

Hans Leo Höger gained a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies with a thesis about 'Continuity and Method in the Work of the Italian Designer and Architect Ettore Sottsass jr' at University of Bonn (Germany). He is tenured professor for Theory and History of Design and Communication at Free University of Bozen I Bolzano.

Höger studied Art History, Romance Philology, Folklore and Empirical Cultural Sciences at the Universities of Bonn, Perugia, Tübingen and Quimper. From 2014 to 2017 he has been the academic representative in the Faculty's Joint Studies Committee. Currently he is the Dean's delegate for services dedicated to students with disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties. Furthermore he is the academic contact person for some of the Faculty's Erasmus agreements and memberships.

The thematic areas of his activities in the field of design research are focused on Cultural Engineering (transdisciplinary approaches to design and architecture process setting), Design Thinking (bridges between theory and practice), and Theory and History of Design. This orientation is consequential to his professional background as – during six years – director of the German Design Council and – later on – as consultant for companies and design offices (focusing on research, strategy, communication, team building, project management). Since the start of his appointment as tenured University professor, the outcome of his research activities is resulting in publications, and partly also in classroom activities. His most recent publication project – to be published in autumn 2026 – carries the working title *Rehabilitating Beauty*. It is investigating possible roles, interpretations, relevances and presences of *Beauty* in present times. Within the Unibz Faculty of Design and Art, Höger is part of the research cluster *make*.

Hans Leo Höger has been the curator of the international conference 'Design Research – Strategy Setting to Face the Future' in Bozen-Bolzano/Italy. Thereafter, the Swiss National Science Foundation (Bern) invited him to join its team of experts for the evaluation of research project proposals. The organizers of the international conference 'Multiple Ways to Design Research' (Lugano/Switzerland) invited him to be part of its Program Committee. DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) - Germany's largest research funding body and the largest such organization in Europe - appointed him as external expert for the evaluation of research project proposals. Other expertises as reviewer include AIS (Associazione Italiana degli Storici del Design) in Milan.

As visiting and guest professor Höger has been teaching at Universities in Milan (Bocconi University – School of Economics and Management), Saarbrücken (Academy of Arts and Design), Zurich (Zurich University of the Arts), Würzburg (University of Applied Sciences), New York (City College of New York) and Kent (Kent State University, Ohio).

Besides his academic activities he has been working as consultant of strategy, research and communication for companies and design offices, focusing on design topics in the context of economics, culture and society. Clients include Siemens, Olivetti, Swiss Re, Poste Italiane, Airport Cologne, Michele De Lucchi, intégral Ruedi Baur et associés, Sergio Calatroni Artroom.

During the first six years of his professional career - as Head of the German Design Council in Frankfurt/M. - he served as Commissioner of the German participation at XIXth Milan Triennale ('Identity and Differences: The Future of Urban Environments') and was also responsible for the program 'Attitudes for the New Millennium' within the IDCA International Design Conference in Aspen/Colorado (USA).

He confides in Heraklitus: "Unvisible links are stronger than visible ones."

He agrees with the industrial designer Konstantin Grcic: "Before performing a purpose in a good way, the purpose itself has to be good."

He believes in the assertion stated by the US-american physicist John Archibald Wheeler: "The past only exists insofar as it is present in the records of today. What those records are is determined by what questions we ask."

He shares the conviction expressed by the German philosopher Ernst Bloch: "Only that kind of remembering is fruitful that also remembers what still has to be done."

Academic Fellowships:

DRS Design Research Society (London)
DMI Design Management Institute (Boston/Massachusetts)
DHS Design History Society (London)
AIS Associazione Storici del Design (Milan)

Publications (selection):

Updating Roland Barthes' Mythologies: Positions from the Fields of Design, Art, Architecture. Mimesis International, Milan 2025 (scientific editorial publication)

Citizen Journalism: Der Charme der Subjektivität als Quelle zuverlässiger Auskunft. In: Hans Leo Höger (ed.). Updating Roland Barthes' Mythologies. Mimesis International, Milan 2025

Superlative (und warum es Sinn macht, sich Alternativen zuzuwenden). In: Hans Leo Höger (ed.). Updating Roland Barthes' Mythologies. Mimesis International, Milan 2025

Updating Roland Barthes' Mythologies: Positions from the Fields of Design, Art, Architecture. Mimesis International, Milan 2024 (University publication)

Who designs the designers? Notes on the role of theory in learning by doing. In: Kuno Prey (ed.). Designing designers. From products to teaching. Corraini Edizioni, Mantova 2022

Bastoni. Design education in Bozen I Bolzano - a case study. Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bozen I Bolzano 2022

Microstorie di innovazione e impresa. Corraini Edizioni, Mantova 2018 (Italian edition)

Microstories of Innovation and Firms. Faculty of Design and Art, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano 2017 (international edition)

Percepire il costruito: Note sull'opera di Ettore Sottsass. In: Maria Passaro (ed). Cucchi & Sottsass. Il Chiostro della Pace. Studi e Restauro. Società Editrice Umberto Allemandi & C., Torino 2015

Theory without practice is useless, practice without theory is dangerous. In: Giorgio Camuffo, Maddalena Dalla Mura (eds). About Learning and Design, Bozen-Bolzano University Press, 2014

Ulm: methodically drawing a Moral, in: diid disegno industriale | industrial design no. 42-43, Rdesignpress, Rome 2010

Design & Geschichte [Design & History], Max Stein Verlag, Weimar 2009

Design Research, Abitare Segesta, Milan 2008

Zurich - Milan: Transalpine Dialogues of Graphic Design and Visual Communication. Design Museum Zurich, Lars Müller Publishers, Baden 2007

Design Education, Abitare Segesta, Milan 2006

LightWorks, Bozen-Bolzano University Press, 2006

Design & Politik [Design & Politics], University of Applied Sciences, Würzburg 2005

intégral ruedi baur et associés (monograph), Pyramyd ntcv, Paris 2003

Michele De Lucchi (monograph), DVA, Munich 2001

La lampada Tizio di Richard Sapper, Birkhäuser, Basel 1997

Il doppio e di più, XIX Triennale di Milano, Lars Müller Publishers, Baden 1996

Ettore Sottsass jr. (monograph), Wasmuth, Tübingen/Berlin 1993