

HEPHAESTUS

Symposium on Craft as Practice

Programme



Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

8-11 April 2026

Bassano del Grappa

Villa Angaran San Giuseppe



Funded by
the European Union

HEPHAESTUS project ID 101095123 is funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Introduction

This Hephaestus Symposium brings together participants from the four ecosystems around a **shared engagement with craft as practice**, in a setting where making is deeply rooted in place. Hosted in **Bassano del Grappa** and connected to the manufacturing district of **Nove**, the symposium takes place within a landscape shaped by long-standing artistic ceramic production and everyday forms of skilled work.

Here, craft is historically tied to livelihoods, to the continuity of techniques, and to the material life of communities. Within this context, craft certainly takes shape in beautifully made objects, in aesthetic refinement, and in those forms of care and affect that are predominant in how it is academically valued.

At the same time, in places such as Nove, craft has also long been an ordinary manufacturing practice through which people earn a living, sustain families, and reproduce the fabric and identity of local production systems.

It is embedded in **daily routines of making**, use, adjustment, and maintenance, and in forms of learning that are situated and relational.

This perspective has informed part of the work carried out within Hephaestus, **where attention has been directed towards the territorial, business, operational and durable dimensions of craft practices**.

The symposium reflects this orientation by highlighting the role and presence of craftmakers within the project and its ecosystems. Their practices are approached as sources of knowledge in their own right, shaping both the conversations and the activities that structure these days.

The programme is designed to support forms of participation in which making, discussion, and reflection are intertwined.

In this sense, the symposium seeks to create a **shared space of practice** in which distinctions between roles become less central, and where engagement is organised around a common involvement with materials, processes, and situations.

Craft offers here a ground through which different trajectories can meet, and through which **practice itself becomes a way of inquiring, learning, and thinking together**.

The venue

Villa Angaran San Giuseppe is more than just a historical or hospitality venue. It is a vibrant space where heritage, social innovation, and daily practices come together.

The villa, dating back to the 17th century, has been revitalised through a cooperative model that **blends hospitality with a strong social mission, combining accommodation, food production, and community activities**. Its uniqueness lies in the coexistence of diverse functions within one place. It serves as a residence and social hub, a workspace, and a platform for cultural and educational initiatives. The villa hosts events, workshops, and training sessions, often focusing on sustainability, social inclusion, and local development. A key feature is its **productive side**. Agricultural work, food processing, and catering are integral parts of a broader system where work, learning, and social engagement are deeply connected. These activities frequently support social inclusion programmes, involving vulnerable groups.



DAY 1

Wednesday, 8 April

13:00 - 13:30 Lunch at Villa Angaran

14:30 - 15:00 Biancanievo Room

Welcome and Opening of the Symposium

Welcome addresses by *Fabrizio Panozzo* (Ca' Foscari University of Venice), *Vishv Priya Kohli* (Copenhagen Business School) and *Margherita De Luca* (Ca' Foscari University of Venice).

The session introduces the aims of the symposium, presents recent results of the Hephaestus project, outlines next steps and expected achievements, and provides an overview of the programme.

15:00 - 16:15 Biancanievo Room

Beyond Making: Craft as Repair and Material Practice, *Maria Laura Toraldo* (University of Milan)

Although it has so far occupied a peripheral position, repair is attracting increasing attention in craft research and practice. Drawing on interdisciplinary perspectives and empirical cases from European craft firms, this talk explores the complexity of repair and its implications for our understanding of craft. It demonstrates how repair can serve as an organisational principle, shaping the development of skills, the transmission of knowledge, the formation of communities, and the maintenance of relationships with materials and clients over time.

16:15 - 17:15 Biancanievo Room

Learning Platform Presentation and Testing

Luca Pareschi and *Francesca Leonardi* (Tor Vergata), *Vishv Priya Kohli* and *Margot Bustamante* (CBS).

Presentation of activities related to the development of the Hephaestus lifelong learning methodology.

The session introduces an online resource hub, hosted on the Hephaestus website, designed to map and describe training opportunities for craft-makers, both within and beyond the project. The platform aims to support users in identifying resources tailored to their needs and in developing relevant skills, and will include a testing phase with participants.

17:15 - 17:45 Biancanievo Room

IP Booklet: EU Intellectual Property Guide for Artists, Craftmakers & Designers

Vishv Priya Kohli and *Margot Bustamante* (CBS).

An interactive session presenting the first version of a practical toolkit supporting craft-makers and designers in navigating intellectual property rights in the EU, with space for feedback and discussion.

Coffee break

18:00 - 19:00 Biancanievo Room

Crafting the city: the contradictions of tourism, authenticity, and urban life

By *D20 Art Lab* and *Elena Raviola*.

Contributions by: *Nynne Rosenkrantz Christiansen*, *Robert Curran*, *Jokum Lind Jensen*, *Nicola Pavan*, *Elena Rausse*, *Bruno Testa*.

This panel explores the complex and often paradoxical relationship between local craftsmanship, mass tourism, and the sustainability of historic urban centres. While tourism provides important economic opportunities for artisans, it can also act as an extractive force, threatening the authenticity it seeks to promote. In destinations like Venice, processes of "touristification" reshape urban life, displacing local communities and turning living environments into spaces increasingly oriented towards consumption.

19:30 Dinner at Villa Angaran





DAY 2

Thursday, 9 April

09:30 - 11:00 Biancanievo Room

Craft as Collective Action: Workshop with Otto von Busch (Parsons School of Design)

Otto von Busch, designer, artist, and professor, explores craft as a collective practice and a tool for social activism. In his talk, he presents craft as a method for generating new capacities for action, introducing the OpenSloyd protocol and a hands-on activity; participants are invited to bring an everyday object with a 6 mm hole (or that can be drilled) to connect with others.

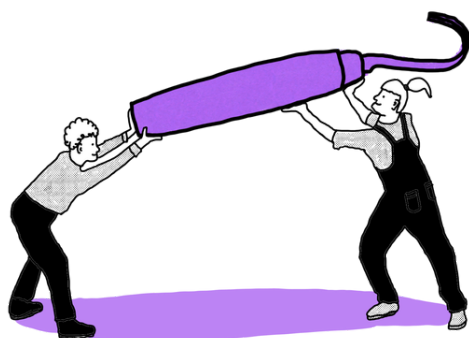
Coffee break

11:30 - 13:00 Biancanievo Room

Emerging collaboration and Hephaestus aftermath

Lukas Arons and Alberto Scodro present a spontaneous and self-organised collaboration developed between Bassano del Grappa and Dals Långed, reflecting on its origins, development, and outcomes.

Building on this experience, the session opens a broader discussion on how to sustain connections beyond the project, and explores possibilities for creating simple, lasting ways of maintaining and evolving the Hephaestus craft community over time.



13:00 - 14:30 Lunch at Villa Angaran

14:30 - 16:00 Biancanievo and Costernaro Rooms

Creating through Destruction: Mixed Media Workshop by Sara Lando

This hands-on workshop invites participants to experiment with recycled materials, altered books, paint, glue, thread, as well as photographs and photo cut-outs. Through processes of layering, assembling, and reworking, participants are encouraged to explore different materials and possibilities, gradually building their own visual compositions. The session combines visual and tactile practices, inviting an exploration of the relationship between the tangible and the intangible, and between the real and the imagined.

Coffee break

16:30 - 18:15 Morosini Room

Why craft? Framing the conversation

A collective discussion exploring a range of perspectives on craft, its meanings, and its relevance today. Drawing on participants' experiences, interests, and questions, the session reflects on how craft is understood and practiced across different contexts, and on why it continues to matter. The discussion will identify shared themes and open questions to inform the following day's making session.

19:00 Dinner in Bassano del Grappa





DAY 3

Friday, 10 April

09:00 *Departure from the parking of Villa Angaran*

09:20 - 10:20 Lineasette, Marostica

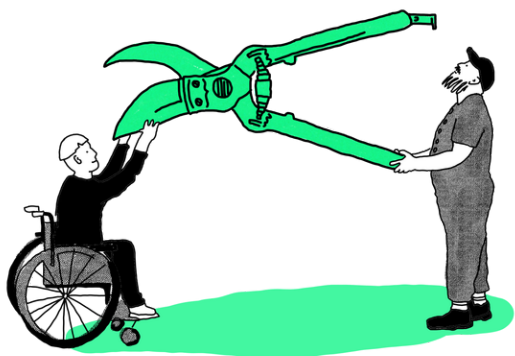
A guided visit to Lineasette, a historic ceramic manufacturer founded in 1977, known for its distinctive work in porcelain stoneware. The company combines traditional craftsmanship with contemporary design, producing sculptural and decorative objects through a largely manual process that reflects both technical expertise and ongoing experimentation.

10:30 - 12:30 Visits in Nove

Nove is a historic centre of ceramic production, whose development has been shaped by the resources of the Brenta river. It represents a key context for understanding the evolution of ceramic craftsmanship, where traditional knowledge, production practices, and contemporary experimentation intersect.

Diego Poloniato Laboratorio Artigiano

Visit to the workshop of Diego Poloniato, a master ceramist rooted in the local tradition of Nove. His work combines technical mastery with a highly personal and expressive style, reinterpreting traditional forms such as the Venetian *cuchi* through imaginative and sculptural compositions.



Diffused Museum, including the Antico Mulino Pestasassi (Baccin Cecchetto now Stringa)

The visit explores selected sites of the diffused museum of Nove, including the Ancient Stone Mill. Together, these places offer a glimpse into the town's ceramic heritage and its close connection to local production processes, presenting Nove as a living landscape of craft where heritage, production, and everyday life are closely intertwined.

(In case of rain: visit to the Civic Museum of Ceramics, Nove)

12:45 - 14:00 *Lunch at **Hotel Le Nove**, a contemporary hotel in the ceramic district of Nove, combining contemporary design with elements linked to local craft culture.*
(at participants' own expense)

14:15 - 15:00 StylNove Ceramics

A visit to StylNove Ceramiche, a company founded in 1967 in Nove, combining artisanal tradition with contemporary design. The production integrates handmade processes with collaborations with artists and designers, resulting in ceramic objects that bridge craftsmanship, design, and innovation.

15:00 - 18:00 Te.Ra Design Studio

Making together: a shared ceramic process

A hands-on session guided by the craft makers *Elena Rausse* and *Bruno Testa*, where participants collectively explore and materialise the themes emerging from the symposium through a shared ceramic-making process.

19:30 *Dinner at Villa Angaran*





Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

HEPHAESTUS

DAY 4

Saturday, 11 April

09:30 - 11:30 Costernaro Room

Round Table: Research Perspectives and Final Remarks

A concluding round table reflecting on the main insights emerging from the symposium, and bringing together participants' perspectives and experiences. The session offers a final space for discussion and for sharing possible future directions.

Bye bye coffee



hephaestuscrafft.eu



**Funded by
the European Union**

HEPHAESTUS project ID 101095123 is funded by the European Union under the Horizon Europe programme. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Vademecum

We kindly ask all participants to take an **active part** in the symposium. One of the core aims of these days is to blur the distinction between researchers and craft makers in the name of practice, fostering a shared space where making and thinking are closely intertwined. All activities are in fact conceived as part of a collective environment in which craft operates as a **principle of connection**.

We therefore encourage openness and curiosity across different practices and perspectives, and invite everyone to contribute, ask questions, and engage in all activities.

Many sessions are interactive or hands-on, so we invite you to participate fully and, where relevant, to bring any materials or objects mentioned in the programme.

Punctuality is important, especially for sessions involving travel or external visits.

Some **flexibility** may be needed, as parts of the programme can adapt to the group and ongoing discussions.

For practical matters:

- Lunch and coffee breaks will be held at **Todomodo**, the social bar-trattoria within Villa Angaran.
- Meals at Villa Angaran are organized and paid for.
- Some meals (as indicated in the programme) are at participants' own expense and will be reimbursed, where applicable, by the participants' home institutions.
- Transportation for the scheduled visit to Nove (Friday, 10 April) will be provided.
- The centre of Bassano del Grappa is within walking distance from Villa Angaran.
- Comfortable clothing is recommended, especially for workshops and making sessions.

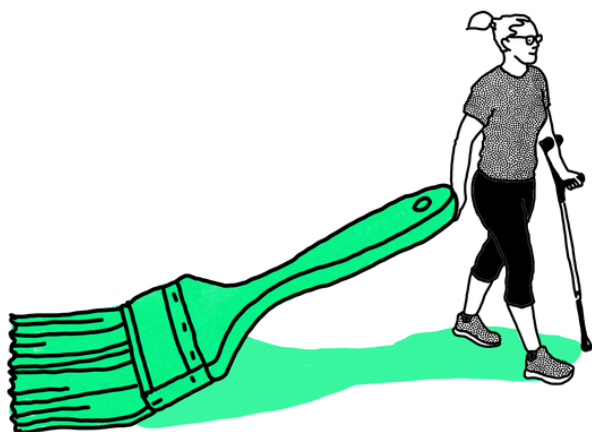
Attendance and documentation:

- Each day, participants are asked to sign the attendance sheet and the photo consent form. Please make sure you have signed it.
- Some moments may be documented for research and dissemination purposes.

Contacts

For any questions or practical needs, please refer to the Ca' Foscari team.

For direct communication, please contact Margherita De Luca.
(margherita.deluca@unive.it)



Collateral events and venues

The following events, taking place in the surroundings of Bassano del Grappa and Venice during the same period, offer additional opportunities to explore craftsmanship and related practices for those who may wish to arrive earlier or extend their stay.

Artisans in the Cloister (Artigiani in Chiostro)

Cloister of San Francesco della Vigna, Venice
11 - 12 April 2026

An event dedicated to craftsmanship, featuring exhibitions, guided visits, talks, and live performances in the setting of the San Francesco della Vigna complex.

GEMA – European Days of Arts and Crafts (Giornate Europee dei Mestieri d'Arte)

7 - 12 April 2026

A Europe-wide initiative promoting artistic craftsmanship and traditional skills through workshops, open studios, and public events. It offers a unique opportunity to discover artisans at work and explore the cultural value of craft practices across different regions.

Visit to Liquorificio Carlotto (Historic Distillery Experience)

Valdagno

12 April 2026, 16:00 - 18:00

A guided visit to a historic Italian distillery, exploring over a century of artisanal liqueur production. The experience includes insights into traditional techniques and a tasting journey through selected products, offering a sensory introduction to local craftsmanship and heritage. Participation fee: €20 per person

Poli Grappa Museum (Museo della Grappa Poli)

Bassano del Grappa

A museum dedicated to the history of grappa and distillation, offering a self-guided visit through the cultural and technical development of this traditional product.

Open daily, 09:00 - 19:30.

Free admission; optional tasting of 5 products: €3.50 per person.

