

Northern Italy Green Building Expert Paola Moschini | Transcript

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Charlie: Welcome to Green Building Matters, the original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Their host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few to be honored as a LEED Fellow . Each week Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. Settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee and get ready to find out why green building matters.

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Charlie: Everybody, welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters Podcast. I'm your host, Charlie Cichetti. Once a week I get to interview a Green Building professional somewhere in the world and today we're going to go to Northern Italy and we're going to interview Paula Moschini, a green building and healthy building expert. They are not just in that region of Northern Italy, but she does work all over Europe. I've had the honor of spending a little time with her as I've traveled over the years and GreenBuild Europe. I can't wait to learn more about you. How are you doing today?

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Paola: Thank you for inviting me. I'm very excited, for this interview is quite impressive because I know your interview is about a very, very person, very deep in sustainability.

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Charlie: They listen every week and it continues to grow. Our Green Building Matters podcast. Well, I know you're the CO at Macro Design Studio. You've got a lot of credentials, but take us back. Where did you grow up and where did you go to college?

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Paola: I was born and raised in a small mountain provincial town in the north of Italy and have always been lucky to live and be in contact with nature, enjoying the change of season. Feel the sense of life that is born in springs, enjoy the cold water of the stream near home in summer, contemplate the change of color in the woods in Autumn and finally work on the snow in winter. In short, nature, integral part of my life. I attended a technical school and then enrolled in Architecture in Venice. I have never heard of someone who saves paper and manages to design a projector, indicating vision on concept. European development strategy. I have always been attracted to technology, science, mathematics and physical and technology. I graduated with honor and following my desire to discover and meet the new realities. My first job opportunity, I moved to work and live in Madrid, Spain. I learned a lot of things in a Spanish studio. After this experience, a few years later I returned and worked for a metal and facade construction company. I was able to deepen my technical skill by working on the construction detail and experiencing the construction of the building day after day on it. When I was in the construction company I began to participate with a green building conciliar and the word of the Sustainability rating system, LEED in particular, it was to this 2007. Three years later it was time for me to start a new project. I began to work as LEED consultant in 2010 and two years later I opened my own sustainability company Macro Design Studio.

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Charlie: It's amazing the nature connection. I hear that a lot from the LEED professionals. I got an interview in a small town and the nature connection. How did you know you wanted to study architecture? Did you look at all the things you could study and pick one? How did you know architecture was something you wanted to study about technology.

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Paola: I like the technology, for that's the white paper.

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Charlie: Obviously some architectural work, but then started your own studio. Can you tell us a little bit about early in your career? Did you have any mentors and anyone that maybe opened the door for you on the way?

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Paola: A person who was strongly influenced my way was Martinus Kazan, was a Spanish engineer who changed the world of action with a truly unique and specialistic and humanistic approach. I had the opportunity to work side by side with him for the reading of the book, (inaudible). Even today. After a long time we will maintain a friendship and he's a very, very impressive person, but more related to the sustainability context, my real context. I learned a lot from a professor of Michigan State University, Tim Brozowski. In 2008 I had the opportunity to meet him and a couple of days later, in 2010, to work alongside him on the LEED project in Romans School is the first platinum certified school outside of the US. From Tim, I learned that design work is always collective and not individual, and sharing experiences makes better work results. This teaching is what I would like to share in a design company.

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Charlie: The mentors are so important that I know you've done some of that studying with Michigan State partnership. Let's talk about the career. Ten years ago, congratulations, you started your own studio and really focused on sustainability. What has that journey been like and about your company?

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Paola: I'm very happy about my professional life. I'm very happy that my intuition, born in 2010, I was able to build an entity lMacro Design Studio. I started for myself, more than ten years ago, and now we have a team of nine professional people, 8 of which are women, and this year we celebrate the

tenth anniversary. I'm very happy about this and it brings me gratification, being able to positively influence people through our articles, which you can read on our website. The training and knowledge that I provide, especially the example I set day after day among the people I am in touch with, especially my family and friends.

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Charlie: I know you've built-up quite a company and really empower women in sustainability in your company. Ten years is an incredible feat. Let's talk about some of the credentials you have. Obviously, you have a lot of LEED credentials after your name. But then this healthy building movement happens and WELL performance testing here, coming out of the pandemic. How have you made that jump from not just green buildings but healthy buildings? Are you starting to do more of that work too?

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Paola: Very interested in this question, we have a very important movement about green building, but as building it's important too. Maybe it completes this part of sustainability that only the energy part doesn't have. After the pandemic, COVID-19. I think wellness is very important because you have a focus on the people. It's very interesting because I had a performance testing agent and then visited the Differ building in Europe to perform the testing and found people very happy to pursue this kind of certification because it's like part of the personal way to do business.

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Charlie: You also do some living building work. It's fascinating as a small but growing sustainability company you want, doing LEED work and wellness WELL work, but sometimes you even get to work on programs like living building. What do you think of that program, living buildings and what kind of work do you do there?

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Paola: Yeah, I think the internacia individualist, a very good job from many years because more than 10-11 years pushing about the positive impact in the construction and in the building in general. My hope is this is the moment for this kind of living building, because this is the way we will finally have a construction building with a positive environmental impact. Today there is only one master regeneration with a positive impact. everything is palliative in this at this moment. It's very important not only for the sustainable development goal for the United States nation, but for the carbonization, preservation of animal spaces and biodiversity. It's altogether to become in one way and then this way, living building. Very sure that our new but very important way is this: we have a building not not so good but with positive impact, environmental impact.

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Charlie: I agree. Programs like LEED and WELL help us get a certain achievement and this is the right way to do it. But we really need to continue moving towards net zero and eventually right. That's a positive and regenerative design and I think that's what we're talking about her. A little bit about these different programs. What's possible? Tell us about today. What keeps you busy today is: do you do a lot of business development? Do you get to work on projects? Do you travel? What keeps you busy today?

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Paola: Maybe to organize the team, the stately company, because at the moment I'm the owner and organize the commercial part, the administration part and do the direction about the company. At the same time maybe I want to grow up, but I wish for the people that work with me, grow up and then become more independent, more autonomy. My day is very, very full. I think more about the organization.

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Charlie: It's amazing and the team sounds like you have an incredible team there of sustainability consultants. Let's talk about what's next. You've been doing green buildings for a long time. I've been doing green buildings for a long time, but what's next? What do you think we need to be reading up on now? I know you mentioned the UN's stand element goals. I know we see decarbonization, all-electric buildings and smart buildings, and there so much. But think of one or two things. What do you think next in this green building movement?

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Paola: I think the next step is the regenerative approach. I hope this kind of regenerative approach is more popular because it's not popular today. Mainstream programs like LEED and WELL are very popular, but the regenerative approach is more difficult and not so popular. For me this is a very important goal. My wish is to create a way in order to incorporate the approach more important. And this goal it's really complicated but at the same time exciting

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Charlie: There's still work to do with our operations, energy, and efficiency in our buildings, but then the embodied carbon and regenerative design. There's a whole other set of teaching. I think you know I've been doing my green building projects a certain way here in the US and we want to be better than energy code and better than our plumbing code. How do we do a little better, what should be doing and it's a tough conversation, but it's happening. I see it happen, I see you doing that work and I think it's amazing. It's good to know you a little bit more. What's your specialty or what are you really good at?

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Paola: It's a very difficult question for me because there is a very normal person. I think maybe servants and the desire to follow my passions, facing each day with the will to do and prepare for the new challenges. I want to go

directly on my way so that I compare myself with my team and I learn from discussion and exchanges between them. I try to share choices and vision as much as possible. I spend a lot of time meeting with my team to change things together. I let myself be carried away by my curiosity. I'm not afraid to try and I believe that the enthusiasm of doing a job I like is my winning card, curiosity and perseverance.

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Charlie: I love it and it sounds like that's what you also show your team. Any good habits, any routines or rituals that help you stay on point?

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Paola: No, really I don't only like to get up early in the morning and provide from the day. This is really my only retain.

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Charlie: Amazing! Let's talk next a little bit about a bucket list. I'm a big fan of bucket lists. I know not everybody is, is there a place you'd still like to travel? Is there an adventure you want to go on? Maybe you want to write a book? What are one or two things on your bucket list?

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Paola: There is a big week which is to reduce the time of work and increase the time I spend with my family and traveling a change. Less work and more time. Spend free time, but quality, free time, political time and like traveling and travel anywhere in particular, you want to go. Obviously, coming out of the pandemic, it's getting better to travel again. Is there a place, a country, a city you want to go to? Not in particular, because I like the way, not only the city but the way to arrive in the city. I like to visit the city, so I like to visit nature too. I'm attracted to the cities, big or small cities, and I don't know. Maybe one day I want to visit and it's amazing.

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Charlie: Thank you for sharing just a couple of more questions here. This is fantastic. We're getting to learn more about you and your region and your company, you know. But I do want to kindly ask a little bit about Europe and green buildings. And there's programs like BREAM and LEED . And well, there's so many options. So if you're working on a project with a client, do you present all the options or do you try to say hey, this is the one we should do? How does that conversation go?

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Paola: I prefer to ask the client what he wants for his bill for his building and then I try to indicate the best solution for him. I think this is a good way because I understand very well in general the client and follow in the correct way. Maybe the way no one is not, for example. It's important to ask the wishes of the client and then to respond with. Now we have 20 different certifications but for you in this case the best solution is this or this: the prices, the timing, the commitment that the client and this is my man. It's good to have options. We know there's a business case for sustainability. We want to get places, we want to get seals. We ultimately want to get to regenerative design.

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Charlie: Last two questions here. I've really enjoyed our conversation. Two questions: Is there any career advice you wish you'd have known a little earlier.

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Paola: I think that we look a wonderful job and if you work and are a good achiever the result will come. The result will come. Their advice is simple, be prepared and always updated, because in our job every day you need to study, you need to prepare for a new challenge and share as much as possible. The idea of with and not for others but with others because the work can be changed altogether with simple action back together. It's very important. Work together and then this is really something that I like,

because I have a lot of changes with different people in different company, is not along in the world, have a connection with other people, other company

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Charlie: Collaborate and connect, don't wait on that early in your career. It's so important to have a sense of community here within this green building movement. Let's say: someone's listening to the podcast, they're listening to your story and they're getting really inspired and they're going to jump into the green building movement. Any words of encouragement to anyone that's just now getting started on three buildings.

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Paola: I move for my passions. It's very important that you are really yourself. You don't have to be different, so something like transparency, something like you appear like you are. It's very difficult to answer this question. She didn't agree. Even though we've been doing this a while. You know here you are doing this work. Europe and Northern Italy and there's still plenty of work right. It's not like all of the sudden, it's we're done.

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Charlie: There's still so much green building work to do and you know you continue to do that where you are. To anyone listening. I hope you've enjoyed listening to Paola and her story. Connect on LinkedIn and let her know what you thought of the interview. She's up in Northern Italy. Right, kind of between Milan and Venice but kind of in the mountains there, so runs over in that region. Make sure you reach out because it is a community here and that's what we do on the Green Building Matters Podcast we like to connect with. That being said, I think you and I will be seeing each other soon, Greenbuild Europe. It's called GBC Europe's Circle Event in Munich, Germany. I can't wait and thank you for everything you do I've enjoyed today.

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Charlie: Thank you to our loyal listeners. We actually are celebrating over one year here on the Green Building Matters Podcast and the entire team were stoked and so glad you continue to listen every Wednesday morning to a new interview with Green Building professional here in this industry or just some pro tips that we want to make sure that you are getting straight from us straight to you.

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Charlie: Thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building Matters Podcast at GBES.com. Our mission is to advance the Green Building movement through vesting class education and encouragement. Remember, you can go to [GBES.com/podcast](https://www.gbcs.com/podcast) for any notes and links that we mentioned in today's episode and you can actually see. The other episodes that have already been recorded are amazing. Tell your friends about this podcast, tell your colonies and, if you've really enjoyed it, leave a positive review. Thank you so much, see you on Next week's episode.