The European Cultural-Cooperation Project MoMoWo

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Finally, the travelling exhibition book, the guidebook of architecture and design itineraries, the open-access publications on the results of workshops, the e-book on the symposium results, and this book represent the main outputs of the project.
Emilia Garda, MoMoWo project leader since 2104, is an architect and associate professor of Building Design at the Department of Structural, Construction and Geotechnical Engineering of the Politecnico di Torino (DISEG). In 2017, she received the qualification of full professor in Design and Building Technology in Architectural Design. She holds a PhD in Building Engineering, a Specialisation in Architecture, Technology and Urban Areas for Developing Countries (POLITO) and a Master's in Culture Technologique des Ingénieurs at des Architectes du XXe siècle (Institut Français d'Architecture - IFA, Paris). She is the author of numerous essays and books. Her research interests include the twentieth-century history of building technology, conservation, and restoration of the architectural heritage of the Modern Movement and gender studies in architecture and engineering.

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After four years of project activities, we would like to thank each member of the scientific and steering committees of MoMoWo, the members of each team partner and the members of our team, including the scientific, technical and administrative staff. A special thank to the many institutions that gave their patronage by showing their confidence in the MoMoWo mission. We express our gratitude to scholars, architects, designers, students, young artists and cultural operators who actively participated at various points along the path of the project, contributing to its success. On behalf of the partnership, we are deeply grateful to the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

Emilia Garda and Caterina Franchini
MoMoWo international coordinators
MoMoWo · Women’s Creativity Since the Modern Movement
An European Cultural Heritage

Caterina Franchini and Emilia Garda


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This book presents the ‘conceptual architecture’ of the MoMoWo Database for mapping women’s cultural legacy and heritage in Architecture, Construction and Design, and includes annexes on some of the most significant practices, outputs and deliverables so far achieved, resulting from the cooperative research activity between all MoMoWo’s international partners whom we directed at the Polytechnic of Turin (Polito). A collection of case studies enriches the volume by providing the reader with examples of specific thematic approaches at several geographical scales.

The conception of the Database with the application of a Geographic Information System (GIS) has opened the way to making maps of the careers of women architects, civil engineers and designers, and of their works in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban planning, architectural and urban restoration, civil engineering, interior and furniture design, from the past to the present time.

The released online map, www.momowo.eu/database-webgis, displays part of the results issued from the principal research tool we created in order to build an interactive and participatory platform for sharing knowledge and fostering new studies that can pass the limits of our partnership in its future developments. According to this aim, we planned a ‘conceptual architecture’ that is suitable to guide data collection following a vision of a long-term work in progress.
From the technological point of view, Francesco Fiermonte, expert at the Laboratory of Sustainability and Safety for Social Challenges (Polito-DIST), has put into practice “An Open Source Approach for the MoMoWo GIS Database” that you will find in the first annexe.

Through the scientific methodological approach adopted for the Database, each multidisciplinary partner’s team contributed to gathering the biographical data and data on the works by women at various stages of research. These stages comprised the preparation of the International Travelling Exhibition “100 Works | 100 Years | 100 Women” (which opened in July 2016 at the University of Oviedo), the cultural-tourist itineraries for the Guidebook MoMoWo. Women Architecture & Design Itineraries across Europe (published in September 2016), and the three international History Conferences/Workshops on women designers, architects and civil engineers between 1918 and 1989 (Leiden, 2015; Ljubljana, 2016; Oviedo 2017), as well as the Symposium Women’s Creativity since the Modern Movement (1918–2018): Toward a New Perception and Reception (International Conference, Polytechnic of Turin, July 2018).

In the frame of the Database activity, the MoMoWo Polito’s team created a special section devoted to Women’s archives. Technical aspects concerning the presentation of archives and archival collections on the online map were covered by archivist Enrica Maria Bodrato of the History and Cultural Heritage Laboratory (Polito-DIST), and they are concisely illustrated in the second annexe “Searching for Women’s Architectural Archives: The Italian Case Study”.

Moreover, envisaging further developments of the MoMoWo Database, two members of Polito’s scientific team, Roberta
Spallone and Marco Vitali (Polito-DAD), carried out feasibility studies for the creation of a “Collection of Digital Reconstructive Models” (annexe 3) of architectural works to be added to the archival section. By studying archival documents, the aim is to visualise in 3D those architectures that were demolished, transformed or changed on the drawings, thus allowing the preservation, interpretation and creation of images of cultural heritages that no longer exist in their original shape or remain unbuilt. Last but not least, three additional annexes enrich the book with illustrations and tables showing whose Database demonstration initiatives aimed to spread visibility and raise awareness about the cultural heritage created by women, via the social media output of our project as well as in local public events and guided tours on the architectural routes of the Guidebook.

The Portuguese team, led by Maria Helena Souto (IADE), produced the section “Women’s Gallery” which has been posted on the MoMoWo Website and Facebook since 2015. Meanwhile, the Slovenian team, led by Helena Seražin (ZRC SAZU), has focused on the discovery of “Slovenian Women Pioneers” whose work-in-progress results were exhibited during the annual MoMoWo Open Day in women’s professional studios (2015, 2016 and 2017). The last annexe “MoMoWo Travel, Tourism, Architecture Design and Women” by Marjan Groot (VU) presents some reflections on travel and tourism resulting from the 125 works by women architects and designers collected in the Database and published in our cultural-tourist itineraries.

All these initiatives have reverberated beyond the boundaries of our project, thus engendering an inspiring imitation process that is magnifying the MoMoWo mission, and giving voice to both material and immaterial women’s cultural heritage in Europe and beyond.
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