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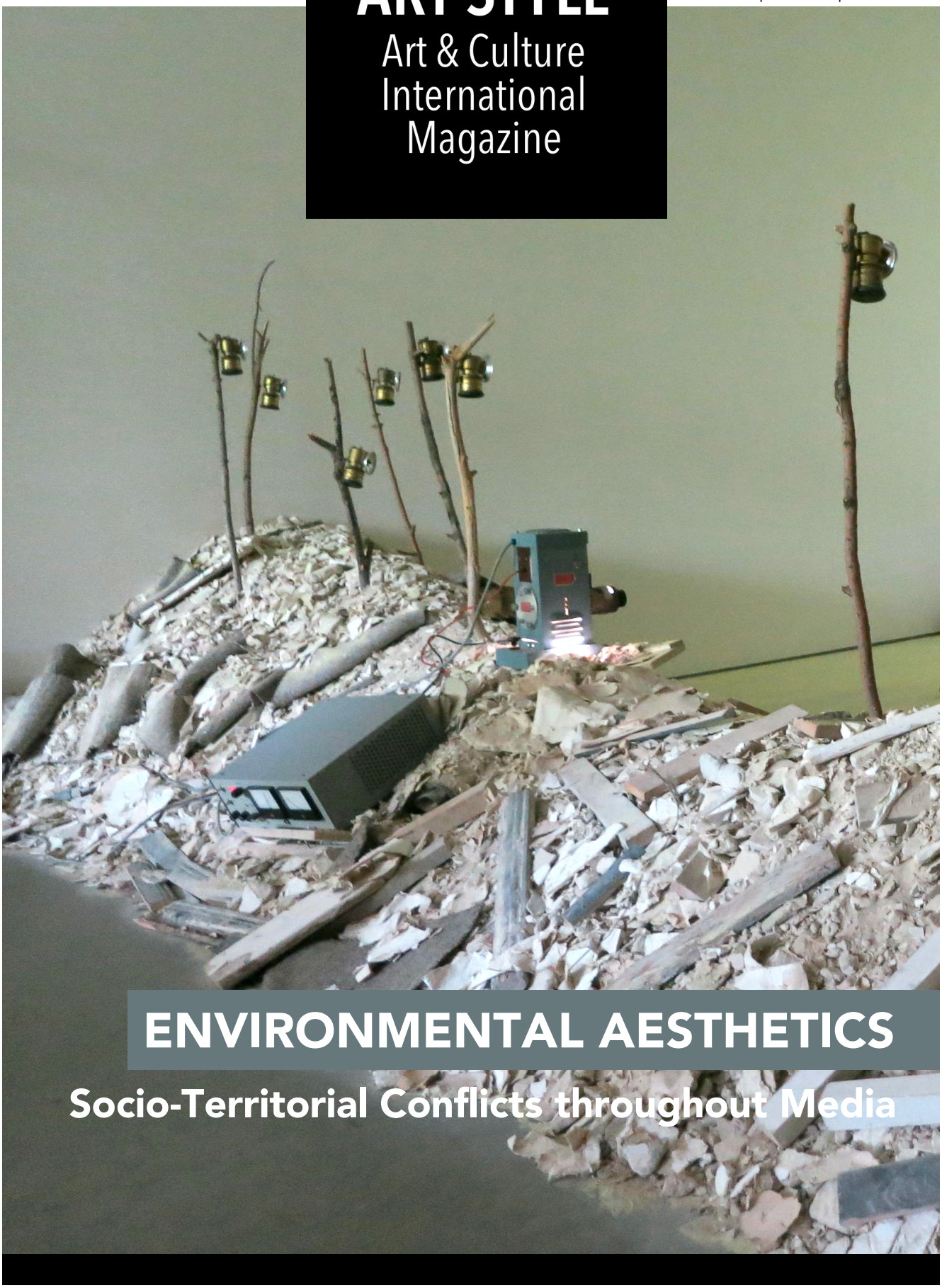

ENVIRONMENTAL AESTHETICS

Socio-Territorial Conflicts throughout Media

Cover: Joseph Beuys,
I like America, and America likes me, 1974.
Photo by Karl Steel, June 21, 2013

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Art Style | Art & Culture International Magazine is an open access, biannual, and peer–reviewed online magazine that aims to bundle cultural diversity. All values of cultures are shown in their varieties of art. Beyond the importance of the medium, form, and context in which art takes its characteristics, we also consider the significance of socio-cultural and market influence. Thus, there are different forms of visual expression and perception through the media and environment. The images relate to the cultural changes and their time-space significance—the spirit of the time. Hence, it is not only about the image itself and its description but rather its effects on culture, in which reciprocity is involved. For example, a variety of visual narratives—like movies, TV shows, videos, performances, media, digital arts, visual technologies and video game as part of the video's story, communications design, and also, drawing, painting, photography, dance, theater, literature, sculpture, architecture and design—are discussed in their visual significance as well as in synchronization with music in daily interactions. Moreover, this magazine handles images and sounds concerning the meaning in culture due to the influence of ideologies, trends, or functions for informational purposes as forms of communication beyond the significance of art and its issues related to the socio-cultural and political context. However, the significance of art and all kinds of aesthetic experiences represent a transformation for our nature as human beings. In general, questions concerning the meaning of art are frequently linked to the process of perception and imagination. This process can be understood as an aesthetic experience in art, media, and fields such as motion pictures, music, and many other creative works and events that contribute to one's knowledge, opinions, or skills. Accordingly, examining the digital technologies, motion picture, sound recording, broadcasting industries, and its social impact, Art Style Magazine focuses on the myriad meanings of art to become aware of their effects on culture as well as their communication dynamics.

Content

Environmental Aesthetics:
Socio-Territorial Conflicts throughout Media

Editorial

Dear readers,

Let's celebrate! It is with great pleasure that *Art Style Magazine* presents this special issue to commemorate its third year of publication. As time goes by, the magazine and editorial team are growing and improving. Among the many challenges in publishing regarding policies and ethics as well as subjects to be treated regarding art and culture, with attention to the emerging context of our planet, both the magazine and its contributors are developing and progressing, as each new issue demonstrates. The focus of this issue is on environmental aesthetics, with the aim of exploring the various aspects of aesthetic appreciation.

Environmental Aesthetics: Socio-Territorial Conflicts throughout Media is part of a session that I organized at the IV International ISA Forum, Porto Alegre, held on February 23–27, 2021, for the Research Committee on Sociology of Communication, Culture and Knowledge (ISA-RC14). This committee has a long history of research results and activities. Among its most renowned founding presidents are Kurt Wolff and Edgar Morin. The committee pertains to the International Sociological Association (ISA). The ISA is a member of the International Science Council and enjoys the status of non-governmental organization in formal associate relations with UNESCO as well as special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

The approach of philosophical aesthetics with the social sciences is part of my research process related to social reality, environmental, and urban issues with the arts. Environmental aesthetics has been gaining increasing attention since the late 20th century. From its initial focus on natural environments, considering human and human-influenced environments, it has developed to include an aesthetic investigation of everyday life in general. Therefore, after the traditional discipline of philosophy, with the arts as its object of study, reflections are sought to appreciate human environments and, in general, they have led to what we know today as the aesthetics of everyday life (Berleant 2013). Thus, environmental aesthetics focuses on knowledge and information about the nature of the object of appreciation. Moreover, unlike the focus on art, many environmental, aesthetic dimensions are highly relative to observation conditions concerning human interventions and their effects.

According to Allen Carlson (2016), several earlier works in environmental aesthetics were empirical research undertaken in response to public apprehension about the aesthetic state of the environment. Therefore, one must primarily consider the social, political, technological, and industrial contexts in which environmental issues have become critical. Consequently, the deterioration of the environment became the focus in design and architecture, where not only functional solutions were sought but also – and most crucially – ethical and aesthetic solutions concerning the meaning of the environmental movement in practice and theory. Therefore, environmental aesthetics today focuses on nature as an aesthetic experience, nature through art, and all other aspects of human experience through aesthetic dimensions in natural and urban spaces. Thus, for a better understanding, this issue presents a sequence of articles that analyze environmental aesthetics with a focus on different points. Following these articles, I close the issue by conceptualizing aesthetic appreciation based on the main aesthetic theories of the last decades.

Accordingly, to open this sequence of articles, this issue presents some new aspects of environmental aesthetics, focusing on its contemporary interdisciplinarity. Thus, to introduce this special issue, *Art Style Magazine* is pleased to present an exclusive contribution by renowned professor Massimo Canevacci. His article "Ubiquities: Aesthetic and Anthropology Glances on Undisciplined Identities" relates ethnography and cultural anthropology with aesthetics, focusing on the digital mutation of the concept of ubiquity in connection with the digital diaspora and the ubiquitous utopia. Canevacci introduces us to this concept of ubiquity, which concerns material/immaterial experiences that favor non-linear paths of space-time, transformed by the visual arts and the corporeal and aesthetic landscape of multiple temporary identities. The author deals with a change in the meaning of the word "ubiquity," determined by the metropolitan subject in its universal presence by the flows of digital communication, resulting in the acceleration of ubiquitous identities. Canevacci's emphasis is on the full manifestation of ubiquitous connections by which ubiquitous ethnography expands connected subjectivity into relationships of time-space fragments. According to the author, a divergent ubiquitous utopia can be the perspective for non-anthropocentric anthropology.

Subsequently, Natasha Marzliak's article, titled "Social and Environmental Demands Through the Art of TransArchitecture Project: Deterritorializing and Building Networks," offers an empirical analysis based on the current needs for social change and the role of contemporary art. She demonstrates how art can be a political instrument that involves new landscapes using the TransArchitecture project by artist Adrians Black. The basis of her analysis is public and environmental artworks, involving procedures from the fields of architecture, performance, transmedia art, new technologies, collaborative practices, and international solidarity.

Moving on, the article "Through Technologies of Communication and New Media Practices: [Un]aesthetics, [Un]mensch" by Katarina Andjelkovic emphasizes action and interaction as dynamic relations between human and non-human entities in the broad spectrum. The author states that "we need to pay attention to the complex consequences of media becoming environmental and environments becoming mediated." For her, these transformations are intensely connected with socio-spatial inclusion and exclusion processes and participatory culture, or within the variety of cultural practices around media, art, and architecture.

Then, following the approach to contemporary art directed increasingly toward environmental, interactive, and immersive practices, this issue presents an article titled "Immersive Environments: Fragmented and Discontinuous Spaces for Action and Art" by Francesca Natale. The author develops her arguments based on the connection between an active viewer and a work of art with a disinterested, value-centered approach rather than its functionality and action. She exemplifies that "a promising and successful experience in this sense is the ongoing series of sensitive environments by Studio Azzurro, an Italian collective of artists: immersive environments where the spectator's actions are not predetermined."

Subsequently, the article "Self-Enclosed Art-Environments and Environmental-Aesthetic Museum Design" by Carla Lohmann-Malegiannakis introduces the following question to the same analysis: What role do environmental aesthetics and sensory, bodily modes of perception play in the design of contemporary art museums? The author discusses museums, the environmental concept for which requires architectural and curatorial decisions to be made, as places mainly dedicated to the aesthetic experience, analyzing the artificial world in terms of the natural outside world regarding a culture increasingly determined by the virtual.

Next, urban environments are considered to have visual and sonorous landscapes, or in other words, the aesthetic visual and sonorous experience. In this sense, we find a multi-layered soundscape resulting from a dynamic city in Omar Cerrillo Garnica's article "Musical Convergence in Mexico City: A Conversation from a Geographical and Historical Perspective." The discussion presents sociocultural and political issues related to music to analyze and understand the soundscapes of cities, where music of different origins converges and shares values through musical hybridizations, resulting in new cultural values and musical genres.

Finally, my contribution, titled "Aesthetic Appreciation: Natural, Artistic, and Media Effects," concludes this special issue on environmental aesthetics. I hope that readers and researchers can make good use of the contents of this recent subarea of Western philosophical aesthetics. Now, as always, I end this editorial by wishing readers and researchers good reading.

Cheers,

Christiane Wagner
Editor-in-Chief and Creative Director

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Ubiquities
Aesthetic and Anthropology
Glances on Undisciplined Identities

Massimo Canevacci

Designing an 'invisible' building forces
us to abandon the idea of making an object (...).
The distinction between what is solid, liquid
and gaseous even seems to disappear.
(Kuma 2012, 55-59)

Abstract

This paper will focus on the digital mutation of the concept of ubiquity and how it favors nonlinear space-time paths, leading many people and artists toward material/immaterial experiences, especially in the contemporary performing arts. My research focuses on how digital cultures radically transform the historical concept of ubiquity in connection with the digital diaspora and ubiquitous utopia. The alteration of the traditional monological identity is living the experiences of a decentered rite of passage based on extreme individualism and nonlinear space-time coordinates. The multifaced subject manifests themself as absorbed in different and multiple ubiquitous connections, while the ubiquitous ethnography expands a connective subjectivity. Visual arts may transform such fragmented panorama of spaces/times and bodyscape in the aesthetics of multiple temporary identities. The subject of the ethnographic experience is ubiquitous. And a divergent ubiquitous utopia may be the perspective for artists co-creating non anthropocentric anthropology. Ubiquity is the centralize-decentralized concept that emerges, transforming its traditional meaning. This change in the meaning of the word ubiquity is determined by a metropolitan subject (in the extended sense) who is everywhere, inserted in the flows of digital communication, and so lives the constant experience in which the classical space-time coordinates are mixed and transformed. The result is an acceleration of the ubiquitous identities that presents itself as one of the most complex events of the new millennium, which must be analyzed according to an undisciplined ethnography (Canevacci 2015). The ubiquity of this ethnography involves any identity, including a researcher like myself, that simultaneously develops diagonal and dissonant relations, using expressions from different areas that happen less and less geographically, but are more subjectively characterized and connected. Unlike in the industrial period, this identity is more flexible. The ethnographic gaze has to be ubiquitous to decipher the conflicting codes (written, visual, musical, mixed, etc.) while practicing different dialogical narratives.

Massimo Canevacci, "Ubiquities: Aesthetic and Anthropology Glances on Undisciplined Identities,"
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Digital Ubiquity

Since 1990, the most relevant analyzes have connected the post-industrial phase (which is cohabiting with the industrialist cultural "remains") with post-human body-art, from which multiple or fluid identities are affirmed (see documenta X, 1997). The researcher who anticipated the theoretical process about *ubiquitous computing* was Mark Weiser. In 1988, he wrote that ubiquities characterize space/time relations in digital communication, stressing that such emerging digital ubiquity involves both humans and non-humans. This is the core of a very perturbative process. The traditional dichotomic paradigm about human and non-human—thanks to internet-of-things or the smart commodities—is going to melt in the air of pixel.

> Ubiquitous computing names the third wave in computing. First were mainframes, each shared by lots of people. Now we are in the personal computing era, person and machine staring uneasily at each other across the desktop. Next comes ubiquitous computing, or the age of calm technology, when technology recedes into the background of our lives. (Weiser 1988)

And Mark Weiser was facing another even more uncanny perspective, perhaps influenced by Gregory Bateson's ecology of mind: "The computer should extend your unconscious" (1988). Bateson criticized the well-known Freudian distinction of ego-id-super-ego inside the same subject, affirming that the ego is expanding itself outside the subject along the channel that is connecting the human "mind" to a forest or mineral "mind." Such an ecological communication pattern crosses and mixes the traditional distinction between humans and non-humans. Nature is a living being exchanging mental information with every creature through technology—a wheel or a computer. This is the reason why Norbert Wiener, together with Gregory Bateson, invented the cybernetic. Feed-back and schismogenesis are the empirical results of the alliance between informatics and anthropology. The consequences of such a visionary predicament or prediction are so visible both in everyday experiences (unlimited youporn and surface resentment, fake conspiracy, and uncontrollable haters). Following Tim Berners-Lee and his perhaps too optimistic reflection:

> We must push back against misinformation by encouraging gatekeepers such as Google and Facebook to continue their efforts to combat the problem, while avoiding the creation of any central bodies to decide what is "true" or not. We need more algorithmic transparency to understand how important decisions that affect our lives are being made, and perhaps a set of common principles to be followed. We urgently need to close the "internet blind spot" in the regulation of political campaigning. (Berners-Lee 2017)

The current digital revolution and the accelerated pragmatics behaviors are foreshadowing ubiquitous identities that can favor divergent results: the beauty of crossing the space/time limits in the process of multiplication of one's own subjectivity; and a tendential fragmentation of the ego in relation to the loss of territorial certainties. The possible consequences present ambiguous and conflictual scenarios: *the cosmopolitan ubiquitous subject coexists with the digital-authoritarian personality*. Therefore, the question is to face this challenge ethnographically and resolve it progressively, revealing the complexity of indifference, prejudices, racism that affect many persons in their anomic morality.

The psycho-cultural and socio-political problems are growing because digital cultures and communication will transform the classical distinction of space and time, favoring decentered and non-linear experiences of *space-times* or, better, of *ubiquitimes***,** a restless montage of syncretic concepts and synchronic narratives. The ubiquitous concept revolves around a field research method, ethnography, which has long been moving among different disciplines, establishing a privileged relationship with culture, communication, and consumption. Ubiquity also expands syncretic concepts and methods presented in the digital culture. This article is not about this concept's history or how it has evolved over time (and spaces!); well, ubiquity is a dynamic concept that is restless when facing itself. A strong metaphorical use of this term has been used recently to identify operating modus through the web culture. A somewhat shared affirmation is that the web is ubiquitous and communicational ubiquity characterizes the internet's space-time relations. Before facing contemporary use of ubiquity, it is necessary a short excursus on Bakhtin's (1988) *chronotope* and Futuristic *simultaneity.*

The actual meaning of this concept inherits and expands the *chronotope* concept drawn from literary criticism. Bakhtin transformed this concept, with an exact sciences matrix, in a methodology applied to nineteenth-century novels. Unifying what was considered *a priori*, *chronotope* determines a vision in which space-time has an immanent connection into the writing style. The dialogic between space and time is connected with the dialogic between author and hero. So, the hero ascends to discursive roles or styles decentralized by the author in each character, with psychological, narrative, and dialogical implications. Symmetrically, the *chronotope* is a pre-requisite for the decentralized development of literary polyphony, in which subjectivity is multiplied in their specifications as much as in their irreducible individuality. The hero is no longer a monological projection of the author. Each character develops psychological and linguistic autonomy. In other words, a polyphonic autonomy.

Simultaneity is another related concept. Futurists have asserted and loved this concept before anybody else in the arts. Simultaneity is applied to painting, architecture, music, sculpture, and above all, in their performance, where poetry, noise, and stories were precisely and simultaneously presented in stages. This form of expression is of fundamental interest to my research: futurists, as avant-garde, were the first to love the city as opposed to the boring countryside and romantic moonlight. Dissonant panoramas, body expansions, and displaced noises emerge from this rising metropolis (Boccioni, *La città che sale*, 1910): in short, all human senses are simultaneously increased by the urban technological experiences. Simultaneity is perhaps the "daughter" of the emergent cinema, which in its montage expresses optical contiguity between different narrative segments. For the futurists, simultaneity is an aesthetic experience made by the fragmented metropolis experiences and the rising of industrial technology. In such a context, an expressive pulse of diagonal images and free words (or *parolelibere* following Marinetti's terminology) are liberated from the classic logics based on *consecutio* toward a disruptive linguistic revolution, thanks to an artistic subject: the simultaneous futurist. His subjectivity is trained to cross the expanded flexibility between space-time lived in urban landscapes. This optical poetry is announcing a possible future based on the iconic movements rising from the streets, crossing the window of the atelier, ready to be transfigured in the canvas of the painter, in the score of the musician, or the book of the writer. On the other hand, the actual concept of ubiquity goes beyond such a simultaneous matrix. Maybe such philosophical autonomy comes from the mystical origin of ubiquity's deep connection to a divine glance. Following the orthodox Christian religion, what is ubiquitous belongs to the visionary perception of the invisible in which the human condition is constantly observed by the divine eyes without any chance for the human sinners to find a secret place to hide themselves.

In contemporary times, ubiquity plays logical-sensorial immanence to a material/immaterial condition; it expresses tensions beyond dualism, that simplified human prejudice in which binary oppositions reduce the everyday's complexity into the hegemony of a dichotomous *ratio*. *Ubiquity is uncontrollable, incomprehensible, and indeterminable*. Ubiquity remains aside from any vertical political control, mono-logic rationality, or any linear space-time determination. In this perspective, it is possible to cut its traditional theological appropriation and consequently affirm some ubiquitous visions towards a non-anthropocentric humanism: where the unlimited poetic and political visions are wandering beyond any fixed identity of things and humans. Ubiquitous is imagination's potentiality connected to digital technology. The ubiquitous communication patterns have been expanded in recent years, and ethnography has to change its research methods. The fieldwork is—at the same *ubiquitime*—material and immaterial. A *multi-sited ethnography* (Marcus 1995) must constantly cross and mix different spaces in a way that was impossible to imagine only a few decades ago.

In my personal experience, thirty years ago, I began to do urban anthropology research in São Paulo. And I did it. But when—fifteen years ago—I began ethnographic research on and with the Bororo culture, I did discover that the relationship between a great metropolis as São Paulo and a small village like Meruri (Mato Grosso) was so connected by digital technology (computer, tablet, TV, cell phone) that it was impossible to separate from practicing my research.[1] The ethnographer has to be in transit, polyphonic, and…ubiquitous. 'Who represents who?' is a question that involves the still alive colonialist power. The current post-industrial period and its acceleration of digital culture have further 'divided' subjects belonging to different cultures and experiences. For example, a division exists between those who communicate and those who are 'communicated' and between those who historically have the power of narration and those who are in the lonely state of being narrated objects. Even the classic vocation of anthropology to 'grasp the native point of view' has been rendered inadequate since its legitimacy partially relies on the same individualized, differentiated native to communicate a personal point of view. This is precisely why a specific linguistic knot binds 'those who represent' to 'those who are represented,' according to what I call the communicational division of labor. The visual hierarchy of the dominant logic has separated those who have the power to represent the Other from those who should continue to be represented as an "eternal" human panorama. The native subjects representing themselves as 'Others' have a key advantage: the digital technology they use has a decentred, innovative effect incomparable to analog technology. Digital technology is easier to use and more affordable; it accelerates communication and decentres ideation, editing, and consumption. The communicational division of labor between those who narrate and those who are narrated—between self-and hetero-representation—permeates the emerging contradiction between the digital technology developed in the West and the subjects' use of this same technology in accordance with their own autonomous worldview. This division and this contradiction redefine the power play within which the anthropology of digital communication contends with, and survives, every persistent attempt to flatten and folklorize the Other (Canevacci 2013, 79).

Exchanges between different cultures have been seen and analyzed in the past (and also in the present!) as the dissolution of weaker cultures. These exchanges between different cultures were perceived as structurally and tropically sad (*tristes*), destined to an *entropology* disorder (from entropy); on the contrary, this is a challenge where the active blendings are characterized by hybrid-syncretism, not by passive approvals. The ethnographer is no longer only an anthropologist or a cultural studies researcher, trained according to procedures established during the field research. Also, the so-called *native* is an anthropologist, artist, or fashion designer. The field has expanded along with the immaterial territory of digital ubiquity.

This ethnography's ubiquity involves any identity. Also, my own identity as a researcher does not remain the same. It simultaneously develops diagonal and dissonant relations, using expressions from different areas, which happen to be increasingly less geographically but more subjectively characterized and connected. This identity is more flexible concerning its industrialist past. My fluid identity is seated on some sort of unstable raft, oscillating between different subjects or contexts coexisting at the same frame. Hence, the ethnographic glance has to be ubiquitous if they want to decipher the conflicting codes (written, visual, musical, mixed, etc.) whilst practicing different dialogical narratives.

Aesthetic Diasporas

The biography of Edward Said and Daniel Barenboim is a manifesto for cultural syncretism and ubiquitous identities, and their polyphonic dialogue on music, politics, and arts is an impressive statement for an alternative vision of the world (Said and Barenboim 2004). They have reflected and practiced in the more differentiated countries with the aim of crossing and assembling syncretism against and beyond any endogamic fundamentalism. They have affirmed the desire to live the space-time ubiquity in a day-by-day experience for the possibility of discovering many differentiated "Orients" and "West." An ethnographic perspective—adequate to the critics of the current sovereignty (*sovranism*) as well as and racialized conflicts—could not replicate this "imagined" geopolitical dichotomy, but should seek differentiated logical itineraries, considering Said's exiled condition of a "transcendental expatriate," which allowed him to open the field of cultural studies. And also, Barenboim's philosophy of music is shaped by the same "transcendental expatriate" condition. Following their polyphonic dialogue, I aim to treat the concept of diaspora in a divergent and parallel way.

Edward Said incorporates a transitive tension between individual diaspora and exiled identity. For this, his reflection is particularly significant; subjective experience and general theory are connected in elaborating a critical vision that challenges the academic disciplinary order and innovates the perspective of cultural studies. He recalls 25 years after the first edition of *Orientalism* (1978) that "the ways in which a work about the representations of 'the Orient' lends itself to increasing representation and misinterpretation" (Said 2003, XV). And this is his conclusion:

> The human and humanistic, desire of Enlightenment and emancipation is not easily deferred, despite the incredible strength of the opposition to it that comes from the Rumfelds, Bin Laden, Sharons, and Bushes of this world. I would like to believe that *Orientalism* has had a place in the long and often interrupted road to human freedom. (Said 2003, XXX)

My goal is just to manifest the desire to continue walking along this "disoriented" road. Daniel Barenboim wrote about the *power of music* from the perspective that everything is connected (2007). The pattern which connects is the basic anthropological method and ethical vision affirmed by Gregory Bateson in all his research. A ubiquitous and undisciplined methodology aims to connect a literary and political critic, a musician and director of the orchestra, a vagant anthropologist, and a mental ecologist. The power of music is not restricted to its specific art; it is included obviously, but transcends it, crossing social and humoral questions not only of its own age but—as often happens with great musicians—anticipating some possible futures. Barenboim sets the example of the *late style* in Beethoven, which is also a book by Said (2006) in which he affirms the possibility of experiencing narratives that are not yet written or unheard of. The late style is productive while it works and, at the same time, puts in question the instrumental principle of productivity. The title's inspiration and the compositional philosophy are taken from a fragment of Adorno (1937). Following Said, it is possible "to explore the experience of late style that involves a non-harmonious, non-serene tension, and above all, a sort of deliberately unproductive productiveness going *against*" (2006, 7). Such an *unproductive productiveness* may favor the crisis for the reification of listening and for the instrumental reason.

According to Barenboim and Said, an "exiled" composer like Beethoven and a "negative" philosopher like Adorno explore dissonant musical figures and unknown narrative images. Such unheard sounds or concepts are inventing the feeling of exile, that all of them have lived in different ways. And when one realizes that it is free of any institutional or normative bond, the creativity has no historical, harmonic, or aesthetic limit in this immaterial space. Here the late style is illuminated, and the author is heading along unknown paths where each conciliatory synthesis is rejected. In this sense, Said writes:

> For Adorno, far more than anyone who has spoken of Beethoven's last works, those compositions that belong to what is known as the composer's third period […] constitute an event in the history of modern culture: a moment when the artist who is fully in command of his medium nevertheless abandons communication with the established social order of which he is a part and achieve a contradictory, alienated relationship with it. His last works constitute a form of exile. (Said 2006, 7-8)

In *Parallels and Paradoxes* (2004), the dialogue between Said and Barenboim is exemplary as a method and as a political-cultural perspective of looking for links and exchanges between differences of identities. The title is already a challenge searching to elaborate parallel traits between identities in movement and music, literature, society; and talk about the paradoxes that need to be lived rather than solved. The convergence of parallels through paradoxes will be the exemplary paradigm for constructing ubiquitous humanism.

The authors rejected political and cultural boundaries: they are an example of a dialogic philosophy applied to the current geopolitical context. Said was born in Jerusalem into a Palestinian family, grew up in Cairo as an Arab-Christian, attended schools in the United States, became a professor at Columbia University; Barenboim was born in Buenos Aires in a Russian-Jewish family, later lived in the State of Israel, became director of the most important orchestras in Berlin, Milan, Chicago. Together they designed and performed "the Palestinian West Bank" of musicians and the experiment celebrating Goethe's 250th anniversary in Weimar, bringing together Arab and Jewish musicians. In the introduction, Barenboim writes: "he was also one of those rare people who saw the connections and the parallels between different disciplines" (2004, 136). In his dialogue with Barenboim, Said underlines: "In your work as a performer, Daniel, and in my work as an interpreter of literature and literary criticism, one has to accept the idea that one is putting one's own identity to the side in order to explore the 'other'" (2004, 234). This positioned subject represents the anthropological method and the ethnographic practices in transit toward emerging cultural studies: it is impossible to understand the Other, keeping their own stable identity or repetitive behaviors.

The dialogue between Daniel and Edward combines the possible parallel convergences between philosophy and ethnography, music and literature, the Orient, and the West. From this point of view, the University and the Orchestra are places where arts and sciences are going to explore more than to conform; and therefore, according to Said: "The paradox is that while music is accessible, it can't ever be understood" (2004, 510). This statement of Baremboim is not only a biographical interest: "I feel German when I conduct Beethoven, and Italian when I conduct Verdi (2004, 2432). Music and writing are in a deep dialogue with the authors. The purpose of the dialogue is condensed in this phrase of Said: "the humanistic mission has to be able to maintain difference but without the domination and bellicosity that normally accompany affirmations of identity" (2004, 2223). This distinction is important because often affirming differences meant the subalternity of the 'others,' concerning a single, authentic identity: that which is dominant. This constructivist critique is linked with the radical critique of the concepts of authenticity, origin, and purity that have always favored discriminations between cultures and policies. From these individualized premises, I would like to outline a trend ubiquitously changing the traditional meaning of diaspora in the space-time-digital weaves whilst focusing on the multividual transurban wandering.

The term *diaspora* is combined with compulsory *dissemination* of various peoples worldwide. The history of the Jewish people is linked to that concept. Hence, the two terms have been associated almost genealogically. Another diaspora is marked by slavery, imposed on African people dispersed in the large plantations of the Americas, followed by peripheral *quilombos* until urban centers were reached. Palestinians, Kurds, Maghrebian, and Asian Diasporas involved groups of people belonging to different political and cultural scenarios and who would

go where different options of life were offered. In recent times, when the number of people became significant, the term diaspora refers to the migration of Latinos to the United States. Finally, diaspora is close to exile: the collective dimension of territorial displacement is emphasized in the first concept. The individual's character is emphasized in the second, coupled with many different reasons. Diaspora, migration, and exile are, therefore, cultural and historical processes related but diverse among them, cohabiting and transferring into each other.

James Clifford emphasizes that the diasporic scenario is becoming less classifiable according to usual historical standards (1999). A multiple-composed process of transnational mobility was set in motion: expatriates per pleasure, unsatisfied nationals, flexible workers, exiled with no political reasons, emerging artists, digital inventors, vagabond artists, seekers of successful experiences, stories seekers, etc. These very different diasporic subjects no longer emerge from violent uprooting and even a collective alienation from their homeland. All these diasporic processes (fugitive minorities or wandering individuals) subvert legal and political rules on which national states are based. The concept of citizenship is challenged by these diasporic subjects. Hence, states and municipalities have difficulty giving political solutions to these flows.

These irregular diasporas break the strict alliance the West has produced between Universalist humanism and state nationalism: between the theoretical Enlightenment that proclaims the equality of human beings and the practical Enlightenment that persecutes these same human beings in their colonies. Diasporic subjectivity fits into the interstices of this vise, trying to realize auto-affirmative modes that affect the immobilist power of localism and the homologation menace of globalism. For this, grasping these subjective diasporas is important as they are different from the violent uprooting of collective diaspora. It encourages a break from the traditional diaspora, freeing it from the painful origin and releasing a disseminated sense of uncertain challenges. To move from a diaspora connected to ethnohistoric suffering towards the diasporas that produce subjective experiences.

Diasporic subjectivity and ubiquitous identity are fluid experiences available to each contemporary *multividual*. The conflicts against dualism and universalism are performed by the subject's multiplicity of identity, who decides to live a diasporically self-experiment. On this point, the research conducted by Paul Gilroy is important. The African Diaspora is no longer seen as a medieval residual, as it normally continues to be presented. According to him, the journey of slave ships contains people within its holds and "a micropolitical and microcultural living system in movement" (Gilroy 2003, 51), that constitutes one of the most extraordinary advances of modernity: "We can see the *Black Atlantic* unraveling itself in diasporic culture, identity theories and difference's dispersion memories" (19). "The liquid contamination of the ocean meant mixture and movement" (33).

Said's thinking favors a caesura of the traditional diaspora, freeing it from the painful weight of violent uprooting to identify disseminated potentials. A transit from the diaspora linked to ethnohistorical suffering to the diaspora producing the experience of heteronomy may be developing the potential flow of plural identities. Thus, Said's Palestinian and Barenboim's Israelian questions intersect with that African of Paul Gilroy: his *Black Atlantic* draws a constellation of the diaspora marked by pain but also by the cultural innovations that produce conflictual modern era. The experience of spatial transits, impure mixtures, religious syncretism, body styles, and musical codes is due to the African diasporas: the slave ships crossing the Atlantic are designing—rather than black––a chromatic multiplicity of cultural identities. In the immense pain of the diasporas, Gilroy sees the lancinating as well as potentially liberating emergence of a decentred-centrality of the *routes* against the binding immobility of the *roots*, by "flow patterns and itinerant traveling typical to transnational adventures and crosscultural creativity" (Gilroy 2003). The diasporic subject manifests the insurgency of *transitive citizenship*, not linked to a nation-state or a passport but immanent to the human being. Humanity in movement *from roots to routes* is anticipating cultural, erotic, and philosophical modernities. The emerging of transitive citizenship is a challenge for global law and the post-colonial order. Perhaps the diasporic subject does not nostalgically reinvent an inexistent local culture not realized in one's original life. The diasporic subject does not folklorize himself.

I was around twenty years of age, whilst listening to *Africa* by John Coltrane. Since then, Coltrane's music has crucially entered my identity's configuration, and I would like to be able to say that, to some extent, I feel I am a bit African-American. Music has become part of my sensory and cognitive experience. Indeed, lots of kinds of music are about pan-African Diasporas. It has become part of my philosophy. In this sense, Africa is part of my sensitive anthropology. This, among other things, means that research and teaching, speaking and writing, observing, and being observed should contain and free up some improvisation, as long as it is done with joy and not as an obligation. Start with a concept, an image, a phrase, a sequence, and then explore the multiplicity of changes and innovations not sudden limited or predetermined in a harmonic structure. This means non-circumscribed diasporas to their African, Jewish, or any other cultural matrices.

In such a polyphonic and transitive context, Said and Barenboim represent two contrastive characteristics of a diaspora: the violent uprooting of one's homeland and transnational identitarian empowerment. It subverts the legal and political rules on which national states are based. These diasporic subjects challenge the concept of citizenship, causing political-cultural problems to those states or municipalities that have difficulty providing a legal solution to these flows. The same Clifford recalls that Said used the word contrapuntal to indicate a positive aspect in the condition of exile: "Being able to see the whole world as a foreign

country favors an original vision (…). This plurality of visions gives rise to an awareness of simultaneous dimensions that—to use a musical concept—is contrapuntal" (Said 1984, 171 in Clifford 1999, 314-5). In *Out of Places*, Said construe his places of memory and their temporality: "along with language, it is geography—especially in the displaced form of departures, arrivals, farewells, exile, nostalgia, homesickness—that is at the core of my memories": Jerusalem, Cairo, Lebanon, the United States..." (Said 1999, 120). These movements create a more fluid, multiple, fragmented kind of identity that the author manages to transform or reverse from the potential weakness of the ego into subjective cosmological enrichment. In the dialogue between Said and Baremboin, there is an encounter where the politics extract the poetics and vice versa thanks to the crossroads of their identities. The same Said wrote: "In my opinion, it is impossible at the twenty-first century to believably claim a single identity." He finds the identity question in his own name: Edward— "a foolish English name" —and Said, "the unmistakably Arabic Family name" (2004, 143).

Such an individual experience arises along the process of a more flexible identity. At the end of the 1980s, human relations at work (end of the industrial age), sex (movements of gender, gay, etc.), territory (spatial ubiquity), communication (techno-digital and social network), family (differentiated patterns) began to change. In the fully industrial era, a person did the same work throughout their life, married, and remained in the same place; now everything changes, flexibility is characteristic that defies tradition, and the emerging go globalization creates huge problems without solving in people's existence. Having a unique, fixed, and compact identity throughout life has always been a problem governed by the political-economic domain; anyway, different cultures have faced in their own way (carnival, rituals, arts, performance, etc.) these desires to be different. This process implies difficulties and limits in the possibility of living fluid identities: in contrast to the *ubiquitous utopias* which, as will be seen later, where imagining the beginning of identity and cosmological revolution, many behavioral and psychological problems began to be manifest in daily practices.

In literature, Fernando Pessoa (and Pirandello!) expresses the same aporias, the restlessness (*desassossego*) of his work enters the labyrinths of the solidity of the self to dissolve its unbearable rigidities and to release the potential multiplicities. The *heteronym*, practiced by him in several writings, is not only a literary or a psychological expedient. Through his self-denomination and diversifiable narrative modules, he assumes diverse identities and reveals never unified through the synthesis of a public-private subject. The fluid paths of his narratives create a polyphonic style involving the nexus of subjectivity, composition, and writing. If in Pessoa, the heteronym is the polyphony of the self ("*eus*") that overflows in the different identities, in Said the fluid identity is a reflection historically and biographically determined: "I think that identity is a set of currents, flowing currents, rather than a fixed place or a stable set of objects.

I certainly feel that about myself... It's not only possible to have multiple identities, but also, I would say, something to aspire toward. The sense of belonging to different cultures can only be enriching" (Said 2004, 262-267). For him, to live this non-normalized multiplicity of identities means public and private conflicts and how it is possible to govern this pluralized and mutant condition: "I have retained this unsettled sense of many identities—mostly in conflict each other—all my life" (Said 1999, 178).

Ubiquitous Utopia

From an anthropological point of view, the *divergent affinities between utopia and ubiquity* could be explored. If the first concept invents an inexistent and ideal place, the second expands everywhere the presence of a generally divine and controlling entity. Between being *nowhere* and *everywhere* moves the current graft of potential ubiquitous utopias thanks to the diffusion of digital communication through an animated individuality.

The concept of ubiquity has a history that precedes utopia: because of their divergent affinity, I thought of connecting the two terms. To the ubiquity that flows in every place is added the utopia that, instead, lies nowhere. The contemporary ubiquitous utopia moves in the transitive gap between these two apparently aporetic propositions. The current meaning of the ubiquitous concept is immersed in the flows of digital culture, so—if you type ubiquity—there is an infinite phantasmagoria of sites. The reason is simple: this term identifies the modus operandi in the web culture. A shared affirmation is that the web is ubiquitous and that the subject that uses it absorbs the communicational ubiquity of the space-time practices of the internet.

In medieval theological meaning, the concept of ubiquity is metaphysical and expresses a radical opposition to dualism and, so to speak, even to the "two." Ubiquity embodies the omnipresent radicalism of the "One." This spatial autonomy derives from being—the ubiquity—an abstract condition mystically linked to a divine being. Ubiquitous is not a result of empirical experience in daily life such as simultaneous; on the contrary, it belongs to the visionary perception of the invisible in which the human condition is constantly observed by the divine gaze. From this ubiquitous eye, one cannot escape, not even hiding in a secret place, because a "ubiquitous" reaching you always and everywhere observes and judges you because it transcends you.

In contemporary times, the spatio-temporal coordinates become tendentially superfluous and expand a type of ubiquitous subjective experience. The researcher me is placed in this situation of ubiquity immersed in his personal experience and the instantaneous relationship with the other, and this other is equally ubiquitous, in the sense that he lives where his digitalized communication system is at that moment active. This experience does not mean the dematerialization of interpersonal relationships; it attests a complex psycho-corporeal network, optical and manual connections, certainly cerebral and imaginary, that move the experience of the subject even in the apparent immobility. The obvious psychological implications would require specific research, together with self-research by the subject-ethnographer who experiments on themselves these accelerated mutations. The concept of the subject manifests itself fully in such ubiquitous connections. And the ubiquitous ethnography expands a connective subjectivity. They are plots that connect fragments of spaces/times lacking that "normal" identification and that multiple temporary identities. The subject of the ethnographic experience is ubiquitous. And the divergent ubiquitous utopia may be the perspective for *non-anthropocentric anthropology*.

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Social and Environmental Demands Through the Art of TransArchitecture Project

Deterritorializing and Building Networks

Natasha Marzliak

Abstract

Redefining its objectives based on the current needs for social change, the seismic tremors of contemporary radical art and its approach to the moving contexts of present times can be a political instrument to unveil and struggle for new landscapes. *TransArquitecture* (2019, in progress), of Brazilian, queer-feminist and post-anarchist artist Adrians Black (pronouns they/their/them), is a set of public and environmental artworks, involving procedures from the field of architecture, performance, transmedia art and new technologies, in addition to collaborative practices and international solidarity. It is situated in the intersectional resistance to the hierarchical structures imposed by the dominant system, which are not only oppressive in a social sense, but also have a catastrophic impact on the world's ecology. Operating forms of resistance to hegemonic narratives that represent subjects doomed to subalternity and deterritorializing the modern/colonial project of power, knowledge and being, which are linked to rationality, capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, Christianity, white supremacy, the oppression of social minorities, and the destruction of the environment, the project is constituted by political gestures having one of its objectives to support the Brazilian indigenous struggle for territories, autonomy, difference in identities/subjectivities and against the destruction of forests. It is art that supports the resistance of violated, mutilated, and marginalized bodies, but that stand up and force change. This text starts from seminal research on *TransArchitecture* and traces some approximations of this art program with decolonial, post-anarchist and deconstructivist criticisms, which bring into play fruitful relationships between art (aesthetics) and politics (ethics), found in the texts by Walter Mignolo, Pedro Paulo Gómez, Jesse Cohn, Neala Schleuning, Mohammed A. Bamyeh, and Georges Didi-Huberman.

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Introduction

Faced with a political complexity, together with emerging social movements, new technologies and influenced by Duchamp, the dadaists and the surrealists, some artists from the 1960s and 1970s have resumed the concept of public, transmedia, technological and collaborative art, such as the situationists in France and the fluxus group, in the USA. These are some of the motivations behind Brazilian, queer-feminist and post-anarchist artist Adrians Black (pronouns they/their/them), who envisions public spaces in opposition to verticalized art spaces. They are a transmedia, queer-feminist and post-anarchist artists who dream of new possibilities of being, living and relating in urban collective spaces. Their artworks suggest a disruption with the project of modernity/coloniality, which is capitalist/global, patriarchal and racist, operating potency space-times for the uprising of identities/subjectivities that give power to collectivity. They discuss the dominance of binary gender, the marginality and violence to which the LGBTIQA+ community has been subordinated, the racism to which black people and indigenous populations have been subjected as well as the threatening extinction of primal forests. All those fronts of struggle, which are directed against the combined consequences of neocolonial and neoliberal forces, are assembled by them, producing art in an intersectional manner by building networks and connections among different social and environmental demands.

Outside the discernible, reductionist and institutionalized realm of art galleries and museums and cinemas, understood as spaces which neutralize the power of art isolating it from the real world and its social problems, they are a member of the art collective *AnarkoArtLab* (NYC), which proposes urban interventions, transmedia events and collective performances that break with the idea of the artist as a myth, the institutionalized art system and market, which always ends up creating representations, and the passive spectator. Their projects also have references in the 1970s social sculpture concept of Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), which has potency for social and environmental transformation. Beuys's expanded concept of art would act with the individuals and inside their bodies, that is, the work of art could make people aware that each human being is a potential creative being and capable of using this potential to shape the society they belong to. Still, coming from a fragile democratic country, with strong political power of Christianity, inequality of resources, contempt for minorities and a conservative mentality, one can notice a considerable ethical responsibility in their making of art. We are in a difficult historical moment due the strong escalation of social inequalities, racism, sexism, nationalist fascism, a global health crisis, climate catastrophe, and relentless state violence. It is urgent to rethink modernity and coloniality, which is linked to rationality, capitalism, colonialism, patriarchy, Christianity, white supremacy, the oppression of social minorities, and the destruction of the environment. From an ethics perspective that takes into account current social and environmental worries, Adrians Black propose

TransArchitecture, a set of public, collaborative and environmental artworks, involving procedures from the field of architecture, performance, transmedia art and new technologies, in addition to collaborative and collective practices and international solidarity. It is constituted by political gestures which has as one of its objectives to support the Brazilian indigenous struggle for territories, autonomy, difference in identities/subjectivities and against the destruction of forests, operating forms of resistance to hegemonic narratives that represent subjects doomed to subalternity and deterritorialize the modern/colonial project of the power, knowledge and being.

Faced with the conception of the functioning of a westernized society, which operates according to fixed representations, abstractions that include class divisions and hierarchical categories that do not corroborate with real life, *TransArchitecture*, under an anarchist and decolonial ethics, escapes from the aesthetic representation of the artist as myth in favor of acts of cooperation, directing itself to the flow of the movement of life, to becoming, which is the change that happens in the encounter of the lived moment. Based on collective creation and self-management to resist subordination, Adrians Black started collaborations with collectives, artists and activists, in addition to the union with *Kuña Aranduha* (Jaqueline), representative of the *Guarani-Kaiowá* ethnic group and resident of the Dourados Indigenous Reserve (RID), located in the state from Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil. She helps organize and participates in the Assembly of *Guarani-Kaiowá* Indigenous Women (in Guarani, *Kuñangue Aty Guasu*), which discusses urgent issues concerning the RID and its adjacent camps, proposing actions to combat violence against the ethnic groups and women who live there, in addition to seeking alternatives to resist the destruction of forests.

By researching *TransArchitecture*, which is built on a non-hegemonic, non-authoritarian and non-Western political (ethical) and artistic (aesthetic) perspective, the author of this text takes the first steps in relation to the important approximations of this work of art with the studies of post-anarchist, decolonial and deconstructivist aesthetic practices, such as the thoughts of Walter Mignolo, Pedro Paulo Gómez, Jesse Cohn, Neala Schleuning, Mohammed A. Bamyeh, and Georges Didi-Huberman, which can be conceptually explored more deeply in future publications.

Indigenous Territory and Territoriality, Social Sculpture and Transarchitecture

Brazilian indigenous people have fought for their autonomy, identity and territory since the Portuguese invasion and colonization. They were considered by the Europeans as non-civilized people, and after being enslaved and undergoing a deculturation process dating back to the actions of Jesuit orders in the 16th century, and violence has persisted to the present day. Since the 1970s, during the military dictatorship, the indigenous lands exploitation has escalated with the construction of the Transamazônica highway. They have been subjected to an increase of violence and the threat of absolute genocide. It is a process of destruction of the native peoples of Brazil and its forests, forged by imperialism of European colonization and, later, by north American neoliberal logic. Violence is intrinsic to the formation of Brazilian society and has taken away from the indigenous the rights to life, culture, religiosity and land. Currently, they are still violated by environmental racism, which disregards their knowledge and places them in a situation of insecurity, violation and progressive deterioration of their territories. Indigenous territory, culture and knowledge, that respect environmental sustainability, has been menaced for five centuries. The territory is a "set of projects and representations which will lead, pragmatically, to a whole series of behaviors, investments, in social, cultural, aesthetic, cognitive times and spaces." (Guattari and Rolnik 2010, 388). The territory is of central importance for all the indigenous ethnic groups of the country because it is where their social organizations and their identity and cultural manifestations are defined, that is, it is where they recognise themselves in a collective identity through territoriality, which is the organization of their territory and that involves the social and symbolic aspects of each ethnic group. The discussion about territoriality

> […] involves its ways of using space and its natural resources, social and economic organization, systems of use values and symbology, when the issue of territoriality is allocated as a primary factor for the construction of the group's own identity, even because the process of territorialization of indigenous groups, by mobilizing a sense of organized collectivity, ends up unifying their own identity that affects their representation and reconstitution of their cultural forms. (Neto de Jesus 2014, 226-227)[1]

The demarcations of the reserves often do not correspond to indigenous territoriality, which leads to disputes involving state, regional and indigenous community interests. This is a particularly difficult time for indigenous people and forests in Brazil due to the Bolsonaro government's bill no. 490, proposed in 2021 and which has a timeframe determining that only the lands that were already under indigenous ownership on the day of the promulgation of the Constitution (1988) will be considered.

The bill text also makes the contact of non-indigenous people with isolated indigenous people more flexible, prohibits the expansion of lands that have already been demarcated and allows the exploitation of indigenous lands by large corporations, most investing in mining, timber industry and agribusiness and, thus, mobilizing a network of invaders which range from large farmers to illegal landholders. In opposition to systems of oppression and resistance, contemporary activism in art allies itself to manifestations and projects relationships between aesthetics and politics, where the notion of body is produced and questioned by the rise of individual corporeity (in a historical and social perspective of the subject) in collective protest as a symbolic event that wants social change. In opposition to the subalternity of coloniality, *TransArchitecture* creates spaces in which these peoples can speak, act, resist, rebel. The epistemic disobedience of the decolonial turn presupposes action. According to Walter Mignolo,

> De-colonial thinking means also de-colonial doing, since the modern distinction between theory and practice doesn't apply once you enter in the realm of border thinking and de-colonial projects; once you enter the realm of Quichua and Quechua, Aymara and Tojolabal, Arabic and Bengali, etc. categories of thought confronted, of course, with the relentless expansion of Western (that is Greek, Latin, etc.), foundation of knowledge, let's say, epistemology. (2007, 14)

When looking at indigenous problems, their territories, forests and ecosystems, *TransArchitecture* raises important questions such as territoriality, decoloniality, self-management and independent communication as resistance, uprising and emancipation from the violences suffered. As Fanon said, "Decolonization, as we know, is a historical process, that is, it cannot be understood, we cannot find its intelligibility, it does not become transparent to itself except to the exact extent that the historicizing movement that gives it shape and form becomes discernible" (1979, 26). Operating under the sign of contemporaneity, Adrians Black are not interested in the "fading power structures and styles of struggle" (Smith 2011, 183) of institutionalized contemporary art. *TransArchitecture* is "more concerned about the interactive potentialities of various material media, virtual communicative networks, and open-ended modes of tangible connectivity", spreading to alternative spaces and seeking "sustainable sources of survival, cooperation and growth" (183). The project has its origins in proposing a series of performances (*figures* 1 and 2) by the *AnarkoArtLab* collective at the NYC Anarchist Art Festival in 2019, an event organized by Adrians Black that takes place annually at the Judson Memorial Church. It is a transmedia and collaborative event that supported, in this year, the Brazilian indigenous culture, art and cosmology.

Figures 1-2. NYC Anarchist Art Festival (2019).
Artworks by Andrea Haenggi and Simone Couto.

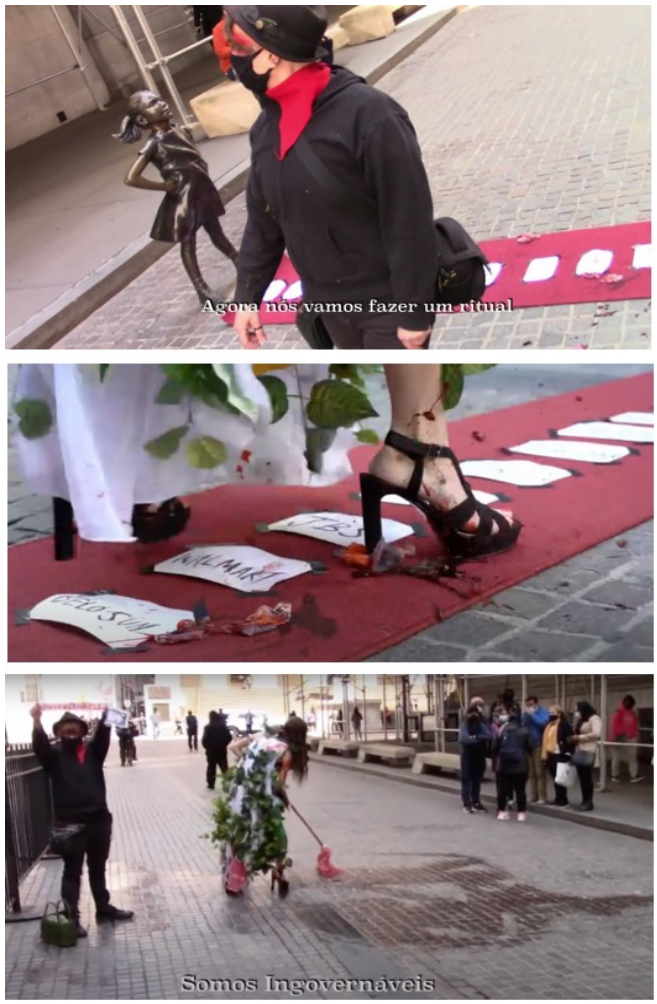
In 2020, Adrians Black and *AnarkoArtLab* participated in a protest along with 1000 people from the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as Indigenous representatives and twenty other NGOs. On that occasion, they presented a public art performance called *Burned Radar* as *figure* 3 shows. From Brooklyn to Manhattan, they carried a burned tree which represented the Amazon. While Brazilian artist Adrians Black shouted activist statements through a megaphone, liters of blood and fake dollar bills were scattered on the ground, setting the stage for the performer Amy Gillian Wilson to simulate the despair of today's society, which is submitting to the will of international corporations.

Figure 3. *Burned Radar*, 2020. Performance by Adrians Black and *AnarkoArtLab*
Photography by Thaís Aquino.

We build moments; situations; disorder.
[...]
We bring by cohesion, the spectator, to be integrated in the process.
We want him out of passivity,
in the here and now participating with us
with the head in the imaginary of the collective unconscious
and body-flesh too if possible.
We want the free communion of uniques.
We need deserts and open oceans.

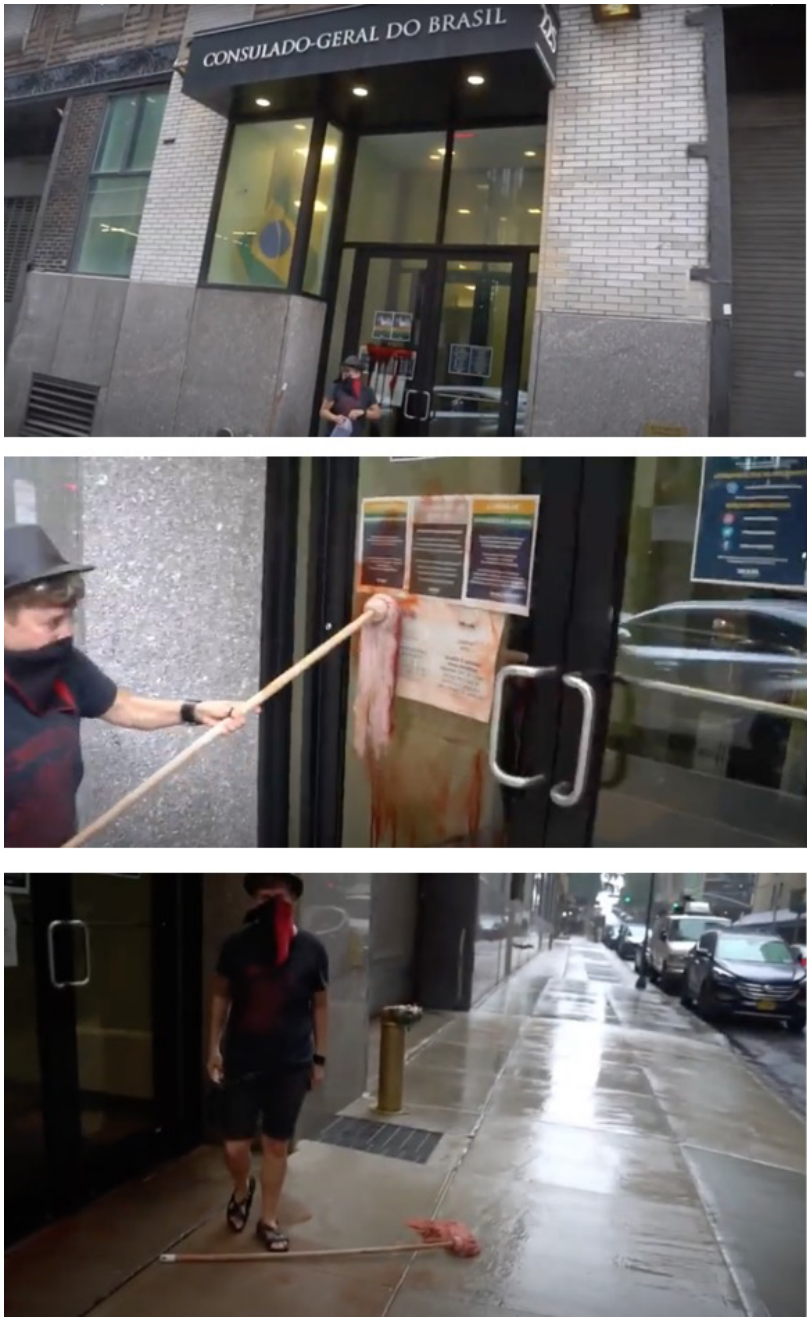
(*AnarkoArtLab* Manifesto)

In April 23, Adrians Black performed *Decolonizing the Amazon*, a ritualistic and practically silent performance of approximately 7 minutes that took place in front of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) as *figures* 4, 5 and 6 show. She incorporated the Fearless Girl sculpture, now a recognized worldwide symbol of women's empowerment, into the action. Furthermore, the girl suggests a challenge to the monetary and political system of American imperialism. Right in front of it, Adrians Black placed a red carpet exposing the names of some of the corporations exploring the Amazon and Mato Grosso do Sul areas, in Brazil. At the end of the carpet the word Amazon was written in blood. The performer, wearing a white dress full of leaves, had in her hands some balloons covered in blood written with more names of corporations linked to the agribusiness. As she walked the red carpet, she slowly threw and stomped on the balloons with a thin heel, smearing the blood on the carpet and the floor around it. The performance ended with a blood wash. Symbolically, the indigenous people's blood was spilled.



Figures 4 – 6. Video-documentation frames of the performance
Decolonizing the Amazon by AnarkoArtLab [Adrians Black/Amy Gillian Wilson], 2021.
Cameras: Benjamin Ferguson/Marisa Homes

In August 2021, Adrians Black headed to the Consulate General of Brazil in NYC with performative blood and a cleaning broom as *figures* 7, 8 and 9 show. Whilst screaming "*No More Indigenous Blood"* (name of the performance), they "rubbed" its facade with "indigenous blood". A simple and powerful action inviting us to think about the indigenous genocide in favor of the market growth and the inactivity of the Brazilian government in the face of the problem.



Figures 7 – 9. Performance *No More Indigenous Blood*
by Adrians Black, 2021. Video-documentation by Ana Luisa Anjos.

To confront PL no. 490, from August 22nd to the 28th, 2021, in Brasília, Brazil, indigenous people from different ethnic groups all over Brazil gathered at the Fight for Life Camp. Then, between the 7th and 11th of September, indigenous women occupied the space of the National Foundation of Arts (Funarte) of the Federal Government and carried out the II March of Indigenous Women with the theme "Original women: Reforesting minds for the healing of the Earth". Joining this demonstration and in a movement of solidarity and support, Adrians Black, the *AnarkoArtLab*, *Guarani-Kaiowá* women, *Ñandesys* (*Guarani-Kaiowá* female shamans), APIB members, activists, other artists (including vocalist Joe, from the band Gojira) and indigenous leaders of different ethnicities produced, on August 25th, 2021, the *TransArchitecture* performance *Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More*[2], demanding their territorial rights (*figures* 10 and 11). It took place at Três Poderes square, which faces the Federal Supreme Court, also in Brasília.

Figures 10 – 11. Video-documentation frames of the performance *Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More*, 2021, by Adrians Black, the *AnarkoArtLab*, *Guarani-Kaiowá* women, *Ñandesys* (female shamans), *APIB* members, activists, other artists (including vocalist Joe, from the band Gojira). Cameras by Scott, Luan, Fabiana Assis Fernandes, and Robbin Hood.

> Aesthetics is ultimately politics. Where engaged art flourishes, freedom is realized. The key to our collective freedom lies in developing these revolutionary aesthetic sensibilities. (Schleuning 2013, 285)

This performance was a political gesture of bodies legitimized by the potency of their culture and religiosity. It was an expression of the survival of these identities arising from a collectivity that resists and acts. In a circular movement (the circle is a symbolic element that refers to union and to feminist, hermaphroditic and anti-fascist struggles), the *Guarani-Kaiowá* elders began singing and playing traditional instruments, such as the *maracá* and the rainwood. During the act, Adrians Black shouted phrases in opposition to Bill no. 490 while the other protesters/performers raised their clenched fists, tightly holding cloths and making blood flow through their bodies (*figures* 12–16). And thus, within these gestures, where "arms rise, hearts beat stronger, bodies unfold, mouths unravel", they transform "inertia in movement, despair in energy, submission into rebellion […]" (Didi-Huberman 2017).

Figures 12–13. Video-documentation frames of the performance *Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More*, 2021, by Adrians Black, the *AnarkoArtLab*, *Guarani-Kaiowá* women, *Ñandesys* (female shamans), *APIB* members, activists, other artists (including vocalist Joe, from the band Gojira). Cameras by Scott, Luan, Fabiana Assis Fernandes, and Robbin Hood.

Just as the life experience must be outside any power subjection,
it must be liberating, I can no longer see art as a celebration of individuals
(myth-making), but communion of singularities.

(Adrians Black, 2015, conversation with Natasha Marzliak)

As Georges Didi-Huberman (2017) said, "Manifesting oneself is a gesture. It can be a dance gesture and it can also be a gesture of violence, of rebellion." The repetition of voices, songs, gestures and sounds of indigenous musical instruments made the performers go into a trance. It is as if at that moment there had also been a space-time warp, hallucinatory, dissent, with a desire for change. In the encounter of indigenous bodies with the performers, in the encounter of their interiorities, they became involved with the "radical, affective, spiritual exteriority" (Zourabichvili 1997, 2) of the other, which generated a permanent state of transformation, a production of *devenir*.

Figures 14 –15. Video-documentation frames of the performance *Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More*, 2021, by Adrians Black, the *AnarkoArtLab*, *Guarani-Kaiowá* women, *Ñandesys* (female shamans), APIB members, activists, other artists (including vocalist Joe, from the band Gojira). Cameras by Scott, Luan, Fabiana Assis Fernandes, and Robbin Hood.

The materialization of the performance provoked an interval, a hiatus in the space-time of the place of power. The floor in front of the Supreme Court was taken over and transformed into a political space, marked with the blood that dripped from bodies in disobedience. On the occasion of exhibition *Levantes* (2017), by Didi-Huberman, Márcio Seligmann-Silva wrote "The uprisings are red, because they are guided, as Benjamin said, by the spirit of revenge, as liberation from slavery, as a clash against the forces of power: blood runs in the veins and on the ground" (2018). This gesture is a monument gesture that symbolically deterritorializes the space of power, being an expression of the survival of those identities that were considered unworthy of the nobility of being in the world.

Figure 16. Video-documentation frames of the performance *Indigenous Blood: Not a Single Drop More*, 2021, by Adrians Black, the *AnarkoArtLab*, *Guarani-Kaiowá* women, *Ñandesys* (female shamans), APIB members, activists, other artists (including vocalist Joe, from the band Gojira). Cameras by Scott, Luan, Fabiana Assis Fernandes, and Robbin Hood.

when the vast body moves thru battlefield streets
it walks on many legs
hungry cells and angry bellies
guts of anger/blood of anger
anger in the one fantastic throat that cries:
"Now! Now this body sees, this body feels
this body knows and aches, this body
will suffer to be chained no more!"
and when the vast body moves thru battlefield streets
the great buildings tremble...

henry/uaw-mf

(Morea and Hahne 2011, 108)

The performance was documented in a video and the insurgency gestures are raised to images of revolt, of struggle for territory, for justice and for the ancestral memory of indigenous peoples. This documentation is not meant to report or represent the moment of the manifestation, even because "there is no representation without the exclusion of something from the scope of the representation—and representations necessarily exclude infinitely more than they include." (Cohn 2006, 46). The "labeling representations," according to Cohn, "whether hostile, friendly, or ostensibly neutral, exercise power over subjects, not only in organizing how the subject is treated, but in encouraging it to conceive itself through the other's discourse" (41). Through close-ups (affection-images), the camera's hypermobility and the intellectual montage of images, made by Adrians Black, the video also takes a position. Escaping the cliché, it makes voices, songs, music and gestures of insurrection and survival visible and infinite. As an art that promotes a policy through images, it denounces the hegemonic mechanisms of power, which deprive these peoples of their territory and their right to territoriality. It is an invention with a dissenting narrative that aims to "create history with the very detritus of history" (Gourmont 1898, 92), and also a testimony to the ancestral memory of these peoples, their humiliation and genocide, and their uprising. The video is a symptom of past oppression and resistance in the present, a break with the appearance that comes from this dialectical movement, reverberating in the viewer's gaze as a focus of light on the current dark times. By going through the neglected paths of knowledge, identity and memory, the images reveal heterogeneous spaces and temporalities, in a multiple perspective of the world, or rather, in the possibility of the existence of other worlds. Corroborating the history and aesthetics of anarchist social art, this performance and its video documentation are invitations for people to act. More precisely, as Neala Schleuning wrote, the people who participate need to do so in the sense of seeing themselves in the image, which carries its own narrative, also affecting others who are like them:

> Social anarchist art must also appeal on a personal level: "An event becomes real when the pictures become personal."[3] Can people put themselves into the picture? Can people see themselves as active participants? Does the message resonate with them personally and with people like them? Without a personal connection, people will not become engaged politically. (2013, 279)

In a social context that reproduces colonial oppressions, the importance of creating this type of image, political, rebellious and emancipatory, that presents itself "when the energy of refusal lifts the whole space; intense gestures, when the bodies know how to say 'no!'; exclaimed words, when speech rebels and files a complaint at the tribunal of history; burning conflicts, when barricades rise and violence becomes inevitable" (Didi-Huberman 2016, 8). Finally, the images present "indestructible desires, when the power of the uprisings manages to survive beyond its repression or its disappearance" (8).

TransArchitecture - Architectural Project

Based on the relationships between the potency of the body with the space-time, *TransArchitecture* also encompasses an architectural project. Promoting networks and alliances between local and global spheres, *Transarchitecture* focuses on Indigenous's architecture knowledge associated to sustainable energy and surveillance and communication technologies. It comprises the building of two interconnected structures: a community healing, monitoring and reforestation center that foresees the construction of collective spaces for leisure, coexistence and indigenous health, reforestation areas and the insertion of technological devices for invasion monitoring; and a transnational communication support center in a public park in NYC.

The spaces are intended to shelter, welcome and protect the collective and, in terms of form, refer to a hybridization of male and female genitals. Such trans architecture does not seek to correct typically patriarchal practices of housing construction standards. It values the specificity of the communal experience incorporated into matrix forms, such as the cone or the circle, which does not divide the experiences into chunk units. It recognizes, however, the value of height for the protection of the village. Thus, a matrix space experiences the advantage of defensive architectural strategies (*figures* 17-19). The vertical shape has the function of making it high enough for the indigenous people to monitor the approximation of invaders in their territory.

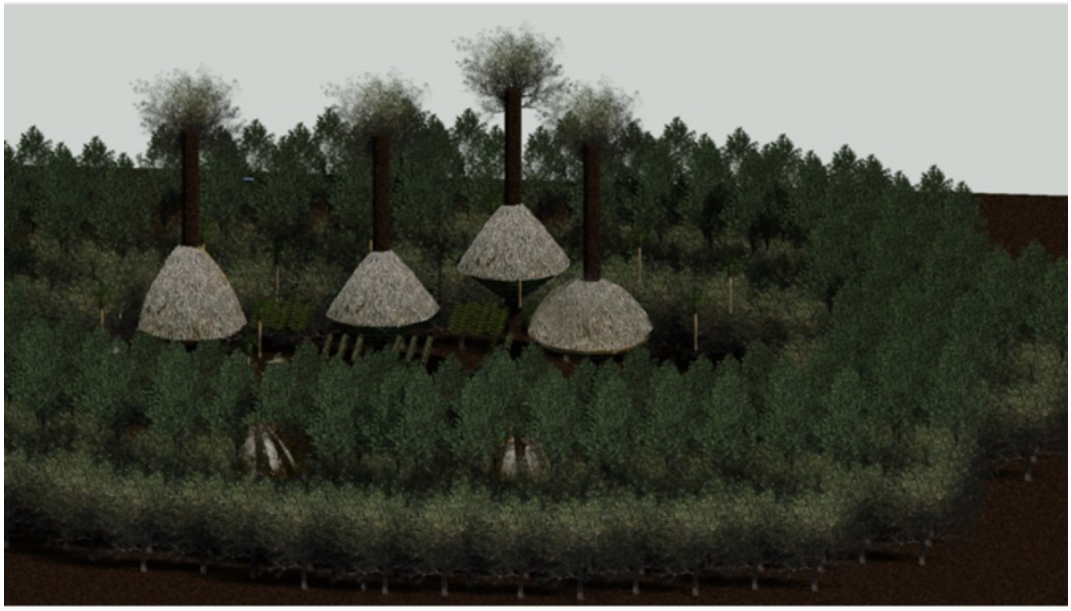


Figure 17. Healing, Monitoring and Reforestation Center to be built in *Guarani-Kaiowá* village in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.

The monitoring center will have a technological arsenal that allows surveillance and reporting in the form of independent communication: cameras (photo and video), drones, cell phones, computers, screens, handheld batteries, GPS devices, night binoculars and bulletproof vests, which will allow the real-time monitoring of lands and forests by the indigenous communities themselves. The project's role is to deliver the equipment, bring in tech-savvy people to set up the surveillance lab, help install cameras at key locations along forest roads and rivers, and train community members in the use and maintenance of the equipment. Once the monitoring systems are in place, communities will be able to use the information gathered to assist in their internal decisions to combat invasions. The system must be managed and maintained by the indigenous communities themselves.

A similar action took place in 2015, when the *Ka'apor* indigenous people, who live in the north of Maranhão, Brazil, autonomously and with the support of Greenpeace, integrated technologies for monitoring and protecting their traditional territory into their daily lives, such as accurate maps, camera traps and satellite trackers. According to Greenpeace website, "one of the last remaining extensions of Amazon rainforest in the state of Maranhão, the *Alto Turiaçu Indigenous Land* (TI) suffers intensely from invasions by loggers and hunters" (2015) which deforest and degrade forests due to illegal logging. Camera traps are cameras with motion and temperature sensors, installed in strategic places in the indigenous land and which allow the capture of images from logging trucks. Also, silently, trackers were installed on these trucks, configured to send, every 5 minutes, important information about the route of illegal timber transport to the computers installed in the indigenous community.

The healing center will have modular spaces for rest, collective cooking, healing practices and maintenance of indigenous health, such as the preparation of medicine from plants, art projects, and chemical substance abuse treatment. Between the healing and monitoring houses, passages and open spaces will be built for meetings and the construction of gardens and vegetable gardens associated with reforestation. Environmental sustainability is important for the community to face deforestation and firefighting actions in order to transform the indigenous territory into an agricultural area for agribusiness.

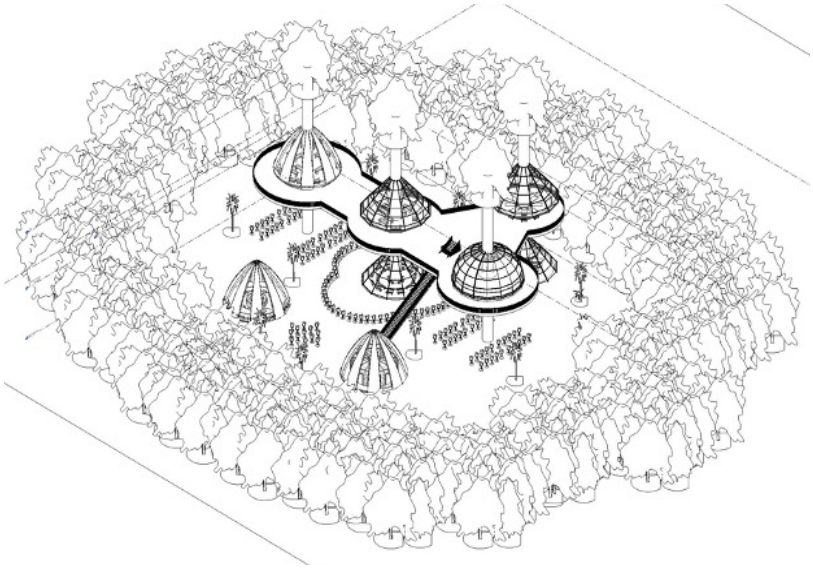


Figure 18. Healing, Monitoring and Reforestation Center to be built in *Guarani-Kaiowá* village in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.

It is a proposition of sustainable spaces and collective coexistence. In contrast to the architecture implemented in Brazil since colonization, which often clashes with our particular climate and social conditions, *TransArchitecture* is concerned with adapting to the environment where the architectural project will be built, assimilating the architectural solutions of indigenous knowledge for the construction of these spaces. In addition, indigenous environmental knowledge, which promotes the maintenance of ecosystems, a primary source of global biodiversity, should be considered. This construction also includes sustainable non-indigenous technologies, such as solar panels, some thermal insulation materials, rainwater harvesting systems and energy mills technology. In addition to indigenous construction techniques and sustainable materials, the project takes into account the immaterial aspects of the indigenous identity, their ways of being and living together.

The second structure of *TransArchitecture* is an extension center to be established in a wooded garden or park in NYC as *figure* 20 shows. It will act as an interaction and awareness space throughout a direct mode of communication from indigenous communities to people beyond Brazil's borders, allowing indigenous self-representation of everyday life and their struggles for survival. In the transit between physical and communicational/networked spaces, it is a relational place that promotes exchanges of knowledge in a dialogical movement of subjects; As Priscila Arantes wrote, "Contrary to the visualization techniques developed at the time of the renaissance that placed its fundamental accent on the gaze of the unique and immobile subject, contemporary technologies put into debate a subject in transit, in constant movement and in permanent connection" (2007, 64) with the other and with reality. People in New York could learn about the history of indigenous ethnicities, their language, their bio-architecture, their food and agroecology, their crafts, their rituals and the use of natural resources to heal diseases. In addition, indigenous people could send messages as well as arson and invasion footage. The objective is to break the silence imposed on indigenous people and promote the New York public's awareness of indigenous perspectives and experiences without the filters of the traditional media apparatus. Thus, through encounter and exchange, they could also act as collaborative guardians of the forest.

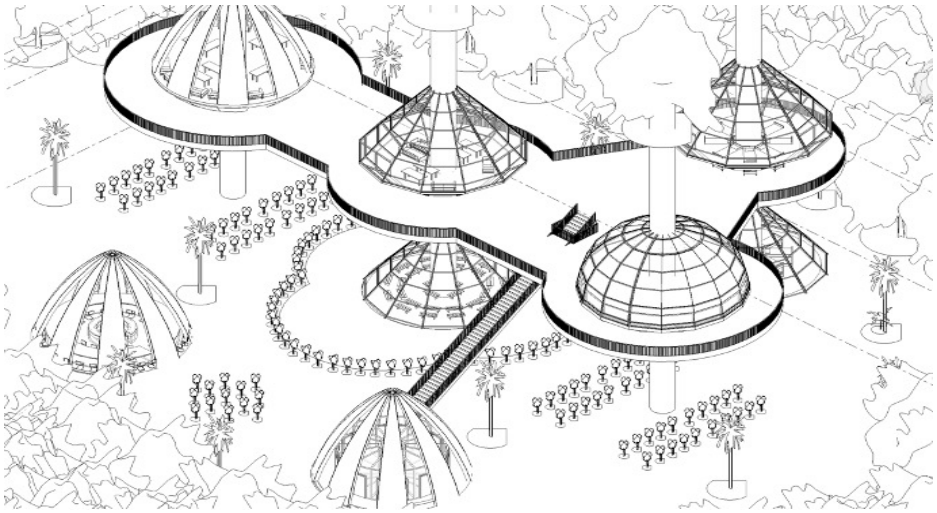


Figure 19. Healing, Monitoring and Reforestation Center to be built in *Guarani-Kaiowá* village in Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil.

Figure 20. Project image of the Extension Center for
Coexistence and Transnational Communication in NYC.

Between transmedia aesthetics and the decolonial and anarchist (ethical) motivation proposed by Adrians Black and managed by them and the collaborators of *TransArchitecture*, the extension meets the idea of the social role that art can play: "speaking about spaces in flux and space-agent artists means, at the same time, to understand (…) the social role of contemporary art as experience and living, as an intersubjective, phenomenological, interfaced construction" (Arantes 2007, 170). The extension can establish a permanent dialogue between indigenous leadership, activists and scientific and artistic communities, making their poignant voices present, in a plural world and not to find themselves "in the ways of the great unknowns" (Esbell 2018, 85) of the representations of society, because it is in the "showing oneself, in this collective saying, that all the strength resides of art among us, Indigenous, and not in the central idea of a fixed point for the pure abstraction of the external other" (85). It is like the African proverb that Mia Couto wrote at the beginning of her book A Confissão da Leoa (2012), "Until the lions invent their own stories, the hunters will always be the heroes of the narratives of hunting." Through an art-making that starts from their own worldview and knowledge, the indigenous collective subject reaffirms its identity in the present and forces the reinterpretation of the colonizing past and its reductionist, silencing and violent narrative. As Danner et al., regarding decoloniality and the Brazilian indigenous aesthetic-literary voice-praxis, "their voice-praxis is irreplaceable in the process of maturation of our national history, including for the correction of modernity in a more general way" (2020, 72). Faced with the reproduction of violence in the expansion of the imperialist system of the global north and through dialogue and collaboration with indigenous communities, *TransArchitecture* opts for decoloniality, in the unequivocal desire to foster the coexistence - in networks - of worlds. In Mignolo's words about the decolonial option:

> Fortunately, the de-colonial option allows for a conception of reproduction of life that comes from the *damnés*, in Frantz Fanon's terminology, that is, from the perspective of the majority of people on the planet whose lives were declared dispensable, whose dignity was humiliated, who- se bodies were used as a work force: reproduction of life here is a concept that emerges from the Indigenous and enslaved Afros in the formation of a capitalist economy, and that extends to the reproduction of death through Western imperial expansion and the growth of a capitalist economy. That is, the de-colonial option that nourishes de-colonial thinking in imagining a world in which many worlds can co-exist. (2007, 17-18)

According to Pedro Paulo Gómez, through coloniality "it was possible to combine the hierarchy and the establishment of borders between people, places, languages, knowledge, actions, teaching, memories, races, etc" (2019, 371) and, in this way, human beings are separated into two categories: humanitas and anthropos, the latter being considered inferior, "a being stripped of human attributes, including reason and sensitivity. And as a consequence of this lack, the anthropos will be unable to cultivate civility, culture, moral development and material progress; and for his inability to create destined to be an imitator of the practices and attributes of humanitas."[4]

Considering or knowing, the worldview and the way of relating to two people who were humiliated and tortured (physically and psychologically) throughout the history of colonialism and the implementation of capitalism in Brazil, *TransArchitecture* starts from a place "where the humanities, the arts and the activities – many times excluded or totally cornered to reduced spaces in training institutions and in the curricula – can find a non-subordinate place for creation" (369–370,). Self-managed, non-bureaucratic and non-hierarchical, *TransArchitecture* is a "lifeworld", in Bamyeh's term (2009, 33), without western/rational/colonial systems. In his words,

> Sometimes these spaces are called *lifeworlds*, although the term itself is not, strictly speaking, part of the heritage of anarchist thought. But in any case it points in general to a social space characterized by living dynamism, interaction, negotiations, and flux, a space to which one may contrast the rigid world of systems—that is, institutions (most importantly the state) that claim to stand in, embody, or represent such a lifeworld in stable, bureaucratic, and standard ways. These spaces are regulated by practical ethics that evolve out of environments lacking in unnecessary coercive resources but rich in human connections. These ethics may therefore be said to be autonomous rather than legal, in the sense that they evolve out of communicative acts or convictions rather than decrees by distant authorities.[5]

The project also foresees that the prototype of this extension will be built according to local material possibilities and its maintenance will have to be done by the community of anarchist supporters and activists in NYC (*figures* 22, 23 and 24), people who are already used to autonomously managing certain structures, such as community planting spaces, supermarkets with products from small farmers and systems of exchange of services and mutual aid.

Finally, this transarchitectural proposal seems to be in line with the post-anarchic ideas that emerged from the 1970s and 1980s and persist to the present day, which abhors ideological platitudes and impotent dreams to foster, beyond imagination, the doing, and also, inserting the question of native peoples in Brazil, approaching the decolonial turn. *TransArchitecture* is a concrete program for the transformation of the body and space-time, which aims to satisfy real problems.

> The despatialization of post-Industrial society provides some benefits (e.g. computer networking) but can also manifest as a form of oppression (homelessness, gentrification, architectural depersonalization, the erasure of Nature, etc.) The communes of the sixties tried to circumvent these forces but failed. The question of land refuses to go away. How can we separate the concept of space from the mechanisms of control? The territorial gangsters, the Nation/States, have hogged the entire map. Who can invent for us a cartography of autonomy, who can draw a map that includes our desires? (A.O.A 1897)

Figure 22–24. Project images of the Extension Center
for Coexistence and Transnational Communication in NYC

Dourados Indigenous Reserve, *Kuñangue Aty Guasu* and International Solidarity

As a rule, Indigenous Reserves are not *Indigenous Lands* (TI) traditionally occupied by natives, but lands donated by third parties, acquired or expropriated by the Union and destined for the permanent possession of indigenous peoples. They are part of the state heritage and are under its guardianship. *The Dourados Indigenous Reserve* (RID), in Mato Grosso do Sul, is today a small part of what was once the land of the *Guarani-Kaiowá* people. It was demarcated in 1917 by the extinct Indian Protection Service (SPI) and a large part of its former territory was transformed into a colony where indigenous people were used as cheap labor for agricultural work. About the colony and the expulsion of the *Guarani-Kaiowá* from their traditional territories, Levi Marques Pereira wrote:

The National Agricultural Colony of Dourados – CAND was established in an area of three hundred thousand hectares, divided into family plots of thirty hectares, which overlapped a large part of the territory of the Tekoha Guasu Kanindeju. In this process, many communities were expelled from their traditional lands, causing a trauma in their histories, always remembered in the narratives of their current leaders. (2014, 3)

The indigenous people were left with a much smaller territory (3,475 hectares), mapped and subdivided, imitating properties, in addition to being acted upon by official indigenous bodies of the Brazilian State, such as the SPI, from 1910 to 1967, and the *Fundação Nacional do Índio* (FUNAI), from 1967, in a process of colonizing territorialization. According to Brand, "The loss of land was accompanied by the direct and permanent interference of the State in the daily life of the Village, with the corresponding imposition of new leadership and, progressively, [...] the division in plots of land and the disarray of kinship and solidarity relationships" (Brand 1993, 244).

Today the RID has a population of over twelve thousand people with restricted access to natural resources, which is a cause of hunger and indigenous misery. It is made up of two villages, Bororó and Jaguapiru, where indigenous people from the *Guarani-Kaiowá*, *Guarani-Ñandeva* and *Terena* ethnic groups live, in addition to Paraguayans and Brazilians who went there due to marriage. The Reserve borders the ring road that connects the city to the MG-156 motorway, and is next to soy, corn and sugar cane plantations, where some of them continue to work as labour for agribusiness and "at the service of deforestation" (Brand 2016, 39). It is also important to point out that "When indigenous people submit themselves to receive wages, the Guarani 'way of being' becomes invalidated, since it dismantles their relationships, weakens and fragments their family structure, further fostering the undermining of traditional culture." (Santana Junior 2009, 14). Therefore, in the RID and its neighbouring camps, with the territorial

confinement, "the scarcity of natural resources, the large existing population, the proximity to the urban perimeter and the high level of misery, make the indigenous population rebuild their life references to seek survival, abandoning elementary cultural traits (those that still remain), since they can no longer survive from gathering, hunting, fishing, and agriculture."[6] In addition, the public policies implemented there since the 2000s "aim to insert the indigenous population even more into the local economy, with a view to encouraging commercial activities."[7]

In opposition to all these violences, which subjugate their collective identity, religiosity, territoriality and ancestral knowledge, the *Guarani-Kaiowá* women (*figure* 25) and *Ñandesys* (female shamans) constituted, em 2006, the *Assembly of Guarani and Kaiowa Indigenous Women* (named *Kuñangue Aty Guasu*).[8] They promote political and artistic mobilization, as well as spiritual empowerment of the community. In the ancestral perspective of this ethnicity, the *Ñandesys* and female elders are the guardians of their knowledge, cosmology, philosophy and culture. Thus, they are representatives of *Guarani-Kaiowá* resistance history. The Assembly is a space for the exchange of information and independent communication, denouncing human rights violations and developing resistance and upheaval proposals. Present at the Assembly are the *Nhandesys* (*Ancients-Jary*) and *Nhanderus* (*Ancients-Ñamõi*), young people, children, social movements, activists, international and national press, indigenous organizations, university researchers, as well as regional political representatives, state and federal governments concerned with indigenous issues. Annually, important issues are debated, namely: racism, prejudice, religious intolerance, demarcation of traditional lands, viability of citizenship, rights of indigenous peoples, elders, women, children and adolescents, public security, participation and social organization based on ancestral knowledge, multiple forms of violence that permeate their daily lives, such as domestic violence, violence by the State and by gunmen in the region, food/crop in terms of food autonomy and consumption of pesticide-free food and impacts of monoculture on the surroundings of the Guarani and Kaiowá villages, the environment, the climate and the *Guarani-Kaiowá* struggle and mobilization agenda.

Figure 25. Kuña Aranduha (Jaqueline Gonçalves) in front of the poster of the Assembly of *Guarani-Kaiowá* Indigenous Women (*Kuñangue Aty Guasu*). Photography from Facebook of the Assembly.

As Didi Huberman (2016) recalled what Freud said about desire, the concretion of dreams and the push of freedom (*Freiheitsdrang*), "The dream leads us into the future since it shows us our realized desires; but this future, present for the dreamer, is modeled, by indestructible desire, in the image of the past" (Freud 1993, 527); here, it is the presence of resistance built in the image of knowledge and the indigenous ancestral being. Despite all the pain, humiliation and injustice, the desire for emancipation, which shapes a future with a view to the current situation but also to their traditions (the past), the *Guarani-Kaiowá* people movement.

Joining *Kuñangue Aty Guasu*, Adrians Black proposed the construction of a prototype of the architectural project by *TransArchitecture* at *RID*. Taking into account that indigenous constructions "condense a web of knowledge and techniques, symbolic, practical and social uses" (Gallois 2010, 120), *TransArchitecture*, in its symbolic and formal aspects, wants to be in line with the ethos and the social and territorial organization of the Guarani peoples. When designing areas for agriculture, reforestation and religious activities, for example, it would corroborate the Guarani idea of *tekohá*, which is their home and where social relations, ceremonies and religious rituals take place. *Tekohá* means the place of the Guarani way of being, of their *teko*, a physical place that connects with their cosmovision (*Weltanschauung*), which comprises philosophy, values, postulates, psyches, ethics. It is noted that *tekohá* "must necessarily include the *ka'aguy* (woods), an element appreciated and of great importance in the life of these indigenous people as a source for gathering food, raw material for building houses, production of utensils, firewood, medicine, etc," [9] being also of paramount importance in its cosmology: the "*ka'aguy* is the stage of mythological

narratives and home of countless spirits."[10] Driven by *mborayu* (meaning "the spirit that unites us" for the Guarani people) and willing to oppose the current problems of violence and disputes over territories from the deep connection with ethnic ancestry, the way of relating with nature, with religiosity, and taking into account *tekoyama*, which is the ideal way of living, *TransArchitecture* is a place of becoming that, through networks of knowledge and being, connects a place where one is to another place where one could go. Currently in constant interaction, negotiation, exchanges and flow of ideas with representatives and supporters of the *Guarani-Kaiowá* indigenous people, *TransArchitecture* is transformed from indigenous cosmology, where "subjects and society are equipped in thoughts and, earthly and spiritual existence, and of concrete and symbolic coexistence world practices."[11]

Contrary to institutionalized and commodified art, which imprisons and compromises creation, *TransArchitecture* moves away from the capitalist logic, linked "to the profit motive, and to the need for mindless consumption of objects" (Schleuning 2013, 285) to be "revolutionary, especially when it serves the politics of freedom and a realizable future."[12]

From the connection with the women representatives of *Kuñangue Aty Guasu*, a movement of international solidarity emerged (*figure* 29). The *AnarkoArtLab* collective and the French band *Gojira*, through a campaign that auctioned some musical instruments signed by them and members of the band Metallica and raised $320,000 for the construction of healing houses and a reforestation movement at RID, as *figures* 26, 27, 28 show (a part of the money was donated to APIB). The construction of healing houses and their surveillance monitoring (the delivery of equipment has already started by Adrians Black at the end of 2020 and effective monitoring is still in the project discussion phase) can be understood as an act of insurrection, since its construction symbolizes the desire to rescue memory, religious practices, and territory.

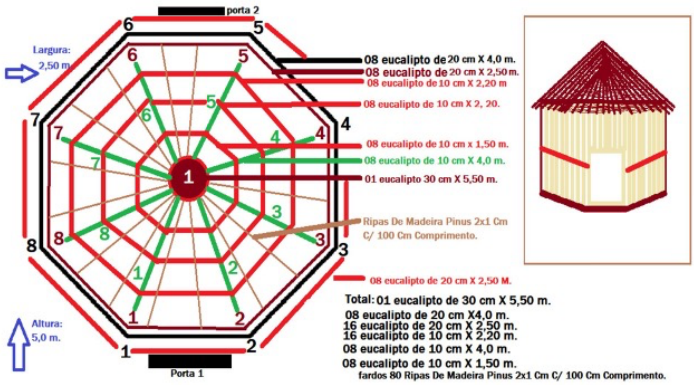


Figure 26. Architecture project made by *Guarani-Kaiowá* Indigenous with financial support by Gojira metal band campaign, 2021.

Figure 27. First Healing house from *Gojira/Anarkoartlab* Campaing,
Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, August 2021.

Figure 28. Joe from Gojira Planting the first tree for the healing houses project.
Mato Grosso do Sul, Brazil, August 2021.

Figure 29. International Solidarity Campaign Slogan.

Some healing houses were already underway when they were affected by criminal fires that, according to the *Guarani-Kaiowá* leaders, are promoted by the indigenous people from the Dourados Reserve, those who became evangelicals (linked to the *Caiuá* Presbyterian Evangelical Mission, a religious system from the *karaí*, the non-indigenous) and today they dispute the space of power based on faith. The presence of new external religious orders promotes the community's disarticulation, its sense of union and cooperation, breaking with the spiritual relationship that the indigenous traditionally have with the territory. As a result of this disarticulation, and covered up by farmers and militias, who have economic interests in these territories, many indigenous people carry weapons, plant using pesticides, in addition to destroying the cultivation of traditional medicinal plants.

It is precisely at this point that *TransArquitecture* finds obstacles in this collaboration, mainly because there is much despair regarding the autonomous monitoring phase. In addition to these peoples having been victims of the violent historical process of the country and the current state neglection, they are also victims of people who belong to their own community, but who have gradually disconnected themselves from their ancestry, religiosity and sense of territoriality, in a process of deculturation and distancing of their ethnic identity. Producing images that denounce one's own people is not a simple thing to do. Some protect family members, others fear possible retaliation. Often, they prefer to seek the judicial system, especially when there is a threat to women's lives. Laws can bring a first feeling of security, but that soon fades in the face of the danger lurking in their daily lives, far from the courts. When accused, many aggressors fail to comply with court decisions. The fear of implementing a surveillance system ends up turning them into facilitators of violence and the consequent possible dilution of their resistance within the system that subjugates them.

Final Considerations

TransArquitecture is a political and social transmedia art program. Since the first event at Judson Church, in 2019, approaching the current social movements of resistance and decolonization, it creates acts of denunciation and protest, performances, construction of non-oppressive and anti-authoritarian spaces, as well as promoting international solidarity to support the fight for lives and emancipation of the territories of indigenous peoples in Brazil and of the environment which they are guardians to. The program comprises processes of deterritorialization of the political, social and economic nature of modern/colonial hegemony with the aim of reterritorializing indigenous people space-time and identities, marking their insubordination in the face of domination and subalternization. Its actions are quintessential anarchist and anti-colonial gestures that carry the emancipation at the moment of making art. It is an alternative way of making art, dynamic, according to Jesse Cohn, which escapes representation and alienating forms to embrace "the world of multiplicity and motion,"[13] which is "the essence of living."[14] An anarchist social aesthetic that "does not simply map the ideal onto the real, or take the ideal for the real; rather, it discovers the ideal within the real, as a moment of reality."[15] Through art, *TransArchitecture* seeks collective freedom and a possible future, different from the present, and therefore, it seems to suggest revolutionary aesthetics as Schleuning wrote about radical and social anarchist art, which is in favor of life and against the mechanisms of power that territorialize and aestheticize it.

TransArchitecture is a work in progress that does not aim at an end. Faced with the current humanitarian, environmental and health crisis, indigenous populations have a lot to teach due to their way of life, whose ancestral knowledge is better related and shows more respect for each other and for nature. In addition to the continuous support to the *Guarani-Kaiowá* of Mato Grosso do Sul, Adrians Black want to propose the architectural project to other indigenous communities and then connect them to other parts of the world through other extension points, multiplying communication between the Indigenous villages in Brazil, in addition to intercultural exchanges and awareness raising.

Figure 30. *Guarani-Kaiowá* Indigenous People, APIB members, *Gojira* and Adrians Black/*AnarkoArtLab* in International Solidarity

It's hard to revive one's dreams,
build from the heterogeneous,
develop the art of reinventing one's own life in another way,
hitherto mutilated.
That's why we engender endless uprisings.
Endless as frequently everything repeats itself, everything fails;
everything fails on the shores of conformism
or against the cliffs of the services of order.
Starting over, however, is also endless.

(Didi-Huberman 2017)

Author Biography

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Notes

1. All translations are my own.
2. The name of the performance is the same of the international journey promoted by *APIB* (Articulation of Indigenous Peoples of Brazil) between October 17 and November 20, 2019, which toured 12 European countries with the aim of putting pressure on the Brazilian government and the agribusiness companies to comply with international agreements on climate change and human rights, to which Brazil is a signatory.
3. CBS-TV news report on Neda, 6/22/09, the young Iranian woman killed during political protests whose image became an icon for resistance.
4. Ibid., 71.
5. Ibid., 33.
6. Ibid., 6
7. Ibid., 13
8. This Assembly is linked to *Articulation of the Indigenous Peoples of Brazil - APIB*, a non-governmental organization created in 2005 by the indigenous movement Camp Terra Livre, which is a political mobilization that produces indigenous actions and manifestations in Brasilia (capital of Brazil) every year, making visible the situation of indigenous rights and demanding that the Brazilian State meet its demands. *APIB* is an instance of national reference for the indigenous movement in Brazil. The organization is managed by the indigenous peoples and supports the regional indigenous associations and was born with the purpose of strengthening the union of peoples from different regions of the country against threats and aggressions against indigenous rights.
9. Almeida & Mura 2003, apud Santana Junior 2009, 2.
10. Ibid., 2.
11. Goettert apud Mota 2015, 87.
12. Ibid., 285
13. Cohn, 2006 apud Schleuning, 2013, 279.
14. Ibid., 279.
15. Ibid., 279.

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Through Technologies of Communication and New Media Practices: [Un]aesthetics, [Un]mensch

Katarina Andjelkovic

Abstract

Through technologies of communication and new media practices, such as speculative media interfaces, our posthuman society combats a globalized "technosphere" causing the planet and its inhabitants to undergo a profound crisis. Such new media practices, in their technique and epistemological aspects, stand as the provocative potential of the dialectics of nature and culture and its role in critically exploring the implications of emerging technologies in the communication processes in urban space. The hypothesis is that speculative media interfaces can be used to explore the co-existence of human and non-human futures in urban space under the environmental crisis today. I ask how interface's 'non-human eye' as a communication device can be related to Bernard Stiegler's (1952-2020) endeavor to understand technical evolution by provoking a revision of the whole of a non-human agency in history? What 'otherness', such as Benjamin's 'angel of history' (*Unmensch*), may have revolutionary forces that indicate a way out of our Anthropocentric perspectives? These questions not only aim to open new perspectives on media practices, but also to contribute to create space for discussion about alternative ways of understanding the relationship between human beings and technology under these transforming conditions. The studies have shown that the integration of speculative media interfaces into architectural aspects and interactions relied heavily on physical integration of contents into the environment and levels of mobility, and as such presumed the prevalence of anthropocentric perspectives to the detriment of non-human aspects. For this reason, ways of thinking and designing for human-nonhuman interactions at city scale remains largely unexplored. In this article, I will discuss how media interfaces, as communication devices, can be used to investigate more than human futures.

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Introduction

Although the way architects design space relies crucially on their own experience, they have only rarely focused on non-human factors, such as the nature of devices of communication and new media practices that equally participate in shaping the urban spaces we inhabit. Likewise, technology and media which are designed to support our everyday lives, have started to steer our reality. As Francesco Casetti noted and explained with his notion *mediascapes*, today we inhabit "space which is not just a landscape containing media but rather a physical environment that (while accommodating devices) transmits and processes messages."[1] According to Casetti, "this optical-environmental arrangement implies a temporary suspension of the immediate interaction with the world, and its reactivation through other means…."[2] As a consequence, space is no longer a neutral container in which media can simply take place or come to pass; it responds to the presence of media.[3] Moreover, the media that we use and technological processes that shape our interactions in space, bring forth the question of our co-existence with technology in the space we regularly inhabit.

Over the past decades, architects and urbanists have been trying to understand and guide these new conditions. They are finding that media is reconfiguring the regimes of more than human futures in urban settings, radically redefining qualities of real space through the qualities of virtual worlds. Nevertheless, the studies have shown that the integration of speculative media interfaces into architectural aspects and interactions relied heavily on physical integration of contents into the environment and levels of mobility, and as such presumed the prevalence of anthropocentric perspectives to the detriment of non-human aspects. For this reason, ways of thinking and designing for human—nonhuman interactions at city scale remains largely unexplored. In this article, I will discuss how media interfaces, as communication devices, can be used to investigate more than human futures in the world dominated by the mass media. By analyzing the integration of diverse types of communication devices, such as smart phones, computer screens and other urban screens, not to control but rather to shape interactions in the urban space, I will deal with the basic conditions of designing for the human-technology interactions at city scale.

Within a few years, the passive physical world defined by purely functional structures which give people shelter, and in which we consume products and interact with the world by way of screens, will be rendered obsolete by intelligent environments in which everyone and everything (people, objects, spaces) will both generate and consume information and, ideally, transform it into knowledge.[4] Architecture, which organizes human activity by means of the construction of space, has the potential to play a key role in this new, hybrid situation by redefining itself as an interface for interaction.[5]

The Case Study "Key of the Game"

I tested the hypothesis in the case of the research project *Key of the Game – The Conquest of Belgrade Fortress*[6] (2010, Fig. 1) performed at University of Belgrade, by analyzing both urban objects and urban practices in connection to human-technology interactions. The research is set in the domain of interactive urban environment with a screen as an interface. In this analysis, interface is not merely an object or boundary points but "autonomous zones of activity"[7] or, more precisely, interface is the means by which interaction or communication is achieved.[8] It is essentially related to the place at which independent and often unrelated systems meet and act on or communicate with each other (the man-machine interface).[9] I am specifically interested in the ubiquity of digital information and ways we approach to it through the interfaces. In this context, the focus should rather be given to the ways this information is related to social interaction, for example: human engagement in urban space, such as participatory culture or processes of social-spatial inclusion. To enable the qualities of these relations to become part of the analysis, and bring them into play, I am taking the scenario of Foucault's *heterotopia*. The *heterotopia* is considered an instrumental device not only due to its ability to remain outside of all places,[10] but rather given its capacity to keep the dynamic space of relations with all the other sites be they real or virtual. In such a way, it suspects, neutralizes or inverts the set of relations that they happen to designate, mirror or reflect.[11] Implementing Foucault's scenario into my research, *Key of the Game* research project was designed as a space occupying alternately virtual and real environments and distributing knowledge, during game playing in the Belgrade Fortress area. The interfaces (screens) are scattered across the Fortress and the Kalemegdan park area, and function as relational devices through which players take interactive roles and are guided virtually to move physically through the site. Their interaction is based on building together the physical and virtual layers of the city in a continuous fashion by providing the complementary analysis of information in the virtual system. The purpose of this project is to provide a reservoir of knowledge about the city that would be used to devise environmental models for the preservation of heritage architecture and its further development.

Linking Digital with Real Spaces, Programming the Actions

The interfaces in the research project are designed primarily to invite social engagement and participation, incessant interactions between actors in real physical space, as well as actors with the space of the immediate interaction with the diverse media devices. All stored data on the web platform would then link the physical spaces, objects in the park and the Fortress with a virtual online resource. Simultaneously, a continuous data circulation is visualized in the trenches of the Fortress, where the collaborative engagement with façade projections is finally executed. Today we are equipped with instruments to record processes faster and transmit them continuously to a network. Thus, structuring data spatially and creating interactive virtual environment can reveal something about the perception in movement and interaction in real space. Information is the key to this process. The method is based on gradual shifts from digital environments into real-life situations by identifying each element of the digital world with its equivalent in the real world. Considering that hierarchies do not exist in digital space to link data, by transferring its phrases and syntaxes to real space, the hierarchies of the physical world could be abolished. In that regard, the implications are also visible in the unconventional language of architecture that uses information as cultural product to incessantly fill the system and transform fixed values and subjects. Manuel Gausa highlights the possibility of implementing these ideas in architecture by emphasizing that "the innovation with which the digital world is constructed needs to be carried over into the physical world."[12] He states that technological advances effectively make it possible to animate structure, anticipate processes and generate flexible, interactive systems. The function of interaction is to impose a new dimension of space that can continually locate us in the virtual network of the city. Deprived of objective boundaries, the architectonic element begins to drift and float, devoid of spatial dimensions (depth, distance, scale, the type of spatial form, openness), but inscribed in the singular temporality of an instantaneous diffusion.[13]

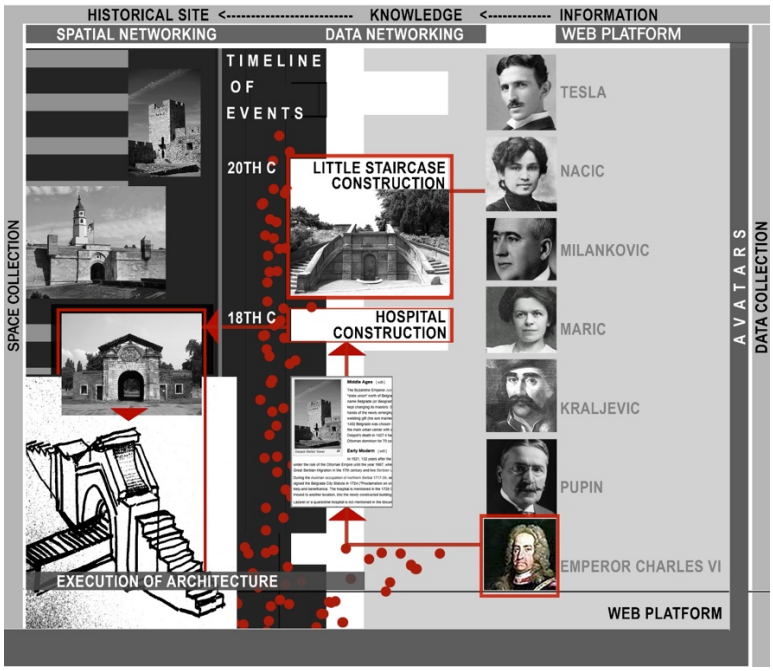

Figure 1. Katarina Andjelkovic, *Key of the Game – The Conquest of the Belgrade Fortress. Web Platform: Processing the Game*. Research project by author, 2010 © Courtesy of the author.

Programming functions comes with the conditioning factors of time and events, and with the consequent actions depending on the evaluation of previous answer provided during the process. These conditioning factors result in a more complex programming that can be better attuned to the potential needs of the actors. All of the actions provided in the system are used for processing environmental models (for example, for the purpose of preservation), they are stored and listed digitally to be activated and processed at any time. In that sense, interfaces are more than devices that communicate between subjects and technology. They are connecting devices between spaces, times, objects and subjects. Moreover, this perspective reveals how interfaces produce knowledge and inspire human interaction in urban space through these connections, such as participatory culture or processes of social-spatial inclusion. In that sense, interfaces are not only a noun but a verb—not only objects but rather practices.

The Capacity to Perceive the Dimension of Otherness

Therefore, technology structures human experience of reality and has the power to shift the relation of human to the world. With Bernard Stiegler, the history recognizes how the technological condition has been repressed in the work of philosophers such as Rousseau, Kant, Husserl and Heidegger. This is the first position from which we observe and analyze interfaces (as connecting technological devices) in relation to the co-existence of human vs. non-human futures in the urban space. The complex linkages raise between media as technology and environmental settings including space in more-than-human worlds. With the progress of modernist thoughts and an increased capacity to perceive the dimension of otherness, we started to see and understand the world around us in alternative ways. In fact, modernity has gauched with the issues of 'non-living' beings and 'non-human' agency in a very paradoxical way: they were constantly drawing orders between those realms and, at the same time, lurking those orders.[14] Moreover, by overcoming the dichotomy nature-culture through modernity, today in times of deep ecological crisis this 'other' as alternative way of thinking may offer us faithful tools to imagine futures. In light of such circumstance, it is significant to reconsider the relationship of technology and nature only to confirm that there are forms of technology that can be looked at as forms of life.

Walter Benjamin was the one to explore the dialectics of nature—culture in very provocative ways. By using conceptual tools to think specific notions, he was deconstructing the anthropocentrism of modernity. With Benjamin, obsession with the characters like angelic beings became the representation of *Unmesch*—image of a cannibal angel—the 'angel of history'.[15] Benjamin's *Unmesch* became the sign of an entity that empathized with the destructive side of nature. Likewise, in Flusserl's philosophical accounts, we find descriptions of a strange creature which comes from hell and is used as a way to think about technology and human nature. Despite the 19th century understanding of the Anthropocentrism in the image shown here (Fig. 2), demonstrating "technology that has an eye," we must remember that Benjamin's angel arrives from hell and can pull us into the unexpected abysses. With Benjamin's observations, *Unmensch* is correlated to the notion of history that is no longer purely Anthropocentric in nature or import solely in concern of a human subject.[16] In this way, both Benjamin and Flusserl created a new worldview where nature has revolutionary forces that indicate a way out of our Anthropocentric perspectives. It can be seen as a way to materialize utopias and exist to enable the construction of alternate worlds within the representation of technologies.

Figure. 2. J.J. Grandville, A Conjugal Eclipse from Another World, 1844
© Un autre monde: transformation, vision, incarnation, ascensions, locomotions (HACHETTE LIVRE-BNF; 1844th edition).

Along with Derrida and Manuel De Landa, Bernard Stiegler strives to understand technical evolution by provoking a revision of the whole of a non-human agency in history. In fact, in Stiegler's general organology—'life'—an account of life when it is no longer just biological but technical, or it involves not just organic matter but organized inorganic matter.[17] From the perspective of a media theorist, historically it was an attractive perspective to understand technology as a subset of a cultural artifact, and vice-versa. In other words, technology is explained in terms of culture and society. This has changed with Stiegler's ideas about technics[18] which reconfigure the opposition between social constructivism and technological determinism. In present times, culture and society are comprehended in terms of technical object. More precisely, Stiegler feels that we urgently need to understand the process of technical evolution, given that we are experiencing the deep opacity of technics."[19] Historically, any technical artefact can be thought of as a series of objects, a lineage or a phylum that can be divided up into generations.[20] Interestingly, in his own observation, artefacts can be traced not just to other artefacts but precisely to human activities such as calculation or certain repetitive sequences of movement, which brings back the human factor and function into the analysis. Depending on how we define technical object—for example a computer can be defined by its form or function—the problem recurs.

Andrés Vaccari & Belinda Barnet remind us that "robot historians will effortlessly cut through our anthropocentric biases: culturalism, biologism, teleology, and determinisms of the social, economic and technological kind."[21] As historian David Edgerton has argued, the machine historians will search for a dynamic in technics that stems neither from biology nor from human societies, a developmental logic that grants machines their own material limits and resistances, their own principles of organization and interbreeding. Importantly, future historians might conclude that it was in fact their own ancestry (in the shape of tools, canoes, language and dwellings) who gave rise to human beings as a species; humans were a fleeting appendage, a bridge between the tool and the Supermachine. This insight calls for a new consideration of technicity, and a new theory of the relationship between human beings and technics. Today, the biosphere reaches the limits of Anthropogenic sustainability. Reticulation that today operates through World Wide Web [www], based on the GPS and on the Cloud, takes form of exospherical infrasomatizations. Search engines, social networks, smartphones, sensors, rfid chips, barcodes, cookies and 'internet of things'—are all becoming mnemo-technical of every material, substance or product. All this constitutes a new stage: the process of exosomatization. And, with exosomatization, biosphere becomes technosphere. This is a phase that will in all probability see the introduction of previously unimagined—or at best vaguely intuited – technologies and formal concepts in every aspect of urban thinking.

In Conclusion

Media infrastructures participate in shaping our ways of perceiving the world. Today, we are increasingly thinking and living under conditions of an effective "programmability of planet earth."[22] We thus need to pay attention to the complex consequences of media becoming environmental and environments becoming mediated. On a discursive level, these transformations are heavily debated in connection to themes like, processes of social-spatial inclusion and exclusion, participatory culture, or within the variety of cultural practices surrounding media, art, and architecture. From this point of view, action and interaction, as well as dynamic relations between human and non-human entities, need to be framed and shaped on a wider range of scales. It allows us to probe deeper into the production of *new media practices as part of urban spaces,* and unpack the struggles and biases inherent in these processes. In consequence, the virtual world is ushering in a space rich in possibilities—a space open to new programs and new spatial definitions, born of operative environments that are capable of 'reacting to' and 'mutating with' reality, and thus capable of 'tuning in' to and 'acting' in it at the same time.

Likewise, interface is no longer primarily understood and defined as a technological *object,* but theorized as zone of activity. As such, interface can be used for further explorations of these dynamic constellations in how it co-constructs the urban spaces of our mediatized cities through constant negotiations between digitization and datafication, privatization and commercialization. This line of research, led by media researchers- to name but a few- Nanna Verhoeff, Shannon Mattern, Simon Wind and Heidi Rae Cooley, has already opened paramount questions such as, "rapid and radical transformations of urban culture and urban publicness," which are "spurred by intensified (global) mobilities, the ubiquity and proliferation of digital information and communication technologies, and the spread of datafication and platformization."[23] This said, human engagement though diverse practices in the urban space such as, urban screens, media architecture, interactive installations, location-based games, augmented reality, mobile mapping and other urban interventions, bring insightful cases of constituting the co-existence of human and non-human futures in the urban space.

Author Biography

Katarina Andjelkovic (PhD, MArch Eng), Atelier AG Andjelkovic, is a theorist, practicing architect, researcher and a painter. Katarina's research, writing and teaching is transdisciplinary and crosses architecture, visual arts and film. She served as a Visiting Professor at the University of Oklahoma (the US), at the Institute of Form Theory and History in Oslo, Institute of Urbanism and Landscape in Oslo, the University of Belgrade, and guest-lectured at TU Delft, AHO Oslo, FAUP Porto, DIA Anhalt Dessau, SMT New York, ITU Istanbul. She has lectured at conferences in more than twenty-six countries in Europe, the UK, the US and Canada; has published her research widely in international journals (Web of Science); won numerous awards for her architecture design and urban design competitions. Katarina won the Belgrade Chamber of Commerce Award for Best Master Thesis defended at Universities in Serbia in all disciplines. Katarina has published two monographs; a book chapter and several journal articles with Intellect. E-mail: katarina.code@gmail.com

Notes

1. Francesco Casetti, "The Projection/Protection complex: Screens, Enclosures, Bubbles," Webinars Screens and the digital mediascape (in Pandemic times). Neuroscience & Humanities Lab Centre for Advanced Studies in Cognitive Neuroscience & the Humanities of the University of Parma, Italy, lecture February 19, 2021. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMweZjNiqQ4&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR1pztSbtXMRzmnmWNFA7p3C8MlpOqXHsc1NVlJX01RZzWU4Io3hOx1MtxM

2. Ibid.

3. Francesco Casetti, "Mediascapes: A Decalogue," *Perspecta* 51: Medium (The MIT Press, 2018): 21.

4. Vicente Guallart, *Media House Project: The House is The Computer. The Structure is The Network* (Barcelona: IAAC Institut d'arquitectura avançada de Catalunya 2004), 30.

5. Ibid, 30.

6. Katarina Andjelkovic, *Key of the Game – the Conquest of Belgrade Fortress*, originally performed in full authorship at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture, as part of the doctoral studies program, during 2010. Later published in: Katarina Andjelkovic, "Spatial Context of the Cinematic Aspect of Architecture" (PhD diss., University of Belgrade, 2015).

7. Alexander R. Galloway, *The Interface Effect* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2012), VII.

8. Definition of interface, *Noah Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language from 1828*, merriam-webster.com. Accessed November 25, 2021. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/interface

9. Ibid.

10. Read in: Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces, Heterotopias," *Architecture, Movement, Continuite 5* (1984): 46–49.

11. Michael Foucault's elaboration in his piece "Of Other Spaces," based on a lecture, but first published in English in 1986.

12. Manuel Gausa, "Theoretical Framework," in Media House Project: The House Is the Computer. The Structure is the Network, ed. V. Guallart (Barcelona: Institut d'arquitectura avançada de Catalunya, 2004), 36.

13. Paul Virilio, *The Lost Dimension*, trans. Daniel Moshenberg
(New York: Semiotext(e), 1991), 13.

14. It is a specific field of the philosophy of history, pioneered by Walter Benjamin. Manuel De Landa's review in his *A Thousand Years of Non-Linear History* (A Swerve Edition, Zone Books, 1997), tried to provoke a revision of the whole of a non-human agency in history. He demonstrated how thinkers and artists were dealing with the link between 'the living' and 'the non-living', claiming that these are the artificial means constantly transformable across the boundaries, and they seem to problematize the very notion of life.

15. About Benjamin's 'angel of history' read in: Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968).

16. Beatriz Hanssen, *Walter Benjamin's Other History: Of Stones, Animals, Human Beings, and Angels* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 48.

17. According to Stiegler, human is being exteriorized into technics, artifacts, or into the inorganic organized matter, that culture and society constitute themselves contingently. Bernard Stiegler, "Elements for a General Organology," *Derrida Today* 13, 1, (2020): 72-94.

18. For Stiegler, *technics* are techno-scientific technology, but also all the ways in which the human is exteriorized into the artifacts.

19. Bernard Stiegler cit. in: Andrés Vaccari & Belinda Barnet, "Prolegomena to a Future Robot History: Stiegler, Epiphylogenesis and Technical Evolution," *Transformations: Journal of Media & Culture*, Issue No. 17— Bernard Stiegler and the Question of Technics (2009).

20. Andrés Vaccari & Belinda Barnet, 2009.

21. Ibid.

22. Jennifer Gabrys, *Program Earth: Environmental Sensing Technology and the Making of a Computational Planet* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2016), 4.

23. Michiel De Lange, Sigrid Merx, and Nanna Verhoeff, "Urban Interfaces: Between Object, Concept, and Cultural Practice," Introduction to *Urban Interfaces: Media, Art and Performance in Public Spaces*, ed. Verhoeff, Nanna, Sigrid Merx, and Michiel de Lange, *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* 22, no. 4 (March 15, 2019), n.p.

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Immersive Environments: Fragmented and Discontinuous Spaces for Action and Art

Francesca Natale

Abstract

The spectator of contemporary art is located in a special operating space during an exhibition, where he/she can participate, take action, modify, intervene, expand: nevertheless, is the possibility of action really the main feature of a work of art, if action is considered as a performance with a clear and specific goal? What will become of the spectator's role, if we shift our conception of the artwork and consider it as something we can't use in a self-evident way? This essay will try to loosen the bond between an active spectator and an artwork recognized as such, and to bring out a disinterested and value-centered approach; in so doing, the aim is to overshadow the need for functionality and action when we deal with art. Immersion appears to respond to the need to be in the image, through a new type of interaction that takes place in real time, offering freedom and the chance to intervene, to participate, to modify the conditions under which experience unfolds: but if the need is to shorten the distance and achieve proximity with the image, to expand it, modify it, to *be in it* as if it was reality, wouldn't it be less costly to experience reality directly, without doubling it? A promising and successful experience in this sense is the ongoing series of *sensitive environments* by Studio Azzurro, an Italian collective of artists: immersive environments where the spectator's actions are not predetermined, he/she is encouraged to interact with the artwork through creative gestures, and the transition from spectator to participant/agent of an immersive artwork is connected with evaluative and operational processes at the same time.

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Introduction

In *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*, James J. Gibson says something quite interesting about his definition of *affordance*: "I have coined this word as a substitute for values, a term which carries an old burden of philosophical meaning. I mean simply what things furnish, for good or ill. What they afford the observer, after all, depends on their properties."[1] The goal is to understand if, when we talk about artistic objects, the so-called "old burden of philosophical meaning" attached to the term "value" is really that old and anachronistic. Shortly afterwards, Gibson adds: "In short, the human observer learns to detect what have been called the values or meanings of things, perceiving their distinctive features, putting them into categories and subcategories, noticing their similarities and differences and even studying them for their own sakes, apart from learning what to do about them":[2] two different approaches coexist in this quote, one strictly classificatory (inapplicable to the artistic discourse: it is not essential to "rank" works of art, outside of the art market); the other properly evaluative, which seems the most suitable in dealing with artworks. To evaluate an artwork is not the same as doing an economic ranking of some sort; works of art cannot be evaluated through hierarchies (comparisons between different artworks are always unbalanced, unfair and, in the end, meaningless). The evaluation process is also not equivalent to the research of something which has "aesthetically superior" properties, or of what is "more beautiful"; whatever "beauty" means, it is not related to objective and visible characteristics of the object in question. When we say that something is "beautiful", "graceful" (or, simply, we think that it is "fine as it is", we "wouldn't change a thing"), we do not rely on those words and concepts, often we don't even use them; we simply wear the dress that fits better according to us, and (in the case of artworks) we read the book that we consider fascinating, or we go back and watch the painting we find compelling. These are "occasions or activities,"[3] as Ludwig Wittgenstein wrote in his *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics*, not words of classifications. Evaluating is questioning why, and how, a specific object has a particular function in our life; this process is a direct consequence of our appreciation of the object, an experience that does not satisfy a need or an interest. We appreciate and enjoy the experience in itself, without any ulterior motive.

A key notion is the concept of "strange tool", coined by Alva Noë in his homonymous book: functionality, instrumentality, and usefulness are pushed into the background when we talk about art; through the Kantian notion of disinterestedness, inevitably linked to an evaluative dimension of aesthetic and

artistic experience, it is possible to loosen the apparently unbreakable bond between art and a spectator that *acts*. "The theory of affordances" Gibson writes "implies that to see things is to see how to get about among them and what to do or not to do with them":[4] the issue is, art does nothing, and with art, we don't do anything. For contemporary art, increasingly directed towards interactive, immersive and participatory practices, an action-centered approach would seem far more appropriate: however, is it really true that in an interactive environment the spectator can only act? The concept of action is definitely nuanced: "action" cannot be defined as "goal-oriented", "task-related", as an efficient performance with a clear goal, especially when we deal with art. Perhaps an interactive environment can *afford* a number of different possibilities, as the analysis of the "sensitive environments" by Studio Azzurro will prove.

Tools and the Meta-Operational Approach

According to Gibson, tools are "detached objects of a very special sort";[5] they can be grasped, carried, manipulated. They can be combined to make new tools, which can be used in every possible way (within certain limits). The notion of "tool" is the *leitmotif* chosen for this essay; although, another concept is necessary, even if it will remain in the background of the analysis: the one of meta-operation. We, as human beings, are capable of *operating on our operations*. According to the Italian philosopher Emilio Garroni, every human operation is included in the framework of meta-operations: in short, one of the distinctive features of human beings is the capability of seeing an object not only for its *a priori*, pre-determined purposes, but also (and most importantly) for its potential, non-immediate, purposes. When we recognize an object (a simple, mundane object, but also a much more complex one), we interpret it through a "perceptive investment," which is of course non-transformative (the object is still and always the same), but can "set up" the object itself depending on the situation we ("we" as in: me + the object I am looking at) are in. The same object is up for potentially *infinite* considerations and points of view: it can operate, and be used, in *infinite* different ways.

This is crucial for the purpose of this essay: it proves that tools (and artistic tools in particular) don't have to be always and immediately available for usage to be considered tools. A stone can be seen as something trivial, not worthy of our attention, during a walk in the woods, but also as something to throw against someone during a heated fight. The object *affords* many different possibilities; but what about works of art? What does all this have to do with them? According to Garroni, artistic activities are *examples* (in a Kantian sense) of this typically human meta-operational capability; what we call "work of art" differs from other objects, because a work of art is not (or should not be) *aimed at something*, following strictly cognitive or communicational goals. Sure, a work of art can aim at anything, and more often than not it does; but it must not be its primary feature, which is instead precisely its meta-operational component.

Framed Environment: Art, Action and Disinterestedness

A work of art is a strange tool; it is an implement or instrument that has been denuded of its function. Art is the enemy of function, it is the perversion of technology. (…) Which is not to deny that there are works of art that may as a matter of fact serve this or that function. Just as something can be a hammer and a paperweight, so something can be, literally, a urinal and a work of art, or a doorknob and an item of sculptural interest.[6]

Alva Noë's interpretation of the gibsonian's approach (often not even explicitly mentioned by the author) is clear: Noë shares a vision according to which dynamic transactions often unfold between us and the objects in our surroundings. In general, seeing and perceiving are activities included in the framework of the entire environment, so not limited to our brain. Seeing is not something that happens within us; we perceive through our acting in the world. Substituting the term *value* with *affordance* strongly suggest a connection with functionality, action, and usability; on the other hand, value is subjective, according to Gibson, no more than a mental phenomenon. The gibsonian approach seems to be clearly action-centered; but how can we relate to an object with which we cannot do anything? Although art looks like technology (and technology organizes our lives and the experiences we have in the world), Noë writes, that is just an illusory resemblance: technology is not technology without a predeterminate goal; and if technology becomes useless, then it is no longer technology, but art. We generally know how to behave around objects: they are placed in a context that

affords instructions on how to use them; everything we encounter on our path is, most of the time, user-friendly. Works of art, on the other hand, are often placed in artificial environments (galleries, museums, exhibitions) that do not provide or explain the terms of use (except for well-known recommendations, such as "do not touch" and "do not stand too close to the artworks"; often even these instructions are absent, or useless, due to the fact that art developed into practices of interaction, touch, modification). Art doesn't seem to follow the rules we already know when we play along in experiencing the world:

Doorknobs don't puzzle us. They do not puzzle us just to the degree that we are able to take everything that they presuppose – the whole background practice – for granted. If that cultural practice were strange to us, if we didn't understand the human body or the fact that human beings live in buildings, if we were aliens from another planet, doorknobs would seem very strange and very puzzling indeed. (…) Design stops and art begins when we lose the possibility of taking the background of our familiar technologies for granted, when we can no longer take for granted what is, in fact, a precondition of the very natural-seeming intelligibility of such things as doorknobs and pictures. Art starts when things get strange. Design organizes and enables; art subverts. It does this by abrogating the background that needs to be in place for things to have their functions.[7]

So, we don't have to act. Art, according to Noë, requires us to stop everything we think we can do with it; we must "stop demanding application, and even pertinence."[8] The transactions we have with this kind of objects are not action-centered: it is a different kind of performance (Richard Schechner called it "the release of undoing"). Certain works of art sure could *afford* some kind of action: I see a burglar ready to attack me, I franticly look around in search of a defense weapon and I spot a Giacometti sculpture; I see it exclusively as something which I can use to defend myself, to hurt the burglar; but for sure I am not seeing the object as it is meant to be seen, that is, as a work of art. In this sense, artistic experience is not only devoid of the necessity of acting, but also of any practical interest: when I engage with a work of art, everything I do is unlikely to be relevant in the world of the artwork, and I, as a spectator, am cut off from that world; my performance is not, by any means, influenced by the properties of the art object.[9] This is an experience that could be defined as "disinterested". Works of art can puzzle us; but they can also bore us to death, as it often is when the object doesn't afford a goal, an action, a job to carry out. When the object isn't *aimed* at something, you don't immediately understand it and it becomes boring; but boredom might be, sometimes, a goal in itself.

The choreography on the stage? The painting on the wall? These are cut off from dancing, or showing, or learning. They stop you dead in your tracks. That is, if you let them. If you suspend. If you interrupt. If you enter that special space and that altered state that art provides or allows. […] Works of art are cut off and they demand that you cut yourself off from your engaged living.[10]

Noë highlights how it is unusual to be bored during our adult life: we have goals to achieve, jobs to complete, assignments to accomplish. Artworks, on the other hand, don't support our constant need for action and practicality: this, if we experience them *as we are supposed to.* That is why the relationship between art and functionality has always been so troubled: a house must be suitable for living (otherwise who would want to live there?), a courthouse needs to appear threatening (otherwise no one would be scared of being on trial and everyone would commit crimes light-heartedly), a bank should suggest an *atmosphere* of honesty and trust (or else who would want to rely on them for their money?);[11] but these are not artistic objects, or at least we generally don't relate to them as if they were. "A true art of architecture" Noë writes "would make inhabitable spaces."[12]

According to Gibson, it is through action that the subject can really get to know and experience the world. Affordances teach us what we can (and cannot) do with objects and tools. But what if the object in question is a *strange tool*, so it doesn't *afford* any actions on our part, at least not in the classical sense we are used to think about action? If we don't act, if we don't accomplish something, as gallery-goers we are at risk of being passive viewers, inactive participants. This was precisely one of the challenges met by interactive, immersive and participatory art: how can the spectator do more than contemplate the artwork? In other words: how can the spectator become an agent?

Interactivity: New Media and Sensitive Environments

The relation between the animal and its environment is not one of interaction in any sense of the word that I understand… it's one of, well, reciprocity's not too bad. A term like 'affordance' that bridges the gap points both ways… Affordances are both objective and persisting and, at the same time, subjective, because they relate to the species of individuals for whom something is afforded.[13]

Interaction seems inadequate to describe the relation between animal and environment, according to Gibson; it seems even less adequate to account for a spectator looking for an artistic performance capable of engage him/her. If we pin-point the most popular art exhibitions over the years, an artistic performance is "engaging" when it activates all the senses of the spectator, entertaining him/her for its entire duration. Immersive, interactive, participatory art (deliberately vague and expandable definitions) sometimes seems to offer interaction as pure sensationalism, mere entertainment, stimulation of the senses for recreational purposes only. Interactive art with an eye for reciprocity, on the other hand, does not seem to be doomed to failure: experiencing interactive art is a complex phenomenon, and it cannot be reduced exclusively to a stimulus to (re)act, to do something, to perform operations through what a computer, a helmet or *datagloves* allow the spectator to do. These actions inevitably lead to a scattered, fragmented experience, during which the only possible goal is to accomplish as many things as possible; there is no freedom, but the duty of keeping up with the requests of virtual interfaces, which afford us so many possibilities that end up with a) inhibiting the spectator, or b) the need to speed up the experience to seize all of them.

If interactive installations were addressed exclusively to our senses, experiencing them would be like being constantly challenged and solicited, forced to participate in an amusement park where we are "kept busy", entertained, and we just have to react to a precise stimulus: nevertheless, "A work of art (…) is more than a stimulus", as Noë states: "it is a response, a transaction, a move".[14] When Gibson describes tools he highlights that "the boundary between the animal and the environment is not fixed at the surface of the skin but can shift"; in general, according to the theory of affordances, we can go beyond the "philosophical dichotomy" of the objective/subjective.[15] Experiencing interactive art is not just a subjective experience if, and only if, our senses are not the only thing that is alerted: that is the main goal of the Italian artistic collective "Studio Azzurro." They work on new media to build a peculiar concept of interactivity, through what they call "sensitive environments": the participation of the spectators is total, imbued with sociality; they do not simply look at the artwork, they "attend" to it. In the works by Studio Azzurro action and contemplation coexist peacefully: Paolo Rosa, one of the collective's founders, argued that "action" and "contemplation" are complementary, and equally necessary, concepts. Passively wearing a virtual reality headset has nothing to do with an artistic experience: thanks to what they define "natural user interface technology", the spectator does not interact with technological prosthesis (a computer mouse, a keybord…) but via "traditional

communicative methods" like touching, breathing and blowing, talking and making gestures. In this way, a "switch on/off logic" in which the technological device is only a mean to an end (if I press a button, something must activate, move, respond somehow) is avoided. Works like *Tavoli perché queste mani mi toccano* (*Tables. Why are these hands touching me*), *Coro* (*Chorus*) and *Il soffio sull'angelo — primo naufragio del pensiero* (*Breath on the angel—first shipwreck of thought*) as *figures* 1, 2 and 3 show, including figures projected on the surfaces of tables, a square made of felt, parachutes, figures that responds to our touch, our steps and breath. These are what Studio Azzurro call *sensitive environments* (in the beginning they were simply called "video-environment"); they are "sensitive" because they are actually modified, influenced, moulded by the spectator's gestures, his/her intervention or simple presence. Studio Azzurro highlights the importance of a "behavioral attitude" of the spectator, not limited to the activation of devices; a creative reciprocity is at stake.

Figure 1. Still from Studio Azzurro, Tavoli. *Perché queste mani mi toccano* [Tables. Why are these hands touching me], 1995.[16]

Figure 2. Studio Azzurro, *Coro* [Chorus], 1995.
Photo of the author (during the retrospective "Studio Azzurro. Immagini sensibili" held in Milan, Palazzo Reale, from April 9 to September 4, 2016).

Figure 3. Still from Studio Azzurro, *Il soffio sull'angelo* (*primo naufragio del pensiero*) ["Breath on the angel (first shipwreck of thought)], 1997.[17]

Of course, pushing the concept of interactivity to its limits, an objection might be that an art installation that aspires to be truly interactive should give the spectator the chance to step in and incorporate whatever he/she feels is missing. This is the ultimate form of reciprocity, and the dichotomy subject/object can be overcome: the subject is not just interpreting the artwork but cooperating with it, and the art object is more than a simple object. In their path to create authentically collective and public spaces for art, Studio Azzurro started an ongoing series called *Portatori di storie* (*Story Bearers*): this project involves creating relationships with virtual people walking back and forth, who can be stopped by the spectator with a spontaneous wave of the hand to listen to their stories. Apparently, the only action possible for the spectator is a gesture, so there is no concrete intervention in the artwork: one of the last projects of the series, *Miracolo a Milano* (*Miracle in Milan*), doesn't even allow the spectator to choose the person to talk to; he/her stands in front of a "sensitive mirror", and a person appears to tell a story. Actually, this project goes to show that action as we are used to know it has little or no place in the artistic discourse, in which the spectator can finally find a space free from hectic procedures, uninterrupted actions and requests, efficiency, obsessive and self-referential participation. That is why the dynamic of spectatorship (especially in dealing with contemporary art) is unusual: as spectators we often interact with the artwork through repetitive and self-centered operations like taking pictures, videos, selfies; then, once the task is over (and so our space for action and performance), we no more want to be active participant. We want to be passive spectators once again, to look at the images we produced, to save them and create memories and archives with them. Our space for action is always, when we deal with art, fragmented and discontinuous.

Conclusion

Back to the start, then. Why cannot a theory of affordances completely take over a value-centered approach? What has all this got to do with how we, as spectators, behave in the presence of an artwork? Boris Arvatov in 1925 significantly wrote:

> Other criteria of value now took pride of place: convenience, portability, comfort, flexibility, expedience, hygiene, and so on – in a word, everything that they call adaptability of the thing, its suitability in terms of positioning and assembling for the needs of social practice. (…) The ability to pick-up a cigarette-case, to smoke a cigarette, to put on an overcoat, to wear a cap, to open a door, all these "trivialities" acquire their qualification, their not unimportant "culture." [18] (Arvatov 1997)

These are criteria of value that do not apply to art objects. Opening a door, smoking a cigarette, are actions that I carry out without giving them a second thought; they belong to my knowledge of the world, to my everyday experience of it. Ludwig Wittgenstein, in *On Certainty*, writes that when it's time for me to get out of the chair, I don't question if my two feet are still where they are supposed to be, and working as they always have and always will; it is an action that I do without doubting my ability to accomplish it. Of course, getting out of a chair is part of a much more complex background, but I shouldn't question every second of my every action (if I do, Wittgenstein warns, I am at risk of never being able to finally act). If we "stop doing" instead, as Noë recommends when we deal with art, we are at least partly detached from what we see; if we feel a disinterested pleasure for what stands in front of us (or all around us, in the case of an immersive performance), we as viewers do not limit ourselves to the desire to own that object; we don't care about its use-value, what it can, or cannot, do for us (or what we can do with it). We do not *fetishize* the object in front of us. Then, art is just a pointless game, a hobby, a contemplative distraction? What is the point of the artistic experience? Is there even a point? "Technology serves ends" Noë writes: "Art questions those very ends. Art affords revelation, transformation, reorganization; art puts into question those values, rules, conventions, and assumptions that make the use of technology possible in the first place";[19] art not only cannot be experienced with the same kind of basic confidence we have when we open a door or get out of a chair; it also calls into question all these actions, reorganizing them, highlighting what we thought it was the granted role they have in our lives. A *strange tool* always presents itself, according to Noë, with a precise

demand: "See me, if you can"; you, as a spectator, have to make sense of it, you have to think about it, question it, bring it into focus.[20] That is why "art's effects are not immediate"; they are never granted, unproblematic, or plain. How we relate to art is always up for "criticism, questioning, context, reflection"; the relation is "magnificently and necessarily cultural."[21] When Gibson writes that "*values* and *meanings* of things in the environment can be directly perceived,"[22] this doesn't seem to apply to the art discourse; that is why the affordance theory is at risk of being a reductionist approach when the focus is on art objects of any sort. At the same time, values and meanings are not strictly "subjective, phenomenal and mental": we cannot discard an evaluative approach to works of art, otherwise it would be impossible to understand them, or even to simply be able to talk about them. Suggesting a disinterested approach to art means opening up to the chance to appreciate artworks socially and globally (in what Kant would have called a "subjective universality"); appreciating artworks is not an idiosyncratic, subjective process, a response to a stimulus, an effect which inevitably follows a cause.

It is not contradictory or fundamentally wrong to approach art for the emotional or intellectual impact that often has on us as spectators, agents, participants; art can have many different goals, and be many different things: the point is, we cannot appreciate art just for its effects, otherwise its specificity, its role in our lives would be unexplainable. As Wittgenstein stated, if effects and reactions they provoke are the most interesting traits of artworks, we could replace them pretty easily: with a phantomatic drug that makes you feel the same way, or with another artwork, as if they were interchangeable. Understanding artworks is never a granted or automatic operation; evaluating them means paying a specific kind of attention, focusing on *this* artwork, which we have chosen to attend to. To shorten the time for contemplation and appreciation often means to react to a constant request of participation and action; the alternative approach, here merely hinted at, is to get rid of a "stimulus-response" logic, of an instrumental use of artworks.

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Notes

1. James J. Gibson, *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (University of Michigan: Houghton Mifflin, 1966): 285.
2. Gibson, *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*, 285.
3. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Lectures and Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology & Religious Belief* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966): 3.
4. James J. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (New York: Psychology Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 1986): 223.
5. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual* Perception, 40-41.
6. Alva Noë, *Strange Tools. Art and Human Nature* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015): 97.
7. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 98.
8. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 111.
9. This exact example was made by Bence Nanay in *Aesthetics as Philosophy of Perception* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016): 29-30.
10. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 112.
11. These examples are taken from Adolf Loos, *Spoken Into the Void.*
12. Noë, *Strange Tools,* 112.
13. James J. Gibson, Discussion, in *Cognition and the symbolic processes*, ed. W.B. Weimer & D.S. Palermo (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1982): 234-237.
14. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 96.
15. Gibson, *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception*, 41.
16. Official Youtube channel of the artists, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9sB_CXsimp4
17. Official Youtube channel of the artists, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYwwpJfE1yA&t=33s

18. Boris Arvatov, "Everyday Life and the Culture of the Thing", *October*, vol. 81 (Summer 1997): 126.
19. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 66.
20. Noë, *Strange Tools,* 101.
21. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 61.
22. Noë, *Strange Tools*, 128.

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Self-Enclosed Art-Environments and Environmental-Aesthetic Museum Design

Carla Lohmann-Malegiannakis

Abstract

Theorists of environmental aesthetics such as Gernot Böhme have long pointed out that the alienation between humans and their natural environment is not only an ecological problem, but also an aesthetic one. The question arises as to how cultural institutions, especially museums as places particularly dedicated to aesthetic experience, respond to this matter. What role do environmental aesthetics and sensory, bodily modes of perception play in the design of contemporary art museums? It can be observed that the atmospheric interplay of artworks and their spatial surroundings has gained importance lately. Contemporary museums frequently commission artists with environments adapted to their spaces and focused on affective visitor experience. Yet in this article I am to show that these types of alliances between art and architecture still remain strongly attached to the modern paradigm of the White Cube as a sterile container for art sealed off from the outside world. It is a key feature of environmental artworks, that they create immersive worlds of their own preventing the recipient from a sensory experience of art in correlation with natural factors of its surroundings. However, as I will show, there are at the same time singular museum institutions that are instead committed to sensual perception of art in interaction with the museum's local environment. While in immersive art-environments atmospheric effects such as lighting are highly engineered and controlled, those museums instead rely on the use of natural light and shadow and bodily orientation in space. The article thus highlights that there are different modes of the atmospheric in contemporary museum design. Some are based, for instance, on an aesthetic of immersive enclosure, others on an inclusion of perceptible yet uncontrollable natural factors.

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Introduction

Recent theoretical approaches to environmental aesthetics criticize a reduction of aesthetics to a judgment of artworks and instead seek to focus on the general sensory perception of reality. These studies often emphasize the category of the atmospheric. In various writings, the philosopher Gernot Böhme, for example, deals with the significance of the atmospheric in the context of an advancing aestheticization of everyday life. He defines the term atmosphere, that originates in the field of meteorology, as something ontologically indeterminate between subject, object, and environment, something that "mistily fills the space with a tinge of feeling."[1] Hence, Böhme describes atmosphere as the "sphere of felt bodily presence."[2] Discussing the atmospheric against the backdrop of both perception and aesthetic production in the context of an increasing aesthetic economy, he underlines that atmospheres are specifically generated by architects, interior designers, or artists through aesthetic labour. Contemporary aesthetic theory, in his view, therefore needs to focus on a critical analysis of the conditions of aesthetic production. It should investigate the connection between the qualities of environments and the moods of people, and question how certain characteristics of environments modify how we feel in those environments.[3]

Based on this, I will take a critical look at the aesthetic design of museum institutions through the lens of theories of the atmospheric and environmental aesthetics. According to Böhme, the museum today is an important mediating site of atmospheric experience because it is a "perceptual context that suspends action."[4] Therefore it is the task of art in a museum today "to convey familiarity with atmospheres and mediate their engagement."[5] However, it is crucial to point out, that the role as a mediator of atmospheres ascribed to contemporary museums by Böhme is not per se a characteristic feature of the museum. The White Cube, the predominant exhibition space of modernism, for example, neutralizes the interior design, isolates the artwork from its external context, and negates the physical presence of the recipient as well as the influences of light and shadow on his mood, contributing to a purely formalistic reception of artworks. In such a setting, visiting a gallery remains focused on a visual experience and does not enable an atmospheric encounter of recipients, artworks and space.

Yet, even if museums explicitly commit themselves to an aesthetic of the atmospheric, as it often happens when contemporary museums commission artists to create environments adapted to the architecture, the aesthetic quality of such atmospheric designs needs to be questioned. Reviews on these artworks tend to rashly associate the current trend of ambient and environmental merging of artwork and exhibition space with a gain of sensual and bodily experience. As I will show, however, the reception of environmental installations in museums is often no longer based on an encounter between a viewer subject and an art object in a bodily and multisensory perceptible environment. It is rather based on a feeling of merging with an ambience and therefore such artworks tend to prevent the recipients from entering into a reflexive distance from their surroundings. So while at first glance the alliances between spectacular museum architecture and environmental artworks today seem to question the exhibition paradigm of the White Cube as a neutral anti-atmospheric exhibition container, I argue that these alliances in fact share many features with the White Cube. It is precisely the complete indifference to the outside space, a specific location in the world, that characterizes both the White Cube and many contemporary museums.

From an environmental aesthetic perspective, it makes a difference whether we experience art in a self-contained space or environment that is hermetically sealed off from the outside, forming a world of its own, or if we experience art in a reflexive relation to a natural outside world. This implies that natural factors in an art environment—that is the degree of accessibility of an outdoor space in which the body can move freely, the level of perceptible temperature and light conditions shaped by season and weather, as well as acoustic and olfactory impressions—have an influence on the quality of aesthetic perception. At first glance such kind of experience may seem incompatible with the museum, since its history is so strongly linked to the decontextualization and autonomization of art. Yet, as I will demonstrate, there are indeed art spaces that are deeply comitted to sensual and physical perceived atmospheric experience.

From White Cube to *Weather Project*
The Self-Contained Gallery Space

In his well-known critique of the modern gallery space, Brian O'Doherty describes the White Cube as a sterile container that allows no atmospheric interaction between the artworks, the viewers, and the spatial environment.[6] By isolating the artwork as an autonomous object in a (seemingly) neutral, homogeneously lit and artificially tempered space, the White Cube negates its contextual references to the interior, the outside world, the bodies of the beholders, etc. It limits reception to a visual perception of formal characteristics and thus promotes the artwork's comparability. Hence, the ideology of the White Cube is, as Brian O'Doherty writes, based entirely on an anti-atmospheric concern to protect the perception of art in a hermetically sealed space against external influences and their sensory implication.

With the emergence of art forms such as Minimalism, the late 1960s marked a shift to aesthetic modes of reception that prioritized affective and bodily aesthetic experience over visual perception and interpretive meaning. The geometric objects by artists like Robert Morris, Carl Andre, Richard Serra, and Donald Judd refused the modernist notion of a self-contained artwork that has only internal references. Instead they constitute themselves as works of art only in the situation of their perception through the interaction of object, space, and receiving subject. They promoted the insight that no work of art can be received independently from its surroundings and from the recipient's perception and thus every exhibition space can be considered to a certain degree as atmospheric.

In view of the spectacular museum buildings that have been erected since then, with their flexible exhibition spaces, their attractions tailored to the heterogeneous needs of different visitor groups, and diverse opportunities for consumption—it seems as if the museum has internalized the artists' new interest in space and the recipients' perception as an orientation towards visitors' experience. Part of this development is that art institutions increasingly commission artists to create artworks oriented to the exhibition spaces. Artists mainly working in the fields of installation and multimedia are more and more themselves creating new museum environments. These are often self-contained bio- and technospheres, which further promote the fusion of architectural space, objects, and the perceiving subjects and thus an atmospheric totalization of museum space—a development that can be described with Hal Foster as an "art-architecture complex."[7]

A prime example of this trend is the concept of the Tate Modern's Turbine Hall in London. 152-meter-long and 35-meter-high, it serves as exhibition space, meeting or lounge area, and as entrance hall to exhibition spaces, museum stores, cafés, and restaurants. A large ramp guides visitors from the Thames embankment into the hall, that is equipped with escalators as well as several viewing platforms from which visitors can observe the space and each other. Because the Turbine Hall's sheer size virtually challenges an exhibition concept adapted to its architecture, artists are regularly commissioned to create site-specific installations, that are launched by major multinational corporations. The success of these projects always depends largely on how well their scale adapts to the hall's dimensions, and how well they cope with its spatial overwhelm.

One prominent example of this comission series is Olafur Eliasson's *Weather Project*, which was on view in 2003. The artist staged an atmospheric simulation of a sunset by filling the hall with an artificial haze and installing a semicircular disk of LED lights at its end, which reflected off the mirrored ceiling to create an artificial sun. As Eliasson often emphasizes, the exposure of the construction elements is crucial to his works. He aimes to encourage the recipients to reflect on the ideological implications of the museum in an institution-critical manner and to place them in a critical relationship to their technically and culturally shaped and medially conveyed environment. The exposure of the technical devices and the mirrored ceiling Eliasson designed at Tate Modern were informed by the same concept. It enabled visitors to view themselves in the midst of a technologized environment—an effect that Eliasson regularly refers to as "seeing yourself seeing" or "seeing yourself sensing."[8] The visitors, however, who laid down on the floor in various positions, forming words or patterns with their bodies, seemed to be driven more by an impulse of excitement about their participation in this spectacular event than by the critical impulse of reflecting on human-environment relations.

The more site-specific the artworks merge with the museum space, the more indifferent this space now relates, it seems, to the concrete landscape, topographical, social, and historical conditions of the respective site and the more it contributes to an aesthetic mode of amazement and spectacle.

Other and more recent examples of this development are the environments, Philippe Parreno arranges in various museums around the world. He creates spaces in which fish balloons are moved by air vortices and bioreactors equipped with yeast cultures direct the movement and lighting processes. Their telling titles such as *Anywhere, Anywhere out of the world* (Palais de Tokyo 2013/14) or *Anywhen* (Tate Modern 2016/17) already refer to the underlying claim to create autonomous worlds beyond time and space. The Tate Modern advertized for their Parreno-Show in the *Turbine Hall* with the words: "Prepare to have your senses activated and stimulated by a spectacular choreography of acoustics, sound lighting, flying objects and film, each connected to the other and playing their part in a far bigger score."[9] But what substance can sensual and physical experience have in a space where all elements and processes are under the highest technical control? When bacteria close shutters and stones speak, these are not independent living processes, but an artificial connection of things that have nothing to do with each other in natural processes. The seemingly collective interaction thus ultimately always refers back to the artist as director and mastermind, who, just as he connects disparate things, separates natural cause-and-effect relationships: Not daily and seasonal cycles and fluctuations determine the perception of light, temperature, and acoustics here, but rather non-periodic, digitally controlled cycles; not the light entering the building from the outside determines the decision to open or close shutters, but rather an algorithm associated with a yeast culture; and the airflow that moves the fish balloons through the room is just as little due to an open window as the remotely perceptible outside noises. Hal Foster aptly states in reference to practices concerned with embodyment and emplacement in postwar art:

> Although many artists and architects privilege phenomenological experience, they often offer the near-reverse: "experience" handed back to us as "atmosphere" or "affect" - that is, as environments that confuse the actual with the virtual, or feelings that are hardly our own yet interpellate us nonetheless. In the guise of our activation, some work even tends to subdue us, for the more it opts for special effects, the less it engages us as active viewers. In this way the phenomenological reflexivity of "seeing oneself see" approaches its opposite: a space (an installation, a building) that seems to do the perceiving for us.[10]

Foster therefore makes the case for art practices "that insist on the sensous particularity of experience in the here-and-now and that resist the stunned subjectivity and arrested sociality supported by spectacle."[11]

The immersive atmospheric environments of recent times have, as has been shown, the property of overwhelming recipients in such a way that they are no longer able to engage with it in a dialectical interplay of distance and proximity. They rather present a design-related creation of technically generated alternative realities that have no location in the world and thus represent utopias, non-places. By contrast, in the environmentally sensitive museums that I will discuss in the following, the relationship of art to the outside world is literally inscribed in the spatial concept as an essential component of the museum experience through an emphasis on the interplay of inside and outside, artwork and environment.[12] The museums I will describe thus place the visitors in a resonant relationship to their surroundings through the use of natural light and shadow, and an emphasis on physical movement. These two key-features of the environmentally sensitive museum will guide my analysis.

The Environmental-Aesthetic Role of Light and Shadow in Exhibition Spaces

"Unshadowed, white, clean, artificial—the space is devoted to the technology of aestetics. [...] Art exists in a kind of eternity of display, and though there is lots of 'period' (late modern), there is no time."[13] As O'Doherty suggests here, a key feature of the White Cube is its shadowlessness brought about by homogeneous artificial lighting, which prevents the experience of art from being affected by daily and seasonal variations in light and thus prevents art from relating to a concrete here-and-now. When museums today commission spectacular works adapted to the architecture, which not rarely simulate ephemeral weather phenomena, usually tied to a very specific place and time, like eternal sunsets, they are in a sense based on the same aesthetic logic of shadowlessness as the White Cube. According to architect and architectural theorist Juhani Pallasmaa, today "the window has lost its significance as a mediator between two worlds, between enclosed and open, interiority and exteriority, private and public, shadow and light."[14] He points out the importance of a natural change of light in interiors, through which the tactile sense is addressed as the "sense of nearness, intimacy and affection," so that "imagination and daydreaming are stimulated by dim light and shadow."[15]

Seen from an environmental-aesthetic perspective, the reception of artworks benefits from changing natural daylight, as it enables an intimate approach to artworks. In addition, the play of light and shadow sometimes caused by the passing of a cloud on a bright day or the sudden clearing of a previously cloudy sky corresponds with the stylistic features of many artworks and can thus create a more immediate affective access to them. Gernot Böhme describes cloud depictions in landscape paintings by artists such as Carl Blechen, John Constable, Caspar David Friedrich, and William Turner as generators of weather moods that enable the spectators to experience things in their here-and-now.[16] The reception of such works under natural lighting conditions can contribute significantly to placing museum visitors in a specific, sensually perceptive relationship to their own location in the world, their here-and-now. Thus the influence of natural light and shadow can be considered one of the most important elements of an environmentally sensitive museum practice.

Throughout the twentieth century and up to the present day, there have been museum directors and architects who have emphasized this importance of changing light conditions in their museum spaces. For example, Richard Brown, founding director of the Kimbell Art Museum in Texas stresses the relationship of the artwork and the viewer to the living outside world and the accompanying heightening of the aesthetic experience created by the use of natural light:

> The visitor must be able to relate to nature momentarily from time to time – actually to see at least a small slice of foliage, sky, sun, water. And the effects of changes in weather, position of the sun, seasons, must penetrate the building and participate in illuminating both art and observer. [...] we are after a psychological effect through which the museum visitor feels that both he and the art he came to see are still a part of the real, rotating, changeable world.[17]

The Kimbell Art Museum was built in 1972 by Louis I. Kahn, an architect known for his sensitive use of daylight in interior spaces. He provided the building's barrel roofs with light slits that distribute the daylight evenly throughout the rooms and make weather- and time-based changes in the natural light perceptible. A more recent example for a sensitive use of natural light is the architecture of Peter Zumthor. Through his interest in the effect of shaded spaces, Zumthor, according to his own statement, distances himself from the architecture of "shadowless" classical modernism.[18] Kunsthaus Bregenz, built in 1997 by Zumthor on the eastern shore of Lake Constance, enters into dialogue with its surroundings in many different ways—but above all by means of a complex lighting system using

daylight. The steel and concrete building construction is surrounded by etched glass panels that reflect the local light, at the same time allowing construction elements and staircases to shimmer through (Fig. 1). Inside, the three upper floors are lit with the help of suspended ceilings that direct daylight, and its changes, into the spaces and diffuse it by means of ceiling panels made of etched glass (Fig. 2). Another master of the architectural interplay of natural light and shadow is Tadao Ando, who designed a majority of the buildings of the Benesse Art Site, an extraordinary example of environmentally sensitive museum practice, on the Japanese island of Naoshima.

The complex consists of buildings, some of which, in distinction to vertical signature museum buildings, lie underground. Daylight illuminates them through open atriums and glazed roof openings, integrating the architecture into the landscape and its relief (Fig. 3). Ando's Chichu Art Museum, for example, was conceived specifically for the works by Claude Monet from the art collection of the Benesse Art Site's founder, Soichiro Fukutake as well as works by Walter de Maria, and James Turell commissioned for the museum. The architect aimed to create an appropriate spatial staging for the individual artistic character of each work. The architecture is strongly focuses on creating an atmosphere that favors a bodily, phenomenological experience of the space. It therefore leads the visitor along paths with different, haptically and acoustically perceptible flooring and through labyrinthine corridors of varying width and lighting.

Before entering the exhibition space of the Monet room, the visitor first crosses an anteroom, which is characterized by strikingly dark lighting and a ceiling that is significantly lower than that of the Monet room. Generating a strong pull, only some light from the Monet room falls into the anteroom. Due to the transition from dark to light and the impression of an expansion of the room, which is caused by the ceilings' different heights, crossing the threshold from the anteroom into the exhibition room is an elevating, even uplifting experience. The visitor enters into a filtered daylight that is directed into the room through a suspended ceiling (Fig. 4). It unfolds a special luminosity and reflects Tadao Ando's view that light only atmospherically tunes a room in conjunction with darkness: "Yet, the richness and depth of darkness has disappeared from our consciousness, and the subtle nuances that light and darkness engender, their spatial resonances—these are almost forgotten. Today, when all is cast in homogeneous light, I am committed to pursuing the interrelationship of light and darkness."[19] The architectural use of light and shadow zones in the Chichu Art Museum creates thresholds between outside and inside and establishes a perceptible connection between the artworks

and the place of their exhibition. Unlike self-contained immersive museum environments, which simulate a constantly renewing nature and thus compensate for real, perceptible natural contexts, visitors to daylight museums are always in contact with their concrete outside world, their here-and-now. This creates a dialectical tension between the place to which the artwork refers and the concrete location of its exhibition, which can stimulate the beholders to reflect on their own location in the world.

Figure 1: Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2016. Photo: Markus Tretter.
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Figure 2: Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2012. Photo: Matthias Weissengruber.
© Kunsthaus Bregenz

Figure 3: Chichu Art Museum.
Photo: Mitsuo Matsuoka.

Figure 4: Chichu Art Museum. *Claude Monet Space*.
Photo: Naoya Hatakeyama.

Walking as a Means of Bodily Felt Presence in the Museum

"Indeed the presence of that odd piece of furniture, your own body, seems superfluous, an intrusion. The space offers the thought that while eyes and minds are welcome, space-occupying bodies are not."[20] O'Doherty's comment on the neglect of physical experience in the White Cube similarly applies to contemporary museums. Here, escalators and elevators replace the visitor's own bodily movement. In most museums visual guidance systems take over the function of orientation in space, making bodily perception superfluous. They ensure that walking becomes an unconscious act that purely serves purposeful locomotion as opposed to strolling around. In the case of the artistic immersive environments discussed before, it is not uncommon for visitors to lie passively on the floor in amazement, as in the case of Eliasson's *Weather Project*. In Philippe Parreno's exhibition in Berlin's Martin Gropius Bau, a lounge area was located on a rotating stage from which visitors could let the exhibition space pass by like a film in easy viewing mode.

More recently—especially since the Covid19-pandemic made physical visits to museums temporarily impossible—there has also been a trend toward the virtual museum visit, which makes the need to deal with a real spatial context completely obsolete. Applications such as Google Arts and Culture, for example, enable users to navigate through hundreds of museums worldwide at a mouse click and provide additional information on the main works in the respective collection as well as virtual and augmented reality applications. The three-dimensional virtual museum tour is not experienced physically via the connection of the feet with a place, the perceptible resonance of the steps on a floor, but only visually. Also, the navigation in space is not adapted to the speed and logic of physically performed walking, but as if jumping from one viewer location to the next. The starting point of the virtual museum exploration is often not the entrance or the foyer of the building, but a central gallery space, so that the centripetal convention of exploring arcitectural space is undermined. In addition to the use of natural light, therefore one of the most important characteristics of an environmentally sensitive museum design is an orientation towards conscious walking. In contrast to the mobility and speed of a technologized and digitalized culture, walking means a sensing of the own body and its relationship to space. It activates the sensual perception of an environment and strengthenes spatiotemporal

orientation. Since subjects experience themselves as bodily sensing beings bound to the world while walking, it can thus also be a way of encouraging visitors to reflect on their own relationship to their physical environment. The increased physical activation of the recipients since minimalism meant that walking became constitutive of many works of art during the 1960s and 70s. According to Manfred Schneckenburger, the artistic director of documenta 6 (1977), the sculpture of that period was characterized by a horizontal orientation that resulted in making the walking experience a key part of the work.[21] At documenta 6 sculptures were installed across Kassel's Auepark, inviting visitors to walk in the landscape. Paradigmatic for this concept was George Trakas' construction of walkways that guided visitors into different areas of the park, and thus drew their attention to the relationship of their own walking body to its specific surroundings.

In recent decades some museums similarly succeeded in incorporating walking as an aesthetically effective factor into the museum visit. An outstanding example is the Museum Insel Hombroich, which is peripherally located near the small German town of Neuss. The Museum consists of an ecological landscape garden with exhibition pavilions widely spread on the site (Fig. 5), housing a diverse collection of artworks.

Figure 5: Museum Insel Hombroich. *Turm.* Walk-in-sculpture by Erwin Heerich.
© Bildarchiv Foto Marburg. Photo: Tomas Riehle.

Hombroich also offers living and working space for artists, writers, musicians and scientists. Moreover, a unique feature of Hombroich is the complete absence of path markings, barrier signs, and museum guards. The visitors are addressed as sensually competent beings and discover the terrain by walking on self-chosen paths. They are trusted to read the natural signs and information of their environment in order to orient themselves. Not only the exterior space of the Museum Insel Hombroich is oriented towards a conscious physical experience, but also the architecture of the pavilions (Fig. 6).

Figure 6: Museum Insel Hombroich. *Zwölf-Räume-Haus.* Walk-in-sculpture by Erwin Heerich. Works of Bart van der Leck. © Bildarchiv Foto Marburg. Photo: Tomas Riehle.

Built of natural stone, they manage without labels on the artworks, without artificial light, and without temperature regulation. Behind each of the four entrances to the museum's largest exhibition building, called Labyrinth, are four rectangular, longitudinal rooms arranged around a large square hall. Wall projections that are staggered against each other divide each room, so that four completely identical paths lead through an always identical sequence of rooms from the exterior to the central hall. The building is thus deliberately designed to create a labyrinthine irritation of orientation. However, this does not serve to confuse visitors, so that they lose themselves in space, it rather intends to sharpen their senses, to make them consciously perceive their own location and movement in a concrete environment, as well as the time of day and season, which becomes apparent through the natural light of the ceiling windows. All these elements—space, time, light, body, movement—become phenomenologically perceptible entities. Due to the constant alternation between interior and exterior, which the spatial concept in *Hombroich* implies, the exhibition space is never experienced as detached from a context, but strongly embedded in the concrete site.

Conclusion

The Museum as Mediator of Resonant Relationships to the Environment in a Time of Environmental Crisis

In recent years, especially artists working in the environmental field explicitly address socio-political discourses on ecology by trying to create artistic models of alternative environments. Such projects are commissioned by art institutions and realized in collaboration with curators as well as in close association with theorists, who often provide texts for the exhibition catalogues. According to Bruno Latour, Olafur Eliasson's "Meteorological Art," for instance, provides the insight that the "outside world" is an outmoded construct of modernity and opposes the "tired old divisions between wild and domesticated, private and public, technical and organic" with an atmospheric ambience of a totalized inside: "a rather delicate sphere of climate control."[22] Eliasson himself often emphasizes, as mentioned before, that the purpose of his work is to critically raise awareness for the problematic relationship between human beings and their environment. Philippe Parreno, according to Hans Ulrich Obrist, initiates with his art a "dialogue between microorganism and human being," whose process is "not machinated but something living."[23]

Yet by simulating, making permanenty available weather phenomena, ecological and biological processes that are usually ephemeral and bound to a very specific place and time, self contained artificial environments like those by Eliasson and Parreno, in my view, contribute to a spectacularization of aesthetic experience. This does not fulfill the artists', curators' and theorists' repeatedly expressed claims of a dialogue between subjects and their environment or an ecocritical reflection on one's own position in the world. The immersive experience rather seems to function as a compensation for a loss of sensual engagement with temporally, climatically, and geographically shaped environmental factors in a culture increasingly determined by the virtual. The respective works thus represent immersive worlds of their own, which may be described as atmospheric, because of their interaction between artwork and space and their tendency to blur the distinction between subject and object. Yet, they do not fulfill Gernot Böhme's environmental-aesthetic premise of an atmospheric experience as a physical and multisensory encounter with the world.

As I have shown, it is not only or not even primarily the art forms that determine whether the recipients' experience takes place in a mode of amazement, sensory perception, or reflection, but to a large extent the nature of the spatial context and concept for which architectural and curatorial decisions are crucial. It makes a difference whether the recipients experience art in a White Cube that is hermetically sealed off from the outside, in a technologically controlled immersive environment that merges everything—recipients, space, art—into a state that precludes any reflection, or whether they experience art in a relation to a natural outside world. Therefore, from an environmental aesthetic perspective, it is necessary for cultural institutions to include elements of uncontrollability in the design of spatial atmospheres. As Gernot Böhme describes in his writings on atmosphere, "to be there [...] also means to experience the resistance of things and, perhaps, even more important, to experience one's own corporeality in this resistance."[24] In his view, buildings should not be all too easily available since one should take some time and effort to walk around them to experience the own corporeality embedded to these acts: "Architecture, consequently has to continue to provide the opportunity for the users of its works to experience bodily resistance through them. Technical facilities must precisely not be used to render the visit of modern buildings something like effortless surfing."[25]

This is where the theory of environmental aesthetics meets sociological theories of the importance of resonance in contemporary society, as represented by Hartmut Rosa. As Rosa points out, the resonant relationship with nature, which is important for an ecologically sustainable but also for a psychologically healthy way of life, is not established through cognitive learning processes and rational insights, but results from emotionally significant experiences. He therefore sees the environmental problem not only in the treatment of nature as a resource, but above all in the loss of nature as a primordial sphere of resonance, as an independent counterpart that provides orientation in the world, in its reduction to something available and manageable.[26]

Rosa moreover considers it pivotal that art, as the other important sphere of resonance besides nature, faces us as an entity and is able to speak with its own voice in order to touch the recipient in the innermost part of his soul.[27] He thereby also addresses the problem that in art reception, sentimental emotion and sensual overwhelmingness are sometimes confused with resonance, so that the moment of being existentially touched is missing[28]. He refers, for example, to theaters that advertise with gigantic light shows and impressive audiovisual effects, offering sensual overwhelmingness as a simulacrum for resonance. In his view, the attempt to make resonance comodifyingly available creates echo chambers.[29]

While Rosa emphasizes that spaces differ in their resonant qualities,[30] and therefore the spatial atmospheric design of art-institutions can be seen as a reason for the emergence of such echo effects, it was the aim of this article to show that whether art is able to affect us in an existential way and provides a sphere of resonance with the world depends significantly on the design of its exhibition context. Against the background of environmental-aesthetic and cultural-sociological theories of atmosphere and resonance, it stands to reason that museums today can be important institutions for practicing a meaningful and maybe even transformative relationship with the environment. But to accomplish this, they need to create a suitable framework in which the external world, the artworks and the subject enter into a resonant relationship with each other, and which is necessarily based to a high degree on uncontrollability.

So, if one agrees with Böhme that atmospheres today are produced specifically through aesthetic labour, it must be noted that a differentiation can be made between different modes and qualities of the atmospheric, that depend to a large extent on architectural and curatorial decisions. They determine whether the recipient's perception takes place in the mode of immersed amazement or in the

multisensory and bodily mode of environmental-aesthetic perception. It was not my intention to make a normative plea for a radical environmentally sensitive museum reform along the lines of the museums mentioned here. Today more than ever, public museums have to meet a wide variety of target groups and needs, so there is naturally a necessity for flexible museum spaces that offer a wide range of possibilities for cultural education and also for entertainment. However, I intend to raise awareness of the museums' role as mediator of spatial atmospheres and on how museums can use subtle measures to focus on providing more opportunities for physical and sensory experience as opposed to or at least in addition to ever more spectecular experiences in self-contained immersive spaces. Especially in view of the currently virulent debate on a different and sustainable relationship between human beings and environment it is of importance to explore some alternatives to the still influencial paradigm of the White Cube as a sterile sanctuary for art closed off from the living outside world.

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Notes

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Musical Convergence in Mexico City
A Conversation from a Geographical and Historical Perspective

Omar Cerrillo Garnica

Abstract

Music is one of the most important elements of culture. When we tend to analyze the music of one place in the world, we can understand some of their cultural and social dynamics. In big cities, like Mexico City, we can notice that these processes happen in an accelerated mood, with many musical exchanges and sound mixtures that create new sociocultural ways of living in the city. The following text comes from some seminars about Mexican music. Participants in relevant Mexican researchers in music history, music anthropology, and cultural promoters have a long experience working with traditional folk musicians and have strong knowledge of Mexican musical traditions. The seminars were organized through cultural regions of Mexico, divided into cardinal points and the center, represented by Mexico City. We recovered this last chapter to re-create the conversation of how the country's capital became a magnet for music from all around the country and many other places of Latin America. The discussion took us through important sociocultural matters that affect music, like immigration, political centralization, language, international exchanges, and cultural affinity. This work aims to create an analytic frame to understand cities' soundscapes, where music from different origins makes convergence and shares some of their sounds, values, and forms, moving through musical hybridizations that create new cultural values and musical genres that citizens appropriate, creating new social practices to live and to love cities. Mexico City is just one of many other large urban systems where music is more dynamic than typical urban characteristics, such as people, streets, and spaces. Integrating history, geography, urbanism, and art, these interdisciplinary works could help mobilize cities into more inclusive spaces where convergence could be the axis for culture in big cities.

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Introduction

In 2018, Tecnológico de Monterrey published *Cardinales Musicales* (Cerrillo, 2018) –Music Cardinals–, a book part of the series *Motivos para amar a México* – Reasons to love Mexico–. This book I coordinated had the aim to make a geographical review of music in Mexico, starting with regional traditional music but considering other genres like classical, pop, rock, among others. The book is divided into five sections, the four cardinal points, and the center. In each section, there is an article for the most representative music genre in the region and other small essays about other related topics, such as iconic instruments, relevant stories, places, and composers. The book was released in September 2018, and it was well-received among music researchers in Mexico as a dissemination work for developing further work in the geographical analysis of Mexican music.

In addition to this work, we invited the leading researchers in July and August 2021. They collaborate in the book to a seminar to further analyze each region explored. In consequence, there were five sessions, one for each cardinal point and the center. The participants were Eduardo Martínez Muñoz (EMM), an expert in Mariachi music; Ramiro Godina Valero (RGV), expert in Norteña and Mariachi music; Carlos Flores Claudio (CFC), music historian; Jorge Amós Martínez Ayala (JAMA), traditional music researcher and promotor from Southwest state of Michoacán. In addition to these personnel, we invited Laura Olivia de León Montesinos (LOLM) and Anatolio Vázquez García (AVG), traditional music promoters. I (OCG) served as moderator and presenter for the five sessions.

This text is a revised version of the last session of this seminar (@Mexicaniximo, August 12th, 2021), when we approach the subject of Mexico City as a cultural center for Mexican music. This is not a literal translation of the seminar session; it is text-based on each participant's main arguments, not the precise discourse. I skipped certain information that can be obscure for not-Mexican readers, like names of places, people, or group names. I kept what I consider essential for the proper flow of the conversation but helping the reader with footnotes that can help have better context for this local data. Finally, I must say that this last conversation analyzes many key points to understand the relevance Mexico City has to radiate Spanish-sung music, not only for Mexico but also for Latin America and even Spain. It also gives essential information on how music helps build the city identity through musical hybridization processes.

The Seminar

OCG: We are going to talk about the point of convergence of cardinal points: the center. We will talk about how music makes center, how all the regional music in the country and many others coming from outside come into this heterogeneous musical cresol that is Mexico City. I want to ask you how music styles from other places arrived at the capital and how they appropriated space in the city.

JAMA: First, I must say that many Latin American countries strongly centralized their cultural production. Just a few countries have three or more music poles of cultural production; this is the case with Mexico. Since the 1950s, Monterrey, a little more than Guadalajara, disputed this centralization because they had radio stations and discographic industries. In Latin America, capital cities not only concentrate economy or political power, but they also host their cultural industries. The exceptions are Brazil and Colombia, which have many cities with music industries. In the case of Mexico, there has been a concentration of cultural industries in Mexico City since the 19th Century, like music score publishing houses or music theaters, which were strongly concentrated in Mexico City. Some theaters were in other cities in Central and Western regions, but most countries had any theaters. Since the 1950s, we can say that decentralization has begun. Monterrey, Guadalajara or even Tijuana at 1970s had more music activities. The music in Mexico City started their immigration to other places in the 1990s, and now we can find *mariachi*[1], *banda*[2] , or *norteño*[3] in many other places, attending needs of radio stations or record companies in these cities. However, if we look backward, we have an intense concentration of musical production in Mexico City. Cultural industries emerged from Mexico City to all Latin America, which means a strong presence of Mexican and Latin American music in this capital. If anyone wants to reach Latin America, you must start from Mexico City. That is why you can find at Mexico City musicians from Cuba, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Bolivia; this is the route to reach all Latin America, in a recording product or a radio program, later as a TV show. So, all Spanish-based music first comes to Mexico City and later to the rest of the world.

CFC: Cultural industries in Mexico City generate this migration pole, first in the nearby provinces and later to other regions in the country. You can watch how immigrants appropriated certain spaces like popular neighborhoods where they settled and converged inside the city. Of course, it is not an exclusive phenomenon. It also happens in other cities, but not in the proportion at Mexico

City. When you live in the capital city, you can notice these multiple traditions and habits, where music is part of the cultural settings that immigration brought to the city. When you walk on the streets and neighborhoods, you can notice this diversity. In the first corner, you can listen to a radio with norteña, and on the next one, you can listen to rock, and then cumbia[4], and then mariachi. Music industries allowed this integration that seems far between in the geographic situation, but finally, they get close one each other in hybridization, as García Canclini (*Culturas híbridas*, 1990) said. These musical tastes mixed and created new genres and forms to play or add certain instruments and other innovations. Technology comes first to big cities making an accelerated hybridization at the point where we can listen to songs and musicians that are no longer in a certain genre and attempt new opportunities in other kinds of music.

LOLM: Migration is, of course, the main reason for this phenomenon. Mexico City means an opportunity for a better life. There are pilgrimages of musicians from the South and East regions of Mexico. In less proportion, Northern people come to the capital city because they prefer to reach the United States to have their opportunities. Few people come from the South and Southeast of Mexico. Around thirty years ago, the first groups of Mexican traditional music arrived, coming with clothing, gastronomy, parties, traditions, and music and poetry. The great door for entering Mexico City was the National Museum of Popular Cultures, a place that not only secured music; it came with all the cultural affairs. Groups are coming from Michoacán[5], Guerrero[6], Oaxaca[7] , and Veracruz[8]. The State of México has a quite interesting role through *La Ruta de los Arrieros*[9], which carried an almost extinguished musical tradition. Now we have a vast number of groups. Some are still working, others have changed, others created new groups, including fusion groups, with jazz, for example, groups of excellent quality, like *Los Versadores*, that make exciting music with tradition from Michoacán and Guerrero.

AVG: In Huasteca Region[10], there are previous experiences with musicians making films in the 1930s and 1940s, but it was *Trío Cantores del Pánuco,* the one that could be listened in the radio. From Hidalgo, *Atardecer Huasteco* are the pioneers. Musicians from Monterrey and other Northern cities preferred to reach San Antonio, Texas, like *Los Alegres de Terán*, a duet that exported *Norteña* music. Some new musicians make essential changes, adding new instruments, like an electric bass. Even they reached first Texas. Later they came to Mexico City.

LOLM: From the region of Sierra Gorda[11], where they played *son arribeño*[12], the most important group that arrived at Mexico City is *Los Leones de la Sierra de Xichu*. The music of *marimbas*[13], Zeferino Nandayapa, opens the road to this music. This is what we noticed when we worked at the National Museum of Popular Cultures under the command of Cristina Payán when we met these extraordinary musicians that let us learn from their culture. They have genuine respect for the public by tuning their instruments before the show, explaining authors' names, the region where they came from, introducing their instruments. They added their shows with dances and spoke their indigenous language with poetry. It is sad that now young musicians want everything fast, not paying attention to their roots. It is necessary to convince some youngsters that evolution does not mean forgetting about roots or recognizing where they started.

RGV: I was thinking about *Norteña* music, in the 1930s and 1940s, there were recordings in the United States. As Cathy Ragland (*Música norteña*, 2009) said, Mexican immigrants created a nation within the nation, creating new scenarios where instruments, people, music can move on. There is also the presence of *Norteño* musicians in Mexican radio and TV programs, bit by bit. Another relevant aspect of decentralization is that the Northern market does not depend on center agencies to develop their products; places like Monterrey, Los Angeles, or San Antonio have cultural industries.

Now, on *mariachi*, it is important to notice that on-hire musicians in Plaza Garibaldi[14] created a proper culture that permeated the country. For example, musicians born at Monterrey went to Mexico City since the 1960s, creating a *mariachi* imaginary that validates musicians that have worked at Garibaldi. We can notice the relevance of culture created at the center. It is essential to say that many other *mariachis* had not made the pilgrimage to Mexico City. Mariachi Vargas invited to play Mauro Carrillo, a notorious Monterrey musician. He rejected the proposal because he was doing well at his place. It happened because radio and TV stations and record companies at Monterrey were important outlets for distributing *mariachi* music; for example, Mariachi Nuevo Tecalitlán[15] went to Monterrey to record their music. This cultural exchange reached other latitudes outside boundaries, like Colombia, where also Mariachi Vargas[16] got some ideas to enhance their music.

OCG: If a music style emerged from Mexico City to the world, it was *mariachi* music. We must not forget the relevance of Plaza Garibaldi to let this happen. It is essential to consider cultural policies in the middle of the 20th Century. It happened in other places in Latin America. For example, Brazil is not a centralized country, but in the 1950s, they had policies for internationalization. Everybody can identify Brazil through samba and football. In Mexico, something similar happened, in Lázaro Cardenas's government[17] and his secretary of Education, José Vasconcelos[18], they promoted mariachi as a Mexican icon.

EMM: Since the independence of Mexico, it is essential to notice that in the first Constitution, the country was declared centralist, which means that all political powers are centralized. Of course, it is necessary to talk about President Cardenas since his campaign for the presidency; he used *mariachi* music on it. Silvestre Vargas[19] narrated his relationship with the president when he went to the capital city asking for his support. Many mariachi groups formed part of many governmental offices. However, in the next period (1940-1946), with President Manuel Ávila Camacho, industrialization of Mexico arrived through substituting imports, creating an industrial belt around the city. With this new industrial policy, the capital city received cheaper products. Agricultural lands were converted into industrial parks, a solid attraction to investors. People at these places also changed their lifestyles, transforming themselves from farmers to labor workers. There was an enormous promise of a better life in the center, motivating a strong migration from other places in the country. Some conflicts in other provinces are also key factors for this immigration. In this process, musicians also came to the center to find new opportunities, like Mariachi Justo Villa, invited to the president's anniversary. When Mariachi Vargas appeared in Mexico City, it happened because they had a promise to work over here. This migration was so massive that the government donated a big terrain to Cirilo Marmolejo[20], bringing many musicians to live over there. In the 1940s, Mario de Santiago[21] explained that many musicians traveled north from Guadalajara to Torreón, seduced by the cotton industry. Miguel Aceves Mejía[22] invited him to play with Mariachi Vargas in Mexico City when he returned to Guadalajara. In this specific example, Mariachi Vargas was never located in Guadalajara. Their big moment came in Mexico City. They negotiated with a priest on a trip to Paris to obtain some terrains where they lived, in Aragón, a neighborhood nearby the airport. Their lands were the first with telephone lines in the region because they needed this communication technology to contact their clients. We can notice that *mariachi* musicians had ties with influential people at the time. It was easy to get a job by telephone, so they also had their wagonettes to get into their work. Rubén Fuentes[23] noticed that the

great big market to cover was Mexico City, not the other provinces. It was the best place to get on the radio, movies, and TV. The media gave them international projection in the 1940s and 1950s. Getting back to Garibaldi, the great place that detonated everything, was *Tenampa Bar*[24], a place for social relationships. It represented Western culture, offering regional food and drinks. Juan Ignacio Hernández, the first owner, noticed that they lacked music, so he hired a *mariachi* group. They never imagined this would become a traditional place. Other groups arrived there, and all said they come from Cocula[25], bringing the social construction that became famous with national and international clients. People got there yearning for Western culture, but there were many others from the city just because the place was famous.

JAMA: The process in which oscillate cultural industries attend to regional dynamics in the country's location at the end of Colonial times in the 19th Century, generating imports of products and people and, with them, music genres. Before airplanes, music did not arrive directly at Mexico City. They came into Yucatán, Acapulco or Veracruz, and other seaports, and they needed to take roads to reach the center. Some genres moved in specific routes: *bolero*[26] came to Yucatán[27], the Colombian music entered by the Pacific Ocean; *polka* and *chotis*[28] joined with American armies at the North. We can see that regional spaces liked certain music. There is a straight relationship between *bolero* and Yucatán. We can notice how *cumbia* covered the short coast of Guerrero, so we can understand why the first *corraleros*[29] came to Acapulco and established there. We feel *polka* as ours, and we do not notice that they are Austrian or Bavarian music that came to Texas and then to Mexico. Many of this music had their routes since the 19th Century and came into Mexico City because they can irradiate from here. *Bolero* reached Mexico City, and from here, it traveled to Central Valley to create the famous Mexican *ranchera*[30] song. We cannot understand *ranchera* without paying attention to *bolero* dynamics. The same happened with dancing music, like *cumbia* or Northern music. I think that Mexico City is not only an attraction pole, but also it irradiates. I have already said that most of the Latin division of record companies was established in Mexico. When a French artist or French or Portuguese wants to reach the Latin American market, he must reach Mexico City. There are interesting dynamics because regions adopted this international music, and later, they irradiated it to provinces and Latin America. Since the 1950s, what happened is a new national strategy: decentralization. There are new development poles, some of them very specialized. Cancún was created just to cover international tourism, and the same happened with other places at the coast that were not properly used for this purpose. President Lázaro Cárdenas began

with industrialization in the West, occupation of coast sides as a strategy for World War II. There is also the idea to industrialize the US border, creating cities like Tijuana. The exchange of music between the center and the new poles produced interesting dynamics that created an idea of Mexican, including cultural and musical affairs. Since the 1920s, there have been some efforts to create some musical identity in regions and all countries. However, these new poles also brought market competition, breaking certain monopolies, which also moved attention to Northwest states, with brass music, like *El Recodo*[31], in which certain hybrid processes were present. Then comes experimentation, with *corridos alterados*[32], rap dynamics, Nortec[33], challenging the classic idea of what we called Mexican, taking distance from *mariachi*. Today is quite difficult to name what Mexican music is. Music needs Mexico City to have a national projection even in this multipole and cresol scenario.

OCG: Diversification is essential for national identity. The cultural policies designed in the 1950s that created national stereotypes are not completely real. What we have is a heterogeneous scenario in Mexico and any other country. Nevertheless, in this international exchange, in the 1950s, we received from the United States rock and roll music that created a paradoxical scene: somebody received it with joy. At the same time, some more folkloric lovers rejected it because they felt it invasive. This phenomenon did not happen with Cuban music. People received Pérez Prado and his mambo in dancing halls in Mexico City with joy. We felt more comfortable with Latin music rather than American music.

CFC: We need to look into political context to understand this phenomenon. Latin America was more into military regimes in the 1960s. These dictatorships motivated musicians into protest songs, well known in the entire continent as *Canto Nuevo*[34]. The case of Cuba is quite interesting because it became a socialist country in the United States influence zone, motivating Cuban musicians to search for other horizons. Not also Pérez Prado came. They become very popular in Mexico City, becoming a new genre that Mexican musicians can add to their repertoire. We adopted *cumbia*, *salsa* from Puerto Rico and New York. All this Latin American music evolved into a Mexican version of block parties known as *sonideros*, a phenomenon that expanded from the center into other places, even to California or Texas, where we can see parties with this Caribbean music and some cultural and social dynamics. If some people cannot afford to watch a whole band show, they can reach this kind of music through vinyl records of these DJs.

OCG: The *sonidero* movement in Mexico has a strong presence of Caribbean music. However, let's analyze the way they appropriate the streets. They carry vinyl boxes, installing turntables, big speakers, etc. These characteristics are almost the same that what happened in the hip-hop movement in New York in the 1970s. The appropriate street, use the microphone to salute people and, if the police arrived, to denounce abuse. *Sonidero* is also influenced by Latin American music and by the hip-hop movement. There has been an interesting evolution in the presence of Caribbean music in Mexico City since the 1930s and the first dancing halls and considering this *sonidero* movement.

EMM: At the 1950s was the apotheosis moment for *cha-cha-cha* and *mambo*[35]. In the Sunday cultural sections in certain newspapers, journalists attacked these rhythms because they preferred the nationalist music repertoire. The same happened to rock and roll. People were going to *tardeadas*[36], where they also took the streets to dance with recorded music. Sometimes, DJs asked for money to stay playing for more time. Later, this movement changed into high-energy music that combined disco and pop music with *sonidero* elements.

JAMA: Dancing spaces existed since colonial times, known as *fandango*[37] houses or dancing schools, that it wasn't a school but a dancing hall. There were places to listen to live music and dance at Porfirian times. These dancing spaces always respond to the music in fashion and social classes. In the 1940s and 1950s, jazz music came to Mexico. People danced exotic rhythms from jazz and twist orchestras like Benny Goodman or Luis Arcaraz. Many years later, there were also discotheques. On the other side is Caribbean music that was present in dancing halls. By the 1960s, with the rise of the middle class, they didn't like *mariachi* or *mambo*. They preferred other music that also needed new spaces. In this sense, it emerged what was called *hoyo funki*[38], discotheques or *peñas*[39]. It depended on your political orientation or economic status, and musical preferences; you can go wherever you want to listen to the music you like. For example, protest songs that could be listened to in *peñas*, were not a Latin American invention. In the United States, there were many of these kinds of songs, like folk musicians Joan Baez or Bob Dylan. In addition, in Europe, you can find musicians like Patxi Andion, Joan Manuel Serrat, or Georges Moustaki. They created models imported first to South America and later here, emerging musicians like Oscar Chávez or *Los Folkloristas*. This doesn't mean that there were just these spaces. Everybody could go wherever they want and can. Someone could go to Avándaro[40], later to a *peña*, and dance to a discotheque.

Even we imported music, Mexicans created our models. For Benny Goodman, we had Luis Arcaraz. For the Rolling Stones, we had *El Tri*[41]. For Joan Manuel Serrat, we had Oscar Chávez. There are many elements to create this appropriation. If Mexico City received music, the city produced responses in a different sense. Our *sonideros* do not resemble Jamaican sound system or New Yorker hip-hop, or even Colombians that listen to Mexican variations of their music are astonished by it. It doesn't matter that *sonideros* used recorded music. They got a unique style. Mexicans can use the same dancing steps for *cha-cha-cha*, *cumbia,* or rock-and-roll, but this is a Mexican sequence. You can't see it in Cuba, Colombia or United States. This is an excellent example of what happens with musical influences that came to Mexico City. Everything arrived here, but we don't make an exact copy; we appropriate music. Something we must ponder.

LOLM: In *peñas,* we could listen to more than protest songs. There was space for poetry and another kind of music. Rock and roll entered here, making Spanish covers. These rock stars also appeared in essential movies. When we went to *peñas*, we could listen to rock and roll and exchange vinyl records. I must add the presence of artistic caravans, promoted by the government, which traveled all across the country and brought a lot of musical exchange.

CFC: We have not spoken about rock, a genre that carries protest messages and social affairs. There are many places in Mexico City to play and listen to rock; there are many subgenres, like metal, grunge, punk, reggae, ska; all active. Our center is multiculturality, diversity of dances, and musical tastes.

JAMA: Music is relevant because it builds identities and life, not only in youth. Music is far from just what cultural industries can produce, and the State can manipulate; music is part of popular sense. Human beings, as thinking and feeling beings, so we must think about our own soundtrack of life. There is no good or bad music. It is about what I can do with this music. It doesn't matter if I buy, steel, or produce music. It is always communicating something and what I want to transmit through it. Mexico has an enormous variety of music.

Conclusions

Through the conversation and the reviewed music genres on it—*mariachi*, *norteña*, *banda*, *cumbia*, *salsa*, *sonidero*, *rock*, and some others—we can notice that Mexico City is, musically speaking, a heterogeneous space. There is not a single musical genre created on it, but they all have a sense of belonging there. It integrates music from other Mexican regions, Latin American countries, and other world places, but many of them do not stay intact. Instead, they are submitted to a peculiar hybridization process, in which other cultural values modify some musical or cultural elements and create a new music gesture.

Cities also have their sonorous landscape. In Mexico City, we can find a multilayer soundscape resulting from a dynamic city. Since the foundation myth today, immigration processes have been created and modified. We can have another perspective of urban dynamics and culture through this sonorous analysis. There are many spaces for music playing through centuries. Their appropriation and desertion processes explained how these urban dynamics changed through generations, new cultural exchanges, and new sociopolitical structures.

Mexico City can be an example of other heterogeneous cities worldwide: Paris, Dubai, Hong Kong, New York, or Sydney, just to mention a few. Analyzing musical cultures in these cities can help create new ways for the social integration of different people. This testimony aims to contribute to other cities' soundscapes.

Author Biography

Omar Cerrillo Garnica is a Mexican researcher (SNI-1) and professor in Cultural Sociology. He got a PhD in Social and Political Sciences and a Master's Degree in Sociology at Iberoamerican University in Mexico City, graduated with honors. Since 2007 is professor at Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, in 2019 becomes Director of Humanities School at Campus Cuernavaca. He is specialized in social analysis of art, music and culture. He also developed a successful community engagement social service program through arts and sports. As a researcher, he has worked in politics in music –rock, Mexican folk genres–, cultural policies, digital culture, and cyberactivism. He has participated in many academic events in Mexico and other countries, with articles and book chapters published in Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and France.

Notes

1. Music genre and group that is probably the best know Mexican music outside the country. Originaly, it came from Jalisco, in the West side of the country. It is formed by one *vihuela*, one *guitarrón* –both instruments are modified guitars–, two or three violins, and, in its modern expression, the group added one or two trumpets. Mexican government promoted this genre at the middle of 20th Century, through movies, radio and TV.

2. Music genre from Northwest Mexico, which main characteristic is the use of brass instruments and some percussions. They played traditional Mexican songs. At the beginning, they played instrumental versions, using clarinet for making voice melodies in the singed versions. Later, they started to use vocalists for market purposes.

3. Music genre from Northeast Mexico, which is a Mexican adaptation of European polka. The more common instruments are a snare drum, an accordion, a bass and a *bajosexto*, a 12-stringed guitar.

4. Music genre from Colombia that expanded through the Caribbean Sea to other countries. Mexico adopted it arriving from Pacific Coast and created an own version of this genre.

5. Mexican province located in Southwest Mexico. The first group that arrived at Mexico City from Michoacan were *Los Purépechas*.

6. Mexican province located in Southern Mexico. The first groups that came from there was *Xintacastli*, and later the group, *Jabalí*. From the region of Tierra Caliente, at Guerrero and Michoacán, came the Salmerón and the Tavira families.

7. Mexican province located in Southern Mexico. The main groups from this place that came to Mexico City are *La Banda de la Princesa Donají* and *Los Folkloristas*.

8. Mexican province located in Eastern Mexico. The most representative music is *son jarocho*, coming to Mexico City *Los Parientes de Playa Vicente*.

9. Arrieros were people carrying merchandises all around the country. This route was specific roaming from Guerrero to Mexico City.

10. A Region in the Eastern Mountains in Mexico. It includes parts of seven states in the Eastern Mexico: Veracruz, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosí, Hidalgo, Querétaro, Puebla and Tlaxcala.

11. A mountain chain located in the central states of Querétaro and Guanajuato. It can be considered a subregion of Huasteca.

12. A music genre from the region of Sierra Gorda. It uses violin and two guitar-family instruments –*vihuela* anda *jaranera*. It is a subgenre of *son huasteco* or *huapango*, the main music genre in Huasteca Region.

13. Marimba is a percussion instrument with plates of different size, made of Wood or metal, in which every plate is a note. It is a popular instrument in South Mexico, Central America, Colombia, and Ecuador.

14. A plaza in downtown Mexico City, where many musicians go to search to get hired for playing serenades, or while people eat and drink in restaurants and bars located in the same plaza.

15. One of the most famous *mariachi* groups in Mexico.

16. Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán is probably the most famous *mariachi* group, not only in Mexico, but also around the world.

17. Lázaro Cárdenas was president of Mexico from 1934 to 1940.

18. Famous Mexican philosopher and writer. He was Secretary of Education (1920-1924).

19. Founder of Mariachi Vargas de Tecalitlán.

20. Founder of Mariachi Marmolejo, the first group to reach radio stations and became famous all along the country.

21. A famous mariachi trumpeter.

22. A famous Mariachi singer in 1940s and 1950s.

23. After Silvestre Vargas, he became Mariachi Vargas's leader.

24. The most famous cantina bar in Plaza Garibaldi.

25. A town in the Western state of Jalisco. There is a common myth that mariachi groups come from there. This myth became popular because of the song named "Cocula", written by Manuel Esperón and Ernesto Cortázar for the movie "El Peñón de las Ánimas" (Zacarías, 1943).

26. Is a Cuban music genre from 19th Century. It can be recognized from its 4/4 rhythm and the use of floritures in guitar playing.

27. A state in Southeast Mexico, in a peninsula nearby the Caribbean Sea.

28. Polka and chotis both are music genres from Central Europe. German and Austrian immigrants came to Texas and Northern Mexico in the 19th Century, bringing these rhythms to America.

29. A kind of Mexican cowboys.

30. A music genre that is a fusion between bolero and mariachi music. It became very popular in 1940 and 1950s by appearing constantly in Mexican movies.

31. A very popular *banda* group, from the Northern state of Sinaloa.

32. It is a variation of folkloric music genre known as corrido, which is an epic narrative song. These altered versions have a faster tempo, explicit lyrics about violence between *narco* cartels and police.

33. An artistic collective created in Tijuana in 1990s. Their music contribution is a fusion between *Norteño* and electronic music.

34. Is a musical movement at all Latin America at 1960s. Composers make protest songs against military dictatorships in Latin American countries.

35. Cuban rhythms introduced in Mexico at 1940s and 1950s. They became very popular in dancing halls at Mexico City.

36. Afternoon dance parties.

37. Popular dancing meetings to dance son or jarabe, Mexican traditional music from colonial times.

38. Funky hole, in English. This was the name for several clandestine places, where young people went to play and listen rock in 1970s. The writer Parménides García Saldaña gave the name to these places, which used to be warehouses, garages, or workshops.

39. *Peña cancionera*, in English, song boulder. This was the name for small bar clubs where young people went to play and listen troubadours, which used to play just their guitar and sing. This music genre was called *canto nuevo* in all Latin America.

40. Is a small town that is two and a half hours by car from Mexico City. In some terrain nearby the town, some youngsters organized a motorcycle race that became the first Mexican rock festival in 1971. The improvised festival received the name of the town—Avándaro—among rock fans.

41. Is one of the most famous rock bands in Mexico and one of the oldest, founded in 1968.

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Aesthetic Appreciation
Natural, Artistic, and Media Effects

Christiane Wagner

Abstract

This article aims to conceptualize aesthetic appreciation based on the main aesthetic theories of the last decades. The development of this analysis includes the core values that highlight the natural and urban environmental aesthetic experience. The need to know more about aesthetic experience establishes possibilities for research beyond art that focuses on natural and artificial spaces. While other traditional approaches have sought to discuss the object of aesthetics, namely artistic beauty and its relation to natural beauty, or an aesthetic appreciation of nature without necessarily the artistic object, this article seeks a reflection on art concerning natural and urban interdisciplinary reality. The following questions guide this reflection: What is the difference between artistic and natural aesthetic appreciation? How does the environment offer aesthetic effects and resonances across socio-territorial boundaries through the media? Before any manifestation or representation, individuals establish their actions through their perceptions. An individual chooses, organizes, and transforms the information that comes to him or her from the environment, resulting in the continuous construction of mental representations according to their participation. In this sense, the scope of environmental aesthetics applies to this reflection in the relationship of the natural environment influenced by humans and the things related to the environment. Therefore, observing the aesthetics associated with the arts and the everyday objects and environments of public life is essential, as is observing their political and cultural implications. The conception, *a priori*, of environmental and everyday aesthetics is analyzed concerning the individual in the public space, considering the relationships of individuals with the arts and the environment through the media. Thus, this analysis enables an understanding—not necessarily chronologically—but with a notion of knowledge grounded in aesthetic theories and the foundations of aesthetics as a philosophical discipline.

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Introduction

To discuss the relationship between art and nature, it is first necessary to contextualize them within the origin of the history of humanity, cultures, and civilizations, and therefore, within the development of science and technology and progress. However, social, political, and economic aspects are also determinants in this discussion. These aspects are based on perceptions of art and nature in their interdependent relationship and its association with progress. This discussion seeks to understand the meaning of an environmental aesthetic, considering that many approaches exclude the artistic object, which is fundamental to philosophical aesthetic reflection. Continuing with this problem, this discussion seeks answers to the difference between artistic and natural appreciation as well as an understanding of the media's aesthetic effects and resonances across socio-territorial boundaries.

Due to scientific and technological advances, the world and people's view of it (*Weltanschauung*) are changing. Therefore, by analyzing the configurations of society throughout the evolutionary history of humanity, it becomes apparent that technology transfer has always been an interaction between nature and culture for all possible achievements of human civilization, as stated by Wolfgang Welsch (2004) regarding Darwin's evolutionary aesthetics. Thus, climate change and other complex environmental crises can be understood using aesthetics with consideration of digital media and the processes of communication and image archiving as memory. In theory, an agreement to combat climate change in terms of the world's industrial and financial aspects through communication technologies and artistic practices could integrate art with a social critique on the Internet through the influence that images exert. Instead, however, such an agreement could present images of a nostalgic return to nature artificially, valuing biodiversity transmitted by visual arts and thus based on out-of-context facts. In this sense, two aspects are essential for aesthetic reflection concerning context and cultural transformation: the first aspect is the technique, in which the term "art" is included; and the second aspect is knowledge based on perception for verifying the facts when considering the effects of images. These images appear in contemporary cultural events and media and allude to everyday life in natural and urban spaces, toward environmental and everyday aesthetics. In addition, they raise discussions and present new elements of the relationship of the media image with contemporary art. Finally, reflections are sought to appreciate natural, human, and, in general, urban environments with natural and urban aesthetic appreciation (Berleant 1986).

Therefore, this article is founded on aesthetics as a philosophical discipline that investigates beauty through art. This discipline seeks to understand the sensitive aspects perceived in art and, through aesthetic judgments, to acquire empirical knowledge. Regarding aesthetics, the focus is on the reflective capacity through sensitivity (perception): intuition, imagination, sensuality, and passion, which can also offer access to knowledge as a cognitive faculty, seeking understanding between sensitivity and reason. Art is the object of investigation for abstract reflection. The distinction between aesthetics and the philosophy of art lies in the relationship with works of art. In the philosophy of art, it is the object of art submitted to philosophical reflection, whereas in aesthetics, the object of analysis is the beauty (or the opposite) identified in a work of art.

Art has its values in itself, both aesthetic (*aisthésis*) and technical, and appreciates other values only in the function of itself. The disproportion of aesthetic (*aisthésis*) and non-aesthetic (*anaisthésis*) values is often associated with sociocultural contexts. On the one hand, the emergence of aesthetic autonomy has favored the faculty of aesthetic judgment, namely the ability to manifest one's taste for natural or artistic beauty freely. However, on the other hand, one can understand that the autonomy of the aesthetic discipline has meant the delimitation of a space for reflection on art, as access to the idea, the truth, the meaning, and the absolute, like science and philosophy, and that gradually became free from old rules and dogmas. Nevertheless, contemporary aesthetics in its context encounters a problem in its interaction with science and ethics due to the necessary specific logic and new criteria in art. Even so, for aesthetic reflection, a chronology of theories or doctrines of art is not relevant. No sense of evolution exists in aesthetics, or in other words through its object of study—the beauty in art. Moreover, considering this discipline a specific area for autonomous artistic reflection and criticism does not mean the freedom to establish its own rules, nor even a distance from everyday life's realities—moral, ethical, and political among others—for the meaning of art as truth.

There are dominant areas of knowledge to consider, namely science and philosophy. Aesthetics, however, is a philosophical discipline. Thus, isolating aesthetics from reality in its autonomy would condition the reflection on art without knowledge, making it just a decorative, entertaining, or ludic activity. Aesthetics underwent two critical phases. The first was in the 17th century when beauty became detached from the values of goodness and truth—the Platonic

ideal of beauty. The second phase was at the end of the 18th century, when the imitation of nature, "of beautiful nature" in the fine arts, ceased to be the only purpose of art. These transformations did not occur randomly; rather, they were consequences of the social, economic, and political conditions throughout history, which offered new conceptions of the representation of reality. However, following the rupture of the academic canons, with the greater autonomy of artists in the context of modernist movements, the arts saw modifications in their formal aspects and criteria for realization. That is, the arts acquired more freedom and artists presented new styles and techniques. Moreover, the aesthetic discipline itself has exhibited transformations concerning the new sociocultural contexts, technological developments, and the evolution of science. So, for a reasonable understanding, the remainder of this article is organized as follows: First, the following section defines environmental aesthetics. Then, arriving at the final considerations is the focus on the urban environment regarding art and media related to nature.

Defining Environmental Aesthetics

As a subarea of Western philosophical aesthetics in the last 40 years, environmental aesthetics has historical roots in the European and North American aesthetics of the 18th and 19th centuries. In these centuries, fundamental advances occurred in the aesthetics of nature, including the emergence of the concepts of beauty, the sublime, and the picturesque, and also the introduction of positive aesthetics (Carlson 2016). The foundations lie in the relationship between beauty and the sublime, and in the theories of Immanuel Kant (1790) and Edmund Burke (1757). Burke presented the sublime in aesthetic experience, emphasizing the essential foundation of this feeling for the imagination. Burke's ideas influenced Kant, especially in his observations on the feeling of beauty and the sublime.

The feeling of beauty, to Kant, is about pure beauty, which refers to the aesthetic judgment without finality, understood as a free contemplation of beauty. According to Kant, the natural environment, *a priori*, offers pure aesthetic judgments with no intention of meaning. It does not refer to any object or any concept. However, on the other hand, applied beauty presents the ideas of finality, applied taste, and being better concerning the ideal model—a vision of perfection. For example, a natural landscape painting could have flowers with

brighter colors and more vibrant greenery than the artist perceived in reality. This meaning lies precisely in the picturesque idea, which emphasizes the aesthetic experience of nature and its connections over time between the aesthetic appreciation of nature and its treatment in art. Picturesque theory advocates aesthetic appreciation in which the natural world is experienced as if it were divided into art scenes, which ideally resemble works of art, especially landscape painting. The idea also resonates with other artistic traditions of nature as a reference for art in a mimetic process. This concept originates in nature as the object of aesthetic experience offering a natural and superior beauty to that of art, and in the development of the concept of disinterest, that is, focusing only on the aesthetic appreciation of nature without personal, religious, economic, or practical interests of the appreciator. Nonetheless, disinterest in aesthetic experience guided by nature in its beautiful and sublime forms resulted in the picturesque. Picturesque "literally means 'picture-like' and the theory of the picturesque advocates aesthetic appreciation in which the natural world is experienced as if divided into art-like scenes" (Carson 2016), which are like landscape paintings.

What matters in the aesthetic judgment itself is the finality of the communicated opinion of taste. It is about the purpose and not the content. However, the difference between natural and artistic beauty, that is, between nature and art, can be compared to the feelings of the beautiful and the sublime. The relationship between nature and art is mainly due to the difference between them as well as human beings' constant search to overcome natural beauty—pure, without purpose, without interests—using artistic beauty, which through techniques and artifices aims for a purpose—amidst the diversity of interests—and a perfection. To overcome natural beauty was precisely the purpose of the fine arts.

According to Kant, realizing a work of art that characterizes nature as its origin, aiming at its highest formal quality in presenting it as a work of art, is not a product of nature but rather freedom from any natural imposition. It is the result of subordinating imagination to the understanding, valuing the harmony of the faculties, but without establishing any interest, objective, or pretension and enabling an acceptable universal communication, without relying on concepts above all. However, the aforementioned notions do not concern an imitation of nature, simply because if imitation were a rule of beauty, this rule would be established as both concept and purpose. Then, all works resulting from the imitation of nature would be beautiful. Each one would have its definition of beauty, of beauty for beauty's sake, without establishing sufficient reasons for the

satisfaction of the ideal of beauty, thus conditioning the representation—the imitation—to an unsatisfactory finality. There is no concept of beauty. The feeling of beauty searches for knowledge and truth, so it aims for pleasure, beauty, and the good. The beautiful and the sublime are individual feelings and imply some purpose when expressed, aiming at universality—agreeing with common sense. The pleasure that beauty offers is defined by the harmony of our capacities for understanding and imagination. The reference is nature. A work that is close to nature, a natural work, offers nothing exceptional to the senses because nature is objective, neutral, and serves as a reference or model. According to Kant, the intense feeling of infinity, of a force that is not under our control, is the intuition of the idea of infinity, of the immeasurable, which the imagination cannot reach, leading to the feeling of the sublime. It is the awareness of powerlessness before a natural force. In this sense, the superior power of nature over humans is appreciated aesthetically in the work of art. During Romanticism, many paintings represented the sublime.

On the one hand, the picturesque as an aesthetic experience has its basis in the aesthetic theories of the 18th century from Burke and Kant. Throughout the 19th century, it lost its meaning. On the other hand, in practice, one can still notice aspects of this disinterested aesthetic experience when art is idealized with nature as a reference, especially in mediating images that allude to nature aimed at tourism, housing, and even parks and artificially natural environments, including open-air museums. One must also assume that the practical dimension of this conception extends to various contexts and places.

Nature as a reference for the picturesque has expanded into an aesthetic of everyday life, and the environment has become a picturesque work. Today, even a work of art resulting from natural beauty can be a medium for a disinterested aesthetic and result in the picturesque. Examples are *Le Jardin de l'artiste à Giverny* by Claude Monet (1900) or a painting by Thomas Cole, which are characterized by the realistic and detailed portrayal of natural landscapes in their beautiful and sublime aspects for the design and realization of residential gardens. To some extent, all appreciation of nature and artistic representation focused on a disinterested aesthetic would be conditioned to nature without human intervention. However, human participation becomes the main interest in the picturesque sense of natural and urban environments encountering an everyday aesthetic with an emphasis on the work *Aesthetic Participation and the Urban Environment* by Arnold Berleant (1984), with an aesthetic committed to the aesthetic appreciation of not only nature and art but also all other aspects of human experience.

In the mid-20th century, Western aesthetics stopped addressing the natural environment, defining it not as an aesthetic appreciation and focusing only on art. So too did analytical aesthetics, which influenced the Western position by rejecting the aesthetic experience of nature. The prevailing argument was that aesthetics implies judging the object of appreciation as art, performed by an artist when considered a work of art. Later, in the last decades of the previous century, the discipline of aesthetics took up this appreciation with environmental aesthetics in John Dewey's emphasis on dealing with the aesthetic experience of nature and everyday life (1925). According to Carlson (2016), "some of the earlier work in environmental aesthetics focused on empirical research conducted in response to public apprehension about the aesthetic state of the environment." Mainly, one must consider the social, political, technological, and industrial contexts of essential environmental issues. Consequently, exceptional attention to environmental degeneration became the focus in design and architecture, which not only sought functional solutions but also, above all, ethical and aesthetic ones concerning the meaning of the environmental movement in practice and theory. However, environmental aesthetics seeks both a cognitive and noncognitive line of thought for an appreciation of nature as an object of analysis. With the cognitive approach, aesthetics seeks knowledge and information in its investigations as a means of appreciating nature, moving away from a relationship with the picturesque based on the aesthetic experience of art. It is essential to consider that for an appreciation of nature, that is, of the natural environment as a reference, an aesthetic appreciation based not only on philosophy, history, and art criticism would be appropriate for understanding information and knowledge, but also based on the natural sciences.

For Carlson (2008), scientific cognitivism considers the knowledge provided by the social sciences, especially history, as relevant to the aesthetic appreciation of human environments and the knowledge provided by the natural sciences. However, in recent decades, the cognitive sciences have focused on research in aesthetics, thus exerting a significant influence on traditional theories of art and aesthetics. The focus of cognitive sciences on artistic creation has led to results regarding how the aesthetic experience is processed, in its pre-existing ways of apprehension, reconfiguration, and recreation of forms for the aesthetic experience in its effects of pleasure. In addition, neuroscience experiments with artists have highlighted the exceptional perceptual and cognitive dispositions that make artistic aptitude possible as well as enhanced the understanding of the emotions essential to art. However, neuroscience does not guarantee that the objects created will be works of art through their results. The evolution of science and its relation to philosophy is one thing; its importance concerning science is another.

On the one hand, science demonstrates that the aesthetic experience depends not only on stimuli from the environment and the art object but also on the biological condition where human beings present distinct cognitive processes in their environment. On the other hand, specifically when considering what art is or is not, the aesthetic experience passes exclusively through criticism and theories of art as well as factors based on the institutional and political game for sociocultural articulations and decision-making, contextualizing the object to be considered art or not art. The biological factor is outside of this game. According to Edmond Couchot (2012), the originality of Western culture has automized production, displacing it under another control, namely that of the sphere of art and its institutions. What art is or when something is art depends on criteria established by art theories. In addition, scientific advances in neuro-aesthetics have provided scientific results regarding intuition based on precise data about the mental processes that direct ideas and inventions. Finally, the relationship between reason and emotion or between objectivity and subjectivity in aesthetics is scientifically presented through the cognitive sciences in terms of their differences—namely the reception of works of art and communication—and their similarities—namely creation processes and the function of emotions. However, it is also worth considering that science has purposes distinct from art, which also offer us knowledge about the world's cognitive values. Stimulation and imagination make art possible as real worlds, and hypotheses about the meaning of these worlds can transform the meaning of life.

Therefore, the other noncognitive line of aesthetic appreciation of the natural environment considers phenomenological methodology, the essence of things and how they are perceived in the world, while considering cultural and social aspects as experience in the formation of consciousness, likewise, the foundations of analytical aesthetics. Both distance themselves from traditional aesthetics concerning a purely aesthetic experience, a disinterested appreciation, and emphasize multisensory engagement, which involves total immersion in aesthetic appreciation by conditioning the importance of the human condition and imagination. Both consider subjective aspects to be oriented toward the object of appreciation. Therefore, aesthetic experience through imagination is directed toward purposes and new forms of perception and understanding, resulting in new theoretical and practical configurations. Environmental aesthetics has thus been grounded in an interdisciplinary manner with different philosophical and aesthetic conceptions, from traditional continental to analytical or phenomenological aesthetics, by cognitive and noncognitive thoughts for the aesthetic investigation of and influenced by human environments in everyday and human life, mainly investigating not only natural environments but also urban environments.

The Urban Environment: Art and Media for Nature

The concern of translating the real in art, to be truthful, not false, or conventional, has always existed in the condition of "nature" and the "natural." Therefore, this condition also contains everything that humans accomplish. Thus, after traditional continental aesthetics with the arts as its object of study, the focus of this section now turns to environmental aesthetics, which is a subarea of philosophical aesthetics. This new area of study seeks reflections on the appreciation of natural environments and human environments, leading in general to what we know today as the aesthetics of everyday life, including urban environments as objects of aesthetic experience in search of information and knowledge.

Environmental issues in aesthetics began to emerge with the environmental and ecological movements in the 1960s and 1970s. Land art is one of the art forms that stand out as an artistic and aesthetic movement regarding the relationship between humans and nature. The first works appeared in the United States with environmental and ecological activities that sought to offer an aesthetic experience involving the observer in the nature of the art. Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970) is the most significant example, which was built with earth and stones on Utah Lake. Land art has nature itself as its material support. Regardless of this aesthetic experience with the dimension of the sculptural work, the most critical element is evidence of human intervention in nature. In this sense, my observation highlights the concept of the Anthropocene through artistic intervention. After more than half a century, this aesthetic experience is made possible not by immersion in the work in nature but by forms of visual transfer through photographic and video images. This sense was highlighted by Christiane Heibach (2016) in her article titled "Von der Land Art zur Klimakapsel: Ökologische Utopien in der Medienkunst" (From Land Art to Climate Capsule: Ecological Utopias in Media Art), which concerned works that intentionally create a field of tension between the creative will of the artist and the creative power of nature. A strong trend of ecology in aesthetic and art theories as well as in artworks is related to the environmental context, especially given the popularity of this topic. In this context, aesthetic and art theories present concerns about the production aspects of the market and the individual values inherent in the human species concerning its nature. What is important is the affirmation of artistic achievement with freedom of expression. This freedom offers the transparency of contemporary society and identifies the reality toward which we must move to find the right direction for humanity.

According to this scenario, examples of the art that has been created are numerous—we are surrounded by it every day. However, some of the most notable highlights from the international art scene were created in the 1970s and 1980s. In 1982 in Kassel, Germany, during the international art exhibition documenta 7, Joseph Beuys planted 7,000 trees. This was an artistic action with a vision of climate policy. Before this artistic action, another work of Beuys regarding the relationship of humans with the environment, industry, technological development, and territorial domination was his performance *I like America, and America likes me* (1974). The performance, held at the René Block Gallery in New York, involved Beuys staying in a room for three days with a coyote. The coyote represented the ancient spiritual energies of the Native Americans and their extermination by the colonizing civilization that dominated the North American continent. The performance offered a socio-aesthetic critique that drew attention and historical awareness to socio-territorial conflicts concerning indigenous peoples and former European settlers, culminating in everyday mass culture. However, the performance was not attended by an audience and was instead recorded in photographs by Caroline Tisdall (1976) as well as some video clips. *I like America, and America likes me* is representative of the comparative aspects of human nature (Beuys) and its animal nature (coyote) for dichotomies of interpretation on reason and instinct, artificial and natural, and development and native peoples—in short for the power relations between humans and nature.

Another highlight was the work of the Polish and naturalized Brazilian artist Frans Krajcberg (1921–2017). His work is distinguished by an aesthetic that can lead us to both beauty and the sublime. Furthermore, his works can lead to a nostalgic return to nature through valuing biodiversity. Krajcberg, due to his own history, had a different perception, stressing the importance of life and human nature, explaining that nature gave him strength and the pleasure to feel, think, work, and survive. When Krajcberg was in nature, he only thought about the truth, told the truth, and claimed the truth (Krajcberg 2011). His works resulted from a direct experience with nature and present the destruction caused by humans as figures 1 and 2 show. His sculptures demonstrate a still life of deforestation in the Amazon and Pantanal (Mato Grosso). The artist expressed the value and power of nature above the immediate and commercial values that lead human nature to its destruction, with the mark of the sublime beauty of his sculptures. Krajcberg presented a manifesto a few years ago. In the manifesto, he drew attention to the art market and called on the art world to rediscover a sense of nature, harmony, and reason for an avant-garde creation that values freedom, dignity, and respect. *Le Nouveau manifeste du Naturalisme intégral* (The New Manifesto of Integral Naturalism 2013) by Frans Krajcberg and Claude Mollard and *Le Manifeste du Rio Negro* (The Rio Negro Manifesto 1978) by Pierre Restany were presented during

COP 21 in December 2015 in Paris. *Le Nouveau manifeste du Naturalisme intégral* includes, in its many paragraphs, a commitment against the process of the destruction of the planet by humans, which would lead to their own destruction. Krajcberg did not make his art a product of the market; rather, through his revolt he called for the Amazon to be protected and created to denounce the dangers that exist on the planet. His art aims to raise awareness through the transformation of the human management of nature. His work is art committed to ecological issues to fight against a possible global catastrophe.

Figure 1. Frans Krajcberg at Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo (MAM).
Photo by Ethnocentrics, December 6, 2008. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

Figure 2. Frans Krajcberg, *Dialogue avec la Nature* (*Dialogue with Nature*).
Parc de Bagatelle, Bois de Boulogne, Paris. Photo by Pierre Metivier, November 3, 2005.
Licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0.

Art is faced with technological and scientific evolution in a framework of the contemporary universality of social transformation and the environment. Artistic actions consider the public space, while images are configured with local responses based on the arguments presented in reports published and broadcast by the media. However, art through media in a contemporary situation of interdependence, with globalized social structures and relations, is associated with the way in which artists present the emerging questions concerning ecology, environmentalism, and sustainable development to the public. This art is not only in its effects the result of the attitude or intention of the artist, who adds to their art their history, but also, and above all, in its effects concerning the differences in society. What predominates are the probable and real effects on a diverse audience with or without social awareness regarding climate change and the threat of a global catastrophe.

The 32nd São Paulo Biennial (Incerteza Viva 2016)[1] presented artworks related to environmental and existential issues. In addition, the event revealed to the community the contemporary conditions of life in search of solutions, as informed the curatorship of the exhibition, which had the theme of Live Uncertainty. Biennial curator Jochen Volz stated that art nurtures uncertainty, chance, improvisation, and speculation while simultaneously attempting to count the uncountable and measure the immeasurable. Thus, it gives rise to mistakes, doubts, and risks. The São Paulo Biennial presented artworks related to climate change within the political and economic contexts in which we live. These works offered the public an understanding of their current environmental condition through the aesthetic experience of the exhibition. However, it is an environment that is positively perceived as a vital condition for the continuity of our system. The exhibition was organized around integration between the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, designed by architect Oscar Niemeyer, and Ibirapuera Park—designed by the Brazilian landscape designer Burle Marx. The integration of these internal and external spaces expanded the sense of public space, allowing the community to interact with art dedicated to the environment and ecology.

The exhibition included many works, such as *Floresta* (*Forest*) sculptures by Krajcberg as *figures* 3 and 4 show, and the *Restoration* project by Jorge Menna Barreto. The latter dealt with agriculture in the face of environmental changes, addressing eating habits and their relationship with the environment and biodiversity. In addition, work by artist Jonathas de Andrade titled *O peixe* (*The Fish* 2016) was exhibited,[2] a film that stood out for addressing the theme of traditional fishing with daily fishing in Alagoas, Brazil (figs. 5-6). The central theme of the artist was the end of modernity in the Latin American context in connection with the disappearance of ideological meanings. Nevertheless, the exact purposes marked modern art in Latin America.

In this sense, the artist discussed the end of utopias. Another significant artwork was by artists Paulo Tavares and Ursula Biemann, titled *Selva Jurídica* (*Forest Law* 2014),[3] which addresses the aforementioned theme from a human rights perspective (figs 7-8). The video explores the frontier of mining and oil exploration in the equatorial Amazon, one of the wealthiest regions on Earth in terms of biodiversity and mineral resources, which is currently subject to a dramatic expansion of large extractive projects. At the heart of *Forest Law* is a series of pioneering legal cases that have called the forest to court to defend the rights of nature (*Selva Jurídica* 2014).

Figure 3. Frans Krajcberg, *Floresta* (*Forest*), 32nd São Paulo Biennial.
Photo by Lemoox, September 11, 2016. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Figure 4. Frans Krajcberg, *Floresta* (*Forest*), 32nd São Paulo Biennial.
Photo by Lemoox, September 11, 2016. Licensed under CC BY-NC-SA 2.0

Figures 5 – 6. Excerpts from Jonathas de Andrade's film,
O peixe (*The Fish* 2016). Vimeo.

Figures 7–8. Excerpts from Paulo Tavares and Ursula Biemann's film, *Selva Jurídica* (*Forest Law* 2014). Vimeo.

More recently, another artistic action became prominent in another context. In April 2020, Olafur Eliasson used virtual reality to present a series of images titled *Earth Perspectives* to honor the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. This action symbolized the viewer projecting a new world. London's Serpentine Galleries commissioned the piece as part of their Back to Earth program. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Eliasson launched a second digital project titled *Wunderkammer*. The true effects of actions through arts and new media, considering social changes, are linked to the collective imagination and the meaning of art throughout its history. However, other critical issues concerning arts and climate change have also been addressed in social and artistic contexts. In a recent article by Wolfgang Welsh (2019), titled "Nach dem Ende des Anthropozäns" (After the End of the Anthropocene), the position of art concerning the Anthropocene was addressed in three ways. First, Welsh related art to the environment, interventions, or the character of a documentary report without offering a solution, only a good intention, emphasizing an already established situation. Second, Welsh focused on human beings and the conditions of their existence on Earth, precisely because of their activities, and also on forms independent of any earthly state, focusing on artificial intelligence and digital technologies as a possibility for the continuity of human existence. He highlighted expectations of solutions by the arts that represent the technological problems of the Anthropocene. However, one must consider the reality of these artworks, not the reality external to them. For Welsh, this is of course inherently perverse, and he added that severe doubts exist as to whether these technological fantasies are anything more than daydreams. Third, Welsh continued to address the situation of art concerning the Anthropocene (in the sense of logic appropriate to the context of art manifestation) by presenting his aesthetic reasoning about a third form of art related to the end of the Anthropocene—that of a planet that is not dependent on human beings. Welsh exemplified his aesthetic reflection with a series of photos by artist Helmut Wimmer titled *The Last Day* at an exhibition at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna (2018). Wimmer's photos represent the causes of human exploitation and the destruction of nature due to human culture, which does not respect nature's signs, thus representing a nature that no longer cares about humans showing their dominance.

Through these conquests and appropriations of space, the image constructs the collective consciousness of a danger that threatens human existence as fact and stimulates the search for solutions through new creations and discoveries. These discoveries, even considered innovations, have their merits in technological evolution itself. However, a new scenario for the metropolis is proposed as a solution, and the problems of a fourth generation, which is already claiming its rights, should be investigated. For example, the controversial use of nanotechnology in urbanization solutions for common well-being in public space may possibly lead to the expropriation of said space.

Final Considerations

Art is faced with technological and scientific evolution in a scenario of a contemporary universality, not only in social transformations but also, above all, in the environments. The social transformations that have resulted from economic, technological, and industrial development have led to new forms of art, possibilities of access to information, and knowledge acquisition. This is a process of social transformation that led to new needs in the relations between humankind and society. Political and social changes are registered mainly with the works of art in public spaces. Contemporary artists have enabled a new look and a new form of perception. The meaning of art and its interventions are essential to society and its evolution. Consequently, this phenomenon presents a course full of purposes in the history of civilization, in social life, concerning technological changes and the individual's goals in their development in large cities. Generally, this article has answered the main question that guided this reflection, which was as follows: What is the difference between artistic and natural aesthetic appreciation? Art, in general, is considered a reflection of society in all of its forms of existence, that is, of reality. Therefore, reality comprises the entire space, be it urban or natural. However, art is one thing while reality is another. Hence, to seek an understanding of the human and social condition through art is also to reflect on the artistic object aesthetically. The other question that guided this reflection was as follows: How does the environment offer aesthetic effects and resonances across socio-territorial boundaries through the media? This article has demonstrated that environmentalist actions have taken over the public space, and that artists have become part of this cause. Images are configured with local responses based on the arguments disseminated and conveyed by the media and in association with other relevant themes, feeding and giving more strength to public opinion.

Author Biography

Christiane Wagner has been a visiting research professor at the University of São Paulo. She was a visiting research professor of aesthetics and science of communication at UNICAMP (qualification for a professorship, Habilitation, venia legendi). She was awarded a doctoral degree in Germany in the science of art and aesthetics (Promotion recognized by the Hessian Ministry of Science and Art). She has a Ph.D. in the science of art and aesthetics with highest honors from Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne (mention très honorable/summa cum laude), a Ph.D. in design and architecture (with highest honors), and a master's degree in science of communication (with highest honors) from the University of São Paulo. Also, she holds qualification training in the history of art, art education, and digital art development, sciences, and technology from the French Ministry of Education and the Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA). She is also the editor-in-chief and creative director of the *Art Style, Art & Culture International Magazine* and a member of the International Committee of the College Art Association of America in New York, NY, and an executive board member of the ISA-RC14, an international research committee on communication, knowledge and culture (International Sociological Association). For more information, see her website: christiane-wagner.online

Notes

1. "The title of the 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, INCERTEZA VIVA (Live Uncertainty), proposes to look at notions of uncertainty and the strategies offered by contemporary art to embrace or inhabit it. While stability is understood as a remedy against anxiety, uncertainty is generally avoided or denied. The arts, though, have always played on the unknown. Historically, art has insisted on vocabularies that allow for fiction and otherness, and it dwells on the incapacity of existing means to describe the systems we are part of. Uncertainty in art points to creation, taking into account ambiguity and contradiction. Art feeds off chance, improvisation and speculation. It leaves room for error, for doubt and even for the most profound misgivings without evading or manipulating them. Art is grounded on imagination, and only through imagination will we be able to envision other narratives for our past and new ways into the future," 32nd Bienal de São Paulo, INCERTEZA VIVA (Live Uncertainty), http://www.32bienal.org.br/en/exhibition/h/

2. A film by Jonathas de Andrade, *O peixe* (*The Fish* 2016), https://vimeo.com/191560038

3. A film by Paulo Tavares and Ursula Biemann, *Selva Jurídica* (*Forest Law* 2014), https://vimeo.com/316761337

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