: a personal reflection**

Ana Telles  
University of Évora

## ABSTRACT

**The study of musical phenomenon has, for a long time, unfolded in two separate camps: indeed, declarative knowledge was mainly produced in universities, where Musicology and its different disciplines were taught, whereas procedural knowledge associated with the performance and composition of Music stemmed mostly from conservatories, music academies and active musicians. Quite recently, the central role of performance in the musicological debate, away from the supremacy of the written text (score), has been pointed out. Indeed, through his seminal writings on music as performance, Nicholas Cook (2014) suggested the centrality of performance in the investigation of the musical phenomenon. In the meanwhile, several authors and institutions have contributed to the definition of “artistic research” in Music (cf. AEC, 2015); it is understood that this specific type of research effectively combines declarative and procedural knowledge through practice-based objects, methods, and outcomes. As regards the enquiry about musical practice and creation, Pinheiro and Caires (2019) identified four levels of reflective depth to which I will relate, in the lines below, my most significant research projects. In doing so, I am drawn to conclude that my practice-based objects and methods have enabled me to achieve results otherwise not possible to tackle, while acknowledging that complementary methods (including from Social Sciences and Humanities) are necessary and beneficial. Even if artistic research in different artistic disciplines supposes an array of specific and differentiated methodological approaches, it benefits from interdisciplinary cooperation, as it shares identical purposes, large-scale methodologies and overarching preoccupations.**

**Keywords: Music, performance studies, artistic research, practice-based methodologies**

As an emerging discipline in the late 19th century, Musicology relied on the classical distinction between historical (diachronic) and systematic (synchronic) science (Carvalho 2001); the first dealt with the history of western classical music, which was basically equated with the written score (Carvalho 2001), whereas the second sought to explain the inner procedures and operations at play in musical works from that tradition. Therefore, for a major part, Musicology relied upon sources, techniques, and methods akin to those which History, in the largest sense, deals with (Weber 1980, 13; Nattiez 2003, 26). Even if the historical perspective was still the main focus of musicological research until the 1960's (Nattiez

2003, 26), we have since then witnessed unprecedented developments, entailing the discipline's adoption of objects and methods both from the social and the natural sciences (Weber 1980, 12). It is now widely recognised that the musical phenomenon, as a multi-dimensional object, must be understood through a conjunction of several disciplines and perspectives, in an enlarged, pluridisciplinary approach. (Nattiez 2003, 26)

In that sense, several subcategories and their respective disciplines coexist and contribute to the understanding of Music, be it the historical approach, the systematic approach (including music theory and analysis), ethnomusicology (borrowing methods and procedures from anthropology), the sociology of music, music aesthetics, new musicology (with emphasis on cultural studies, analysis and criticism of music), music psychology, music therapy (with a strong application focus in healthcare settings), among others.

Traditionally, the declarative knowledge produced by the studies developed in those areas, as well as their respective connections and intertwinements, was produced in universities, whereas the procedural knowledge associated with the performance and composition of music stemmed mostly from conservatories, music academies and active musicians.

Yet, in the 21st century, authors such as Nicholas Cook have pointed out the central role of performance in the musicological debate, away from the supremacy of the written text (score), thus adding a much significant contribution to the object of study. Indeed, through his seminal writings on music as performance (Cook, *Beyond the score: Music as performance* 2014; Cook e Pettengill 2013), the author suggested the centrality of performance in the investigation of the musical phenomenon. Believing that “texts do not determine performances or the meanings they embody, they create a potential for the generation of certain meanings or kinds of meaning”, the author pruned “a broader musicology in which writing and playing are both understood as integral dimensions of music's existence and meaning”. (Cook, *Between Art and Science: Music as Performance* 2014, 7)

The centrality of performance in the musicological debate has entailed some critical developments. Indeed, we started looking into the psychological, neurological, physiological, sociological and cultural aspects of music performance, while also referring to performance practice, which focuses on how music from different times and spaces ought to be performed, in light of the available pertaining data. Key authors, such as John Rink, have explored number of those aspects (cf. Rink 2002; Rink 1995). Additionally, we began dissecting performance through the analysis of sound and/or video recordings, as Cook and other researchers – namely from CHARM (AHRC Research Center for the



History and Analysis of Recorded Music) – have shown.

In light of the aforementioned developments, central questions arise: may we understand and value musical performance to its full extent without actually practising it? Particularly, are there any aspects of musical performance which may be understood only through a hands-on, practice-based approach? And how may we advance knowledge and artistic creativity through performance and the application of performance-related research?

Most of my recent endeavors, either in an individual setting or as doctoral thesis' supervisor, attempt to answer those questions, through well-defined, concrete artistic research objects, methods and products. In that sense, my activity joins the developments in the area of artistic research, which suggested the integration of procedural and declarative knowledge (Pinheiro e Caires 2019, 251), while accepting that a degree of subjectivity, inherent to any artistic practice, may be accommodated in the already mentioned type of research. According to Pinheiro and Caires (2019):

Although it has been widely discussed and developed since the 1990s, the concept of artistic practice as research has undergone a relatively recent boost. In fact, a few decades ago, music practice and creation were separate from scientific research, and were not considered to deserve to be labelled as 'true research'. Several authors, such as BORGDORFF (2006; 2008; 2012), indicate that there has been a recent emancipation of artistic research from the scientific paradigm that establishes the problematic notion of scientific objectivity as a final goal in research. (Pinheiro e Caires 2019, 252)

I strongly believe that artistic research projects allow for the development of relevant and innovative artistic practices, thus unfolding their full application potential. Yet, I often combine design driven methods with more conventional methodologies, either from music history, sociology or systematic musicology. In that sense, I thoroughly endorse the Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et des MusikHochschulen's postulates about artistic research, as expressed in the AEC Council's White Paper (2015):

Artistic Research may be defined as a form of research that possesses a solid basis embedded in artistic practice and which creates new knowledge and/or insight and perspectives within the arts, contributing both to artistry and to innovation. [...] Artistic Research, although strongly application-oriented, does not preclude pure research. In fact, in order to make progress, the field of Artistic Research is likely to support a wide range of component

activities, some of which may count as pure research, others as applied, and still others as developmental or translational research. [...] Artistic Research should not be understood as something that is incompatible with more traditional forms of research.

In a personal attempt to answer the questions I brought forth in the preceding lines, I'd like to comment upon some recent performance-related research projects. But before that, I should specify that my research pathway has led me to pursue research in some fundamental areas, such as historical or systematic musicology, with occasional incursions through aspects of the sociology of music or music performance studies, of which I may cite but a few examples. Those studies have occupied me throughout my whole research career, while studies focusing on performance-related issues and design driven methods have become more and more frequent in recent years. Yet, the historical, systematic and sociological perspectives are ever present, even if at the background, in my most recent research endeavors. In that sense, I consider that my artistic research activity (including doctoral supervision), based on an active artistic practice, comprises the four levels of creative depth identified by Pinheiro and Caires (2019, 252):

In terms of practice and musical creation, four levels of reflective depth can be identified. The first has to do with the act of performing, improvising and creating music. The second level concerns the collection of contextual information to inform the creation and practice of music. This is informed musical practice. The third comprises reflection on musical practice and the contextual information collected, in order to deepen perspective on and understanding of the creative and artistic phenomenon. This is research for the art. The last step consists of the process of framing musical practice and creation, contextual information and reflection and discussion within a rigorous methodological system. This last stage can be named research through art (Frayling 1993-4; Crispin 2016).

For one thing, the first level is ever present, through my performances and recordings as pianist. As examples of the second level, I would cite my own doctoral thesis, entitled *Lúis de Freitas Branco (1890-1955): parcours biographique et esthétique à travers l'œuvre pour piano* (Telles 2009), which had a very strong historical and analytical focus: for one thing, it established the first comprehensive biography of Portuguese composer *Lúis de Freitas Branco*, on the basis of a significant number of unpublished sources; on the other hand, it aimed at the discussion of the author's aesthetic development through a parametric musical analysis of his piano works. The work thus conducted led, some years later (Telles 2017), to the establishment of a critical edition of Freitas

Branco's Preludes for piano, which not only has a potential interest for performers wishing to tackle that repertoire, but also applies in pedagogical settings. If the establishment of a critical edition of music does not necessarily require its author to perform the repertoire, in this particular case the choices made, in terms of fingerings and criteria for the indication of note alterations, were mostly based on my own performative practice.

Other contextual work leading to informed musical practices has been developed in my historical research projects, which include reference to sociological aspects. On that level, I should mention an introductory approach to the relationships of three Portuguese composers of the 20th and 21st centuries – Fernando Lopes-Graça, Jorge Peixinho and João Pedro Oliveira –with the Brazilian musical scene, in their respective times (Telles 2015a); significantly, all of the selected composers are often featured in my artistic performance projects.

Some systematic musicological studies were conducted, mostly in areas and about repertoires that were already well-known to me, as a performer; for example, the comparative analysis of Freitas Branco' and António Fragoso's piano works (Telles 2010); analytical studies of Henri Tomasi's piano works (Telles 2015b) and *Retour à Tipasa*, by the same author (Telles 2015c); an enquiry about aspects of Claude Debussy's language that permeate contemporary works for piano by selected Portuguese composers (Telles 2018b, 239-262) and a survey of byblical sources in the musical output of João Pedro Oliveira (Vernon Press, in print). In all but one case [1], my own playing of the works in question was deeply enhanced by the knowledge gathered through rigorous and systematic analytical methods.

Furthermore, in line with my dedication to the performance of new music works, often produced in the context of collaborative composer-performer projects, or as an active performing member of several contemporary music ensembles [2], I have produced some research that would qualify as "research for art", the third level of reflective depth suggested by Pinheiro e Caires (2019, 252). In that category, I include two studies dedicated to the history of the Lisbon Contemporary Music Ensemble and its relationship with the contemporary musical creation (Telles 2020b; Telles 2012) and an enquiry about the life and works of Clotilde Rosa, one the ensemble's founding members whose works I had a chance to perform, particularly in the context of a specific composer-performer interaction that gave origin to Rosa's last piano work, which is her only work for this instrument and electronics (Telles 2020a). The emphasis on musical creation, particularly in Portugal, had previously spurred a survey about several active composers and their respective creative options (Telles 2011).

As regards music performance studies, I started out with an analysis of Maurice Ravel's works as conducted and recorded by Pedro de Freitas Branco (Telles 2005). Yet, more recently, I have focused on aspects of idiomatic writing for the piano and the corresponding technical-performative issues, in the works of composers which I have often played and premiered, such as João Pedro Oliveira (Telles 2019) and Christopher Bochmann (Telles 2018a; Telles 2020c). This trend, which corresponds to the fourth level of reflective depth mentioned by Pinheiro e Caires (2019, 252), did, in fact, become one of my main research areas, having subsequently spurred doctoral projects under my own supervision, which replicated the methodology I had developed in studies about musical instruments and repertoires other than the piano's (cf. bassoon, bass clarinet, doublebass). In those projects, the research questions stem from artistic practice and reflect a dual perspective: the performer's and the composer's. In that sense, the end results usually address both, through descriptive and prescriptive outcomes. The methods employed include a practice-based identification of notational and technical problems, on one hand, as well as of effectively innovative solutions, on the other hand; an organised register of those findings; an experimentation process leading to the development of problem-solving strategies; a sustained dialogue with fellow performers and composers; and the adoption of results' presentation formats that include performance, audio and/or video recordings [3], annotated scores and written text.

To this trend, I may add three specific projects, relating to instrumental practice and technique. In the first of these, Piano fingering strategies as expressive and analytical tools for the performer (Telles 2021), I claim that the fingering process, in the process of preparing a piano performance, bears an important cognitive role and may prove to be a valuable analytical resource for the interpreter, as it promotes the understanding of musical processes at work, both before and during the performance, specifically in the contemporary repertoire. Complementarily, I advocate that a more comprehensive and all-encompassing approach to fingering, freed from the constraints of standard practices, may significantly contribute to the realization of the full expressive potential of a number of works. The fingering strategies are designed in practice, as an essential component of a pianist's preparation for performance; this study theorizes those strategies, in order to achieve both descriptive and prescriptive outcomes with potential impact on fellow artists dealing with similar repertoires and students.

The second of these projects, Extreme dynamics through body movement in contemporary piano music performance (in preparation), takes major consensual issues of standard piano technique as a starting point, and relies equally on my own practical experience as a performer

devoted to the piano music of our time; through a performance analysis of different works calling for extreme dynamic nuances, I intend to systematize and communicate a repertoire of movements that have allowed me to manage these repertoires without injury in the course of a performative career spanning over more than two decades. As in the previous project, this study elaborates on a set of design-driven strategies, developed by an individual performer, in the context of her own artistic practice; by congregating knowledge from style, performance practice, interaction with composers, alongside with health and well-being concerns, it strives to communicate a set of principles for effective technical innovation in piano playing.

The third project, under development by one of my doctoral students, Ricardo Sá Leão, starts with a literature review documenting the progressive loss of creative musicianship competences, including improvisation, among classically trained pianists, following the institutionalization of a canonic repertoire and standard teaching methods from the second half of the 19th century to the present; through the establishment and testing of an extensive and carefully designed set of exercises, he intends to develop those competences for himself, so as to communicate them to piano students in the course of their own performative development.

In all of the cases discussed above, both the object of study and the methods employed stem from artistic practice and are engendered by it. They are tailored by a specific artist to respond to his/her performative (and indeed formative) concerns, in a way that does not (and cannot) exclude a certain degree of subjectivity, based on the performer-researcher's own physical and psychological characteristics; in fact, we must not forget that, to a certain extent, his/her own development as a performer is an important aim of the research. The results attained through this type of research would not be possible with more conventional approaches by themselves, even if the concourse of methodologies from the social sciences, humanities and systematic musicology is much needed. Furthermore, the outcomes of these projects do necessarily include artistic realizations (scores, performances, recordings), either single or multiple.

My experience with practice-based research has allowed me to relate positively to the CA2RE | CA2RE+ Conferences, both in Hamburg and Ljubljana. Even if all the projects I was called to comment upon, on both occasions, were from the field of Architecture, I was able to contribute with content-related comments, hoping to enrich the discussion with an interdisciplinary approach; indeed, I found that several of the issues being investigated resonated with my own research interests, and could benefit from related knowledge from my own field of studies. And even if the concrete design-driven methods applied to those architectural

## NOTAS

- 1 Retour à Tipasa is a work for narrator, male chorus, and orchestra; therefore, I never participated in a performance of that work.
- 2 Sond'Ar-Te Electric Ensemble (2007-2011), GMCL – Lisbon Contemporary Music Ensemble (2009-2017), Ensemble DME (2013-present).
- 3 As in the Performance and Context platform: <https://perf.esml.ipl.pt/index.php/component/k2/item/9-essay-viii-a-key-work-in-the-piano-output-of-christopher-bochmann>

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## BIOGRAPHY

Pianist Ana Telles performs regularly in Europe, Asia and the Americas, having published over twenty CD's.

She develops research in the fields of Music of the 20th and 21st centuries, Portuguese modern and contemporary music, Piano music and performance, having authored a significant number of book chapters, papers in peer-reviewed journals and musical editions.

Full professor at the University of Evora's Music Department, she's currently the Director of the School of Arts of the same university. She is an elected member of the Board of Representatives of ELIA – European League of Institutes of the Arts.

Intérprete:

Ana Telles

Instrumento / Área:

Piano

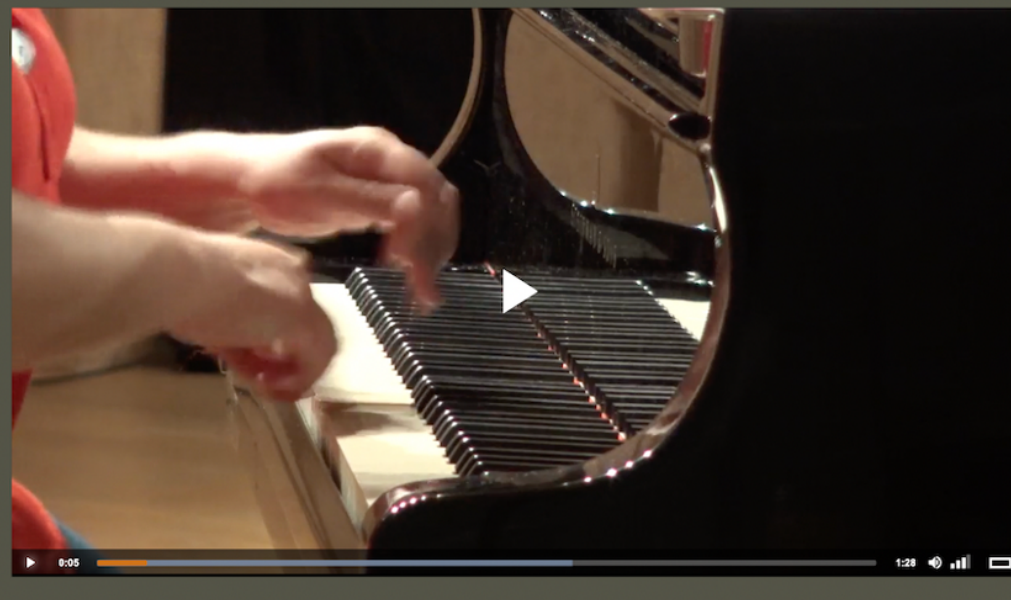
Instituição:

Universidade de Évora

Programa:

Christopher Bochmann | Essay VIII

Media:



## Essay VIII: a key work in the piano output of Christopher Bochmann

**Abstract:** Christopher Bochmann's pianistic language is based on a fairly conventional instrumental technique, inherited from the 19th century pianistic tradition, yet encompassing characteristic features developed by authors associated with the 2nd Viennese School and post-serialism, as well as significant experiences in the fields of free forms and aleatoric music. The permeability to a neoclassical sensibility, probably stimulated by contact with Nadia Boulanger in the formative years, has remained over time and manifests itself from time to time, both in the use of techniques, genres and forms of the past, but also, more comprehensively, in a constant search for balance and proportionality, across all of Bochmann's works.

From 1991, the year he composed *Essay VIII*, for solo piano, Bochmann inaugurated his maturity phase, based on what he calls a "unified technique". The significant consistency of his instrumental language from then on results, to a large extent, from the synthesis of previously explored elements that *Essay VIII* operates, as I intend to demonstrate throughout this essay. Furthermore, we shall see how specific traits, not always particularly idiomatic, of Bochmann's pianistic idiom enhance the aural understanding of the compositional principles that structure the work in analysis, and how a successful performance of the work depends largely on the understanding and highlighting, through specific performance practices, of the composer's choices.

FIGURE 1. Ana Telles. 2020. *Essay VIII*: a key work in the piano output of Christopher Bochmann:

A research outcome combining declarative and procedural knowledge

Source: [https://per.esml.ipl.pt/index.php/component/k2/item/9-essay-viii-a-key-work-in-the-piano-output-of-christopher-bochmann#\\_ftn2](https://per.esml.ipl.pt/index.php/component/k2/item/9-essay-viii-a-key-work-in-the-piano-output-of-christopher-bochmann#_ftn2)

The image displays four systems of piano musical notation, each consisting of a treble and bass staff. The notation includes various dynamics such as *ff*, *mp*, *p*, *f*, and *sf*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. Several measures in the bass staff of each system are highlighted with colored boxes (red, green, blue, yellow) and vertical lines, with some notes circled in purple. The first system has a red box around a measure with a purple circle. The second system has multiple green, blue, and yellow boxes with purple circles. The third system has several blue and green boxes with purple circles. The fourth system has blue and yellow boxes with purple circles. The text *p legato* and *(sempre p e legato)* is present in the bass staff of the second system.

FIGURE 1. Ana Telles, 2020. Essay VIII: a key work in the piano output of Christopher Bochmann:  
 A research outcome combining declarative and procedural knowledge  
 Source: [https://perf.esml.ipl.pt/index.php/component/k2/item/9-essay-viii-a-key-work-in-the-piano-output-of-christopher-bochmann#\\_ftn2](https://perf.esml.ipl.pt/index.php/component/k2/item/9-essay-viii-a-key-work-in-the-piano-output-of-christopher-bochmann#_ftn2)

## CONTRIBUTORS

### EDITE ROSA

Prof. Dr., Lusófona University of Porto / University of Beira Interior - DECA

### TADEJA ZUPANČIČ

Prof. Dr., Faculty of Architecture, University of Ljubljana

### MANUEL BOGALHEIRO

Ass. Prof., Dr., Lusófona University of Porto

### ANA TELLES

Prof., Dr., University of Évora

### ANKE HAARMANN

Prof., HAW Hamburg

### DÉBORA DOMINGO-CALABUIG

Prof., Dr., Universitat Politècnica de València

### JOÃO SOUSA CARDOSO

Prof., Dr., Lusófona University of Porto

### MARIA HANSEN

Executive Director ELIA European League for the Institutes of the Arts

### TERESA FONSECA

Prof., Dr., University of Porto, Faculty of Architecture

### GENNARO POSTIGLIONE

Prof. Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### MATTHIAS BALLESTREM

Prof., Dr., HafenCity University

### FABRIZIA BERLINGIERI

Ass. Prof. Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### CLAUS PEDER PEDERSEN

Prof., Dr., Aarhus School of Architecture

### PAUL O ROBINSON

Dr. University of Ljubljana

### ALESSANDRO ROCCA

Prof., Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### MARKUS SCHWAI

Prof., Dr., Faculty of Architecture and Design Norwegian University of Science and Technology

### JOAQUIM ALMEIDA

Prof., Dr., University of Coimbra – Department of Architecture

### IGNACIO BORREGO

Prof., Dr., TU Berlin

### RALF PASEL

Prof., Dipl.-Ing., TU Berlin

### JÜRGEN WEIDINGER

Prof., TU Berlin

### ROBERTO CAVALLO

Prof., Dr., TU Delft

### JOHAN VAN DEN BERGHE

Prof., Dr., KU Leuven

### THIERRY LAGRANGE

Prof., Dr., KU Leuven

### JACOPO LEVERATTO

Assistant Prof., Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### STAMATINA KOUSIDI

Associate Prof., Politecnico di Milano

### MARGITTA BUCHERT

Prof., Dr., Leibniz University Hannover

### ELENA MONTANARI

Assistant Prof., Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### ANDREA OLDANI

Assistant Prof., Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### GIULIA SETTI

Assistant Prof., Dr., Politecnico di Milano

### SABINA JALLOW

Lecture at Malmö University

### ANNELIES DE SMET

KU Leuven, Campus Sint-Lucas

**JO(HAN) LIEKENS**  
KU Leuven, Campus Sint-Lucas

**NEL JANSSENS**  
KU Leuven, Campus Sint-Lucas

**MANON PERSOONE**  
KU Leuven, Campus Sint-Lucas

**CLAUDIA MAINARDI**  
Politecnico di Milano / TACK

**MAR MUÑOZ APARICI**  
TU Delft

**MELCHER RUHKOPF**  
Leuphana University Lüneburg

**DANIEL SPRINGER**  
HafenCity Universität Hamburg

**ANDREA CRUDELI**  
University of Pisa

**BEATRICE BALDUCCI**  
AUID PhD Program, Politecnico di Milano

**GRETA MARIA TARONNA**  
DASTU, Politecnico di Milano / TU Delft

**MARTA FERNÁNDEZ GUARDADO**  
HCU, HafenCity University Hamburg

**WIKTOR SKRZYPCZAK**  
HCU, HafenCity University Hamburg

**SILKE HOFMANN**  
Royal College of Art, Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design

**FELIX RASEHORN**  
TU Berlin, HU Berlin

**ELENA GUIDETTI**  
The Future Urban Legacy Lab, Politecnico di Torino

**ANITA SZENTESI**  
University of the Witwatersrand

**DANIEL NORELL**  
Chalmers University of Technology

**EINAR RODHE**  
Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design

**MARCUS KOPPER**  
TU Berlin

**MARTIN ROTH**  
TU Berlin

**TIM SIMON-MEYER**  
HCU, HafenCity University Hamburg

**PEPA IVANOVA**  
KU Leuven / LUCA School of Arts

# CA<sup>2</sup>RE+

## 2 EVALUATION OF DESIGN-DRIVEN RESEARCH