

Il Sistema Design del Politecnico di Milano alla Milan Design Week 2026 presenta “INTERDEPENDENCE: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE”

Per il terzo anno consecutivo, la Scuola del Design, il Dipartimento di Design e POLI.design tornano alla Milan Design Week con “**INTERDEPENDENCE**”, che nel 2026 si rinnova con un’edizione dal titolo: “**past, present, future**”, con l’obiettivo di esplorare il rapporto tra design e tempo, declinandolo in un evento distribuito su due sedi: la **Fabbrica del Vapore** e **SaloneSatellite**.

Dopo l’esplorazione di relazioni e connessioni con *INTERDEPENDENCE: designing relationships (2024)*, e l’indagine delle tensioni tra opposte polarità in *INTERDEPENDENCE: exploring opposites (2025)*, quest’anno l’attenzione è focalizzata sulla dimensione temporale.

In molti ambiti oggi, assistiamo a **tensioni tra conservazione ed innovazione, tradizione e cambiamento, ricordo e lungimiranza**. Queste tensioni non esistono in modo isolato, ma agiscono come forze interdipendenti che contribuiscono a definire identità, sistemi e valori per cui progettiamo. Il passato racchiude conoscenze, pratiche, materiali e storie che possono fungere da fondamento o da monito. Il presente ci colloca in un contesto complesso, che richiede consapevolezza critica e azione responsabile. Immaginazione, anticipazione e cura sono strumenti essenziali per orientarci tra le molteplici possibilità del futuro. Il design si sviluppa nel tempo e opera all’incrocio di queste tre dimensioni: ogni progetto è plasmato da ciò che lo precede, risponde alle urgenze del presente e apre a ciò che potrebbe venire dopo e comprendere come le cose perdurano, si trasformano o scompaiono diventa essenziale per immaginare mondi equi, resilienti e significativi.

«Il design è una forma di progetto che tiene insieme tempi diversi. Da un lato interpreta il patrimonio culturale e materiale che abbiamo ereditato; dall’altro traduce i bisogni e i desideri del presente in scenari possibili. In questo senso il design è una pratica di relazione: connette persone, saperi e comunità, trasformando la memoria del passato in risorsa per immaginare il futuro. Non è solo produzione di oggetti, ma costruzione di significati e di traiettorie condivise», spiega **Francesco Zurlo, preside della Scuola del Design del Politecnico di Milano**. Questa costruzione di significato non avviene solo nel tempo, ma anche nello spazio: «Il nostro Sistema Design vanta una lunga tradizione di collaborazioni internazionali. Ora, per il terzo anno, stiamo partendo da queste connessioni per dare forma a un evento unico durante la Design Week 2026 e riunire prospettive diverse provenienti da tutto il mondo. INTERDEPENDENCE, infatti, esiste grazie allo scambio favorito da questa vasta rete di scuole che abbiamo costruito nel tempo», continua il preside.

A **Fabbrica del Vapore**, infatti, INTERDEPENDENCE prende la forma di una mostra internazionale, curata in collaborazione con **CASVA** – Centro di Alti Studi sulle Arti Visive di Milano, che presenta i progetti di studenti del Politecnico di Milano e di oltre 50 università di design di tutto il mondo, affiancati da una selezione di materiali storici provenienti dagli archivi di CASVA. La mostra è arricchita e completata da un nutrito programma di eventi con conferenze, laboratori e attività di

networking. L'esposizione è stata resa possibile grazie al **sostegno di** diversi partner oltre a CASVA, tra cui **Microsoft** che contribuisce anche con l'organizzazione di incontri tematici.

A **SaloneSatellite**, INTERDEPENDENCE è presente con una selezione monografica di tre progetti esperienziali di Digital and Interaction Design intitolata "**Mobility Futures**", centrata sul futuro degli ecosistemi automotive esperienziali, che reinterpreta la guida non soltanto come una questione di mobilità, ma come un rituale, ripensando interazioni ormai cristallizzate e sviluppando nuovi significati. I visitatori saranno coinvolti attivamente in nuovi rituali di guida attraverso esperienze simulate in prima persona.

ALLESTIMENTO E STRATEGIA

L'identità visiva e il progetto di allestimento di INTERDEPENDENCE 2026 sono stati sviluppati in collaborazione con un gruppo interdisciplinare di studenti della Scuola del Design. Il risultato sono ambienti nei quali passato, presente e futuro si sovrappongono sia simbolicamente che materialmente. Spazi in cui il tempo non è lineare e dove l'idea di archivio influenza il modo in cui interpretiamo la realtà. Materiali colorati e semi trasparenti, uniti alle luci naturali creano un gioco di ombre che dà vita ad un ambiente in cui ogni angolo cattura l'attenzione dei visitatori e li accompagna nell'esplorazione di idee provenienti da tutto il mondo.

La partnership con CASVA è stata chiave per la realizzazione della mostra. «C'è una relazione profonda tra CASVA e la Scuola di Design del Politecnico di Milano, entrambi condividono un patrimonio di idee che si incontrano, nel presente, nella mostra ideata per Fabbrica del Vapore – afferma **Maria Fratelli**, direttrice di CASVA – Per guardare lontano, salire sulle spalle dei giganti può essere una soluzione efficace perché non condiziona l'orizzonte ma lo amplia, includendo lunghe intramontabili giornate. Il progetto è infatti una ricerca del nuovo e dell'immutabile, del processo e dell'iconicità, della funzionalità e della bellezza. Polarità che non sono antitetiche ma, nella dimensione dello studio e della ricerca, dialettiche. L'interdipendenza tra CASVA e Politecnico di Milano è quindi una relazione virtuosa finalizzata alla disamina e all'affermazione dell'idea stessa di progetto».

Come comunicano e coesistono progetti di design dal valore storico, con quelli di giovani progettisti? **Giampiero Bosoni**, docente del Dipartimento di Design che si è occupato di curare la selezione di materiali da esporre dagli archivi CASVA, riflette: «Pensiamo che nel contesto di questa mostra sia provocatoriamente utile e stimolante "giocare" con la memoria storica per riflettere, in maniera ironica e sorprendente, su come il progetto non sia sempre destinato alla realtà contemporanea, ma spesso è la proiezione coraggiosa di un futuro possibile. Le visioni sono molte, le storie sono tante e i futuri sono molteplici. Progetti a suo tempo considerati "ideali", se non utopici, prendono vita grazie a una accurata elaborazione digitale creativa e ci proiettano dal passato a un futuro possibile, in un mondo che poteva esserci, ma non c'è stato, e... Forse in anticipo, rispetto al proprio tempo?».

The Politecnico di Milano Design System at Milan Design Week 2026 presents “INTERDEPENDENCE: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE”

For the third consecutive year, the School of Design, the Department of Design, and POLI.design return to Milan Design Week with “**INTERDEPENDENCE**”, which in 2026 is renewed with an edition titled: “**past, present, future**”, with the aim of exploring the relationship between design and time, shaping it into an event distributed across two venues: **Fabbrica del Vapore** and **SaloneSatellite**.

Following the exploration of relationships and connections with *INTERDEPENDENCE: designing relationships* (2024), and the investigation of tensions between opposing polarities in *INTERDEPENDENCE: exploring opposites* (2025), this year the focus is on the temporal dimension.

In many fields today, we witness **tensions between conservation and innovation, tradition and disruption, memory and foresight**. These tensions do not exist in isolation but act as interdependent forces that help define the identities, systems, and values we design for. The past contains knowledge, practices, materials, and stories that can serve as both foundation and warning. The present places us in a complex context that requires critical awareness and responsible action. Imagination, anticipation, and care are essential tools to navigate the many possibilities of the future. Design develops over time and operates at the intersection of these three dimensions: every project is shaped by what came before, responds to present urgencies, and opens up to what may come next. Understanding how things endure, transform, or disappear becomes essential to imagining fair, resilient, and meaningful worlds.

“Design is a form of project that bridges different eras. On one hand, it interprets the cultural and material heritage we have inherited; on the other, it translates present needs and desires into possible scenarios. In this sense, design is a relational practice: it connects people, knowledge, and communities, transforming the memory of the past into a resource for imagining the future. It is not merely the production of objects, but the construction of shared meanings and trajectories,” explains **Francesco Zurlo, Dean of the School of Design at Politecnico di Milano**. This construction of meaning does not take place only in time, but also in space: “Our Design System boasts a long tradition of international collaborations. Now, for the third year, we are building on these connections to shape a unique event during Design Week 2026 and bring together diverse perspectives from around the world. INTERDEPENDENCE, in fact, exists thanks to the exchange fostered by this extensive network of schools we have built over time,” the Dean continues.

At **Fabbrica del Vapore**, INTERDEPENDENCE takes the form of an international exhibition, curated in collaboration with CASVA – Centro di Alti Studi sulle Arti Visive di Milano, presenting projects by students from Politecnico di Milano and over 50 design universities worldwide, alongside a selection of historical pieces from the CASVA archives. The exhibition is enriched and complemented by a rich program of events including conferences, workshops, and networking activities. The exhibition has been made possible thanks to the support of several partners, in addition to CASVA, including Microsoft, which also contributes by organizing thematic meetings.

At **SaloneSatellite**, INTERDEPENDENCE is represented through a monographic selection of three experiential Digital and Interaction Design projects titled “**Mobility Futures**”, focused on the future of automotive experiential ecosystems. It reimagines driving not only as a matter of mobility, but as a ritual, rethinking crystallized interactions and developing new meanings. Visitors will be actively engaged in new driving rituals through first-person simulated experiences.

EXHIBITION DESIGN AND STRATEGY

The visual identity and exhibition design project of INTERDEPENDENCE 2026 were developed in collaboration with an interdisciplinary group of students from the School of Design. The outcome is a series of environments where past, present, and future overlap both symbolically and materially. Spaces where time is not linear and where the concept of an archive shapes the way we interpret reality. Colorful, semi-transparent materials, combined with natural light, create a play of shadows that brings to life an environment where every corner captures visitors’ attention and guides them as they explore ideas from around the world.

The partnership with CASVA was key to the realization of the exhibition. “There is a deep relationship between CASVA and the School of Design of Politecnico di Milano; both share a heritage of ideas that converge, in the present, in the exhibition conceived for Fabbrica del Vapore”, says **Maria Fratelli**, Director of CASVA. “To look far ahead, standing on the shoulders of giants can be an effective solution because it does not limit the horizon but expands it, including long, timeless days. The project is in fact a search for the new and the unchanging, for process and iconicity, for functionality and beauty. These are not antithetical polarities but, in the dimension of study and research, dialectical ones. The interdependence between CASVA and Politecnico di Milano is therefore a virtuous relationship aimed at examining and affirming the very idea of design”.

How do design projects of historical significance interact and coexist with those by young designers? **Giampiero Bosoni**, professor in the Department of Design who curated the selection of materials from the CASVA archives, reflects: “We believe that within the context of this exhibition it is provocatively useful and stimulating to ‘play’ with historical memory in order to reflect, in an ironic and surprising way, on how design is not always destined for contemporary reality, but is often the bold projection of a possible future. There are many visions, many stories, and multiple futures. Projects once considered ‘ideal,’ if not utopian, come to life through careful creative digital processing and project us from the past into a possible future, into a world that could have existed but did not—and... perhaps ahead of its time?”.

Politecnico di Milano at Design Week 2026 with exhibitions, talks, and a focus on students

Exhibitions at Fabbrica del Vapore and the Leonardo Campus, a *lecture* by architect Ma Yansong, and many other initiatives

On the occasion of the 64th edition of the Salone del Mobile, to be held from April 21 to 26 at Fiera Milano, Rho, **Milan Design Week** returns alongside the events of the Fuorisalone circuit. Politecnico di Milano will take part with a wide range of cultural initiatives and student project presentations, organized in collaboration with the **School of Design**, the **Department of Design** and **POLI.design**; the **Department of Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering – DABC**; and the **Department of Architecture and Urban Studies – DASTU**.

Below is a selection of the main events featuring students, researchers, and faculty from Politecnico di Milano during Milan Design Week 2026. For the full and continuously updated list of events, please visit: <https://www.polimi.it/il-politecnico/eventi/rassegne/design-week>

INTERDEPENDENCE: past, present, future – Exhibition

Time: April 16, 5 pm–7 pm; April 17–23 and 25, 10 am–7 pm April 24, 10 am–11 pm; April 26, 10 am–2 pm

Location: Fabbrica del Vapore – Via Procaccini 4, Milan

For the third consecutive year, the School of Design, the Department of Design and POLI.design present *INTERDEPENDENCE: past, present, future*, a series of initiatives reflecting on connections across time through projects curated by students from Politecnico di Milano and more than 50 international design universities.

Hosted at Fabbrica del Vapore and co-curated with CASVA, the exhibition features student projects exploring how knowledge of the past, the complexity of the present, and the possibilities of the future converge to shape fair, resilient, and meaningful realities. It also includes a selection of historical pieces from institutional archives.

The exhibition is enriched by a program of events including conferences, workshops, performances, and networking activities.

INTERDEPENDENCE: Mobility Futures – Exhibition

Time: April 21–26, 9:30 am–6:30 pm

Location: Stand A20, Rho Fiera Milano – Corso Italia, Rho

A monographic selection of three *Digital and Interaction Design* projects focused on the future of experiential automotive ecosystems. The projects reinterpret driving as a ritual, rethinking established interactions and directly engaging visitors through simulated and immersive experiences oriented toward possible future scenarios.

ARCHITECTURE IS NOT ARCHITECTURE – Lecture by Ma Yansong

Time: April 22, 5 pm

Location: Politecnico di Milano, Aula Magna Pesenti – Leonardo Campus, Trifoglio Building, Via Bonardi 9, Milan

A lecture by Chinese architect **Ma Yansong**, founder of the renowned MAD Architects and guest editor of Domus 2026, organized in collaboration with Domus magazine and Politecnico di Milano. Speakers include **Walter Mariotti**, Editorial Director of Domus, and **Emilio Faroldi**, Deputy Rector of Politecnico di Milano.

LIVING IN THE DIGITAL AGE – Exhibition

Time: April 20–24, 9 am–7 pm

Location: Politecnico di Milano, outdoor areas, Leonardo Campus – entrance from Via Bonardi 9, Milan

Students from the AUIC School – Architecture, Urban Planning and Construction Engineering of Politecnico di Milano, affiliated with the DASTU and DABC Departments, present their projects for ten temporary pavilions. The central theme is living in the digital age. The pavilions are self-built under the guidance of Professors **Pierluigi Salvadeo** and **Marco Lucchini** (DASTU).

Within the exhibition → Round Table: Tuesday, April 21, 5:30 pm

Location: Aula Rogers, Via Ampère 2, Milan

Project presentation featuring **Elisa Cattaneo**, **Duilio Forte**, **Matteo Ghidoni**, **Stefano Mirti**, **Giulia Ricci**, and **Luigi Savio**, followed by a guided tour of the temporary pavilions. Also attending: **Donatella Sciuto**, Rector of Politecnico di Milano, and **Andrea Campioli**, Dean of the AUIC School.

TAKING CARE | SIGNS OF CHANGE – Exhibition

Time: April 17 – June 12, 2026, Monday–Friday, 10 am–7 pm

Location: Guido Nardi Exhibition Space – Politecnico di Milano, Leonardo Campus, Via Ampère 2, Milan

An overview of the complex path leading to today's healthcare facilities, analyzed through their historical and social evolution. The interdepartmental exhibition of Polytechnic Culture, "*Taking Care. Signs of Change*", explores the relationship between architecture and health. Curated by **Stefano Capolongo** (DABC) and **Pilar Guerrieri** (DASTU), promoted by the AUIC School – Architecture, Urban Planning and Construction Engineering of Politecnico di Milano, with the participation of the DABC and DASTU Departments.

THE WHITE HOUSE. DOMESTIC PROPAGANDA – Exhibition

Time: Until April 28, 2026, Wednesday–Saturday, 2 pm –7 pm

Location: Dropcity Centre for Architecture and Design – Via Sammartini 56, Milan

The exhibition explores how the White House, beyond being a residence, has evolved into a powerful symbolic and anthropological device. It originates from research conducted by students of the Interior Architecture Design Studio of the AUIC School at Politecnico di Milano, led by Professors **Lola Ottolini** and **Davide Fabio Colaci** (DASTU).

MATERIALS DESIGN FOR TRANSITION EXHIBITION – Exhibition

Time: April 20–26

Location: Politecnico di Milano Materials Library – Bovisa Candiani Bookshop, Building B1, Bovisa Durando Campus, Via Candiani 72, Milan

The exhibition presents a collection of Master's thesis projects developed under the guidance of Professors **Valentina Rognoli**, **Giovanni Maria Conti**, and **Daniele Tamborini**, researcher **Sonia Massari**, and members of the *Materials Design for Transition* research group of the Department of Design. The projects follow a *material-driven* design approach, ranging from objects and 3D printing filaments derived from food waste to underwater installations designed for ecological regeneration.

CARLA DE BENEDETTI PHOTOGRAPHER – Exhibition

An archive of authorial homes

Time: April 22–25, 10:30 am–10:30 pm; April 26, 10:30 am–6:30 pm

Location: Fabbrica del Vapore, Spazio Cattedrale – Via Procaccini 4, Milan

The exhibition celebrates the work of **Carla De Benedetti** (Milan, 1932 – Sarasota, Florida, 2013), photographer, reporter, and intercultural researcher, whose images captured architecture, interiors, and cultures around the world with a unique, refined, and sensitive perspective. Curated by **Giampiero Bosoni**, Politecnico di Milano – Design; **Mariella Brenna**, Politecnico di Milano – DASTU; Maria Fratelli, Director, Fondazione CASVA; Alessandro Morelli, Curator, Carla De Benedetti Archive, CASVA; Francesca Picchi. Exhibition design by Andrea Gianni, with consultancy by **Ico Migliore**. **In collaboration with** the DASTU Department, Politecnico di Milano; Fondazione CASVA; and the heirs of Carla De Benedetti.

OTHER EVENTS

QUANTO SIAMO INGOMBRANTI?

Time: April 20, 10:00 am–12:00 pm

Location: OpenDot – Via Tertulliano 68, Milan

Within the framework of three Horizon Europe projects – Cir4Fun, R-evolve, and FRANCESCA – OpenDot, together with Politecnico di Milano and FederlegnoArredo, promotes a roundtable discussion involving twenty representatives from the furniture supply chain, from design to end-of-life. **Francesco Zurlo**, Dean of the School of Design, Politecnico di Milano, will speak.

DESIGNBOOM – DREAM PROJECTIONS

Designing the Future Before It Arrives

Time: April 23, 3 pm –4 pm

Location: Salone del Mobile – Rho Fiera Milano, Corso Italia, Rho

Round table featuring **Stefano Boeri** (DASTU), **Ma Yansong**, and **Carlo Ratti** (DABC) at the Dream Projections event by Designboom at Salone del Mobile.

KENOSIS

Time: April 23, 2:30 pm–3:30 pm

Location: Superstudio Village – Via Negrotto 59, Milan

The algorithm as a universal language of matter: two talk sessions explore how AI is reshaping architectural design, materials, and creative processes. The first talk focuses on the generative process as a shared language between architecture, the city, and matter. Speaker: **Ingrid Paoletti** (DABC), Politecnico di Milano.

100 THINGS NOT TO FORGET

Time: April 14–26

Location: Rifugio 87 – Viale L. Bodio 22, Milan

A project stemming from the reopening of World War II shelters and bunkers, transforming them into contemporary cultural spaces. Among the various sites is the semi-underground shelter on Via Bodio. The exhibition includes TechnéTECA, a project aimed at creating a living archive of craftsmanship, with research and experimentation from seven Italian universities. Promoted by the cultural association **Repubblica del Design**. Among the contributors is Barbara Di Prete og the Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano. The **Materials Design for Transition** research group also presents a selection of projects focused on materials and biodesign, exploring regenerative solutions and bio-fabricated innovations for the future. Scientific coordinators: **Valentina Rognoli**, **Sofia Soledad Duarte Poblete**, **Serena Camere**, **Max Latour**.

BAU DESIGN DAYS – BOVISA ARTE URBANA

Time: April 20–26

Location: Cafè Gorille – Via G. de Castillia 20, Milan

Exhibition of projects by students of the School of Design, Politecnico di Milano, developed in collaboration with the AAA Collective and the BAU Museum. The works include clothing and furniture created from urban waste materials collected in the Bovisa district.

CIRCLES OF PEACE

Time: April 20–24 and 27–30, 9 am–1 pm and 2 pm–6 pm

Location: Fondazione Franco Albini – Via Saffi 27, Milan

The exhibition presents the work of 44 students from Politecnico di Milano who, under the guidance of Professor **Ico Migliore** of the Department of Design, reinterpreted the 1956 Olympic Totem by Albini, Helg, and Steiner. Through a series of maquettes, they explore its geometry and expressive potential using new materials, colors, and textures.