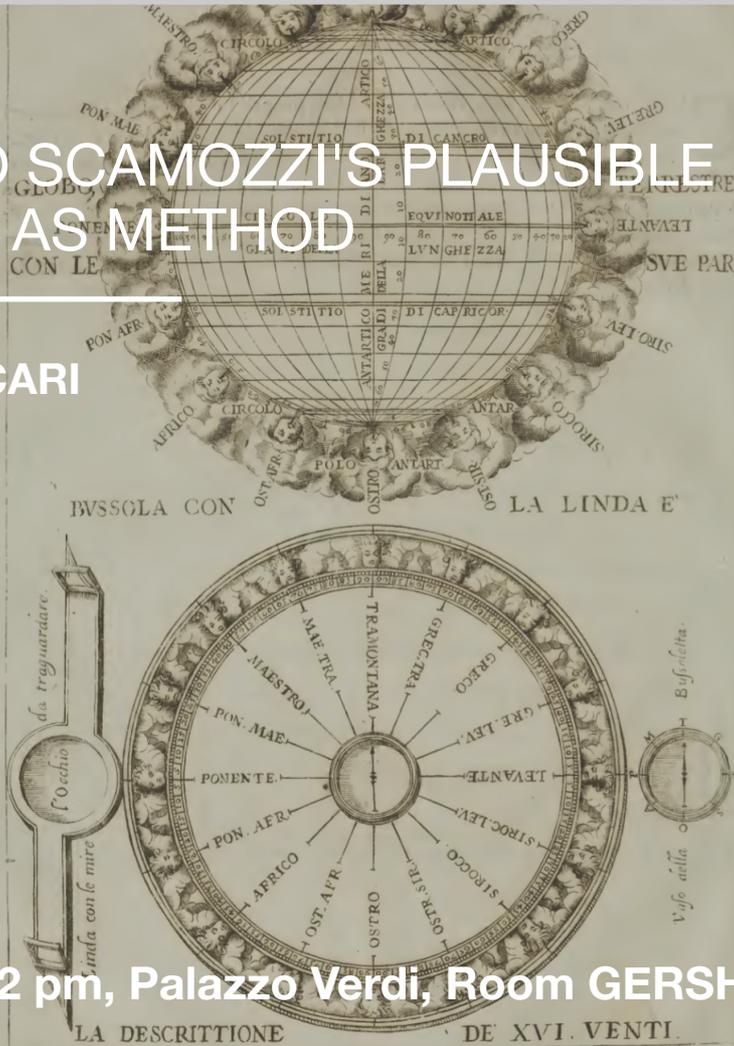


VINCENZO SCAMOZZI'S PLAUSIBLE PASTS, OR: HERITAGE AS METHOD

LORENZO VICARI



February 17, 2 pm, Palazzo Verdi, Room GERSHEVITCH

Vincenzo Scamozzi constructs a theory of place by reinventing Rome as an open and unstable field of architectural invention rather than a fixed historical model. Working within a city still composed of fragments, ruins, and interpretations, Scamozzi shows that place is not simply given by location or context: it is produced through operations that translate remains, texts, and environmental conditions into architectonic order. In this sense, heritage is not a background for place but one of its instruments—a pre-specific ensemble through which architecture invents and situates itself.

The lecture reintroduces Scamozzi's engagement with Ptolemy's tripartite division—cosmography, geography, and chorography—as a scale-model for architectonic thinking. Cosmography names the horizon of universal order; geography organises regional relations; chorography addresses the singularity of a site. Scamozzi's Rome operates within this triad: not a stable origin, but a medium that allows architecture to traverse scales—linking universal speculations to local dispositions, and returning the local to the abstraction of theory.

Two mirrored attitudes toward antiquity make this visible. The first is exemplified by his chorographic reconstruction of the Baths of Diocletian, where drawing functions as a speculative restitution of a lost whole: a heritage-making act that stabilises the past in order to make it operative as a spatial reference. The second emerges in his reinvention of Pliny the Younger's Laurentian Villa, a building known only through text. Here Scamozzi abandons archaeological fidelity and through the means of architectonic rationality draws a plausible configuration, turning literary description into a spatial thesis that can guide further designs.

In the tension between restitution and invention, the lecture argues, Scamozzi reframes heritage as a theory of place grounded in plausibility rather than certainty. Rome becomes not a single recoverable origin but a repertoire of plausible inventions. Through design, Scamozzi does not return "the" past; he draws one of its many plausible pasts—a speculative heritage that situates architecture by proportioning between real and imaginary, and by making place legible as a proportioned relation between scales.

Lorenzo Vicari is an architect based between Vienna and Cuneo (Italy) and the co-founder of studionuvolari.eu. [studionuvolari](http://studionuvolari.eu) believes that architecture is a discipline made of ideas and invariants, of space and experience, of abstraction and concreteness, aimed at inventively form the human environment and its relationship with Nature.

Since 2021 Lorenzo teaches at TU Vienna, Institute of Architecture and Design, and he is PhD candidate at the department of Architecture Theory and Philosophy of Technics. His thesis draws upon the relationship between Architecture and Universality with a non-historical reading of Vincenzo Scamozzi's *Idea dell'Architettura Universale* through the lens of Michel Serres' philosophy. He graduated at Accademia di Architettura di Mendrisio in 2018. He is a former collaborator of office BAUKUNST in Brussels and Lausanne and a former research assistant at RMIT in Melbourne.

Lorenzo is regularly invited as design critic in various institutions, recently among others ETH Zürich, University of Naples, TU München, Milan Polytechnic, Nanjing School of Architecture.



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