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Gerrit Rietveld Academie

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Victoria Meniakina

Kenniskring / Knowledge Network: Victoria Meniakina

Victoria Meniakina is an architect, strategist and educator, who has been working with architecture and design practices as well as cultural institutes across Europe and in the USA. She is a co-founder of Agency Agency — strategy and design consultancy, based in Amsterdam and is currently teaching at Gerrit Rietveld Academie and KABK Royal Academy of Art in The Hague.

Meniakina questions sustainability and ethical efforts in architecture, design and art practices, and how new planetary narratives shape these disciplines and discourses. She is also investigating tools and strategies addressing issues concerning personal and planetary wellbeing.

Architectures of Wellbeing

The research is a deep-dive into the narratives, tools and strategies, addressing individual, collective and planetary wellbeing that occur in the architectural, artistic and design discourse and practice. The research methodology is based on three levels of wellbeing:

1. Individual Wellbeing —
Matter and Embodied Experience

If we are not well the planet is neither and vice versa. Exploration of narratives around health and wellbeing of an individual through embodied experiences.

2. Collective Wellbeing —
Communities of Care

Case studies of spatial planning, architecture and design examples as well as artistic concepts, with a specific focus on practice, ritual and craftsmanship.

3. Planetary Wellbeing —
New Planetary Conversations

This part connects the previous points in order to take a closer look into how conversations around climate crisis, Anthropocene, and environmental issues can be reshaped for a more actionable discourse, as well as how they shape artistic and architectural practices and their visual language.

Today, more urgently than ever, we need a shift in perspectives, narratives and stories surrounding the health and wellbeing of our planet and our species. In the words of Donna Haraway, we have to stay with the trouble, however, it is up to us how. This is a call for creativity and exploration of radical ideas and scenarios in the time of environmental, social, political and economic uncertainty. Design can improve lives — individual, collective and planetary, and art can reflect on that. Art and design strategies – in practice and education – are explored to

imagine, iterate and create new narratives, tools and solutions for a more conscious, healthy and caring future.

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