

Press Release

## CHANGING VALUES

A Conference of the MAK and the Slovak Design Center together with the Architekturzentrum Wien and Kunsthalle Wien in the context of the program INTERREG V-A Slovakia–Austria

Venue Architekturzentrum Wien  
Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Vienna  
Date 6/7 September 2019  
Conference in English

The international conference *Changing Values* attended by distinguished experts will offer the opportunity to consider alternative ecological and economic approaches as reflected in the key content of the VIENNA BIENNALE FOR CHANGE 2019. Based on the topics “valuable data,” “innovative materials,” and “transformation design,” architects, designers, artists, and entrepreneurs will discuss possible synergies for the common search for sustainable strategies, ethical production conditions, and ecological justice, be it in the Global South or in the Global North.

For one of the two keynote lectures, we were able to win Yasmeen Lari, Pakistan’s first female architect. As a pioneer of Brutalist architecture, she constructed groundbreaking buildings, mostly made of concrete, in the 1960s and 1970s in Pakistan. In 1980, she founded the Heritage Foundation of Pakistan together with her husband Suhail Zaheer Lari, a renowned historian. The Heritage Foundation initiated historical restoration projects and for that purpose researched traditional construction techniques and craftsmanship. Since 2005, she has been applying this knowledge to the development of earthquake-proof and flood-resistant housing and communal buildings. Massive government-funded and international aid is not able to provide any sustainable solutions for the recurring catastrophic floods in Pakistan. Lari, however, has succeeded in constructing flood- and earthquake-proof houses with traditional construction materials and minimal use of resources. Mobile training teams give instructions for self-building with the goal of training especially women to be new “Barefoot Entrepreneurs”. Approximately 40 000 houses have already been built. Low-cost, low-carbon, healthy, and safe—these are the central values of Lari’s work.

The second keynote lecture (lecturer to be announced) will focus on the outlines of a radical new economic model that, based on biological and technical circular economy, aims at creating a sustainable equilibrium

For Change

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between the legitimate striving for wealth and the needs of our fragile planet. The goal is also to address the question how Big Data and artificial intelligence can support us in this undertaking.

Three subsequent podium discussions will examine data as the “new oil” of the 21st century:

The panel on VALUABLE DATA will focus on the questions that arise with regards to handling data, especially approaches for human data dignity in the light of the increasing power potential of Big Data.

The panel on INNOVATIVE MATERIALS will address the relationship between humans and resources and what material innovations will be needed for a socially and ecologically sustainable development of our society. Particular focus will be placed on the question how innovative (research) companies can effectively cooperate with designers, architects, and artists to this end.

Change—in a positive sense—is always confronted with two major challenges: Determining a desirable goal and TRANSFORMATION DESIGN, i.e. designing the transformation to the desired state. The third panel will discuss the challenges of this design task and why transformation design requires a holistic approach.

Participants of the conference, in addition to Yasmeen Lari, will be, among others, Katja Schechtner, architect and urban planner, Paul Feigelfeld, media theorist, Seetal Solanki, architect, and Nikolaus Hirsch, architect and art theorist.

Please find the updated conference program as well as information on the registration procedure at [www.viennabiennale.org/en/exhibitions/detail/international-symposium](http://www.viennabiennale.org/en/exhibitions/detail/international-symposium)

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