Editorial: Drawing as a Powerful Catalyst for Design Driven Research and Creation

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Drawing is one of the most important activities of a designer, who draws with different media ranging from the pencil to the computer mouse. The act of drawing is a multi-layered, multi-sensorial activity with a significant impact on creativity, creative output and knowledge production. It is above all an act with a long tradition related to many disciplines that adopt the map, the sketch, the plan, the section, the detail and relate them to their discipline-specific acts of drawing. All this includes a mental relationship between the outcome and the first sketch. In our current age, dominated by multi-media and digital alternatives, we look at possible (re)-interpretations of this activity and productions. How is the (act of) drawing connected with design, designing, design research, interaction design, pedagogy, geography ...?

The question of space appears to come back time and again in the course of human history, that proves we can re-think and re-design space through the transformation of immaterial and mental aspects into tangible space (so-called analogous spaces), opening new avenues to innovation and reflection, and to debates on political and social topics. There are numerous strategies to be investigated here, ranging from the transformation of immaterial and mental aspects in tangible space (so-called analogous spaces) to looking at old masters who focused on how space is related to mental aspects such as thinking, reflecting and understanding the world. But most of these strategies strongly rely on drawing as the eidetic act of transformation between the immaterial and the tangible world.

Drawing and space share a common history, and all along these historical lines—that reach as far as today—strong dependencies between the drawing and the space exist, which appear to make them inseparable, both in the conception and in the observation and understanding of space. In designing, looked at from a historical perspective, space is often that which drives designers to drawing, whereas drawing is often that which leads to new spaces. Innovative ways of drawing have led to innovative concepts of space. The urge for the latter has often instigated the quest for the former, and the other way around.

This co-existence of both entities—the drawing and the space—generates fruitful crosspollinations, and this forms the base of this research environment. We believe that bringing these together may deeply change our view on this research landscape, and further expand it.
The further development of the architectural drawing and the analogous space is key to the discipline of architecture. Both track chairs of this conference track have erected the research group *The Drawing and The Space* ([http://www.thedrawingandthespace.info](http://www.thedrawingandthespace.info), [https://architectuur.kuleuven.be/departementarchitectuur/english/research/onderzoeksgroepen/the-drawing-and-the-space](https://architectuur.kuleuven.be/departementarchitectuur/english/research/onderzoeksgroepen/the-drawing-and-the-space)) at KU Leuven Faculty/Department of Architecture, with the explicit ambition to investigate the potential of the intersections between Drawing and Space for the discipline of architecture.

The Design Research Society 2018 conference offers an opportunity to map and discuss interests between design research, and current professional, educational and research practices that all seem to revolve around the act of drawing as a powerful catalyst for design driven research and creation.

The scope of the theme *The (Act of) Drawing in Design (Research)* is twofold. Firstly, it will be a meeting point for researchers from a variety of backgrounds to jointly share and discuss their insights and ideas. Secondly, we aim to explore the meaning and values of the (act of) drawing in the light of design driven research and creation as a whole.

As a result of the call of our DRS conference track we received a set of submissions that, altogether, appear to cover a range of subjects and topics that widely benefit from the drawing as a powerful catalyst for design driven research and creation. These subjects and topics range from (1) anthropological approaches and (2) computational and robotic interests over (3) sculptural and artistic processes of knowledge production and (4) the physical gesture of drawing as a generator of memories to (5) notionality and inscription of verbalization to make tacit knowledge explicit and (6) analogous drawings of speculative architectural designs as forms of knowledge production in the field of architecture.

Here occurs the tight correlation between the architectural drawing and the analogous space. It is clear that each of the contributions to our DRS conference track demonstrate ways of drawing as descriptors and initiators of particular spatialities: (1) the mental and physical space of aboriginals, (2) robotic versus analogous space, (3) abstract sculpturalities that describe space through spatial occupation, (4) physical human gestures of drawing that make ‘memory’ tangible and translate it into space, (5) imagineering space through close observation of innovative ways of drawing and (6) space making through the embodiment of ‘landscape’ (fragile topographies) by deep and intense processes of drawing.

The themes and outcome of this conference may help to further investigate the aforementioned themes, and the submitted contributions prove that these themes need to be further investigated. We are very grateful that the Design Research Society is offering platforms from which this content can be further discussed, shared and disseminated. Hence the chairs of this conference track wish to expand and strengthen this community in collaboration with the DRS and the researchers and designers who have showed their interest through the contributions they have submitted.