



# SCAFFOLDING VITRUVIAN

## CURATORIAL TEAM

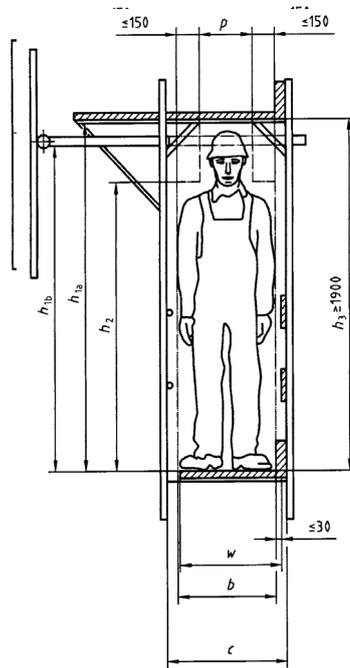


Image source:  
Turkish Standards TS EN 12811-1, Temporary Works Equipment - Part I: Scaffolds - Performance Requirements and General Design, Turkish Standards Institute, December 2005.

Leonardo da Vinci's 1490 "Vitruvian Man" depicts an idealized male figure accompanied by the Roman military architect Vitruvius's notes on the proportions of the "universal" human body as an ideal template for architecture. While Vitruvius's idealization of the human body was discredited long ago, various examples of other forms of universalized abstractions still populate much of the standards of architectural thinking today.

A Turkish Standards Institute (TSE) document from 2005 utilizes the image shown here to consider the measurements of scaffoldings with regarding the human body. In making the standards, TSE imagines an "average" construction worker's body—a body situated within the many dimension lines, annotations, and the scaffolding. Similar to its Vitruvian counterpart, the TSE image is one of many similar "average," "typical," and "normal" bodies that are depicted in various contemporary design standards. Such visual representations call for attentive and close investigations that can both uncover all the missing bodies that are excluded via these types of abstracted contracts and eventually unsettle the very idea of the universal subject itself.

Despite its obvious limitations, however, what is different in this scaffolding Vitruvian figure is that he is neither an idealized template for architectural form nor an abstracted scale figure in an architectural space. By placing the construction worker's body as an actor in the construction of architecture, the image unwittingly provokes future architectural discourses and pedagogies that might include other missing bodies that belong to the many actors involved in the very making of architecture.