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SU IMMAGINI E IMMAGINAZIONE
3rd INTERNATIONAL AND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE
ON IMAGES AND IMAGINATION

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Virginia Vecchi

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INDICE

IMAGE LEARNING

PAPERS
ARTICOLI

ID001 IRIS NENTWIG-GESEMANN
The Imaginary and Imatinative in Children's Drawings.
Interpretative Approaches with the Documentary Method 30

ID002 EDNA BARROMI-PERLMAN
Images of Emancipation. Analysis of Photographs of Jewish Italians after the Liberation of the Roman ghetto in 1870 31

ID004 SOFIA MENCONERO
Image processing for knowledge and comparison of Piranesi's Carceri editions 32

ID006 ALESSANDRO PEPE
Using Image-Based Research Methods in vulnerable populations as a culturally sensitive approach: ethical and methodological aspects 33

ID007 SANDRA MIKOLAJEWSKA
Video mapping for Cultural Heritage: state of the art and future developments 34

ID008 MARINELLA ARENA
Learning from the city: an emotional journey 35

ID010 GRETA ATTADEMO
Narrative space in videogames 36

ID011 GIULIA CORDIN
IS THE FUTURE OF EXHIBITIONS IN DIGITAL STORYTELLING?
Curatorship in the age of internet and the rise of the amateur curator 37

ID012 ADRIANA TREMATERRA
The Restoration Drawing by Images: The Dominican Monastery of the Holy Cross in Croatia 38

ID014 PAOLO BELARDI
IT IS YOUR TOWN: KNOW HOW TO PROTECT IT
The comic writing of Yona Friedman
39

ID016 LAURA MUCCIOLO
Settled / Nomadic: The Disappearance of the Project and the Invention of the Image. Two Projects by amid.cero9
40

ID017 ANTONELLA TIBURZI
The use of photographs in the teaching of the Shoah. A critical guide
41

ID018 FEDERICO O. OPPEDISANO
The "First Step" of Images
The Tangible Illusion of Stop-Motion Animation
42

ID019 GENNARO PIO LENTO
Drone survey of the Monastery of Panagia Kosmosoteira
43

ID020 GIANLUCA CAMILLINI
Imitate, Cite, Contextualise.
Approaches and the use of history in the teaching of graphic design
44

ID021 ELISABETTA CATERINA GIOVANNINI, MASSIMILIANO LO TURCO, ANDREA TOMALINI
BACK TO THE PAST. Narrative and storytelling learning in a digital modeling reconstruction process
45

ID022 VALERIA MENCHETELLI
Images Save Life.
The Role of Graphic Communicationin Social Health Education
46

ID023 ULRIKE STADLER-ALTMANN
Pictorial & Spatial Image Learning – Using diamond ranking to understand students' perception of learning environment
47

ID024 LORENZO GIORDANO
Image: necessity and truth. The narrative medium in Valerio Olgiati
48

ID025 BARBARA PIGA, MARCO BOFFI, GABRIELE STANCATO, NICOLA RAINISIO, GIULIO FACCENDA
Emotional and Cognitive Maps for Urban Design Education:
a human-centered design learning approach
49

ID026 BARBARA E. A. PIGA, NICOLA RAINISIO, MARCO BOFFI, SILVIA CACCIAMATTA, GIULIO FACCENDA, GABRIELE STANCATO
The effectiveness of digital visualization tools to enhance co-design activities in urban planning
50

ID027 ANTONELLA POCE, MARIA ROSARIA RE, MARA VALENTE, CARLO DE MEDIO, ALESSANDRA NORGINI
Narrating the museum: developing Critical Thinking skills through a collaborative Storytelling experience
51

ID028 ANTONELLA CONTIN, VALENTINA GALIULO
Unveiling Beauty through Maps
Affective image determination for spatial learning through Metropolitan Cartography Maps
52

ID029 ALEXANDRA COSIMA BUDABIN
Interventions for Dissonant Heritage in Bolzano
53

ID030 LUCA GALOFARO
L'immagine fotografica nel lavoro di Josef Albers.
La fotografia come strumento didattico e interpretativo
54

ID031 STARLIGHT VATTANO
The woman in the propaganda posters.
Categories and graphic structures
55

ID032 CLAIRE SALLES
Vulva Moulding. Contact Image as a Feminist Practice Producing Knowledge
56

ID033 ARIANNA PAPALE
Representation and environmental damage
The case of Edward Burtynsky
57

ID034 SUSANNE SCHUMACHER
On the habitus of students - Reconstruction of explicit self-concept and incorporated norms in mental images of the future profession
58

ID035 MARIA GRAZIA BERLANGIERI, VINCENZO MASELLI
Hackcity - Hackbodies
Images and narratives of cyborg architectures in Japanese anime and urban utopias
59

ID036 ELENA CARATTI, CAMILLA PILOTTO
From the verbal to the visual.
An example of intersemiotic translation of Calvino's Invisible Cities
60

ID037 GIUDITTA CIRNIGLIARO, ANGELICA FEDERICI
Digital Spaces and Digital Places: Recovering Ancient Traditions with Contemporary Forms in Rome
61

ID038 ROBERTO GIGLIOTTI, NINA BASSOLI
Displaying displays.
Contemporary architecture exhibitions and their production of images
62

ID040 ROSSELLA SALERNO
Re-Imagining Spaces and Places.
Spatial imaginary methods: the creative process and iconographic circulation
63

ID041 MICHELA BENENTE, CRISTINA BOIDO, MELANIA SEMERARO
Virtual representation to narration Roman Turin. Interactive didactic paths from the city to the museum
64

ID042 RAISSA D'UFFIZI
Visualizing the Italian way of life: Italian design products through the pages of Domus, 1955-1975
65

ID043 MICHELE VALENTINO, ENRICO CICALÒ, MARTA PILERI
Stick Images. Learning by drawing lines with objects
66

ID044 MARTINO MOCCHI, CARLOTTA SILLANO, LORENA ROCCA
Sound beyond the hedge. Towards an acoustic construction of images
67

ID046 ALESSIO CACCAMO, IDA CORTONI
Infodemic, Visual Disinformation and Data Literacy. How to Foster Critical Thinking Through the Emerging Dataficacy Competence
68

ID047 FEDERICA CODIGNOLA
Image variables of collectible design: Art, luxury, and country-of-origin effect
69

ID048 CRISTINA COCCIMIGLIO
The repression of techno-aesthetic creativity
70

ID049 ELISABETTA VILLANO
Black Space, White Space. Transdisciplinary Reflections for a Pedagogy of the Void
71

ID050 PATRIZIA GARISTA
Drawing as a reflective practice in life-long learning
72

ID051 ROB EAGLE
Augmented reality as a Thirdspace: Simultaneous experience of the physical and virtual
73

ID052 GIULIA PETTOELLO
Animalizing: Immagination to enhance italian towns
74

ID053 ANDREA LUPACCHINI
Architectural Imaging Design
75

ID054 E. RATTALINO, M.M. MORETTI, S. SCHMIDT-WULFFEN
Learning from scientific visualisations:
knowledge exchanges between science, design and art
76

ID055 VINCENZO MOSCHETTI
Sylva as Anima Mundi
Animals, maps and outposts as project-related tools in the work of Luis Buñuel
77

ID056 M.L. BELISARIO, B. DI DONATO, M. GILLI, E. MANCINO
INSIDE and OUTSIDE SCHEMES. STEREOTYPES and CREATIVITY IN CHILDRENS' IMAGES
78

ID057 ISABELLA FRISO, GABRIELLA LIVA
Museum in Absentia
The Staging of the Image
79

ID058 STEFANO BRUSAPORCI
'Εστία' or Notes on Architectural Heritage Imaging
80

ID059 AUROSA ALISON
From visual studies to interactive design: What about digital aesthetics?
81

ID060 CINZIA ZADRA, SIMONA BARTOLI KUCHER
Graphic journalism: Multi-perspective and intersubjective visions
Seeing, thinking and recognising the other
82

ID061 VINCENZO CIRILLO, VALENTINA ALFIERI, IGOR TODISCO
From Art image to video/comic-image learning.
The video spot Stay at home
83

ID062 PAMELA MAIEZZA, FABIO FRANCHI, ALESSANDRA TATA, FABIO GRAZIOSI
What Images Say / What Users See.
Exploring Mobile Augmented Reality for Visual History-Telling of Architectural Heritage
84

ID063 ENRICO CICALÒ
What Images Say / What Users See.
Learning by drawing. Learning to drawing
85

ID064 CHIARA ROSTAGNO, CHRISTIAN AMIGONI, EZIO BOLZACCINI
The breath of the Leonardo's Last Supper.
Climate change effects on the "natural temperament" of the painted wall
86

ID065 ANNA CHIARA CIMOLI
All Things Sacred. An Experience in Diversity and Active Citizenship at a Contemporary Art Museum
87

ID066 NICOLETTA FERRI
A video-performance as a (professional) mirror.
The use of composition in a performative research with Primary School teachers
88

ID067 ENRICA LOVAGLIO COSTELLO
Reimagining Cognitive Visualizations:
Designers' Leading Edge & Innovative Power
89

ID068 JUNA CARLOS CASTRO-DOMINGUEZ, CARLOS BARBERÁ PASTOR, ALEXANDRA RODES GÓMEZ
Victimsville. Or how Hedjuk landed in Berlin 2030
90

ID069 NICOL ELLECOSTA, DEMIS BASSO
Knowledge and appreciation of manga comics in an Italian sample
91

ID070 ELIANA BILLI. ALESSANDRA MARIA GENOVESE, STEFANO SDOIA
From mutilated to complete image. Lacunae in paintings through the eyes of restorers, art historians and ordinary viewers
92

ID071 LETIZIA BOLLINI
Knowledge Atlases. Spatial visualisations as (inclusive) learning tools
93

ID072 MARCO VEDOÀ
Grasping the Fragility Aspects through Spatial Inequalities mapping.
The Case of the Alpine Areas in Lombardy, Italy
94

ID073 SONIA MOLLICA, ANDREA MARRAFFA
Bauhaus-room: design at the service of new didactic applications
95

ID074 ADELAIDE TREMORI, MARCO RICCIARINI
Illustration and architecture
96

ID076 DEMIS BASSO, YURI BORGIANNI
The design of product's packaging: different perception from different perspectives
97

ID077 MASSIMILIANO CIAMMAICHELLA
This Person Does Not Exist.
Representation Theories and Practices of a Desired Face
98

ID078 STEFANO BOTTA, DANIELE CALISI
Using virtual reality as a tool to research, analyze and learn: the competition for Palazzo del Littorio in Rome
99

ID080 AGOSTINO URSO, FRANCESCO DE LORENZO
The power of the image in the comics culture.
Two examples applied to architectural themes
100

ID081 FABIANA GUERRIERO
Images of property market analysis in a GIS environment.
The exploration of a Unesco site
101

ID082 GIUSEPPE CAPRIOTTI, ROSITA DELUIGI
Educating spaces and hybrid images. Learning strategies in school buildings on the Kenyan coast
102

ID083 LUCA CARDANI, FABRIZIO BANFI
Thinking and Design Through Analogical Image Knowledge, Visual Simulation and Modeling Learning: the Uncanny Space of the Hall
103

ID085 ANDRÉS LUPIÁÑEZ, IÑIGO UGALDE-BLÁZQUEZ
La Casa de los Toros de Barcelona
When architecture, photography and cultural life are synthesized in a work of art
104

ID086 RAFAEL SUMOZAS, MARIA CACIQUE
Decay buildings and their impact on urban regeneration through art: a case study in Taiwan
105

ID087 MARCELLO SCALZO
Hervé Morvan, artist and poet of the "optique de la rue"
106

ID089 GIORGIA POTESTÀ, VINCENZO GELSOMINO
Archaeological documentation from Drone. The theatre of Locri Epizefiri
107

ID090 MARÍA EUGENIA GARCÍA-SOTTILE, SEBASTIÁN GÓMEZ-LOZANO, ALESSANDRA DE NICOLA
Image and Choreography. Transmitting to replicate, transferring to create
108

ID094 MARGHERITA CICALA, NICOLA CHIACCHIO
The new frontier of images NFTs.
The digitalization of the image in the art world
109

ID095 LETIZIA BOLLINI, MARIA POMPEIANA IAROSSI
Educational power of images. Visual narrativity and iconicity in scientific dissemination
110

ID096 FEDERICA MAIETTI, ANDREA ZATTINI
Learning by representing. Architectural drawing between visual simulations and graphic abstractions
111

ID097 FLAURA AIELLO
The image of sacred space in Desiderius Lenz's drawings The aesthetics of the rule
112

ID099 MAURIZIO PERTICARINI, VALERIA MARZOCCHELLA, ALESSANDRO BASSO
Lidar Sensor for the Enhancement of the Architectural Heritage
113

ID100 DAVIDE CARLEO, MARTINA GARGIULO, GIOVANNI CIAMPI, LUIGI CORNIELLO, MICHELANGELO SCORPIO, PILAR CHÌAS
Survey and lighting retrofit as instrument of knowledge and valorisation: the Casa de Vacas
114

ID101 FRANCESCA BASSI, RITA BONFANTI, ALESSANDRA DE NICOLA, FRANCA ZUCCOLI
A partire dalla O di Giotto
115

ID102 VALERIO MARIA SORGINI, GRETA MARIA TARONNA
That (interrupted) refined ludus
Imagination and architecture in the reality of fragments
116

ID103 FABIO LUCE, GIOVANNA A. MASSARI, CRISTINA PELLEGATTA
Verbal Space and Visual Space between Reality and Imagination
117

ID104 MATTEO MORETTI
Design for graphicacy: the case of Glocal Climate Change
118

ID105 ISABELLA SCURSATONE, MARIA EUGENIA GARCIA SOTTILE
The development of images in Mass Choreography.
From manual notation to computerised notation
119

ID106 MARIO BOTTINELLI MONTANDON, CRISTIANA CANONICA MANZ
Image as a vehicle of cultural expression between education and society. Experiencing an artistic-visual workshop for young adults between upper secondary education and university of teacher education in teaching at primary level in Italian-speaking Switzerland
120

ID107 ORNELLA ZERLENGA, LUCIANO LAUDA
Drawing COVID-19. The viral image
121

ID108 MARÍA-ISABEL MORENO-MONTORO, ALICIA MARTÍNEZ-HERRERA, ESTRELLA SOTO-MORENO
From head to toe: an "exquisite" hopscotch as learning and research through drawing
122

ID111 JOSÉ CARRASCO HORTAL, SARA PRIETO GARCÍA-CAÑEDO, JOSÉ A. SÁNCHEZ FAJARDO
Interpretive Communities: When collaborative writing meets metaphor-based object design
123

ID112 PAOLA RAFFA
Images in motion: percective codes for shared space
124

ID114 DEMIS BASSO, GIOVANNI LECCI, ALESSANDRO EFREM COLOMBI
Students' eyes like reality-based sceneries in e-learning
125

ID115 MANUELA PISCITELLI
The image of touristic Italy in the magazines of the late 19th and early 20th century
126

ID116 MARTA QUINTILLA CASTÁN
3D GIS Information System for the inventory of the Mudejar heritage in Aragon. Architecture and territory
127

ID117 CORRADO CASTAGNARO
The image of the contemporary city, a critical reflection on the spaces we live in
128

ID120 DOMENICO CRISPINO
Historical views: images for comprehension of the modern garden
129

ID121 BEATRICE STEFANINI, ALESSANDRA VEZZI, MARTA ZERBINI
Holographic representation tools and technologies for new learning actions: DhoMus Project applied to Pitigliano and Vetulonia Museums, Tuscany
130

ID122 SILVIA PUTEO, EZIO GIOVANNI BOLZACCHINI, CHIARA ROSTAGNO
The Micromega's eye.
Image analysis in our cultural heritage and the challenges of global change
131

ID123 MARTA ZERBINI
The graphic representation of data in architectural scientific research.
The definition of visual elements
132

ID124 DALIA GALLICO
@Re-Art Archive Experience. Innovation and beauty
133

ID125 SILVIA BALZAN, SUSANNE KÄSER, ALYIN TSCHOEPE
Icono-Ethnography as Methodology.
Connecting visual communication and ethnography in participatory urban planning processes
134

ID126 MICHELA PACE
Housing narratives. Stories of distortion, promotion and originality linked to the marketing of heritage
135

ID129 FRANCESCO BERGAMO
The Observer's Distance
Scopic regimes in the Age of Intelligent Machines
136

ID130 LUCA ROSSATO, MARTINA SUPPA
A course of architectural documentation through the clouds.
The challenge of teaching survey techniques during the pandemic emergency
137

ID132 PATRICIA MÉNDEZ, JESSICA FUENTEALBA QUILODRÁN, MATÍAS RAMÍREZ BRAVO, CONSUELO EMHARDT
Insights of images within the Chilean student architecture press, 1930-1990
138

ID133 MONICA GUERRA, LOLA OTTOLINI
Participatory actions in virtual spaces.
The role of images in the construction of shared spaces
139

ID134 CATERINA CUMINO, MARTINO PAVIGNANO, URSULA ZICH
When the Artifact Becomes Image: Representing Geometrical Query with Tangible Tools. Catalogues Physical Models at the Turn of 1900
140

ID138 FRANCESCA RONCO, GIULIA BERTOLA
New narrative and graphic tools in museums.
Experiments of motion graphic technique applied to Japanese illustrations of Museo d'Arte Orientale (MAO) of Turin
141

ID139 DONATELLA FANTOZZI
Street Art: from impertinent transgression to inclusive citizenship
142

ID140 CAMILLA CASONATO
Picture books as a source for mind mapping.
An experience in secondary schools
143

ID141 LUISA CHIMENZ
Style, taste, trend.
Perceptions, statements and misunderstandings in design theoretical discourse
144

ID142 RITA CAPURRO
Photography and Representation of the Museum Visit Experience.
Getting to Know Museum Audiences through the Photographic Image
145

ID143 FRANCESCO MAGGIO
Drawing Modernity
146

ID145 IRENE CAZZARO
Learning from patterns: information retrieval and visualisation issues between bioimage informatics and digital humanities
147

ID147 FABRIZIO AVELLA, STEFANIA AGNELLO
The Mathematical Table of the Palazzina Cinese in Palermo. Animation and virtual reality techniques for an edutainment project
148

ID148 ALESSIO BORTOT
Unusual rainbow.
Images and projections between art and science
149

ID149 MARIAPAOLA VOZZOLA
Images as communication of a new normality.
The representation of the new social habits introduced by the Covid19 emergency in public spaces
150

ID150 MICHAEL RENNER
Drawing Labs – from the Copy of the Master to the Inquiry into the Design Process
151

ID152 LUIGI CORNIELLO
Processes and tools for understanding the survey image
152

ID153 ELISABETTA BIFFI, LUCIA CARRIERA, FRANCA ZUCCOLI
ABR Training for Educational Research: The Global Classroom project
153

ID155 RICCARDO AMENDOLA, MONICA BATTISTONI, CAMILLA SORIGNANI
ARCHITECTURE BEYOND IMAGES
The storytelling in the collages of Fala Atelier
154

ID157 ALESSANDRA DE NICOLA
Silent poetry. The images of gesture among the arts.
Pretexts and reflections on a language with great educational potential
155

ID158 ALICE PALMIERI
Coloured patterns: designing urban spaces through chromatic abstractions
156

ID160 FAUSTO BREVI, FLORA GAETANI
The role of images in the dematerialisation of design presentations during pandemics
157

ID162 PEDRO JOSÉ ZARZOSO LÓPEZ
Read or watch
158

ID163 GIOVANNA RAMACCINI
THE "ALLEGORICAL FACADE"
Between temporary set-up and collective well-being during health emergency
159

ID165 ELEONORA FARINA, LETIZIA DELLA ZOPPA
Future teachers' implicit ideas on creativity: visual stimuli for idea-generation activities
160

ID166 GIAN MARCO GIRGENTI, ELEONORA MANCUSO
Image Education and Didactics of Cultural Heritage. Graphic and creative workshops within the project "La scuola adotta la città"
161

ID167 NATHALIE KERSCHEN
Emphatic Designs: Reclaiming Imagination in Architectural 'Thinking'
162

ID168 ALESSANDRO CASTELLANO
Real digital world(s). Indizi di realtà nell'esplorazione virtuale di spazi reali
163

ID169 NICOLETTA SORRENTINO
1964 - 2020, From Tokyo to Tokyo.
Heritage and actuality of pictographic communication
164

ID170 ANITA MACAUDA, VERONICA RUSSO
Image education and visual digital storytelling
165

ID173 CHIARA PANCIROLI, LAURA CORAZZA
OPEN Communication of Science: the role of audiovisual language in the digital museums
166

ID175 VINCENZA GAROFALO, EMANUELE ROMANELLI, CHIARA VASTA
Animated representations. Multimedia techniques for storytelling
167

ID177 CEDRIC KAYSER
Narratives of glitch: towards a new understanding of the imaginal
168

ID179 MAURIZIO UNALI, GIOVANNI CAFFIO
Semantic Model Learning
Cultural hybridizations and aesthetic recycling for architecture and design
169

ID180 JUDIT ONSÈS
The power of images to imagine and create worlds yet-to-come
170

ID182 ALESSANDRA MESCHINI
Poliphony of Gazes in an Emergency. What Images relate and How.
The Tangible and Intangible Elements of Suspended Time
171

ID183 STEFANO MORIGGI
"Infuturarsi".
Imagination and argumentative competence in digitally augmented learning contexts. Notes and reflections on a didactic experience
172

ID184 ALESSANDRA AGRESTINI, MATTEO COLLEONI, ANDREA MANGIATORDI, STEFANO MALATESTA, GIAMPAOLO NUVOLATI, ENRICO SQUARCINA, FRANCA ZUCCOLI
From mental maps to art: a project on the University-Bicocca sense of place
173

ID185 FABIANO MICOCCI
The Collages of Athens. The Representation of the City in the 21th Century
174

ID192 DANIELE ROSSI
Pittronica
Towards an Archaeology of the Electronic Image on Italian Television
175

CATERINA CUMINO, MARTINO PAVIGNANO, URSULA ZICH

When the Artifact Becomes Image: Representing Geometrical Query with Tangible Tools. Catalogues Physical Models at the Turn of 1900

Abstract

Traditionally, communication in mathematics passes through symbolic representations and visual ones, whether they are images, models or other artifacts, both in the theoretical speculation phase and in the transmission of knowledge with educational and disseminative aims. This dichotomy of representations has its roots in the epistemology of the discipline. In the European context, during the second half of the 19th century, a set of Catalogues of models for the study of geometry born. The contribution analyses their structures based on visual operations of a mathematical nature, with an indisputable aesthetic content, realized following the developments of mathematics at that time and the foundational studies by Monge, which explicitly identified the educational use of models for the geometry of surfaces. Catalogues are therefore tools for the promotion of visual artifacts of great impact, designed for the materialization of complex mathematical queries. Therefore, we propose a critical analysis of the images used in such Catalogues, of the modalities of model interpretation and of the possible repercussions in the current context of interdisciplinary studies.

Keywords

representation, geometry, algebraic surfaces, didactic, models