www.labont.it

1999 - 2019
Since its foundation in 1999, Labont has set its research in the constant reconciliation of the analytical approach with the continental one. The scientific results provided by scholars that in the last twenty years have collaborated with Labont are a clear expression of the goodness of this intuition.
People

Founded in 1999 by Maurizio Ferraris, Tiziana Andina, Carola Barbero and Cristina Becchio, today the LabOnt is an interdepartmental center with more than 60 members.
Academic Careers

Many of the LabOnt former graduate students, doctoral, and post-doctoral fellows got positions in Italy or abroad. Among them:

Tiziana ANDINA. Since 2019, Full Professor, University of Turin
Alessandro ARBO. Since 2016, Full Professor (permanent position), University of Strasbourg, France
Lorenzo BARAVALLE. Since 2013, Assistant professor in Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Philosophy of Science at University of São Paulo
Carola BARBERO. Currently, Associate Professor in Philosophy of Language (permanent position), University of Turin
Cristina BECCHIO. Since 2011, Full Professor (permanent position), Department of Psychology, University of Turin (2013 winner of ERC Junior Grant)
Emanuele BOTTAZZI. Since 2013, Assistant Professor, University of Trento
Elena CASETTA. Since 2018, Assistant Professor, University of Turin
Leonardo CERLIANI. Currently, Postdoc at the Institut du Cerveau et de la Moelle Épinière, Paris
Angela CONDELLO. Since 2019, Assistant Professor, University of Messina
Edoardo FUGALI. Since 2012, Associate Professor in Theoretical Philosophy (permanent position), University of Messina
Alessandra JACOMUZZI. Since 2010 Research Assistant (permanent position), University of Venice
Pietro KOBAU. Since 2006, Associated Professor (permanent position), University of Turin
Jimmy Hernández MARCELO. Currently, Postdoc Fellow, University of Salamanca
Alessandro SALICE. Currently, lecturer at University College, Cork, Department of Philosophy
Enrico TERRONE. Currently, Juan de la Cierva Fellow, University of Barcelona
Giuliano TORRENGO. Since 2019, Associate Professor, University of Milan
Gender composition

Labont has always been attentive to the gender gap: not only its gender composition is almost equal, but it is also actively engaged in the SWIP Italia.

Marina Sbisà (Università di Trieste) – Presidente
Vera Tripodi (Università di Torino) – Vicepresidente
Over the years, LabOnt elicited many debates that, started in Italy, rapidly acquired an international breath
A new theory of social reality
A new realist ontology
A new theory of the web
Research

The LabOnt is articulated in different research groups, developing different but related investigations.
Social Ontology. Social ontologists aim to define and describe the structures and the dynamics of the social world, or rather the part of reality that is not reducible to the physical world and was “built” by human beings to live-out desirably fruitful relationships of co-operation and exchange. Social ontology sets out to answer questions such as: “what is social reality?”, “is it possible to conceive of a definition of social facts and objects?”, “what distinguishes brute facts from social facts?”, “what type of objects are groups?”, “what types of objects are future generations?”, or, to say it differently, “what are the conditions that allow us to consider a collection of individuals a group?”, and, to explore the question, “is it possible to develop a constitutive rule of social reality?”

Philosophy of Technology. The philosophy of technology analyses the nature of technology and its social effects. More specially, it addresses issues regarding the making and using of technical artefacts from ontological, ethical, and aesthetic point of view: it questions “what technology is” and what its objects are; what makes technology ethically problematic or whether it itself possesses moral qualities; what makes at least some technological products beautiful and aesthetically pleasing to us. One of the central issues in ontology about technology concerns the nature of artificial beings.
Philosophy of Technology
Ontology of Biology &
Ontology of Gender

- **Ontology of biology** studies the entities, processes, and mechanisms countenanced by the principal theories within the life sciences. On the one hand, the ontology of biology intersects scientific knowledge and metaphysical inquiry, aiming to put forward or refine theoretical conceptions of life, species, natural kinds, sexes, evolution, cultural evolution, natural selection, development, and their possible “ultimate nature”. On the other hand, the ontology of biology purports to explore the interaction between such theoretical conceptions and society, seeking to frame debates concerning issues such as the biodiversity crisis, genetically modified organisms, food diversity, genetic determinism, the relation between sex and gender.

- The **ontology of gender** questions what type of thing genders are, how they are created and maintained, and what it is to be gendered. One of the central issues in ontology about gender concerns whether our gender classifications capture a natural kind (a uniform type with a common essence) or a social kind (a unity that does not share essential, “natural” as opposed to “social” proprieties). The ontology of gender studies whether humans create categories of sexual preference and behaviour just like they create many other categories or whether humans are differentiated sexually as the woman/man dichotomy exists in reality.
Ontology of Biology
Ontology of Gender
Ontology of art. If we were to ask an average cultured person, someone not particularly experienced in philosophy – a sort of ingenuous philosopher endowed with a robust common sense – what they would expect to find in a book on the philosophy of art, they would most probably answer that they would expect to read a reflection, in essay format, whose object is art and the products of art. Quite simple, really. The task of answering questions such as: ‘what is art?’, ‘what is an artwork?’, ‘what is beauty?’, “what is the difference between a common object and an artwork?”, “what is a fictional character?”, “what is music?” and so on, would be reserved for the philosophy of art.

Ontology of architectural design. The ontology of architectural design is concerned in the definition of the design action in a positive sense: as a specific system of inscriptions, exchange and production oriented to the realization of some (material) effects in the world. What is an architectural design? To whom and what it owes its power? Which facts it has to consider? What values it could be embody? Instead of looking at architectural theories, to their underlying systems of values, and to their specific normativity, the ontology of architectural design focuses on documents, on the forms of productions, and on their actions (and effects) in the social world.
Ontology of Art
Ontology of Architectural Design
Ontology of law. Law defines our everyday life and can constitute a jumping off point for trans-disciplinary scholarship because of its social and cultural relevance. The interest for juridical orders has a long tradition in the framework of philosophy and social sciences and especially in the field of social ontology. During the last decades social scientists and humanists have overcome the remaining skepticism with respect to the legal world and its (ostensible) technical rigidity, demonstrating to be able to manage juridical concepts and categories. Modern legal cultures have been characterized by a certain autonomy towards social reality, to some extent their discourse on law has been self-referential. Only by means of a deeply transdisciplinary dialogue can law become relevant for the humanities and the social sciences.
Ontology of Law
International Conferences

Over the years, LabOnt has organized around 80 international conferences and every year it awards two international Prizes
Derrida cultivated long-lasting relations of friendship and professional collaboration with professors teaching at the University of Turin, which also conferred him a degree *honoris causa* in Philosophy in 1998.

Every year, the directing committee selects an internationally acclaimed philosopher, jurist or sociologist to hold three lectures in Turin throughout the academic year.

- 2019 – Jolán Orbán (University of Pécs)
- 2018 – Bernard Stiegler (Institut de recherche et d’innovation, IRI, Paris)
- 2017 – Günter Figal (University of Freiburg)
- 2016 – Massimo Cacciari (San Raffaele University, Milan)
- 2015 – Alessandra Donati (University of Milano Bicocca)
- 2014 – Michel Wieviorka (École des hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, Paris)
Every year one scholar is awarded with the “Paolo Bozzi” Prize for Ontology, instituted in 2010 by LabOnt with the aim of giving public recognition to thinkers who have distinguished themselves in the field of ontology. The award winner is invited to give a public lecture on the day of the ceremony.

- 2019 – Iain Hamilton Grant (University of West England, Bristol)
- 2018 – Maria Eichhorn (Artist)
- 2017 – Brian Leiter (University of Chicago)
- 2016 – Wolfram Hogrebe (University of Bonn)
- 2015 – Paolo Legrenzi (Università di Venezia)
- 2014 – Markus Gabriel (University of Bonn)
- 2013 – Michael Kubovy (University of Virginia)
- 2011 – Achille Varzi (Columbia University)
- 2010 – Barry Smith (University of Buffalo)
Journals

The LabOnt is responsible of
Rivista di Estetica
Brill Research Perspectives in Art and Law
Rivista di Estetica is one of the oldest philosophical journals in Italy, established in 1956 as a quarterly journal about aesthetics and more general philosophical themes.

Rivista di Estetica (Anvur A-Category) is indexed by: SCOPUS, Web of Science Core Index AHCI, The Philosopher’s Index, Répertoire bibliographique de la philosophie, ERIH, Articoli italiani di periodici accademici (AIDA), Catalogo italiano dei periodici (ACNP), Google Scholar.
70 philosophy and literature

edited by
Carola Barbero
Micaela Latini

71 The science of futures. Promises and previsions in architecture and philosophy

edited by
Alessandro Armando
Giovanni Durbiano
On behalf of the University of Turin and of the Käte Hamburger Kolleg „Recht als Kultur“, the interdisciplinary journal *Brill Research Perspectives in Art and Law* aims to gather outstanding contributions to the fascinating debate at the intersection of art and law. The focus of the journal involves all the aspects (philosophical, juridical, sociological, technological and cultural) characterizing the relationship between law and art as well as the questions common to the two fields.
What is Art?

The Question of Definition Reloaded

From Fountain to Moleskine

The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Producibility

Tiziana Andina

Maurizio Ferraris
Book Series

The LabOnt is responsible of

- Italian Studies
- Analytic Aesthetics and Contemporary Arts
Italian Studies
Philosophers and cultural historians typically discuss works of art in abstract terms. But the true significance of art for philosophy, and philosophy for art, can only be established through close analysis of specific examples. Art is increasingly being used to introduce and discuss problems in philosophy. And many works of art raise important philosophical issues of their own. But the resources available have been limited. Analytic Aesthetics and Contemporary Art, the first series of its kind, will provide a productive context for that indispensable enterprise.

The series promotes philosophy as a framework for understanding the study of contemporary arts and artists, showcasing researches that exemplifies cutting-edge and socially engaged scholarship, bridging theory and practice, academic rigour and insight of the contemporary world.
CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART, AESTHETIC MODERNITY AND ZHANG PEILI
Towards a Critical Contemporaneity

Paul Gladston
Believing in the importance of spreading academic research and knowledge outside the academic premises, Labont carries out an intense activity of popularization, in particular in the field of aesthetics, ontology, and more recently, the philosophy of the web and digital revolution.
TV programs
A Handbook for Highschool
Start@UniTo
Projects

LabOnt carried out many national and international projects, including European founded projects.
Past Projects

- 2016–2017, “I work therefore I am (European),” (Erasmus + Program – Jean Monnet “Policy Debate with the Academic World”)
- 2013–2015, “DOC. Documentality Organizing Complexity” (EU Accelerating Grant, Compagnia di San Paolo)
Partnership

LabOnt has several national and international partners
What’s Next

Scienza Nuova
A new Research Institute

Scienza Nuova is an Institute of Advanced Studies established in 2019 as a joint initiative between the University of Turin and the Politecnico of Turin and based on the cooperation between the LabOnt (University of Turin) and the Next Center for Internet and Society (Politecnico of Turin). Its main aim is to foster the dialogue between technological knowledge and the humanities on digital technologies and social innovation, encouraging the exchange between universities, professionals, and the business world.

Director: Maurizio Ferraris, University of Turin
Vice-Director: Juan Carlos De Martin, Politecnico of Turin