# History of Architecture and Design

## Prof. Paola Proverbio

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

The aim of the course is to provide students with the historical and critical approaches required to enable them to understand the complex backdrop - underlying issues, interconnections, problems and expressive languages - of contemporary architecture and design. By the end of the course, students will have an essential grasp of the two disciplines, enabling them to analyse architectural and design features; they will be able to communicate themes using appropriate lexicon and will have gained the ability to understand the main aspects of the cultural debate and contemporary architectural production.

***COURSE CONTENT***

Although the course will analyse the two fields separately in order to identify their specific features, it will also highlight their many shared themes and operative issues. There will be a particular focus on the analysis of the everyday condition and its dynamics.

In terms of **architecture** the course will cover the most important historical periods from the mid-19th century (approx.) to the late 1960s.

In summary: from the Crystal Palace to the birth of the skyscraper and Art Nouveau; from the avant-garde (Futurism, De Stijl, Expressionism and Constructivism) to the work of the masters of modern architecture (F. L.Wright, Le Corbusier, L. Mies van der Rohe and W. Gropius) and other figures and design trends (H. Scharoun and A. Aalto).

In terms of **design**, beginning with the definition adopted by the WDO (World Design Organization), the course will focus on: the role of design as a complex, connective tissue, engaging with an increasing number of sectors (e.g. furniture, transport, communication, capital goods, so-called social factors, services, systems, fashion and food); its definition as a varied discipline, subject to influence from outside factors and closely dependent on many other fields (technology, economics, anthropology, ergonomics, etc.); and its role in various production methods (from industrial production to the rapid manufacturing of the “new” digital crafts). Design is, therefore, a strategic process that guides innovation and resolves problems, improving quality of life through products, services, systems and innovative experiences. The course takes an international approach, but focuses especially on the case of Italy and the historical developments leading to the establishment of the Made in Italy brand, thanks to the work of designers such as G. Ponti, B. Munari and A. Castiglioni until recently, and of P. Starck or R. Arad today, and their collaborations with numerous Italian design agencies.

***READING LIST***

For the history of architecture, one of the following:

W. Curtis, *L’architettura moderna dal 1900,* Phaidon, 2006.

K. Frampton, *Storia dell’architettura moderna,* Zanichelli, Bologna, 2008.

The chapters to study in each text will be indicate to students.

For the history of design:

T. Maldonado, *Disegno industriale: un riesame*, Feltrinelli, Milan, 1991

D. Dardi, V. Pasca, *Manuale di storia del design*, Silvana Editoriale, Milan, 2019

The chapters to study in each text will be indicate to students.

***TEACHING METHOD***

The course is based on traditional *ex cathedra* lectures including image slideshows and videos. There will also be educational visits which will serve as important opportunities for expanding on the topics covered in lectures.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The final assessment, which consists of an oral exam, is designed to assess knowledge of reading list and lecture content. Students will be assessed primarily on their ability to summarise and analyse content critically, as well as to use specialist language. Students may divide the exam into two parts, one per subject, to be taken at different times.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

The course is introductory in nature. Consequently, there are no prerequisites. Any gaps in students’ knowledge will be remedied by means of targeted reading recommendations or, on request, specific interventions.

Further information can be found on the lecturer's webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENG or on the Faculty notice board.