

CV



Nicola lives and works on the unceded homelands of the Lenape people.

M.Arch, B.Arch
Architect (Architects Registration Board of Victoria | 800199)
Co-Founder of Sens
Principal at Baci Baci
Adjunct Assistant Professor at The Cooper Union
NEW INC Member
SVA Design Research, Writing, and Criticism Residency Alum

Nicola (she/her) is an architect, educator, and researcher. She has worked in New York, Melbourne, and Tokyo, with a particular focus on public libraries, cultural institutions, and public organizations. In addition to her role as an Adjunct Assistant Professor at The Cooper Union's Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture, she works through her NYC-based design studio, Baci Baci, and her architecture and research practice, Sens. These two practices ebb and flow into each other, feeding Sens' research and joint expertise into U.S.-based projects.

Originally from Melbourne, Australia, she practiced architecture at Jackson Clements Burrows Architects, Lovell Burton, and Neometro and has taught extensively in the undergraduate and graduate courses at RMIT University and The University of Melbourne.

Prior to founding Baci Baci, Nicola was the Lead Interior Architect at Margaret Sullivan Studio (MSS), working predominantly with public libraries across the US; Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Hartford Public Library, and Anne Arundel County Libraries to name a few, as well as other public organizations; Theatre for a New Audience, Student Leadership Network and the Center for Fiction.

Baci Baci is a New York-based building and interior design studio working with clients driven by community and resourcefulness. Currently this includes projects in public, commercial, residential, and cultural sectors. Baci Baci designs and delivers thoughtful spaces for people and the public.

Baci Baci and Sens are committed to design that supports care, material preservation, and long-term ecological responsibility. Together, these two practices ebb and flow into each other, feeding Sens' research and joint expertise into U.S.-based projects.

At MSS, Nicola led and developed numerous public and stakeholder engagement workshops with leadership, staff, and local communities across the United States. This experience further solidified her passion for participatory, community-led design practices and for developing educative workshops to empower the public.

As a member of the NEW INC Year 13 cohort, the New Museum's cultural incubator for art, design and technology, she is exploring crafts and representation of reuse in both historic and contemporary architectural contexts.

Nicola is also the co-founder of the architecture collective, Sens and independent architecture publication, Caliper Journal, both platforms fostering architectural discourse, dialogue and collaborative research. Currently, she is leading a range of projects both in Australia and the United States including a library, an office fit-out designed for disassembly, and residential renovations.

Sens is an architecture and research collective working collaboratively to embed projects with forward-thinking research to enhance their responsiveness to environmental and cultural contexts.

PROJECTS

Entropico Offices, New York NY - Baci Baci/Sens. (Office) Entropico. **Role:** Principal. 2026-
[Lenape Ancestral Homeland](#)

Warwick Warehouse, Melbourne VIC - Sens. (Adaptive Reuse, Residential), Private Clients. **Role:** Architect, 2026-
[Wurundjeri Country](#)

Maroubra Apartment, Sydney NSW - Sens. (Interior Renovation, Residential), Private Clients. **Role:** Principal, 2026-
[Gadigal Country](#)

Neversink House, Neversink NY - Baci Baci/Sens. (Residential), Private Clients **Role:** Principal, 2025-2026.
[Lenape Ancestral Homeland](#)

Theatre for a New Audience Renovations, Brooklyn NY - MSS. (Theater lobby renovation) TFANA. **Role:** Design Lead 2025-2026.
[Lenape Ancestral Homeland](#)

Hartford Public Library Branches, Hartford CT - MSS. (Main library and two branch libraries) Hartford Public Library. **Role:** Design Lead, 2024-2025.
[Saukiog Ancestral Homeland](#)

Glen Burnie Library, Glen Burnie MD - MSS. (Library) Anne Arundel County Libraries. **Role:** Design Lead, 2024-2025.
[Piscataway Ancestral Homeland](#)

The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Main Library Renovation, Pittsburgh PA - MSS. (Library) Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. **Role:** Design Lead, 2024-2022.
[Delaware Tribe Ancestral Homeland](#)

Acton Memorial Library, Acton MA - MSS. (Library) Acton Libraries. **Role:** Design Lead, 2024-2025.
[Nashoba Ancestral Homeland](#)

"Reading Space, The Common Room", Melbourne VIC - Sens. (Civic, Temporary Library) Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA). **Role:** Artist, 2020-2023.
Commendation in the 2022 Dulux Colour Awards.
[Wurundjeri Country](#)

South Melbourne Surf Life Saving Club, Melbourne VIC - JCBA. (Community Facility). **Role:** Student of Architecture, 2016-2019.
AIA Victorian Architecture Awards: Public Architecture Commendation (2020), City of Port Phillip Design and Development Awards: Sustainability (2020), Architizer A+Awards: Architecture +Community Finalist (2021)
[Wurundjeri Country](#)

SENS / [sens-sens.com](#)

BACI BACI / [baci-baci.com](#)

LINKED IN / [nicola-cortese](#)

NICOLA CORTESE

QUALIFICATIONS

Design Research, Writing, and Criticism Residency, The School of Visual Arts, New York City, USA, 2024

Master of Architecture, RMIT University, 2019. (With distinction, GPA 4.0)

Bachelor of Architectural Design, RMIT University, 2016. (With distinction, GPA 3.6)

RMIT Exchange Program, The University of Tokyo, Japan, 2018.

EXPERIENCE

SENS
Founder of Sens, 2020-present.

BACI BACI
Principal, 2025-present.

THE COOPER UNION
Adjunct Assistant Professor, 2026-present

MARGARET SULLIVAN STUDIO
Lead Interior Architect, 2024-2025.

DBI PROJECTS
Project Management & Marketing and Communications, 2022-2024.

CALIPER
Founder and Editor-in-Chief of Caliper Journal, 2017-2022.

NEOMETRO
Architect & Marketing and Communications, 2021-2022.

RMIT
Sessional tutor in the Master of Architecture and Bachelor of Architecture program at RMIT University 2020-2022.

Leading multiple design studios and electives.

JACKSON CLEMENTS BURROWS ARCHITECTS
Architect, 2015-2021

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
Sessional tutor in the Bachelor of Architecture program at University of Melbourne, 2021.

LOVELL BURTON
Student Internship, 2018

KENGO KUMA & ASSOCIATES
Student Internship, 2018

MEDIA

"Material, Map, Matter" Exhibition and Publication, 2026

"Work, Work, Work" Thesis Project, Published in "Major: RMIT Architecture Graduating Projects 2019-2022" Book, 2024.

"**Public Absence**" (co-authored with Stephanie Pahnis & Lauren Crockett) published in Art + Australia, The "Pivot Issue", 2022.

"Reading Space: The Common Room" project published in Who's Afraid of Public Space Publication, 2022.

Ongoing Editor-in-Chief of Caliper Journal, Issues 01-6 (2017-2021). Editorial Board of Caliper Journal, issues 7-10 (2021-2023).

Speaker in the "Beyond The Selfie" Panel hosted by Louis Nuccitelli for Melbourne Design Week at the Capitol Theatre, 2022.

Speaker in the "Reading Aloud" Panel for the Melbourne Art Book Fair hosted by Melbourne Art Library (MAL), 2021.

Curator and coordination of the "Shift-ed" Exhibition and Launch event for Caliper and RMIT Design Elective "Proof", for Melbourne Design Week at Collingwood Yards, 2021.

Event curation and coordination of the Caliper Issue 6, "Love" Launch at M Pavilion in 2019.

Event curation and coordination of the Melbourne Design Week Caliper Journal (Issue 4&5) launch events held at Testing Grounds in 2018 & 2019.

AWARDS

American Institute of Architects, Torch Mentorship Cohort 2025

[Commendation](#) in the 2022 Dulux Colour Awards in the Commercial Interior - Public and Hospitality category for the "Reading Space - The Common Room" Temporary Public Library.

Australian Institute of Architects, Victorian Graduate Prize, shortlist 2020

The Anne Butler Memorial Prize for the most outstanding architectural thesis project, 2019

The Leon van Schaik Peer Assessed Thesis Award, 2019