



POLITECNICO  
DI TORINO

# Honors thesis

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COURSE OF ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION CITY

*Abstract*

**Communicating architecture: not only vision**  
**Visit of Valentino Castle for visually impaired people**

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*Is it possible to have a perception of things or places even though you cannot see them?  
Is visual impairment a limit in understanding the space around us?*

*Barriers* do not imply only high gaps and narrow passages, but also barely legible or indistinguishable information. These ones are known as *perceptive barriers*.

The main focus of this study is connected to the ability of visually impaired people in understanding architecture through senses. The study aims to investigate and test the fruition of spaces through specific experiences that do not include the use of the eyes.

As a matter of fact, this work was developed starting from the experience “Drawings for hands. The Valentino Castle in relief”, organized by the Polytechnic University of Turin together with Tactile Vision Onlus and Unione Italiana dei Ciechi e degli Ipovedenti. Haptic and tactile perception were the nodal point of this workshop.

The first section of the thesis is characterized by a theoretical part, where needs and answers of visually impaired people are analyzed, and where possible solutions are hypothesized. In fact, the 7 rudiments of the *Universal Design* represent the solution to unreachable information.

The second section of the thesis focuses on the implementation in the cultural context. A practical approach leads to create a collection of case studies highlighting analogies and differences.

The last part of my study consists in designing the visit of Valentino Castle for the considered user.

*So it consists in a tour dedicated to blind people?*

No, this project is the starting point for the development of a more inclusive visit.

According to that, the study suggests some helpful instruments in order to communicate the architecture through senses, not including the visual one. This method proves that a user-friendly design brings more effective results for everyone.

The decision of working on Valentino Castle includes an investigation about the role of museum guide, which led to the composition of the final project *The guide for the Guide*.

As a matter of fact, the project *The guide for The Guide*, consists of an educational support for the museum Guide in order to facilitate a better visit for all the users. The guide shows the relationship between Guide, Users and the Castle and it is a design model adaptable on different case studies.

*Forget the DO NOT TOUCH*

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Figure 01. This picture shows the relationship between the subject of *The guide for The Guide*

# *Instructions*

WHO

The Guide



p. 1

FOR

The User



p. 3

WHAT

The Castle



p. 5

HOW

Facilitations



p. 7

Figure 02. Index page of *The guide for The Guide*

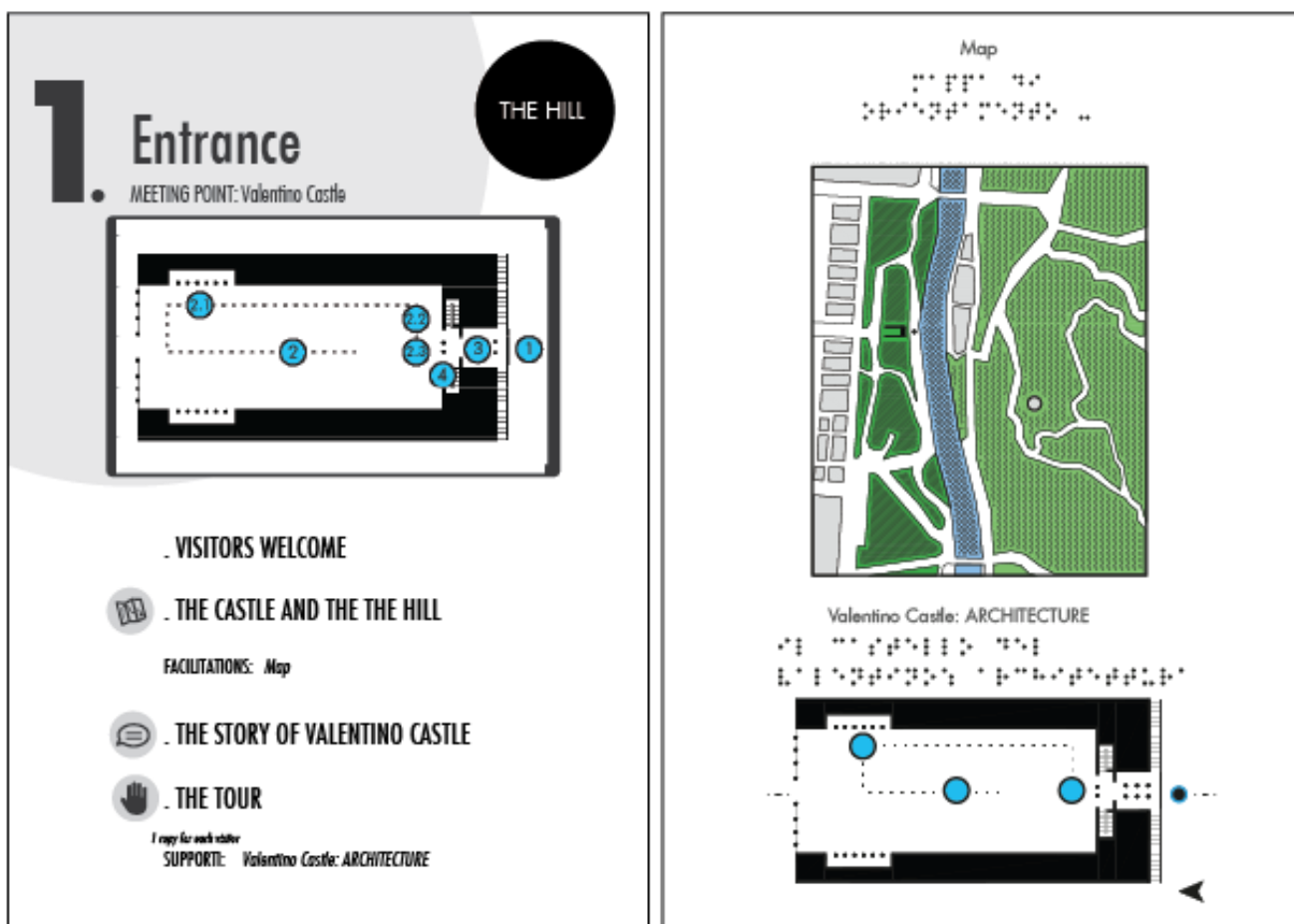


Figure 03. Example page of *The guide for The Guide*

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