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GRACE LA: From Harvard University's Graduate School of Design, this is *Talking Practice*, a series asking renowned designers to provide an inside glimpse into what they do, why and how they do it, exposing the ways in which their design imagination is articulated through practice. I'm Grace La, Professor of Architecture and Chair of the Practice Platform. Thank you for listening.

We are delighted to have with us today German architect Anna Heringer, known internationally for her rammed earth and bamboo projects. For her humanitarian architecture, Anna holds the honorary UNESCO chair of earthen architecture, building cultures and sustainable development. She currently has projects in Asia, Africa, and Europe. She is also the recipient of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture for her work in Bangladesh, and is exhibiting at the 2018 Venice Biennale. Anna is teaching a studio at the GSD this semester entitled Architecture as a Tool to Improve Lives. Welcome, Anna.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** Thank you.

GRACE LA: I thought we could start by asking where your interest in mud as this raw material, how did it come into being?

**ANNA
HERINGER:** I was a development learner when I was 19 years old. I went to Bangladesh to just have an idea of how people in a different part of the world are solving their daily challenges. And I experienced the mud architecture firsthand. I mean, I was living in a mud village, with the poor. And I just loved walking through this very narrow alleys. And the softness and warmth of this material really caught me.

GRACE LA: Did you start then very directly working with the community or how did it begin?

**ANNA
HERINGER:** So I was just accompanying the development worker from that NGO. It was an NGO just run by Bangladeshi. It's called Dipshikha. So I was just really learning what development work is about. And I got really passionate about, especially rural development. But I also had this other passion for designing, for architecture. And I didn't how to combine these two passions that was always my mind.

But then I got back from Bangladesh and I started studying architecture in Austria, in Linz. And throughout these years of studying, I got really frustrated because I thought I would never, ever be able to combine this passion for really making a change and the passion for designing. And I was lucky, towards the end of my studies, there was an announcement that there would be a workshop for earthen architecture with Martin Rauch, who is right now also a partner for many projects that I'm doing.

And then I got my hands in the material and really understood how it works in a tectonic way. And it was like for me, the missing link. I felt very strongly at that moment that this material really has something to do with my past, with what I am supposed to be doing in this world.

GRACE LA: And it seems that obviously this raw material, it is ubiquitous. We find it everywhere. So it seems to align so perfectly with your interests in humanitarian issues, in sustainability, and in many ways you can tell that it really embodies your values. So when you look at the material, though, it seems that one of its essential qualities is that it needs to work in relationship to something that's very light. So in a way, I look at the work and I think, aha, these are material that's very heavy and it needs its light counterpart in the bamboo. Could you tell me a little bit about the bamboo?

ANNA HERINGER: Yeah, the bamboo is fascinating. What you said, it's bringing the lightness in and the structure, the rhythm. So I love playing music as well. So for me, architecture is very connected to music and it's the rhythm for me, the bamboo. And what is also important for me are the textiles, the colors. That is almost in every project that comes as well. That brings another sensitiveness and poetry to this kind of material composition. So mud is good for pressure, but not for tension. And of course, the bamboo is good for tension. So this is the perfect counterpart or partner for that as could be timber in Europe, for example or any other parts.

GRACE LA: So you are confirming in a way what we see as the duet between these very two quite different materials. And I believe that they need each other to create this sort of sensuality that I think is so present in your work and is so beautiful.

ANNA HERINGER: Thank you.

GRACE LA: It's in many ways very primal. So who is helping you with the bamboo side of things? Maybe you could describe the collaboration and how it works.

ANNA HERINGER: I was a scout when I was little, and young, and we built a lot with raw timber logs that are also round, and we did a lot of lashing techniques and built towers and gates and whatever, also pretty high and large structures already. So I had trust in lashing techniques. And that was important because the literature that I found on bamboo at that time was more-- you had this kind of very technical and bold joints that would never have been replicable by the people there. And the lashing techniques they have, and we just took it and improved it a bit.

And I had my cousin especially involved in that, who is also a scout and a carpenter and a basket weaver, and this combination was just perfect because it's all about this knots and lashing. So he really understood the material perfectly. And then it got tested by engineers, by Christophe Tigaden. And, and then it was further developed, but that came really well together.

GRACE LA: So you brought together, then, your cousin and this expertise in rammed earth and these two essential components. So how many people are on the team now?

ANNA HERINGER: My team is pretty small. We are right now four in the office, but we are always collaborating. We have a wonderful contractor in Bangladesh, who doesn't speak English, but it works with Bengali. And he's running now the site alone, which is really exciting for me that we don't have to be there on the site and we just see how far we get in that way. And of course, the workers, they are trained in these techniques and we know when we design that, to really take into consideration what they are able to do also without us.

And then I'm collaborating a lot with Martin Rauch, who is this rammed earth expert, so in different projects like in Spain or in Austria. And keep my core team really small and agile so that we can really be very flexible and fast. And then we just really try to get the partners in so that we can scale up then.

GRACE LA: So in those early days when you had to be on site more, I'm assuming, especially for the early projects in Bangladesh, describe maybe how you did that? How long was your involvement and your residency in those early conditions?

**ANNA
HERINGER:** In the beginning, I was there for four months, for six months, always on site, and I loved it. I mean, that was wonderful. We really became a family there. And of course, now, since I'm a mother, I can't be away for that long time anymore. I mean, I would love to be there with the people. But it's also letting go a bit and gives more responsibility to the local team of craftsmen. And I think it's important for them also to grow. So it's natural. And I think one day I probably will be more free again.

I will be back on the sites because this is really what I enjoy a lot. It's like having my hands in the mud, in the dirt, and not just being behind the screen or just doing the model, is really seeing the meaning of architecture and also how important the process is. It just gives a lot of happiness. It's wonderful to see that you really can make a change with the right process and the right building techniques and of course, the right architecture.

GRACE LA: I think that's very evident. When you see the work, you can tell that the community takes a great deal of pride in the buildings that have been created. So if you are now a bit more distant from the process because you're not there on site, what do the construction drawing sets look like? How do they differ?

Typically, architects will produce very thick drawing sets to describe every detail. Of course, these are sometimes better, sometimes worse, depending on the time and the available support to do a kind of project. So for you, what does it look like, these construction drawing sets? How are you producing them?

**ANNA
HERINGER:** My last project there had almost no drawings because I was there. I had sketches only with the pen, just hand drawings, and I was trying to be ahead, like day ahead. So right after work on the site, I would sit down and sketch for the next day. And a lot of details just developed by mockups, one by one, mockups on the site, or really drawing in the mud in the ground. And now, of course, we have to do much more drawings, but it's also a lot of sketches. I just was in Bangladesh, and so we did a lot of sketches there and explained things. And that's the thing we need to draw more.

But on the other hand, we're taking a lot of details that we had used for other projects so that we are sure that they understand how to do it. And we don't have to bring that in again.

GRACE LA: So that relies on certain kinds of repetition of knowledge and iterations and refinement.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** we also bring in always a new kind of elements to enhance the innovation and the development.

GRACE LA: That's very interesting. So that now you can layer on new techniques and new thinking about the form.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** Yes, that's true. So before I was really more of box like and straight walls and so on. And with the mud you can also build in very curved ways because it's such a plastic material. So I'm going more in the architecture refinement. And especially this project now is a center for people with disabilities. And it's a little bit dancing. The walls are dancing. And we have this saying in Germany, if something is special, it's dancing out of the raw, out of the line.

So we want to celebrate that being special is something beautiful. Being not the typical box is something good, and it's something really worth showing and finding the beauty in it, because this is what currently really is a bad situation in Bangladesh, that people with disabilities are being hide away from the society. And it's just not a topic, although there are really a lot of cases there. So to bring the awareness that everyone and being special is something beautiful, so I hope that this message is kind of coming through the architecture.

GRACE LA: Yes, you bring up this notion of the elasticity or the plastic nature of the actual material itself. And this is so interesting because it feels to me like the traction that you were able to get on the school project in Bangladesh relied on the precision of corners and there's a sort of beauty to this idea that this really very amorphous, blobby material that you think of when you envision mud or earth in general, could become so crisp.

And I think that surprise is what makes that project-- for me, as I look at it, I think that that's the moment of delight, that the material can really take on a very new quality so that it wouldn't even be necessary ultimately to make the form or the shape idiosyncratic, because just the nature of it working, in contrast, is actually shocking.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** Yeah, that's an interesting point. Yes, I think in the beginning, it was very important to show you can make straight edges and straight walls. And that was a total surprise to the workers as well, because there were-- I mean, they see it as dirt. They just pile it up somehow, but that you give the care to this material really try to do it in the most refined way. And through this elevating the material was something really new and was needed to see the value of mud not just as dirt, but as just an equal material to any other material as brick or concrete.

So that was a very important step. But now they love the design. They saw the foundation. They were freaking out. They say, oh wow, this is exciting. This is something new. So it's when you have only one or two materials in your hands that you can work with, then you really have to focus on the quality and the correct character of this material.

So the more you work with it, the more you get deeper and see the full range of possibilities, and that makes it super interesting for me to work with. It's not like you come to the limits of something in a material and then you change the material. You just take the new one, but then you never get deep, what you can really create out of the characteristics.

So it's getting to the material better and better with every project that I'm doing. And that's fascinating, and really to create the architectural language out of it, and also prove that this material can actually do a lot of things. This is what I'm really also fighting for because the image of modern earth architecture is very bad. So to prove that you have, of course, certain limitations, but you also have a huge palette of resources, of patterns and shapes that you can use with it, that's fascinating for me.

GRACE LA: So what are the limits of mud then? You are proving through the body of your work and the interest in form, the duality that you're working with in terms of these heavy and light materials. It has quite infinite capacity, but is there a limit to it? Obviously, there's some structural considerations. You mentioned it earlier, obviously, it's good in compression but not in tension. So where are its limits? Where do you intuit the limits are?

**ANNA
HERINGER:** Mud is vulnerable towards water and towards of course, then the climate. And for me, this parameters that mud is different in every place in the world. So you can have-- for example, I was used to rammed earth. And I came to Bangladesh. I didn't see any stones. I couldn't find stones. So I had to change the technique, which has done, again, a certain character in its design and appearance. And then this is a given parameter.

And then there's another parameter, which is the local climate towards its modest vulnerable. So if I'm taking these vulnerability series and embrace it and not try change it through chemical aggregates or whatever, I'm creating parameters that makes the project really unique in a way, tailored to that specific spot in the world. And for me, fascinating. It's not a project that I could place from China to Bangladesh or to Zimbabwe or whatever.

So it's something that really emerges out of the local conditions, the local mud, the local climate, and that gives some authenticity that is really powerful. And I think that is also needed because our approach has become more and more random kind of thing. We have our style. We do the same thing in Dubai as we do in London. And this is becoming, I think, a really problem in terms of cultural identity, because cultural identity was working with local materials and respecting the local climate and understanding how the material reacts to that climate.

GRACE LA: Well, I think you're striking at the very core of why your work is so fascinating at a time when architecture as a discipline faces-- it faces essentially the challenges of globalization and the flattening effect of architecture displaced from its site, displaced from cultural conditions and/or even the politics of space. So I think that the work that you are producing, in part because it's growing from the very nature of the place and literally physically growing from the place, is so unique. It's a kind of antidote to thinking about how architecture is displaced.

And of course, architects are also practicing all over the world. So in some ways that has seen huge benefits to the discipline, but also qualities of the flattening, the two dimensionality of thinking of architecture in other places. So I think that that's fascinating. As you approach new projects, how are you managing the financing of these projects? Who is funding the support of this kind of work?

ANNA HERINGER: In the beginning, it was really difficult. I was absolutely not known at all. I was just coming out of University, basically. But I had a good network of friends, and especially we have one tradition in Germany around the 6th of December, we have the Carol Singers Campaign. So I did that with my friends and we collected building budget. A big part of it by singing door to door. So luckily, I don't have to do that anymore. But it was difficult.

And of course, I had also NGOs joining me in Shanti Partnership Bangladesh. But it was very difficult. And it still is not easy, but it's better because people trust me. They know funds are in good hands. And also companies are coming in to fund me. And yeah, that is becoming easier. But still, it's a hassle. I mean, with every project you have a weight on your shoulders, of course. But organizing a budget is time consuming. But I decided not to do competitions, almost not. I did two competitions in my life so far, and I rather invest this time into really starting projects from the very beginning and also including raising funds.

And I would say that this is probably the same kind of time input that you give, because I mean, you're not winning every competition. So this time that is lost there, you could actually also create your own projects in a way.

GRACE LA: So that's an interesting expansion of the role that architects must play, the creation of your own projects by investing very deliberately in methods of fundraising, and of course, all the techniques that must come and expertise that must be integrated to actually realize the project, in traditional terms, what architects produce. But now you're also talking about the before life and the after life of the project. Who is taking care of the projects after you were gone?

ANNA
HERINGER: Yeah, that also has to be organized. And the last project with the Center for People with Disabilities, that was really nice. They saw the METI School in the papers and got interested and thought that it makes sense to build like in this climate. So they contacted me. Then someone was visiting the project, was really excited about it, also not just about the architecture, but about the NGO and the work of the NGO of Dipshikha. So then they, Dipshikha, and the donors got into contact. And they started to think of how they could help each other for starting a new project for people with disabilities.

And then that was coming towards the end. And you know, oh, we need a new building, so why don't we do it in modern bamboo? And so this came the other way around. And the nice thing is now that not only the building is sponsored, but as well the program is sponsored. So that always has to be, of course, solved as well, how this is going to work out.

GRACE LA: So after the building is completed and let's say you're not working very directly afterwards, is it the NGO that's often managing some of the aftercare and the maintenance of the projects and maintaining the life of the building?

ANNA
HERINGER: Yes, that works really well. So it's the NGO who is there who is really taking nicely care. It's the students in the school or in the other school that are really taking care of it. And that works wonderful. I'm really impressed how well they take care of the buildings.

GRACE LA: What do you see are the challenges then in terms of replicating this process for other areas? Where do you see obstacles or potential problems?

ANNA
HERINGER: The problem is that as architects, engineers, we not trained with this material. So there is a lot of fear, no one knows how to calculate it. It's not rocket science. I mean can do blocks tests and test them in compression and it would easily work out. But you need an architect engineer for starting a construction building normally. So if there's a lack of experts, so this is a huge hindrance or this is a huge obstacle to implement more projects like this.

And then, of course, also need craftsmen. In Bangladesh, there are still a lot of people building in muds, so this is not such a big problem. And also the lashing techniques have been copied a lot. So this would work out. But I think it's this fear of being vulnerable. This image is probably the most difficult part, that mud is dirty, is poor. That is the biggest obstacle.

So to convince people that this is an equal material to any other material, plus it has this benefit that it's really healthy. It can really deal with this high humidity that is also in this kind of climate zones, and it is very stable if you just follow some basic rules like good foundation, good roof, and it can be repaired easily.

And of course, it's the only material that you can take from the ground and give it back to nature without any scars. And you can grow your own garden on it when you give it back. Plus it can be recycled six times and you won't lose the quality of the material. That's fascinating to me. But still, the image is a huge problem. So I think the only thing that can change the image is really good design examples, really good architecture that prove that this is a wonderful material.

GRACE LA: Are there other materials that you imagine you might think about in the future that capture your imagination and that you dream about other than mud?

ANNA
HERINGER: No, I really love that material. For me, it's much more than the material. And I've seen that also, when we did the structure a couple of years ago in front of the GSD, it looked as concrete because clay in Boston is gray, but still people were passing by and touching the wall. And it's not something you would normally do walking around a city and touching the walls. And this is just not what's normally happening. So I really believe there's something that touches our very archaic part in our brain body, I don't know, but it's something-- I mean, humankind grew up with this material.

And there are so many poems, so many myths. And also in the religious story, origin often comes out of the earth. There's something very unique about this material. And there is still so much to explore about it. And I'm loyal to that. I'm still fascinated. It doesn't stop in any way. And I feel the more I'm stressed and I'm having my hands in the mud, I feel that it really grounds me. It feels really good.

GRACE LA: Well, you can really feel that joy and passion for it. I loved the clip in your Ted Talk, in which you showed some people actually petting the wall as they were walking by. And I thought that was really fascinating thing because of course, that project was sited in front of the GSD, and the GSD is a monolith of concrete. Nobody pets the walls.

ANNA
HERINGER: Yes, that's true.

GRACE LA: The exteriors. So I thought that was really very interesting statement about the magnetic quality of this material, and also because it was cast in such a way that it was precise. So this material that, again, is so amorphous, being so crisp and tactile that people wanted to experiment with it and touch it, I did think that was a very interesting, fascinating moment in your video.

ANNA
HERINGER: Yeah, I love that video. It's always a big laughter when I show that in my talks.

GRACE LA: Yeah.

ANNA
HERINGER: No, but it's true. With this preciseness of the material that is needed so that it's not looking that clumsy and that poor anymore, that you can really be precise in the shapes that is absolutely needed to work with this preciseness.

GRACE LA: For students and for practitioners who wish to think about architecture in the way that you are practicing, what is the path that they might take?

ANNA
HERINGER: I think it's important to also give an importance to manual work and not just to-- I think when I see our architecture that is popping up all around the world, I have the feeling it's born too much from an intellectual point of view. But I think you also need the emotional part. You need the manual, the haptic part as well. And I think-- I'm designing full body. It's like I'm designing with my hands in a very intuitive way with large clay models. So it's kind of 3D sketching on the clay.

And then I have the feeling it's with both hemispheres of the brain. It's not just about arguing about thinking. It also has to come out more intuitive approach. And that also can be trained in a way that you really learn to trust your gut feelings. You always feel when something is right. And to follow that. And for that it needs a certain speed in design, and that you get into flow. And that comes easy when you also use your hands in the design process. And I think it's a process we call clay storming. I developed at ETH Zurich together with Martin Rauch. And it's really-- for me, I must say, the projects that I'm doing, I'm almost all designing it in that way, and that goes really fast.

And somehow it brings in this kind of surprising elements you would not think about it when you really concentrate on your intellect and think about it. There are some elements coming in that are really floating out of my hands somehow in the material. Because it's so fast, you can cut things, you can reshape it so easily. You can add again. So it's not that you're sitting on a board on a stereo cut or whatever. You have to think already before what you want to cut. So this is a different process. And that helps a lot for designing.

Plus, I think we really need an understanding of craftsmanship again, that I really strongly believe. We need to the materials we design with again. And that I see a lot with the students. They design more in computer programs than out of material understandings, and that makes projects in economic in a way, because, of course, can force almost every shape in concrete and steel.

But you need a lot of steel to have this overhangs and the shapes and whatever. And this is not good for the climate, definitely not. So to understand the material and where the limits of a material are is, of course, also helping in an economic way and of course, also in ecological way. So this kind of understanding I think needs to be trained more. And this practical part has to come in the curriculum again.

GRACE LA:

So that combines both these artistic and craft process, intuitive process with something that I think you're doing so it almost seems very intuitive as well, but to create the meta structure to support this from the logistical and financial and organizational capacities. And so I think that is-- because it seems to me that there are a lot of architects and artists who are practicing in the way that you might be practicing, but because of the other types of skill sets that you need to bring to bear on the project, they might only remain at the scale of something very small, maybe not even public in terms of its public projects.

So it does seem to me that it's this intimate process that you're referring to in addition to having some ability to pull the kite strings together of many different organizations and funding sources, questions of labor that you're doing so uniquely, and that maybe it's that combination, I think, that is so interesting, because again, I feel like in the world today, we do have some of these practitioners who are practicing in a certain way, but it doesn't have any scalable potential.

**ANNA
HERINGER:**

Yeah, I think scaling up is extremely necessary, and we're really working on that. Also, I'm just writing a book on upscaling earthen architecture with Martin Rauch and Lindsay Blair Howe. So it's really important because with this climate change reality that we're facing right now, we need to upscale. And this is something we really need to train also our students, that they are not, just ending up as working bees in architectural firms, but that they are also able to implement their own visions.

There are so many students now that really want to do meaningful projects, also community-driven projects and not just ending up in a developer's office. And I think that's very important that we teach this kind of techniques, how to raise funds, how to manage these kind of also interdisciplinary teams and so on that they really are able to implement their own projects and visions.

And for me, an important strategy in the beginning was that, I said, OK, one third is my hard job, one third is my bread job, and the other third is simplifying my own life. So I was lucky that my bread shop was always teaching so that I love to do as well. But it doesn't matter. I mean, you can also be working as a waitress, whatever job, but something that enables you to do your hard job and you're not have to give up on your ideas and philosophies and your vision, I think that's very important, that you have really a good amount of time in your hand that you can work on following your path.

So for me, still now is architecture is, of course-- I'm really lucky. I don't have to compromise in my philosophy and working philosophy in any of the projects. They are all following my dreams and my vision. But what enables that is also teaching. So this is still my bread job. And I'm still simplifying my life not only to save money, but-- for example with clothing. I just stopped going to regular clothes stores because I don't like the unfairness that is behind these kind of textiles. So I learned tailoring myself and partly sewing my own clothes.

I still like to go to second hand shops because I don't feel guilty. In Bangladesh, I witnessed the situations of the garment workers. So I just can't buy these things anymore. And of course, that also led to a new project that I'm doing with the tailor in my hometown and tailoring women in that village in Bangladesh, where also the projects are, the architectural projects. We also started a project called TD Textile that is right now exhibited at the Venice Biennale, where we enable women to stay in the networks in the villages where they have comparatively lots of freedom.

I mean, they have the social network. They can build their own houses with their hands, with the local resources. Children can romp around in the village and have a fantastic playground in the places there. So to keep the quality of life, we designed textiles that are being able to be produced in a decentralized way, so without electricity, with a lot of hand stitching, and that are also unique so that they can't be replaced by technologies. So in a way, this kind of simplifying my life also leads to surprisingly new paths in my work as well. And I think it's a good strategy. At least for me. It worked out well.

GRACE LA: Well, I think that's such a breath of fresh air here, especially on the East Coast. Everybody is moving very quickly and we're always working towards this next set of goals. So the life is very fast paced and sometimes one doesn't have the ability to stop and think, I think, more critically about how one engages in the world. Anna, your studio at the GSD has a certain purpose and direction. Tell us what you're hoping to achieve with the students this semester.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** On the one hand, I think it's important to really understand what architecture can do as a tool to improve lives, how powerful architecture can be. And I think that when you're really in a situation like a refugee camp, where it's such a basic need to have protection, I think then you also understand the power of it.

And also, where there is such a lack of material choices and economic power, you really also understand the meaning and the power of local materials. It forces you really to focus on the real essence of architecture. And I think for me, Bangladesh was really always the biggest learning experience because I was free of all the ego and all this kind of trying to be special kind of thing.

So you really have to focus on absolutely elementary notion of architecture. And on the same time, of course, we're trying to give ideas to really improve the lives there for the people in the camp. And I think with our studio trip there, we also had Martin Rauch with us. So we did some improvements and some mockups, how really structures can be improved, the bamboo structures and the plastic tarp structures with the mud. And I think that will have an impact because that's what people say. I mean, if it's proven right in the life, then it of course, will spread this project. I'm really very positive that this will have an impact.

GRACE LA: In the face of challenges, what is the role of doubt in your practice? You had described scenarios in which you've had certain kinds of challenges. Tell me a little bit more about this.

ANNA HERINGER: When you're a young student have a lot of doubts in your own capacities, how to overcome this doubt. For me, it was like I got a B grade for the METI school design, which was my diploma thesis. And then you think, oh my God, I never built something in am I worth. Is this project worth being implemented?

Especially as a woman, I think this is something, you never feel ready. You feel first you have to learn a lot of stuff before you-- your worth that the project is being realized. But I think that's something you need to have trust in yourself. And this is really what I would like to tell the students that no matter even if your teachers are telling you, it's probably not worth it, it's something you have to believe in yourself.

I mean, everyone has a calling, everyone has a purpose in life and then really trust it and go for it and somehow things are developing in a way that-- they are opening doors all the time. So if you're on the right path, then doors are being opened. This is really fascinating experience for me. Of course, it comes also with pressure and of course with doubts and with tears, but you always get up again. And it's absolutely worthwhile.

GRACE LA: That is a very interesting subject onto itself. The question of doubt, combined with persistence combined with emotional fortitude to reflect on what you are doing and to have such deeply held belief that it can withstand the pressures of architecture, the challenges that one would face in any given project, and to see it through really does require a kind of exertion that is beyond let's say, a 9:00 to 5:00 approach to the world.

So I think this is something-- if we're lucky to find it within ourselves, it's a really remarkable moment because it can fuel you beyond the trials and tribulations of life, actually. So I think this is, in a way, it's a whole other subject that we really don't talk too much about. But if one can find that the relationship between core value, persistence and actually some healthy doubt, one has to have the doubt to be critical.

ANNA HERINGER: Absolutely. That is needed. But at the same time, it's also- when you that it's not just about you, but it has a purpose for many more, then you also feel the power for that. So I had to fight for myself. I'm not good in fighting for myself, but I know if I draw back with my doubts now, then there won't be a school.

So I just know that I have to go over my comfort zone, and I have to go over my doubts, because I know that a lot of things kind of depend on my decisions. And that gives me also to see the meaning and the purpose that gives also the energy that you need. So I believe with every challenge you get, you also get the energy to go over it.

GRACE LA: It's great advice, Ana. It's a remarkable opportunity to have you with us here at the GSD to think about the way in which you're combining a very deeply held set of philosophical values with the work that you are creating, and we're just delighted that you can be a part of our community and share this thinking with our students and with our faculty and with Harvard at large. Thank you so much for being with us. It's been a great morning to be inspired by what you do.

**ANNA
HERINGER:** I really enjoyed being here. Thank you.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

GRACE LA: I'm Grace La, and you've been listening to *Talking Practice* from the practice platform of Harvard University's Graduate School of Design. Today's episode was produced by Ronnie Saroff and edited by Maggie Janik. Platform research and support was provided by Jihyun Ro and sound engineering by Jeffrey Valade of Harvard University's Media Production Center.

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