



POLITECNICO
MILANO 1863

DIPARTIMENTO DI ARCHITETTURA
E STUDI URBANI
DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
AND URBAN STUDIES



Autostrada del Brennero SpA
Brennerautobahn AG

Wim Wenders, *Paris, Texas* (1984)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Convenors

**DASU - Dipartimento di Architettura
e Studi Urbani, Politecnico di Milano**

Andrea Gritti
Elena Fontanella
Claudia Zanda

with

Autostrada del Brennero SpA

Diego Cattoni, Chief Executive Officer
Carlo Costa, General Technical Director

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Contacts

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Motorway Architecture and Landscapes Retrospectives and Perspectives between Critique and Design

Politecnico di Milano

Piazza Leonardo da Vinci 32, Milano

Aula Magna, building 1

March 1, 2024 h 9:30/18:30

Le Gallerie

Piedicastello, Trento

Sala Conferenze C1, Galleria Bianca

March 2, 2024 h 15:00/19:30

CALL FOR PAPERS AND VISUAL ESSAYS

The International Conference welcomes contributions from various fields of study. It promotes a cross-disciplinary dialogue – open to the disciplines of architectural, urban and landscape design, town planning, engineering, history and geography – about the meanings related to *motorway* in contemporary age.

Contributions can be delivered in the form of *paper* or *visual essay*, as long as they relate to: a research carried out during the last 25 years; an ongoing one; a research project planned for the future.

Papers and visual essays will be presented during the first day of the Conference in Milan, in *plenary* or *parallel panels*. Complementary topics will be discussed during the second day of the conference in Trento, in *round tables*. Here authors will take part as discussants.

Participation is free of charge. Registration is required by filling in the form at the following link: [motorarchland_form](#)

Remote participation is allowed.

To submit a proposal to the Conference, please send to motorarchland@polimi.it before 31 December 2023, the following documents:

-an **abstract** of no more than 300 words, spaces included + one key-image (free format, jpg, no more than 10 MB)

and/or

-a **visual essay** in horizontal format (an original image with free graphic technique - 15x21 cm, jpg, 300dpi, no more than 10 MB) + a short caption of no more than 120 words, spaces included.

before April 15, 2024 selected authors should submit:

- a **paper** of no more than 3000 words + 3 images and/or

- a **paper** of no more than 1000 words + the visual essay

(layout will be provided, together with guidelines).

Calendar

November 20, 2023 - launch of the call

December 31, 2023 - abstract and/or visual essay submission

January 15, 2024 - acceptance notification

January 29, 2024 - possible delivery of additional or alternative royalty-free images for the book of abstract

March 1, 2024 - first day International Conference - Milan

March 2, 2024 - second day International Conference - Trento

April 15, 2024 - draft paper submission

May 20, 2024 - paper feedback

June 30, 2024 - full paper submission

Autumn 2024 - conference proceedings publication

For any further informations please contact

motorarchland@polimi.it

The International Conference is part of the activities organised in the “Motorway Architecture Landscape. Descriptions, interpretations, and design experimentations in the territories crossed by the A22 motorway” research framework, developed by the Department of Architecture and Urban Studies, Politecnico di Milano, in partnership with Autostrada del Brennero SpA.

A selection of the research outcomes was presented in the exhibition “Brenner Motorway. Architecture and Landscape” on display at Le Gallerie, Piedicastello, Trento from September 29, 2023 to March 3, 2024 and in the book “Brenner Motorway. Architecture and Landscapes - Iconographic Maps”. Two books are currently under publication: “Brenner Motorway. Architecture and Landscapes - Research and design for service areas” and “Brenner Motorway. Architecture and Landscapes - Documents”.

The **International Conference** will cover **two days**.

The first (March 1, 2024) at Politecnico di Milano (<https://www.polimi.it/>) and the second (March 2, 2024) at Le Gallerie di Piedicastello in Trento (<https://museostorico.it/location/le-gallerie/>).

The International Conference will feature:

- **lectures by keynote speakers** and by invited chairs.
- **interventions by the authors** of theselected papers and visual essays.
- **guided visit to the exhibition** “BrennerMotorway. Architecture and Landscapes”.

The conference proceedings will be published in open access.

Since 1924, when the Milano-Laghi motorway was opened to traffic, to nowadays, the construction of motorway networks have gone through three non-linear phases: *pioneering*, *expansive* and *consolidative*. The latter, characterised by the need to ensure adequate safety and technological efficiency parameters for motorways on a global scale, has highlighted two competing phenomena. Firstly, the progressive weakening of the design impulses that characterised the pioneering and expansive phase. Secondly the accumulation of an increasingly large heritage of architectural and engineering works as well as motorway landscapes, deserving to be enhanced through preservation and not only maintenance. **The milestone of the first one hundred years of motorway history, therefore corresponds to a shift in the design paradigms of these complex territorial architectures.** Contemporary design cultures must, therefore, adopt a different posture from the one assumed during the XX century to face the numerous challenges engendered by energy and ecological transitions: from the decarbonisation of transport to the regulation of the imbalances induced by routes in the crossed territories.

The conference aims to explore motorways both in retrospective and perspective terms.

Looking towards the past, motorways appear as **emblems of modernity**, able to characterize territories and landscapes and, with alternating fortunes, to face the shocks produced by recurring economic, political and social crises. At the same time, looking towards the future, motorways emerge as a **frontier place** where it is possible to test new design strategies, both to counter the effects of climate change and to seize the opportunities offered by the expansion of new digital technologies in integrated systems for the mobility of people and goods.

By assuming this twofold point of view, **the Conference is addressed to researchers that, since the beginning of the 21st century, have studied the relationship between motorways and their contexts, proposing a series of questions.**

What are the design experimentations that characterised the first century of motorway history from the points of view of architecture and engineering and their scales of intervention? Which of these projects, later realised, is worthy of preservation today, or which of them are object of maintenance cycles that changed their meaning or to removals that have erased their presence?

Where and how has the relationship between motorway infrastructure and the crossed territories changed among decades? Why do motorway landscapes emerge at different latitudes that are sometimes generic and sometimes specific?

How should the design of motorway infrastructure change to counteract nowadays the effects of climate change and strengthen processes of ecological and energy transition? When and how could designers collaborate with transport systems providers to reduce motorway ecological footprint?

Motorway Architecture and Landscapes conference is therefore an opportunity to reflect on history, places, theories and practices of architectural, urban and landscape design, by starting to study the interiors and surroundings of the motorway: the elements that make them resonate with their contexts, whether physical or cultural, real or virtual.