

The Eugeniusz Geppert Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

Doctoral School

Sensory Landscapes

Senses, Experiences & Mind-Ecologies

DOCTORAL THESIS

in the field of art in the discipline of fine arts and art conservation

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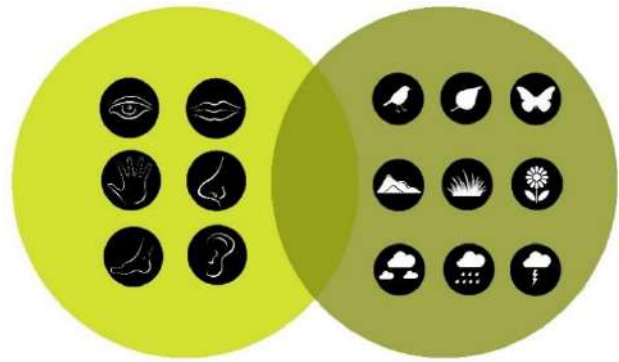
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ABSTRACT

With the intention of exploring a broader approximation to environmental art-design disciplines, the present dissertation examines and elaborates a series of reflections, processes, actions, interventions and works focused on sensitive approaches to our environment through the interconnection of bodily experience and landscape awareness. *Sensory Landscapes* is a practice based research that aims to sensitize and understand the natural and human environment through the conceptualization and findings of artistic-design approximations to landscapes across senses, site experiences and mind-ecologies.

Along the research process, a guiding thread weaves diverse geographies with the sensory experience of touching, smelling, observing, tasting and listening. Throughout the process, various ways of thinking, acting and creating are explored, interweaving disciplines, media and places. In parallel, the research intends to raise a series of questions that broaden the understanding of site approximation, time-based and landscape concerns, through a dialogue between sensitive cognition, critical thinking and environmental mindset. With this perspective, *Sensory Landscapes* is proposed as a conceptual framework, as an experimental laboratory that explores perceptions as a key source of cognition, and as a medium for approaching to the context, connecting tangible and intangible landscape concepts that identify the territory: smells, tastes, sounds, scenes, textures into experiences.



INTRODUCTION

How to interact, coexist or intervene with, within or towards our landscapes?

How do artistic-design practices foster sensitive approaches towards environmental reflection?

How to reimagine our habitats from biocultural and sociocultural interactions?

Contemporary societies are experiencing challenges addressed by design and artistic disciplines searching for sensitive dialogues that generate ways of coexistence between natural and human-made environments. According to the definition of nature as “the phenomena of the physical world collectively, including plants, animals, the landscape, and other features and products of the earth, as opposed to humans or human creations,”¹ and understanding landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors,”² the investigation raises, examines, explores and generates a series of reflections and explorations on how artistic-design practice can provide sensitive and mindset approximations to our landscapes.

In recent decades, human activities have significantly influenced to the increasing impact of nature degradation. “Degradation occurs when earth's natural resources are depleted. The resources which are affected include water, air and soil. The degradation also impacts our wildlife, plants, animals and micro-organisms.”³ This process, together with existing environmental issues, is increasing considerably due to anthropogenic effects rather than natural causes.

¹ The Oxford Reference (2008). Nature. In: Oxford University Press. [online]: <https://www.oxfordreference.com> [03.03.2021]

² Council of Europe (2000). European Landscape Convention, European Treaty Series - No. 176, Florence, 20.10.2000

³ Choudhary, M. P., Chauhan, G. S. & Kushwah, Y. K. (2015). Environmental Degradation: Causes, Impacts and Mitigation, In: National Seminar on Recent Advancements in Protection of Environment and its Management Issues. (ed.): Maharishi Arvind College of Eng. & Technology Publisher, India. p. 12

Mind-ecologies: When thinking about coexisting with our planet, approximations that focus on sensitivity, empathy, reciprocity should be considered as means to rethink the existing models based solely on the human being in a central place, but as part of an interconnected ecosystem. In terms of environmental actions towards our planet, “we need to make optimum use and management of resources, sustainable development, adoption of green concepts and above all, community participation in all developmental activities.”⁴ One of the main fields related to these concerns is *ecology*, understood as “the study of the relationships between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment.”⁵ According to the Ecological Society of America Ecology, “it seeks to understand the vital connections between plants and animals and the world around them and provides information about the benefits of ecosystems and how we can use Earth’s resources in ways that leave the environment healthy for future generations.”⁶ To preserve and enrich livable habitats, we must rethink our main priorities towards an ecological and sensitive forward-mindset.

The experience of the senses as a source of landscape cognition: In terms of artistic practice, sensory experience, as a perceptual and cognitive site-approximation, has become an essential means that facilitates receptive insights on the relationship between human-made and natural world.

With these perspectives, the main field and interest of the present research focuses on the relationship between ecological mindset and sensitive cognition towards artistic practice, and how this connection can be a medium to establish sensitive dialogues towards our landscapes. Based on the interaction of theory, site-experience, and praxis, the research proposes a broader understanding of these ideas, exemplified through a series of experiments, actions and interventions that examine how artistic-design practice, in connection with cultural and biological systems, might shape conceptual insights towards our landscapes. The research examines how artistic and nature-based approaches are able to reimagine the boundaries between bio and human habitats, by exploring contemporary landscape concerns, interpreted in sensitive explorations that open spaces for new encounters.

⁴ Choudhary, M. P., Chauhan, G. S. & Kushwah, Y. K. Op. Cit.

⁵ The Ecological Society of America (2019). Ecology. In: ESA.org. [online]: <https://www.esa.org/about/ecology> [03.05.2021]

⁶ The Ecological Society of America (2019). Op.cit

INTRODUCTION | RESEARCH SUMMARY

The present dissertation ***Sensory Landscapes | Senses, Experiences & Mind-Ecologies***, examines and elaborates a series of reflections, processes and artistic-design explorations focused on sensitive approaches to our environment by interconnecting bodily experience and landscape awareness. To achieve this approach, the research is organized and based on the following insights:

The introductory section begins by outlining the key premises of the research, while providing an overview of contemporary social, environmental and artistic challenges. It frames a series of reflections focused on rethinking, sensitizing and understanding our natural and human environment from the perspective of senses, experiences and mind ecologies. The introductory framework is complemented with ***Landscape as a Personal Concern***, which offers a brief introduction to the key motivations for carrying out the present research. Concerns that originate from reflections and experiences gathered throughout my personal, academic and professional path.

The subsequent section, entitled ***Towards our Landscapes***, outlines the main questions that arose from the initial premises and along the research process, as well as the main objectives and phases for developing the research, based on different methods: collecting, mapping, interviewing, perceiving, experimenting, interpreting, creating, intervening.

The research process is developed from different phases that offer the possibility of exploring, going back-forward, expanding or ramifying. And, while the process is not necessarily linear, in general terms, the main phases that have been developed are as follows:

- Develop main research questions, theoretical and conceptual framework
- Identify and scope the natural and cultural landscape
- Experience specific locations through sensorial perceptions and site approaching
- Interpret the concepts that have been experienced and recognized through sensory art-design projects, actions, and collective artworks
- Collect and conduct the main outcomes and conclusions
- Dissemination and sharing

This section includes *Cartography of Senses*, the framework that constitutes the guiding thread on which the research is based, which is composed of five key concepts: *Soundscapes*, *Tastescapes*, *Scentscapes*, *Tactilescapes* and *Visualscapes*.

The continuing section, ***Landscape as a Personal Journey***, traces the main sources and influences that have shaped the course of my personal trajectory. Events, spaces, or artistic works that have transmitted an aesthetic experience to me. The section draws the main sources based on literature, visual arts, cinematography, spatial, public and environmental art, architecture and landscaping.

One of the main premises of this research is based on the idea that the artistic process is directly related to the place where it is conceived, therefore, in the section entitled ***Site Context: Natural and Cultural Landscape***, the Polish territory of Lower Silesia with its city-capital Wrocław, is established as the geographical epicenter for the development of the research. The scope of this context is mainly focused on its water landscapes, having the Odra River as its main axis. This scope is complemented by its greenscapes, as well as architectural and urban landscapes.

In order to establish the theoretical framework on which the thesis is based, ***Thinking Landscapes | Thinking Senses***, reviews the existing body of literature and case studies focused on the main research themes: soundscapes, smellscapes, hapticscapes, visualscapes and tastescapes. The conceptual framework has been enriched from various authors and artists that examine concepts related to the notion of landscape and human senses. These visions are reviewed from historical and contemporary perspectives and are enriched from various disciplines based on humanistic, ecological, aesthetic, philosophical, and social concerns.

The first approach of this section, ***Thinking Landscapes***, explains how the term *landscape* is understood as a conceptual construct that has evolved and acquired diverse connotations across cultures, places and periods, interpreted as a mental elaboration and as a holistic conception of particular phenomenon. ***Thinking Landscapes in the Artistic Sphere*** examines, mainly from the cultural perspective of Western history, the aesthetic attitudes to landscape in different periods.

From the first pictorial representations of natural phenomena, and the initial inner gardens and orchards from earliest civilizations, through the beginning of the first sensitivities conceptions of the term of landscape that emerged in the mid-eighteenth century; to later artistic landscape approaches from recent centuries that broaden different concerns, media, concepts and domains manifested across diverse contemporary explorations such the artistic approach *Environmental Art*. This section also outlines the concept *Genius Loci*, which is associated with the notion *Sense of Place*.

Thinking Senses, emphasizes the importance of senses as significant human source of knowledge and comprehension of the world. The section explores ideas, theories and works on how sensitive cognition contributes to understanding, interpreting and perceiving the surrounding environment. The section initiates by examining the Aristotelian theory of perception and its hierarchy of the five senses, and how this idea has expanded towards the identification of the sensibilities, interwoven into a wide number of senses. It is complemented with ideas related to multi-sensitivities within the natural world, and concepts related to the phenomenological approach and to ecologies of mind in connection with body, brain and world. *Thinking Senses*, traces a theoretical framework across soundscapes, olfactory, haptic, visual and gustatory landscapes, emphasizing the significance of the senses as a means of interaction with the natural and human-made world. The section is complemented by ideas and case examples, as well as conversations-interviews with thinkers and artists, such as the interview with blind-thinker Thomas Tajo on echolocation and acoustic perception, and the interviews with artists Jasmin Schaitl and Kinga Bartniak, on the haptic sense related to the performative and artistic domains.

Site Approximations and Landscape Concerns Towards the Artistic Design Process, outlines and explains the main approaches that have been explored within the practice research process, which are as follows:

- Nature-based approximation
- Timescapes
- Ephemerality
- Sense of place: contextual approximation & site-approaching

- Multi-scope and multi-scale
- Living-research lab
- Encounter, situation, unpredictability and intuition
- Waking as a sensory experience
- Material exploration and local techniques
- Mind-ecologies and environmental concerns
- Multi-directional and dynamic research process
- Cross-disciplinary approximation
- Collective process
- Community and artwork interaction

The chapter ***On-site Explorations*** presents and describes the series of interventions and site-specific actions developed within the art-based research across different landscapes of Lower Silesia and Wrocław. The body of work is formed by a conjunction of intertwined explorations, including collective actions, ecological and site-specific interventions, low-impact interventions, urban acupunctures, gardens, bio-architectures, landscape projects, mappings to ephemeral installations, body architectures, bio-sculptures, bio-architectures, sensory devices, ephemeral sculptures, craft pieces and objects. The body of work and actions interweave time-based, site experience, contextual knowledge, and eco-social mindset, and are developed on the basis of the following approximations:

Visualscapes: Series of visual approximations based on the connection between sight perception and natural environment. A relationship that explores the cyclical sense of time and nature. A notion of scenery and close-up view; from the territorial scale to the detailed level where the landscapes perform a changing canvas across sites and seasons. Photographs, drawings, actions, bodily architectures, ephemeral interventions. The visual narrative highlights the landscape variations presented according to the four seasons: *spring, summer, autumn* and *winter*.

Soundscapes: Series of sound mappings, sound compositions, hydro auscultations, and acoustic actions across various soundscapes of Lower Silesia and the city of Wrocław. The research explores natural and cultural sound diversity, where water, as one of the main protagonists, is manifested itself in different landscape scenarios.

Scentscapes: Exploration of the olfactory perception from two approximations to the scent landscapes. On the one hand, the fragrance of lavender farmscape, the action of harvesting in summer season during its flowering and aromatic period, followed by the creation of essential oil scent. On the other hand, an approach to the woodscape, by a scent device that encapsulates fragrances and memories of the forest: humidity, mist, wild fruits, wood, pine trees, ferns, moss, wet soil, streams.

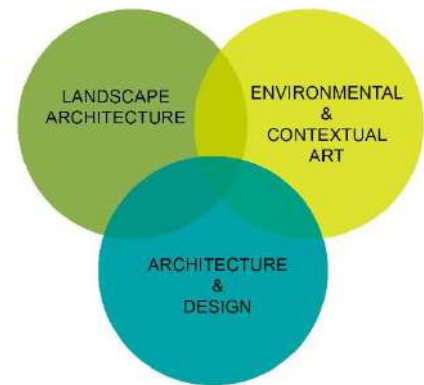
Hapticscapes: Series of actions, interventions, videos, drawings, photographs and drawing traces that examines the significance of perceiving landscapes through tactile experiences. Haptic surfaces that transmit the pass of time and skin aging caused from the exposure to the environment. Dialogue between time, matter and landscapes as an experience that unveils diverse tactile qualities. Rain, wind or sunlight; temperature and climate; natural factors that provide a sensitive materiality: patterns, cavities, impurities.

Tastescapes: Series of explorations, artworks and actions that seek dialogues between gustatory perception and tastescapes. Food cycles, local gastronomy, farmscapes, gastronomic landscapes. Understanding the local territory of Lower Silesia and Wrocław through its food production and gastronomic practices. The research integrates a series of artistic-food explorations, gustatory creations and field actions, such as site-mapping, harvesting, food walks and cooking. In parallel, this research has been complemented with the interpretation, connection and translocation of an ancestral agricultural practice from Mexico, *La Milpa*, in the form of collective initiatives in Poland ***Milpa Collaboratory***, which highlights cooperative forms of artistic practice and foregrounds the key role of a kitchen as a laboratory space to explore collectively artistic-didactic practices.

The chapter entitled ***Expanded Geographies | On-site Works*** establishes bridges to other geographies through the development of three specific site-experiences. The first is *Insect City*, a public sculpture in the city of Linz, Austria, which reflects on biodiversity in urban habitats. The second experience, *Sensory Garden* in Sicily, Italy, a work carried out as part of the *Biennial of the Mediterranean*, in which an interactive garden is conceived and perceived from the five senses.

The research has also expanded to the context of Mexico, specifically, to its Pacific Coast, where the coastal landscape is explored through a series of site-specific interventions that integrate biodiversity, architecture, and ecology. The series of works was developed within the framework of *Flaneur in The Insular Cities: Island Ecology*, an internet-based residency based in Shanghai, that explores the theme of ocean ecology as a starting point for artistic experimentation.

The last section, ***Seeding & Germination | Soil-Didactic Practices***, emphasizes how educational practices and the academic space become relevant as a laboratory for exploring and disseminating new ways of thinking, imagining and creating. It reflects and brings into practice some of the key questions raised in the research: how to germinate seeds, and how these seeds can be disseminated through fertile soil-spaces. With this approach, the section brings some examples of the academic teamwork practice, developed within the educational space *Laboratory for Designing Interactive Spaces and Objects* at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław, as a collaborative research environment.



LANDSCAPE AS A PERSONAL CONCERN

My main field of interest is focused on artistic-design practices that promote positive approximations in communities by integrating social, spatial, ecological, and nature-based strategies. As an architect, landscape architect and practicing artist, I am interested in research-praxis as a field of experimentation and continuous learning. With this approach, I am focused on searching creative processes and sensitive ways to coexist with our cultural, geographical, and biological world.

Through my research-practice, I propose new narratives to relate to our landscapes, exploring new ways to redraw the borderlines between natural habitats and human beings by creating sensitive interventions that leave spaces for new interactions. In this way, I seek to provide a different point of view on the existing relationship of nature and human beings from diverse angles: research, praxis, dissemination, academia.

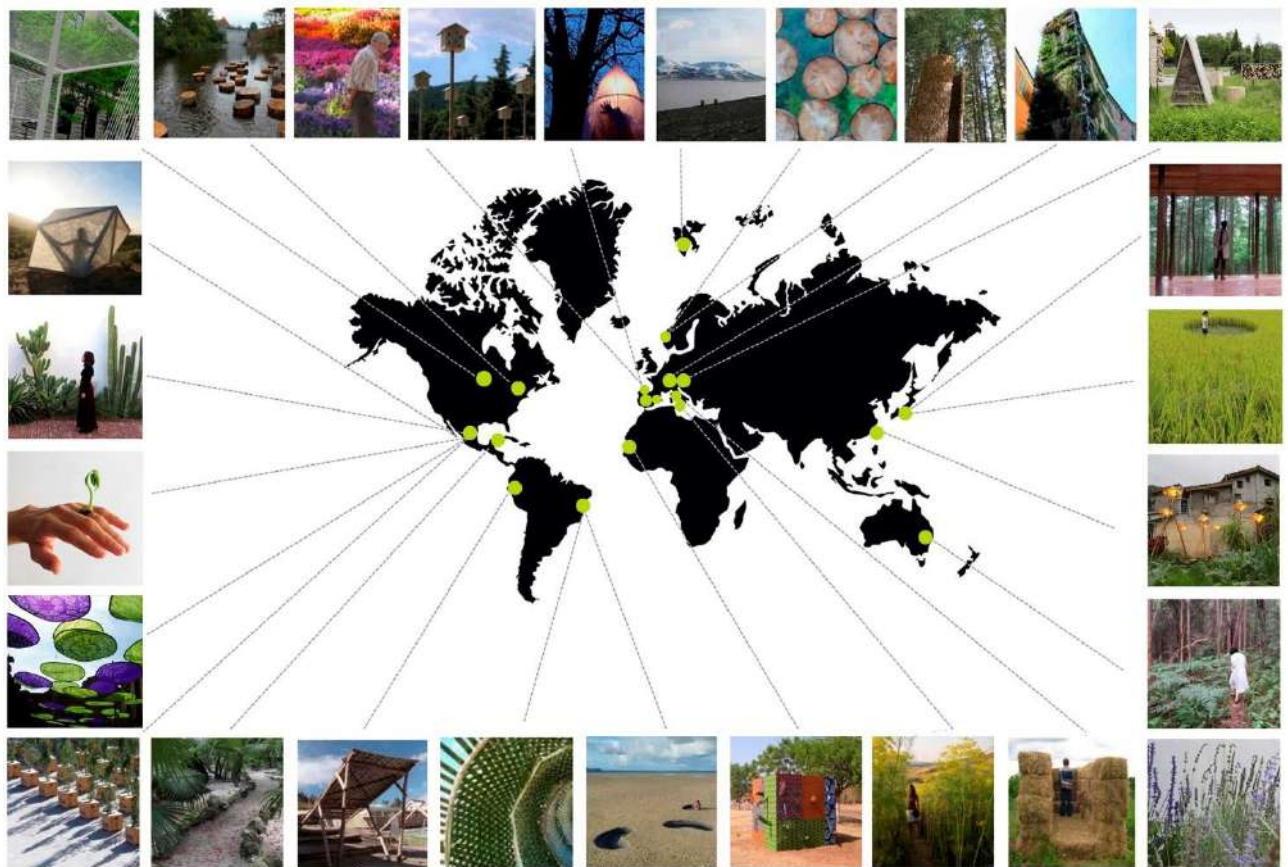
With this approach, I am interested on how artistic-design approximations enhance community identities and landscape consciousness towards new visions of our environment, seen not only from an anthropocentric, but complemented from a biocentric points of view. I am interested in emphasizing educational aspects towards a better understanding of our environment. Parallely, I seek to make emphasis on how community could discover, participate, and interact, and how people could reflect about their natural and cultural context, by having a diverse perception of their own place. I intend to raise a series of reflections that broaden our landscape understanding through the dialogue between artistic practice, critical thinking and ecological mindset.

LANDSCAPE AS A PERSONAL CONCERN

Performed Research in the Field of Landscapes & Senses

Along this pathway, I have developed a close connection with different territories and communities, building up a research core that intertwines local knowledge and site experiences.

Based on the above concepts, along my practice-research trajectory, I have developed a series of projects focused on artistic, environmental and educational initiatives that explore different ways of dialoguing with the landscape. I have developed these concepts through a series of in-situ interventions and initiatives across different locations, media and scales.



Series of artworks and site-specific interventions | Ivan Juarez

TOWARDS OUR LANDSCAPES

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, METHODS & PROCESSES

Although there are numerous studies focused on landscapes and senses, these explorations have mainly been developed separately, focusing on each of the human senses in a particular way. One of the main goals of this research is to incorporate significant concepts, case studies and explorations into an integrated framework. Through the process, a series of questions arise, focusing on how the phenomenological and mind-thinking approach could become an artistic-design medium to understand and intervene our cultural and natural environment, and how these questions are able to generate concerns towards reflective practice.

- How to interact or coexist with, within or towards our landscapes?
- How can artistic practice contribute towards sensitive approximations for our environment?
- How do people perceive, experience and interact with our landscapes?
- What is the relationship between landscape with, sound, smell, taste, touch, vision?
- How can artistic design approaches contribute to the sensory experience and cognition of our landscapes?
- How are perception and experience a source for landscape art-design practice?

MAIN GOALS AND OUTCOMES

- Promote ethical and sensitive environmental practices
- Understand how sensory art-design practice can improve environmental notions
- Stimulate critical and creative attitudes towards environmental art practices
- Encourage collectively processes and cross-disciplinary approaches
- Share knowledge within wider communities
- Provide a conceptual framework for sensory art-design approximations

CONTEXTUAL APPROACH AND LANDSCAPE AWARENESS

- Comprehend cultural and natural insights towards art-design approaches
- Acquire awareness of contemporary concerns in landscape disciplines
- Implement ethical and social sensibilities in the landscape design process
- Explore personal experiences and environmental positions in response to landscape and art-design disciplines

CONCEPTUALIZATION

- Explore sensory design strategies, theories, process and methods in landscape practice
- Exercise perceptual notions to the natural and built environment and gather outcomes towards the development of praxis-research
- Develop reflections and processes for landscape art-design approach by exploring the five senses
- Recognize how knowledge of other professionals and disciplines develops and extends thinking to improve our own work

RESEARCH METHODS, PROCESS & DEVELOPMENT OF MAIN PHASES

Along the course of the research, a multidirectional and dynamic process arises, branching out into different areas or narratives. New paths emerge from each reflection, generating diverse explorations that are integrated as a kaleidoscope in the totality of the project. The initial conception is based on the temporal notion of the place where a series of actions, interventions and site-works have been enriched from different sources, references, and case studies, ranging from scientific areas such as biology or ecology to humanistic and artistic areas such as philosophy, phenomenology or sociology. One of the main objectives is to integrate place and community-based into the process, shaping a research-practice that explores various research methods: collecting, mapping, interviewing, perceiving, experimenting, interpreting, creating, intervening, gathering.

As a synthesis, the research process is developed from different phases that offer the possibility of experimenting, going back-forward, expanding or ramifying. And, while the process is not necessarily linear, in general terms, the main phases that have been developed are as follows:

- Develop main research questions, theoretical and conceptual framework
- Identify and scope the natural and cultural landscape
- Experience specific locations through sensorial perceptions and site approaching
- Interpret the concepts that have been experienced and identified through sensory art-design projects, actions, and collective artworks
- Collect and conduct the main outcomes and conclusions
- Dissemination and sharing

DESCRIPTION OF PHASES

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

The research begins by addressing the main research questions focused on the relationship between art, landscape, environment, and phenomenology. It elaborates the bibliographic review and the theoretical framework, *Thinking Landscapes* | *Thinking Senses*. The conceptual framework has been enriched from various theoreticians, scientists or artists, and complemented from several historical and contemporary case studies that provide specific insights related to the research.

Identify and Scope Natural and Cultural Landscapes

In this stage of identification and first approach to the territory, *Site Context* | *Natural & Cultural Landscapes*, the research scopes specific natural, ecological, and cultural landscapes, identifying and understanding main landscape values and systems. It also maps out key local contributors and actors, including academics, researchers, practitioners, institutions and community groups.

Sensory Approach | Experience Specific Locations through Sensorial Perceptions and Site Approaching

This phase identifies specific site locations and applies cross-disciplinary methods of approximation to the landscape. This approach connects concepts, traces and narratives that identify the territory through experiences and perceptions. Various site-actions and site-mappings have been carried out. Actions, such as walks or itineraries. Throughout the process, sensory cartographies have been developed where sounds, tastes, textures or smells are the main inputs to identified.

Interpret the Concepts that have been Experienced and Identified through Sensory Art-Design Projects, Actions, and Collective Artworks

Development of site-explorations materialized into artworks and actions in-situ, conceived as links of approximation to the local environment.

GUIDING THREAD: Cartography of Senses

Along the research process, a conductive thread weaves diverse geographies with the sensory experience of touching, smelling, observing, tasting and listening.



Soundscapes

The sonic environment and the symphony of landscapes

Tastescapes

Productive landscapes, food-labs and gastronomic landscapes

Scentscapes

The sense of smell as an evocative connection associated with space, memory and experience

Tactilescapes

Haptic and tactile perceptions. The experience of touching nature and feeling temperatures

Visualscapes

Scenery and time. The visual perception of micro and macro scenarios. The cyclic sense of time in nature

CHAPTER 1

LANDSCAPE AS A PERSONAL JOURNEY
INSPIRATION SOURCES
&
INFLUENCES

LANDSCAPE AS A PERSONAL JOURNEY

INSPIRATION SOURCES & INFLUENCES

One is the books one has read, the painting one has seen, the music listened and forgotten, the streets one has walked. One is his childhood, his family, a few friends, a few loves, a few disappointments. One is a sum reduced by infinite subtractions ⁷

Sergio Pitol

Places, events, scenarios and geographies. Reflections, ideas, concepts, questions, or works that have influenced me throughout my practice. Over the course of my professional pathway, different places, moments, and visions have provided me with an important source of inspiration. Experiences that have enriched my personal view and have accompanied me along my personal journey.

I would like to mention those sources of which I have had the opportunity to experience personally. Events, spaces, or artistic works that have transmitted an aesthetic experience to me, and that sensitively exemplify the dialogue that is generated between the artistic work and the perceiver. Sources that I have interpreted and reimagined in the course of my research practice.

Landscape as a Personal Aesthetic Experience

Two kinds of knowledge have been and are distinguished: mental and sensual. They were contraposed in no uncertain terms in antiquity as aidings and vôngig- two concepts then constantly used and constantly set against one another ⁸

Władysław Tatarkiewicz

I have been inspired by several naturesscapes and ephemeral events of nature, such as the Monarch Butterfly winter migration that settles in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Michoacan, Mexico; or by the dynamic movement of the low tide on the island of Itaparica in Brazil, caused by the effects of the gravitational moon and sun forces, where the seawater constantly rise and fall its levels, transforming the landscape of the coastal dune every day; or to the natural phenomenon *fall foliage* that occurs in the boreal and deciduous forests of North America, in the state of Vermont during the autumn season. A natural event that creates a unique landscape scenery of gold, ochre, orange, red and yellow colors.

⁷ Pitol, S. (2007). Trilogía de la Memoria: El Arte de la fuga. (ed.): Anagrama, Barcelona, Spain

⁸ Tatarkiewicz, W. (1980). A History of Six Ideas: An Essay in Aesthetics. Melbourne International Philosophy Series, 5. 1st ed. Philosophy Department, University of Melbourne, Australia, p. 3

Along my personal journey, I have been influenced by diverse natural sceneries and geographies, experienced across different locations in the world. From the Savannah in Senegal to the dynamic gradients that shape the Mediterranean landscape. From the Pyrenean and Alpine mountainous forests with hill meadows to the Danube Valley of Austria and Hungary. From the coastal coniferous forest in the Norwegian Fjords to the Arctic Archipelago of Svalbard. From the native eucalyptus bushlands in Australia to the forest ecosystems and agricultural rice fields of Japan and Taiwan, or from the tropical forest and marine ecosystem in Brazil to the Andean cultivate terraces in Peru.



Having been born in Mexico, I have been significantly influenced by its rich biodiversity and contrasting ecosystems. Natural landscapes that generate significant cultural heritages, diverse historical contexts, preserved traditions, cosmologies and symbolic connotations of the territory.

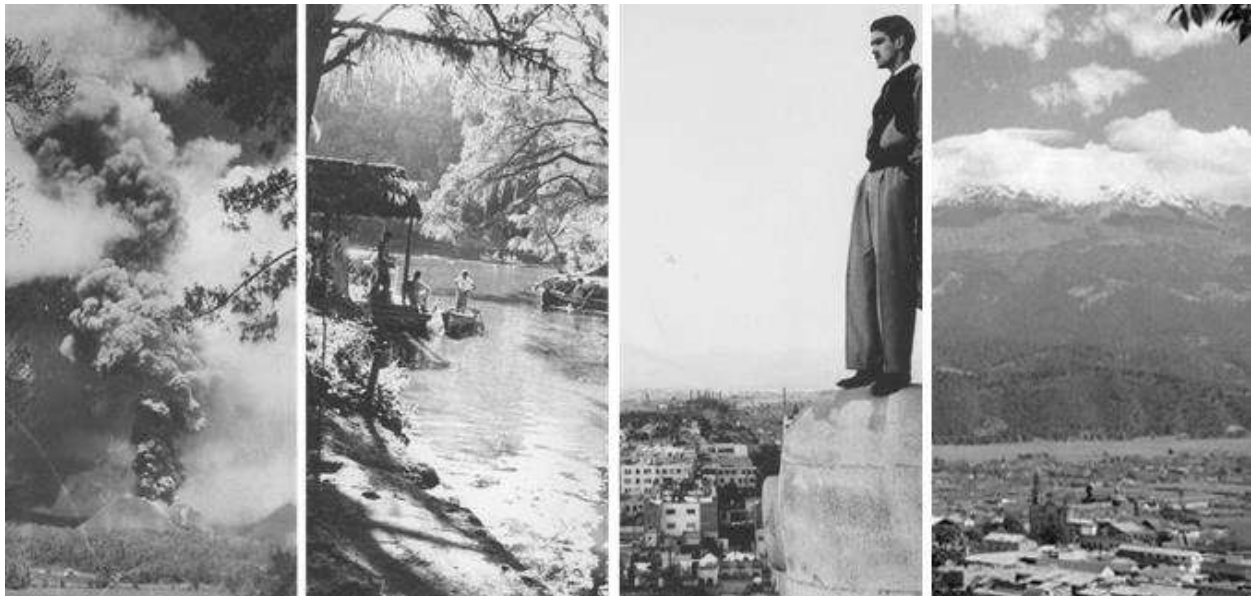


Natural and cultural landscapes of Mexico | Series of photographs: Ivan Juarez

Landscape as a Personal Journey

Main Influences

As mentioned above, my influences are closely joined to diverse geographies or ephemeral events of nature, but I also acknowledge contributions from people who have preceded me. From my parents, I have been inspired by their perception of the world, but mostly, I have been influenced by their ethical values. From my mother, who is biologist, I have been inspired by her critical thinking, and how she transmits and shares her knowledge about nature, culture, history, and society in a wider sense. I have also been influenced by my grandfather, who was a photographer and explorer; his visual narratives made me discover as a kid, diverse cultural and natural landscapes of Mexico through a journey of knowledge and imagination.



Landscapes of Mexico | Series of photographs | between the 1940s and 1950s
photographs: Raul Bolaños (grandfather)

Landscape as a Personal Journey

Artistic sources

The work conceived along my practice doesn't start only from architecture or environmental design disciplines, but also nourishes from different artistic sources. Literature, music, dance, painting, or cinema are on many occasions the ones that give guidelines for my creative process. With this approach, I have been influenced from a wide variety of authors and artists. From painters, photographers, sculptors, scenographers, architects and landscape architects, to writers, dancers, chefs and film directors.

From the beginning I have never conceived artistic-design disciplines just as a specialization, but as a broader vision of understanding and questioning the environment that surrounds us, in which every vision can be enriched through different perspectives. In relation to the dialogue between art and nature, I am interested in how the conception of landscape has evolved over the history of art. From the first pictorial and spatial landscape representations to the visions from photography and cinema, as well as the aesthetic experience between body, nature and territory, which emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, where the experience of landscape became the fundamental meaning of the work of art; to the current artistic-design conceptions based on environmental-social challenges related to our habitats and territories. Concerns that are complemented by contemporary bio-artistic practices that are based not only on the human being as a central place.

Literature | Artistic Sources

In the field of literature, I have been influenced by Latin American and Spanish writers, such as Juan Rulfo, Octavio Paz, Roberto Bolaño, Julio Cortazar, Gabriel Gracia Márquez. From the spatial narratives of Jorge Luis Borges, and the sonorous and imaginary universe conceived in the poetry of Federico García Lorca. Examples include *Impressions and Landscapes* (1918) and *Poet in New York* (1930).

City That Does Not Sleep

by Federico García Lorca

*In the sky there is nobody asleep. Nobody, nobody.
Nobody is asleep.
The creatures of the moon sniff and prowls about their cabins.
The living iguanas will come and bite the men who do not dream,
and the man who rushes out with his spirit broken will meet on the street corner
the unbelievable alligator quiet beneath the tender protest of the stars.*

*Nobody is asleep on earth. Nobody, nobody.
Nobody is asleep.
In a graveyard far off there is a corpse
who has moaned for three years
because of a dry countryside on his knee;
and that boy they buried this morning cried so much
it was necessary to call out the dogs to keep him quiet ⁹*

Visual Arts | Artistic sources

In terms of visual arts, pictorial spaces, and visual explorations, I have been moved by Caravaggio's poetic use of light and shadow; or from Mark Rothko's immersive paintings that evoke contemplative spaces and atmospheres through multiple layers of luminous colors. I also admire the Zapotec artist Francisco Toledo, who, through paintings, sculptures, lithographs, engravings, drawings and sculptures, expresses the Juchitecan cosmovision and mythology represented in landscapes and creatures. I admire him not only for his artistic practice, but also for his social activism, becoming one of the significant promoters and defenders of the artistic and cultural heritage of Oaxaca and Mexico. In the field of photography, I am moved by the sensitive approach to the territory and its communities, captured in black and white images by the Oaxacan artist Manuel Álvarez Bravo.

⁹ García Lorca, F. (1940). City That Does Not Sleep [*Ciudad sin Sueño*]: Poet in New York



Series of paintings by Mark Rothko at the Tate Modern, London | photograph: Ivan Juarez

An artist who has influenced my own thinking is the English Romantic painter William Turner (1775-1851). I am interested in how through his paintings, the temperament of the natural phenomena is expressed, revealing its strength and impetuosity, making present the power of nature over the human being.



Series of paintings by William Turner at the British Museum London

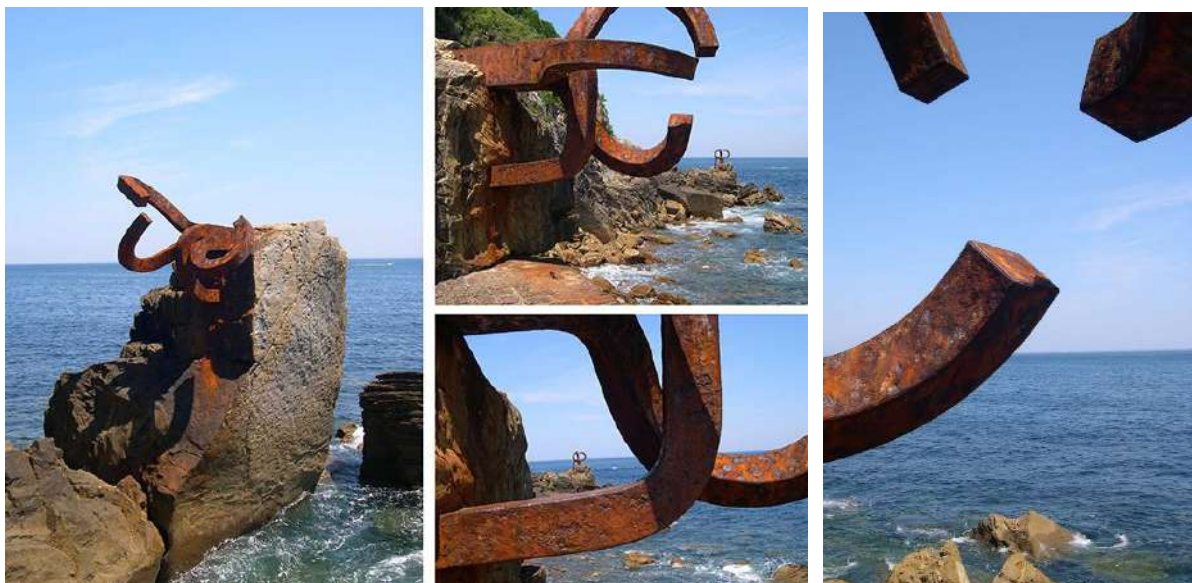
Photographs: Ivan Juarez

Cinematography | Artistic Sources

I would also like to highlight cinematography as a significant inspiration in my creative process, a medium that constantly influences my work. As examples, I can mention the cinematographic narratives of Wim Wenders; the atmospheres and photography in the filmography of directors as Wong Kar Wai and Andriej Tarkowski; or the social, quotidian, humble and authenticity-laden vision of Iranian director Abbas Kiarostami. Artistic visions built from stories, fragments, lands, people and scenes, which create a personal way of understanding and imagining certain territories.

Spatial, Public & Environmental Art | Artistic Sources

In relation to spatial, public, and environmental art works, I am particularly interested in artistic visions that explore aesthetic experience in connection with places, body, matter, light, presence. Along these concepts, I admire the body of work from sculptors and land artists who have developed their artistic practice during the twentieth and/or twenty-first century, such as Richard Long, Isamu Noguchi, Eduardo Chillida, Dani Karavan, James Turrell, Walter di Maria, Janet Laurence, Tomáš Libertíny, Pierre Huyghe, Alan Sonfist, Andy Goldsworthy, Rei Naito, Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Alexander Calder, Jorge Oteiza, Tadeusz Kantor, Nancy Holt, Richard Serra, Maya Lin, Gordon Matta-Clark, Ana Mendieta or Vito Acconci, among others.



Peine de los Vientos (1977), San Sebastian, Spain by Eduardo Chillida

Photographs: Ivan Juarez

Spatial, Public & Environmental Art | Artistic Sources**The Sculptural Space at UNAM | Mexico City**

One of the land artworks that have influenced me the most, which I have had the opportunity to visit constantly since I was a child, is the *Sculptural Space*, located in the ecological reserve on the campus of the Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). A walking and contemplative spatial work, that integrates art and ecology. The large-scale sculptural space was conceived in 1979 jointly by six artists: Federico Silva, Helen Escobedo, Manuel Felguérez, Matías Goeritz, Hersúa and Sebastián. A series of geometric pieces that in their totality honor the cosmovision and symbolism of nature-time cycles of Mesoamerican cultures, creating a circumference that emerges from the volcanic soil, leaving an empty natural space in the center, highlighting and delimitating the inner ecosystem of endemic species that grow on the black lava soil of *tezontle* (volcanic rock).



The Sculptural Space at UNAM, Mexico City | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Spatial, Public & Environmental Art | Artistic Sources**Arte Sella: The Contemporary Mountain | Trentino, Italy**

As one of the most significant places and artistic initiatives in which art and nature are harmoniously integrated, is *Arte Sella: The Contemporary Mountain*. An open and experimental-living museum of several hectares, created in 1986 and located in Val di Sella-Borgo Valsugana, in the Italian Pre-Alps of Trentino. The artistic place offers different itineraries in the mountainous forest, where the walker-viewer discovers along the way various sculptural pieces. The sculptures have in common the fact that they have been made with natural elements and materials: wood, stone, logs, branches, or the vegetation itself. The open museum is organized into three main areas across the woods and features more than fifty works of art conceived over thirty years by artists and architects, such as Michelangelo Pistoletto, Roberto Conte, Will Beckers, Anthony Howe, Nils-Udo, Edoardo Tresoldi, Urs Twellmann, Steven Siegel, Rainer Gross and Kengo Kuma, among others. The artworks are constantly being replaced by new art pieces since most of them vanish and disintegrate in nature over time. The core artwork is the *Cattedrale Vegetale*, realized in 2001 by artist Giuliano Mauri. A natural architecture that blends into the landscape formed by a series of vegetal columns, forming interior passages covered by the vegetation. The space changes its appearance, leafiness, and tonalities according to the different seasons of the year.¹⁰



Arte Sella, Trentino, Italy | Cattedrale Vegetale by Giuliano Mauri, 2001 | photographs: Ivan Juarez

¹⁰ Arte Sella. [online] <http://www.artesella.it> [03.03.2022]

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources



Pantheon of Agrippa in Rome, Italy (126 AD)
Dome's oculus | photograph Ivan Juarez

With regard to the relationship of architectural spaces connected with the natural environment, I am particularly interested in those architectures that are closely integrated within the territory and landscape. Historical spatial influences include, *The Pantheon of Agrippa* in Rome (126 AD). Architectural space characterized by its *oculus*, which is a circular opening in the center of the dome that poetically allows both, natural light and rain to penetrate into the interior of the space.

As unique examples of the relationship between architecture and territory are the ancient Greek cities located in Turkey, Asia Minor. For instance, the archaeological sites of Pergamon, the “ancient Greek city in Mysia, situated few kilometers close from the Aegean Sea,”¹¹ and Ephesus, “the most important Greek city in Ionian Asia Minor.”¹² Examples that link architecture and territory. This connection can be observed in their amphitheaters; architectonic spaces that are sensitively integrated into the gradient of the topography, conceiving a natural scenario where the spectator’s gaze reaches the entire horizon. The scenario becomes the landscape scenery.



Amphitheater of Pergamon archaeological site | Asia Minor, Turkey | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Pergamon existed at least from the 5th century BCE, but it became important only in the Hellenistic Age (323-30 BCE)¹³



Amphitheater of Ephesus archaeological site | Asia Minor, Turkey | photographs: Ivan Juarez | Ephesus founded in the eleventh century B.C. Situated on the northern slopes of the hills Coressus and Pion and south of the Cayster River¹⁴

¹¹ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020). Pergamum. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Pergamum>. [15.06.2022]

¹² Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020). Ephesus. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online] <https://www.britannica.com/place/Ephesus>. [15.06.2022]

¹³ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020). Pergamum Op. cit.

¹⁴ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020). Pergamum Op. cit.

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Mesoamerican Sites | Mexico

It is also worth mentioning the Mesoamerican architectures, closely merged into the natural world, where the cosmos becomes the main reference to generate the architectural spaces and human settlements. As examples are the Mayan archaeological sites of the Yucatan Peninsula, in Mexico, which arise within a civilization that has its period of splendor during the third to tenth centuries AD. Among the ceremonial archeological sites are Palenque, Calakmul, Dzibilchaltún, Cobá, Uxmal, Labná, or Chichen Itzá, among others. Sites that I have walked constantly, and that exemplify how sacred architectural elements emerge as massive bodies of stone blended into the surrounding landscape.



Mayan archaeological sites in Mexico | Palenque (226 BC to ca. 799 AD) and Calakmul (700-350 BC)

photographs Ivan Juarez

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

The Alhambra | Granada, Spain

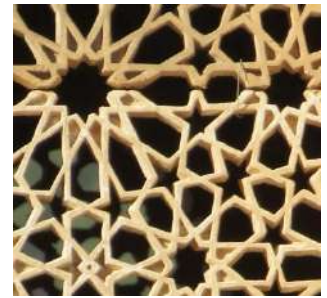
Sounds

From the squared towers of the Alhambra the Albaizin is seen, with its patios, with its ancient galleries through which the nuns pass. Within the white walls of the cloisters lies the way of the cross. Beside the romantic latticework of the bell-towers the cypresses languidly sway their fragrant funereal masses (...) The patios are sonorous and shady ¹⁵

Federico García Lorca

A particular place from which I have been significantly inspired, is the historical complex of *The Alhambra*, a bridge between cultures, times and continents. Gardens, courtyards, sounds, scents, orchards, palaces, interior-exterior spaces, arcades, porches, lattices, poetries, calligraphies, lights, shadows, and water always present as a guiding thread. For two years, I had the opportunity to discover and have a close relationship with its artistic, architectural and cultural landscape, woven by senses and mysticism. A cultural heritage closely connected with the city of Granada, and especially with the mountainous landscape of Sierra Nevada. Constantly present in liquid form. The natural scape of Sierra Nevada provides with snowmelt water, thanks to a historic system of irrigation ditches that flows water in a variety of forms. The poetic water staircase, the water mirrors or the soundscapes created by fountains, channels and ponds. At the end of its journey through inner spaces, gardens and courtyards, the water flows outward to join again with the river and the ditch system, providing the liquid element to the city's fountains, as well as irrigation for the traditional agricultural fields.

¹⁵ García Lorca, F. (1918-1st ed.): *Sonidos: Impresiones y Paisajes*. (ed.): Ediciones Cátedra Granada, Spain 1998



The Alhambra & Generalife, Granada, Spain | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Japanese Gardens & Temples

I would like to highlight the country of Japan as an important source of inspiration. A cultural territory where the close connection and respect between its inhabitants and nature is uniquely expressed. Sensitivity towards nature is manifested in a wide range of cultural, artistic, religious, and social expressions. An important connection to nature is manifested through its main religions, Buddhism and, primarily Shinto, which believes that nature and the natural world are an embodiment of divinity. The most significant examples that arise within this relationship -human being, nature and divinity- are materialized in landscape conceptions, through temples and gardens that arise from ancient times to the present day across the territory.

Walking and experiencing Japanese gardens evoke a sense of suspension of time, where wooden architectures - temples or pavilions - blend harmoniously with the natural and landscaping elements. Water, ponds, rocks, gravel, mosses, flowers. Cherry, plum, maple trees. Paths, bridges, fences. Altogether they constitute a symbolic universe of sensitivity, detail and delicacy.



Above: Kamiyama Shrine temple. Down: Tokyo Royal Garden | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Japanese gardens manifest themselves in different locations and scales, from the royal palaces, shrines and temples to the tea ceremonial gardens. From the domestic small gardens made by community neighbors to the miniature living landscapes conceived within the Japanese artistic expressions of *bonsai* (盆栽), *saikei* (栽景) and *bonseki* (盆石).



Japanese garden | Kyoto garden details | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Although the garden references in Japanese geography are numerous and each one of them expresses a particular universe, I would like to mention a few examples, such as the moss garden of *Saihō-ji* temple, where a living green carpet covers the scenery in a unique way; and the historic Zen temple garden *Ryōan-ji*, an abstract landscape, manifested in a dry garden that represents in a profound sense a whole cosmos using minimal elements from nature: rocks emerging out from the earth. Both spaces represent the gardening sensibility manifested in numerous examples in Kyoto.



Moss garden at the Saihō-ji temple in Kyoto, Japan, started in 1339 | photographs: Ivan Juarez



Ryōan-ji temple, Kyoto, Japan. XV century | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Conceived with the same sensitivity, it is worth mentioning the series of gardens created between the years 1924 and 1975 by the modern *ikebana* artist and landscape architect Mirei Shigemori (1896–1975), in which, in an abstract, respectful, vanguardist and sensitive way, he reinterpreted the conceptual meaning of the historic Japanese gardens.



Tofukuji kare-sansui in Kyoto, Japan by Mirei Shigemori (1939) | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum | Japan



We are a landscape of all we have seen

Isamu Noguchi

I would like to mention a particular place that is significant to me, both due to my personal experience in that space, and also because of the author who created it, the art studio of American-Japanese artist and landscape architect Isamu Noguchi (1904-1988), who established his studio space in the village of Mure, located nearby Mount Gokenzan in the Japanese island of Shikoku (he established two parallel studios, both in Japan and in New York). During his artistic career, Isamu Noguchi explored different media, such as sculpture, ceramics, landscaping, furniture, lighting design and scenography. Since 1999, the studio became the *Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum*, a place where landscape and historical architecture merge together, and where his sculptural stone art works (some of them unfinished) are integrated as part of the landscape.



Isamu Noguchi's former studio, today Garden Museum, Shikoku island, Japan | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Teshima Art Museum | Japan

The wise tradition of intertwining landscape and architecture has been reinterpreted in contemporary spatial works, such as the *Teshima Art Museum*. An architectural-sculptural space settled on the top of the mountain in Teshima Island, designed jointly by architect Ryue Nishizawa and artist Rei Naito, who poetically conceived a white and organic space nestled in the landscape. The interior space pays a delicate homage to one of the most important natural elements: the drop of water.



Teshima Art Museum, Japan | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Twentieth and the Present Century

In order to complement the topic related to key sources of inspiration that connect architectural space and the natural environment in a unique way, I would like to mention relevant architects from twentieth and present century, whose work is a constant reference in my artistic practice. Architectural spaces that emphasize intangible concepts, such as light, atmosphere or silence. Examples are the *Thermal Baths* in Vals, Switzerland by Peter Zumthor; the *Luis Barragán house-studio*, and the *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera house-studio* by Juan O’Gorman, both in Mexico City; the *studio Alvar Aalto* in Helsinki and the *Oslo Opera House* by *Snøhetta Architects*.



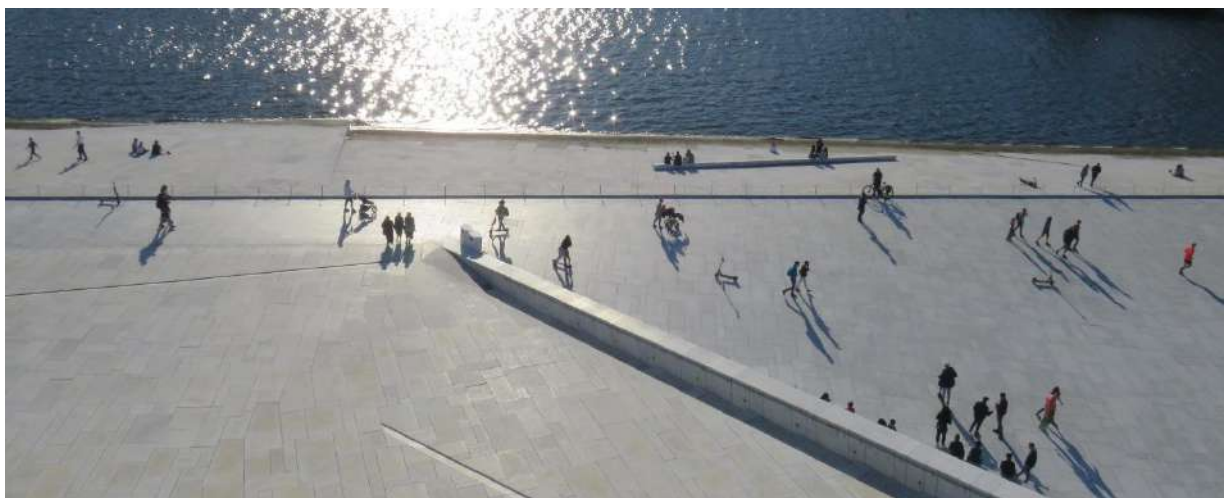
Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera house-studio by Juan O’Gorman
Mexico City (1929-1931) | photographs: Ivan Juarez



Luis Barragán House and Studio| Mexico City (1947-1948)
Photographs: Ivan Juarez



Architecture & water | two examples: thermal baths in Vals, Switzerland by Peter Zumthor (1996) and Oslo Opera House by Snøhetta Architects (2008), | photographs: Ivan Juarez



Architectural Spaces & Landscape | Artistic Sources

Jørn Utzon's Can Lis house | Majorca, Spain

In 2018, with the support of *Utzon Foundation*, I had the opportunity to inhabit and develop a series of site-specific projects in *Can Lis*, the house that Jørn Utzon designed on a cliff on the Mediterranean island of Majorca. Can Lis was projected in the early seventies, for him, his wife Lis and their son Kim, after ten years of intense work on Sydney Opera House. The house in Majorca is considered one of the most significant architectural buildings of the twentieth century, and since 2006, one of the objectives of the Foundation, is to maintain the main function of the building for which it was conceived -inhabiting a domestic space- complemented by a series of architectural initiatives focused on researching and promoting the ideas of Jørn Utzon and the body of his work.

As a tribute to the classic Mediterranean architecture, Can Lis could be defined as a landscaping-house, where a sequence of spaces -patios, rooms, porches, massifs, openings, limits- are conceived as scenarios or living pavilions that dialogue with nature, highlighting the cyclical sense of time and the constant natural transformation of Mediterranean landscape. House and landscape come together in a poetic vision that provides unique atmospheres and ritual-domestic spaces as source of meditation and continuous inspiration. A Landscaping-house conceived as experiential and metaphoric space that provides a shelter to reflect about architecture, nature and life.



Landscapes | Majorca Island, Spain | photographs: Ivan Juarez

The phenomenological approach, the dialogue with Mediterranean nature, and the traditional Majorcan architecture reinterpreted by Jørn Utzon in Can Lis, are the main concepts applied within the architectural-experiential space. Spaces, where each daily activity related to the domestic sphere -sleeping, cooking, reading, eating, walking- evokes an event of great depth as a sensorial experience.



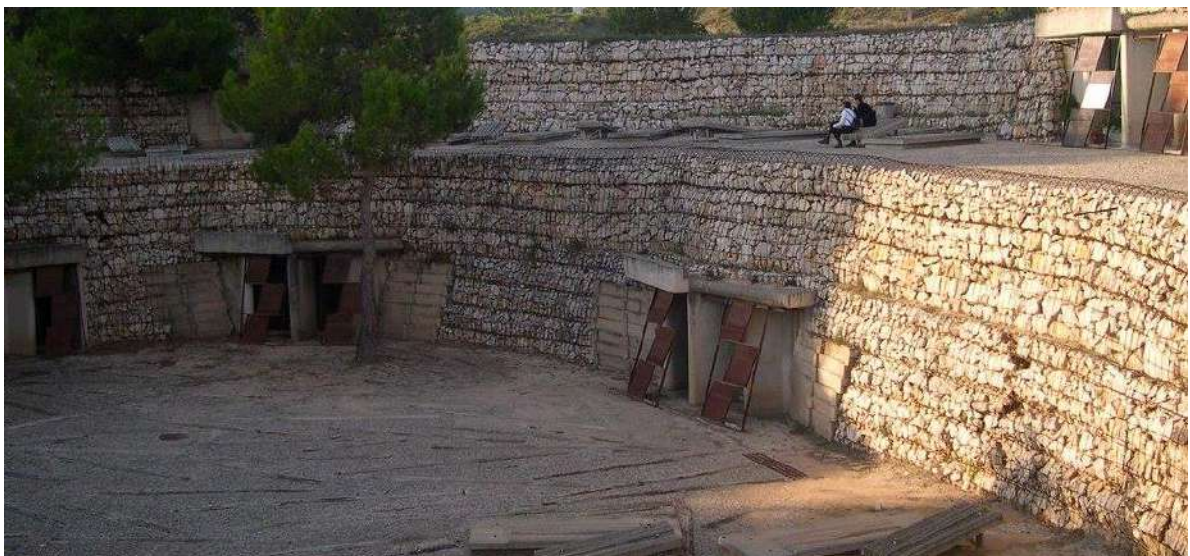
Jørn Utzon's Can Lis house | Majorca, Spain | photographs: Ivan Juarez

Landscaping | Artistic Sources

In relation to the territorial and large scale, I would like to mention those examples in the field of landscaping and environmental design, disciplines that have been a personal reference within my practice. Among them are landscape architects such as Roberto Burle Marx, Luis Catherine Mosbach and Gilles Clément. Also, landscape projects such as the *Tosca Stone Park* in Olot by RCR Architects and the *Cemetery Igualada* by Enric Miralles and Carme Pinós, both interventions in Spain.



Tosca Stone Park in Olot, Spain | by RCR Architects | photography: Ivan Juarez



Cemetery Igualada, Spain | by Enric Miralles + Carme Pinós | photography: Ivan Juarez

Landscaping | Artistic Sources

The Highline | Manhattan, New York

The Highline in Manhattan, New York, designed in collaboration between Diller Scofidio and Renfro James Corner Field Operations along with artist gardener Piet Oudolf. The Highline is considered one of the most significant and influential urban projects of the last decades, due to the implementation of bio and landscape strategies for recovering a disused elevated railroad track within the city, transformed into the most dynamic public linear park on the island of Manhattan.



High Line, New York, 2009 (first phase). Planting design by Piet Oudolf | photographs: Ivan Juarez

CHAPTER 2

SITE CONTEXT

NATURAL & CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

POLAND | LOWER SILESIA | WROCŁAW

SITE CONTEXT: NATURAL & CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

Poland | Lower Silesia | Wrocław



Map Location | Europe | Poland

Since one of the main premises of the present research is based on the idea that the artistic process is closely connected to the place where it is conceived, the territory of Poland, located in the center of Europe, is established as the geographical and contextual framework for the development of this investigation. Specifically, the research has been carried out in Lower Silesia, a historical and administrative region located in the southwest of Poland, which, due to its geographical position and historical background, holds an important natural and cultural heritage.

In this context, the historic city of Wrocław, capital of Lower Silesia, is proposed as the epicenter of the present research. A conceptual and physical territory that I have inhabited and experienced during the period of three years within the research process. A city with which I have established a close connection, from October 2019 to the present time (summer 2022).



Poland | Lower Silesia | Wrocław

Lower Silesia is understood as a region that has historically been formed from three complementary cultural territories: Polish, Czech and German. Geographically, the region of Lower Silesia settles in the basin of the Middle Oder River, a river that flows from the southeast, rising in the Czech Republic, to the northwest towards Baltic Sea. Lower Silesia is bordered by three other provinces (*voivodato* in Polish); to the north with Lubusz, to the northeast with Greater Poland (*Wielkopolska*), and to the southeast with Opole. It is also located within the borders of two countries; to the southwest with Germany, and the southern border is traced by the Western and Central *Sudetes Mountain Range*, which since centuries, constituted the boundary between Polish Silesia and the historical region of Bohemia, nowadays Czech Republic.¹⁶ It is worth mentioning that this mountainous and cultural landscape has been a constant source scenario in literature and the arts, as depicted in the literary work of the Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk.



Sudetes mountain profile from Świdnica | photograph: Ivan Juarez

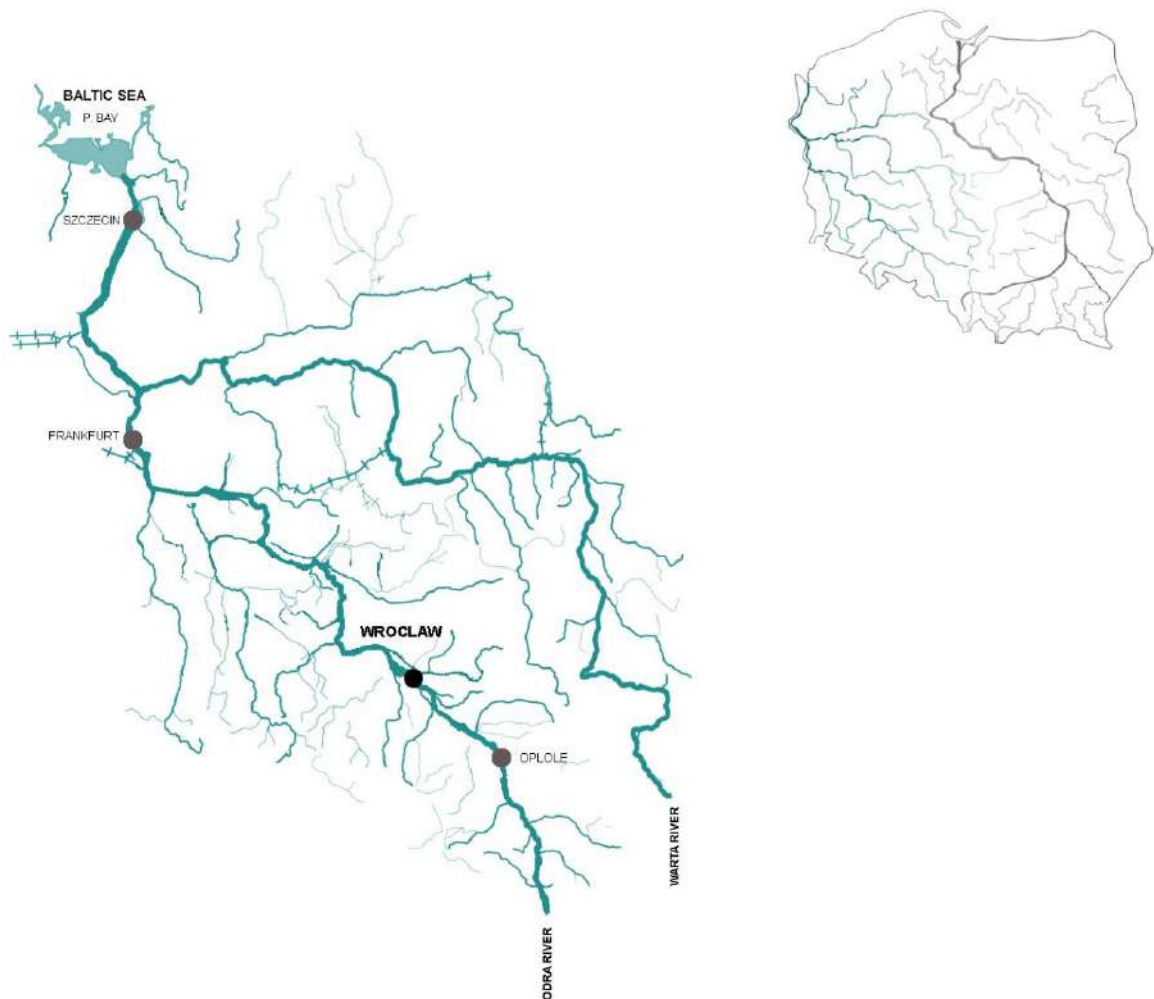
¹⁶ Witkowski. A., Kleszcz, M., Błachuta, J. & Napora, K. (2012). Ichthyofauna of Wrocław: The Odra River, its tributaries and the selected city reservoirs. *Fragmenta Faunistica* 55(1), Museum and Institute of Zoology Pas, Poland

Lower Silesia



Lower Silesia | Wrocław | map

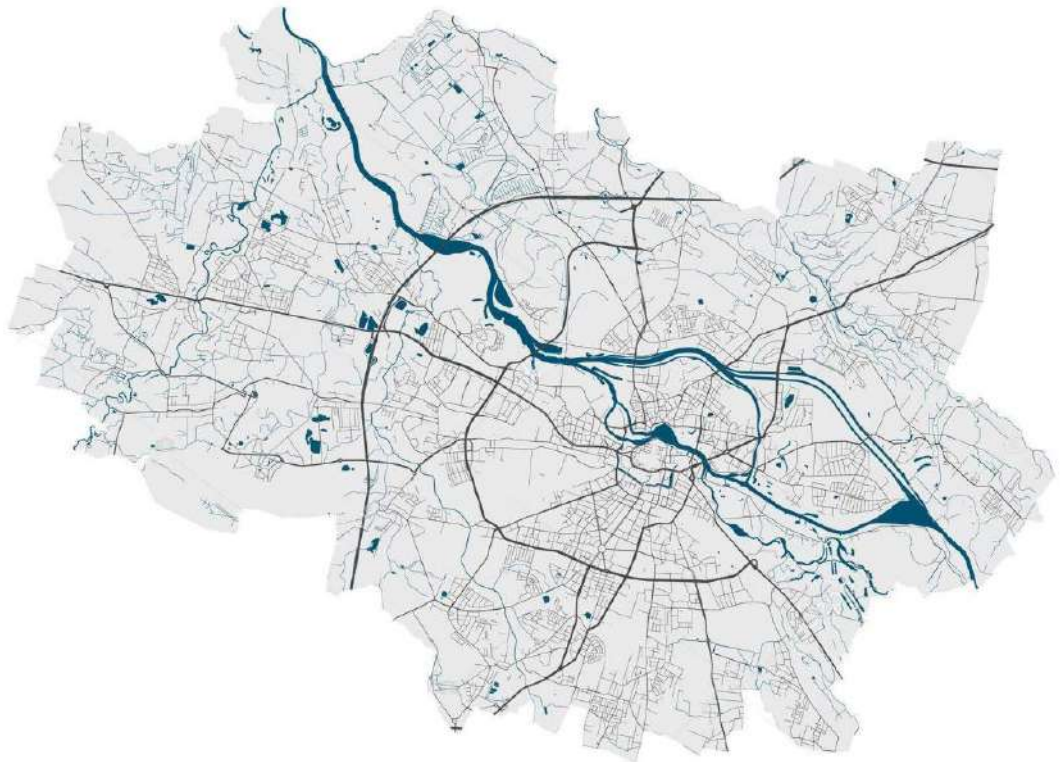
Wrocław | Waterscapes



Odra river system Poland (with a fragment of Germany)

The Odra River has had a significant impact on millions of people living in its basin for hundreds of years. It influenced the inhabitants in many spheres of life. It has had a strong culture-forming role for many nations for many generations. Memories of families and their ancestors ¹⁷

¹⁷ Odra Centrum (2015). In: OdraCentrum.org [online] homepage: <https://odracentrum.org> [14.03.2020]



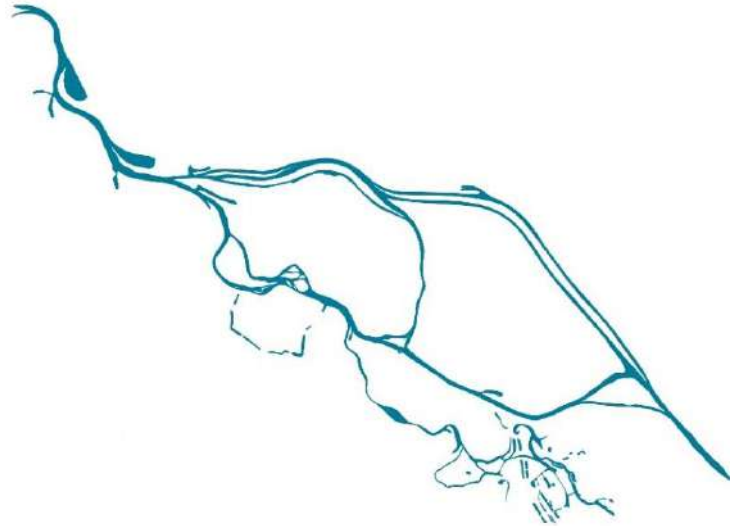
Wrocław and its river system: Odra River and tributary rivers: Oława, Widawa, Bystrzyca and Ślęza ¹⁸

The city of Wrocław is distinguished by its significant natural landscape, characterized by its close relationship with water. The city was founded in the 10th century CE at the confluence of several rivers and streams that form a rich and complex hydrological system that expands and branches along the cityscape giving shape to a unique urban fabric. The fluvial system is composed of five rivers, Odra the most significant and the longest in Silesia, as well as its main tributaries: Oława, Widawa, Bystrzyca and Ślęza.¹⁹

¹⁸ Wrocław city map (2020). [online] homepage: vectorstock.com [12.09.2021]

¹⁹ Witkowski. A., Kleszcz, M., Błachuta, J. & Napora, K. (2012). Op.cit.

Wrocław | Waterscapes | Fluvial Network & Infrastructure



The fluvial network of the city, mostly oriented to navigation, water supply, electricity generation, as well as providing a variety of eco-systemic functions, such the habitat for different biological species. It also includes areas for human habitation and recreation, that shapes a complex historical and current

system of infrastructures for flow, flood and navigation management, which is materialized in canals, dams, ponds, retaining dikes, cisterns, mills, water tanks or ports.

Above: Wrocław-Odra River map | source: Odra Centrum
Below: Wratislavia map by Braun & Hogenberg | 1588-97 ²⁰

²⁰ Braun & Hogenberg (1588-97). Wratislavia map reference: Van der Krogt 4, 4876. From: *Civitates Orbis Theatrum, Liber quartus Urbium Praecipuarum totius Mundi*. Cologne, 1588-97. Taschen Br. Hog., p. 324 [online]: <https://www.cartahistorica.com/our-catalogue/europe/central-and-east-europe/wroclaw-wratislava>

An important feature of the river system includes the city fortress moat (*Fosa Miejska*), built continuously from the 13th to the 19th century, which remains a complex system of fortifications surrounding the interior of the ancient city; as well as the series of twelve islands (*wyspa* in Polish), among which is a small archipelago located in the geographical core of the city, consisting of a group of six smaller islands: *Słodowa*, *Tamka*, *Daliowa*, *Bielarska*, *Młyńska* and *Piasek*, which are complemented by larger islands, such as *Ostrów Tumski* (*Cathedral Island*), which is the oldest quartier of the city; *Kępa Mieszczańska*, densely populated; or *Wielka Wyspa* (*Great Island*), which is the largest island and contains several neighborhoods within its perimeter.



Ostrów Tumski and Piasek islands | photography: Ivan Juarez

The islands and the city areas crossed by the river conform a series of connecting structures, considered an important infrastructure of the city's mobility system that includes more than one hundred bridges and footbridges. Among them are the *Piaskowy Bridge* (1861), *Tumski Bridge* (1889), *Oławski Bridge* (1883), *Zwierzyniecki Bridge* (1897), *Grunwald Bridge* (1908), and *Most Bartoszowicki* (1917); to the most recent ones, such as *Milenijny Bridge* (2004) and *Pont Redzin* (2008).



Grunwald Bridge | photography: Ivan Juarez

Wrocław | Waterscapes | Riverbanks

On its riverbanks, along the river course and canals, the city benefits from its boulevards, promenades, seating amphitheatres, pedestrian and bike paths, where vegetation forms alleys, linear parks or urban meadows; and as the bio-landscape expands, the vegetation naturalizes, providing important ecological zones of riparian forest that shelter native biodiversity.



Amphitheater seating that functions as a lookout point to the riverside | photography: Ivan Juarez



Canal promenades | photographs: Ivan Juarez

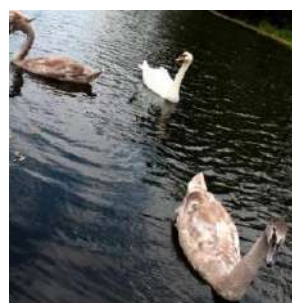


Odra river and riverbanks | photographs: Ivan Juarez



Wrocław | Waterscapes | Biodiversity

In relation to its biodiversity, among the aquatic fauna, there are diverse species of birds, such as mallard duck (*Anas platyrhynchos*), mute swan (*Cygnus olor*), grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), black cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*), black-headed gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*). Semiaquatic rodents, such as otter (*Lutra lutra*) and beaver (*Castor canadensis*). Diverse species of fish, such as asp (*Aspius aspius*), European catfish (*Silurus glanis*), European chub (*Squalius cephalus*), gudgeon (*Gobio gobio*), northern pike (*Esox lucius*), common rudd (*Scardinius erythrophthalmus*), European perch (*Perca fluviatilis*), common bream (*Abramis brama*), European carp (*Cyprinus carpio*). Among the flora, there are various riparian plant species including trees, shrubs, reeds and sedges, such as European alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), aspen (*Populus tremula*), black poplar (*Populus nigra*), white willow (*Salix alba*), basket willow (*Salix viminalis*) blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*); bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) and reeds (*Phragmites*); and a variety of aquatic plants, such as water lilies (*Nymphaeodes peltate*), floating fern (*Salvinia natans*).²¹



Riparian flora and fauna | Odra and Olawa | photographs: Ivan Juarez

²¹ OnWater Foundation (2013). In: Olawa Promenade site [online] homepage: <http://onwater.pl> [14.03.2020]

Wrocław | Waterscapes

Dissemination, Education & Protection

In relation to river and water concerns, the city hosts several spaces and organizations focused on dissemination, education and protection. Of particular note is the *OnWater Foundation*, created in 2013, focuses on cross-cooperation through the implementation of educational and cultural projects related to the promotion of knowledge of the Odra River.²² In 2015, the Foundation created the *Odra Centrum*, a floating space, located on the Odra River which carries out pedagogical projects in the field of ecology and environmental protection of rivers and water bodies, as well as cultural and social projects that enhance the identity of the local community.²³ Also notable is *Hydropolis: Center for Ecological Education in Wrocław*, a referential space for the city, focused on knowledge, dissemination and information about water and the river system. Hydropolis is established by the *Municipal Water and Sewerage Company* in a historical water reservoir, built at the end of the 19th century, which has been converted into an interactive museum housing a series of exhibition and didactic spaces.²⁴



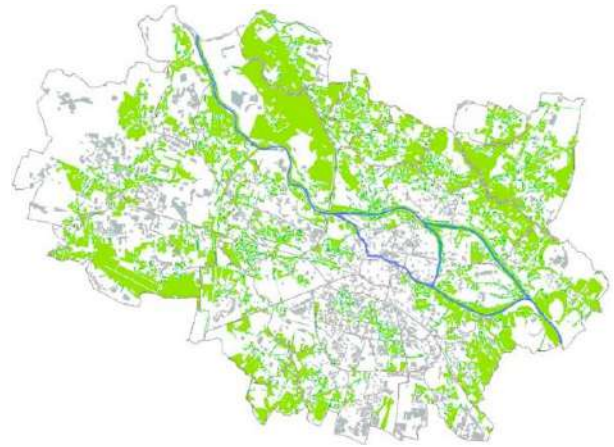
Foreground: Odra Centrum, floating architecture. Background: Water tower on the causeway (Wieża ciśnień Na Grobli)

²² OnWater Foundation (2013). In: OnWater.pl [online] homepage: <http://onwater.pl> [14.03.2020]

²³ Odra Centrum (2015). Op.cit

²⁴ Hydropolis (2015). In: Hydropolis.pl [online] homepage: <https://hydropolis.pl/> [14.03.2020]

Wrocław | Greenscapes



Wrocław | green areas patches²⁵

Regarding the green infrastructure system, the city is characterized by its significant surface and number of natural spaces, integrated by the variety of riverside landscapes, urban forests, orchard gardens, boulevards, as well as interior city block courtyards. There are also a significant number of historic and present-day parks of different scales throughout the city. More than 40 public parks are distributed in the urban area, among which the following are the most significant: *Szczytnicki Park* and the *Centennial Park* (Tysiąclecia), which are the largest and second largest park respectively, the *South Park* (Południowy), the *East Park* (Wschodni), the *West Park* (Zachodni), *Grabiszynski Park*, as well the small parks in the old city beside the moat, *Juliusz Słowacki* and *Mikołaja Kopernika*. The green scape includes the Botanical Garden (1811), located on Cathedral Island, which is part of the University of Wrocław.



Greenscapes Wrocław | Botanic Garden | photographs: Ivan Juarez

²⁵ Mollashahi, H., Szymura, M. & Szymura, T. H (2020). Location of urban grassland patches in Wrocław city. Connectivity assessment and prioritization of urban grasslands as a helpful tool for effective management of urban ecosystem services. PLOS ONE Journal. [online] <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0244452.g005>

Wrocław | Cityscapes

The architectural and urban landscape of Wrocław presents different historical layers that have shaped the city and its multiculturality. From its central historic square, *Rynek*, to the different neighborhoods and quarters, where buildings from different historical periods coexist. Its architecture encompasses several historical periods and expressions, generating a singular spatial language in the cityscape. From Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque, through Historicism, Art Nouveau and Art Deco; to examples of the modern movement of the socialist period, including Postmodern, and up to present-day buildings.



View of the cityscape from the old town.
Photograph taken from The Penitent footbridge
(*Mostek Pokutnic*), between the two
towers of Mary Magdalene church | photographs: Ivan Juarez

The city area of Wrocław, with a population of 634,893,²⁶ comprises diverse neighborhoods, among which are the following, *Stare Miasto*, the core of the old town; *Przedmieście Świdnickie*, *Bartoszewice* neighborhoods; *Biskupin*, which is distinguished for being an area of horizontal housing with large green areas; *Nadodrze*, considered the 19th-century artisan district; and *Ołbin*, *Grunwaldzki*, *Sępolno*, *Szczytniki*, *Szczepin* neighborhoods, to mention a some of them.

Of particular note is *WuWa District*, an experimental housing complex conceived as one of the main examples of the modern movement, as a result of a building exhibition held in 1929, organized by the *Silesian Committee of the Deutsche Werkbund*, as part of the *Wohnung und Werkraum* (Living and Work Space), in which several Silesian architects, including Hans Scharoun, participated in the project.²⁷



WuWa District | city scale model and buildings | photographs: Ivan Juarez

²⁶ PopulationStat (2022). Population Wrocław. In: World statistic data (2021-10-06). [online]: <https://populationstat.com/poland/wroclaw> [10.07.2022]

²⁷ Urbanik, J. (2010). WuWa 1929-2009 The Werkbund Exhibition in Wrocław. (ed): Muzeum Architektury we Wrocławiu, Poland

Examples of historic representative architectural spaces are, the Cathedral (*Ostrów Tumski*) (13th-14th centuries), the Old Town Hall (*Stary Ratusz*) (13th century), the *White Synagogue* (1829), the *Train Station (Wrocław Główny)* (1855-1857), the *Central Market Hall (Hala Targowa)* (1906-1908), which is the gastronomic epicenter of the city, the *Centennial Hall (Hala Stulesia)* (1911-1913), by architect Marx Berg, a building recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the *Four Domes Pavilion* (1912-1913) by Hans Poelzig, the *Renoma Department Store* (1930), *Museum Panorama* (1967-1983); as well as residential buildings of the modern socialist period, such as the *Manhattan estate* (1973) by Jadwiga Grabowska-Hawrylakamong.



Manhattan estate and Grunwald Bridge | photography: Ivan Juarez

Among the organizations or institutions in the discipline of architecture are the *Museum of Architecture*, housed in a historic complex of the former 16th century monastery; the *Regional Chamber of Architects of Lower Silesia*, located in WuWa; or the *Faculty of Architecture of the Polytechnic University of Wrocław*. In terms of education, the city is characterized by its large number of academic institutions and universities, with several distinguished academics and graduates from different fields who have been laurate with the Nobel Prize. As an example, the writer Olga Tokarczuk, who has recently been appointed Board of the University of Wrocław.

Wrocław | Cultural & Art Scene

The city is also recognized for hosting an important number of cultural initiatives, for example, in 2016 the city was the *European Capital of Culture*. Wrocław is also known for its art scene, housing a number of art venues related to music, fine arts, dance and theater, including the *Opera House*, the *Puppet Theater*, the *Pantomime Theater*, the *Capitol*, the *Grotowski Institute*, the *Comedy Theater*, *Wro Art Center*, the *Contemporary Museum*, which is located in a former anti-aircraft bunker, the *National Music Forum*, or the *National Museum*, distinguished by a unique collection of Silesian Art from the twelfth century onwards; as well as various alternative spaces that complement the city's cultural scene.



The National Museum Wrocław | photography: Ivan Juarez

Lower Silesia and Wrocław as a site-laboratory for artistic experimentation

Through the insight of this particular territory, its natural and cultural landscape has been proposed as the conceptual-geographical framework for the development of the research-practice. A place of inspiration, knowledge and experimentation where I have established a close connection through different processes and experiences. Explorations and interpretations that have been materialized in artworks, interventions and actions that will be explained in more detail in chapter five *On-Site Explorations*.

CHAPTER 3

THINKING LANDSCAPES | THINKING SENSES
LITERATURE REVIEW
&
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

THINKING LANDSCAPES | THINKING SENSES

LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The body is our general medium for having a world ²⁸

Maurice Merleau-Ponty

According to different studies on the use of senses in artistic-design environmental practices, and how this approach has become a conceptual scope for intervening in our cultural and natural environment, researchers, theoreticians, and practitioners have provided important contributions to this connection. A body of literature and case studies are based on the association between perceptual experience and site approaching, and how these concepts have contributed as a theoretical framework to generate approximations to artistic-design praxis, and as a complementary insight towards discipline development.

The present theme, *Thinking landscapes | Thinking senses*, examines concepts related to the notion of *landscape*, Maderuelo 2015; Nogué, 2007. The notion of *place*, Pope, 1731; Heidegger, 1971; Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Lynch, 1960. It also examines concepts based on *human senses* in connection to tangible and intangible landscapes. Pallasmaa, 2005; Careri, 2013; Hedfors, 2003; Ingold, 2007; Porteus, 1985; Gordon, L.J. 2018; Tolaas, 2009, among others. This interrelationship is guided by a theoretical framework that weaves soundscapes, smellscapes, hapticscapes, visualsapes and tastesapes.

In parallel, these visions are enriched from various humanistic, artistic, social, and scientific disciplines, which are complemented through various case studies. The theoretical framework is enriched through the review of historical and contemporary practices, which are characterized by signifying specific contexts based on phenomenological approach as well as ecological, aesthetical, and social concerns.

²⁸ Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945). *Phenomenology of Perception*. (ed.): Routledge & K. Paul, London, U.K.

THINKING LANDSCAPES

land + scap

land (n.): Means both a place and the people living there. Old English *lond*, *land*, "ground, soil," also "definite portion of the earth's surface, home region of a person or a people, territory marked by political boundaries."²⁹

ship: word-forming element meaning; to shape "quality, condition; act, skill, position; relation between," Middle English *-schipe*, from Old English *-sciepe*, Anglian *-scip* "state, condition of being," Dutch *-schap*, German *-schaft*), from *skap-* "to create, ordain, appoint."³⁰

The word **landscape** associates people and place. First appeared printed in English in 1603 (denoting a picture of scenery). It has its origins in Middle Dutch (*landscap*) meaning region, German (*landschaft*). A previous formation in English was *landskip*.³¹

The term *landscape* has acquired diverse meanings across cultures, latitudes, and time periods, understood as a broad concept that encompasses diverse connotations and visions. From this perspective, the interpretation of the term *landscape* as a cultural construct has evolved constantly throughout history. From its origin, establishing a relationship with the surrounding environment, mainly through the sense of sight, as a representational subject matter for aesthetic contemplation, where the landscape was considered as an entity close to the natural world, to evolve and become a multidimensional concept with important cultural meanings, associated with aesthetics, history, identity or ecology.

The conception of landscape associated to the relationship between place and people, from its origins to its present multi-approximation, has been influenced from various cultural transformations, processes, perceptions, and from several disciplines, such as phenomenology, geography, agriculture, anthropology, philosophy or cartography, among many others.

In relation to the conception of landscape, both in artistic and in spatial design disciplines, the term is understood as a concept that encompasses a wide range of issues related to aesthetics, environmental or cultural concerns.

²⁹ Online Etymology Dictionary (2000). Landscape. In Online Etymology Dictionary. [online] homepage: <https://www.etymonline.com/word/landscape> [12.03.2022]

³⁰ Online Etymology Dictionary. Op. cit.

³¹ Lorch, B. (2002). Keywords Glossary: landscape. The University of Chicago [online] homepage: <https://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/landscape.htm> [14.03.2022]

Landscapes can be deceptive. Sometimes a landscape seems to be less a setting for the life of its inhabitants than a curtain behind which their struggles, achievements and accidents takes place. For those who are behind the curtain, landmarks are no longer only geographic but also biographical and personal ³²

John Berger

Nowadays, the broader meaning of the term *landscape* is evident in different conceptions and definitions. According to North American geographer, Eugene J. Palka, “definitions of landscape by historians and researchers vary widely from humanistic treatments of landscape as scenery beheld within a given view.”³³ The term is closely related to ecological connotations, but it is also associated with spiritual, aesthetical, cultural, political, philosophical or scientific meanings, where the human-nature binomial and its connections are reflected in the conception of the world. For the Spanish geographer Joan Nogué “landscape is a social construction, which reflects a particular way of organizing and experiencing the territory.”³⁴ For Benjamin Lorch, professor of political philosophy “landscape can be the content of a representation wherein it travels through a medium, it can also itself be a medium which carries social, geological, historical messages or it can be considered a medium of exchange and social practice expressing visual appropriation, identity and power.”³⁵ The *European Landscape Convention* (Council of Europe, 2000), defines landscape as “an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.”³⁶ From the point of view of art, for John Berger, English art critic, writer, visual artist and author of *Landscapes*,³⁷ the concept landscape is not understood as a static term or entity, but as a metaphorical conception, which goes beyond a simple geographical background, drawn and interpreted from different visions, stories, bonds. Personal and biographical experiences. From its multi-perspective conceptions, the term landscape can be understood as a holistic concept that encompasses diverse meanings and functions, associated with cultural, environmental or artistic concerns.

³² Berger, J. (1967). *A Fortunate Man: The Story of a Country Doctor*. (ed.): Jean Mohr Canongate Books, U.K.

³³ Palka, E. J. (1995). Coming to grips with the concept of landscape. *Landscape Journal*, 14, p.63-73. [online]: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3368/lj.14.1.63> [15.03.2022]

³⁴ Nogué i Font, J. (2007). *La Construcción Social del Paisaje*. (ed.): Biblioteca Nueva, Spain

³⁵ Lorch, B. (2002). *Landscape. The Chicago School of Media Theory*. [online]: <https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/landscape> . [15.03.2022]

³⁶ Council of Europe (2000). *European Landscape Convention*. Council of Europe, Florence

³⁷ Berger, J. (2016). *Landscapes*. (ed.): Verso, U.K.

Thinking Landscapes within the Artistic Sphere

At the beginning, some farmers tried to organize their cultivations according to geometries that, besides providing productivity to the harvests, they provided contemplative pleasure, as a sensory reflection of the imaginary of their myths, such as the idea of paradise, the representation of the world, or consciousness of love. Then, these orchards took the name of garden ³⁸

Javier Maderuelo

For Javier Maderuelo “*landscape* is a conceptual construct, a mental elaboration that humans create on the basis of certain cultural phenomena. This relationship implies a way of thinking.” In the artistic field, and throughout the history of Western art, the concept of landscape emerges from the pictorial medium. Historically, the domain of landscape in art has been represented mainly by painting and drawing, which later evolves and expands in different media and becomes enriched by other visions, such as philosophy, religion, architecture, gardening or cartography. According to the relationship between the landscape and the sight, for Javier Maderuelo, Spanish architect, art historian and professor of landscape architecture “a history of the gaze is a history of the evolution of visual learning and the interpretations that human beings have experienced over the centuries in order to understand the world around.”³⁹

The artistic conceptual approximations of Western landscape have crossed different chronological periods. From the earliest natural phenomena depictions, such as the mural at the Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük in Central Anatolia, Turkey, which represented a volcanic eruption;⁴⁰ the “Bronze Age frescoes from Akrotiri on the Greek Aegean island of Thera,”⁴¹ considered the earliest example of painted natural world; the representations of interior domestic orchard-gardens in Ancient Rome, manifested in *Pompeii Gardens* frescoes (third and fourth centuries B.C.); through the Middle Ages, a historical period that spans the time frame from 500 CE to 1400-1500 CE., where the senses emerge through a *new naturalism*, represented by the ideas of theological philosophers as Francis of Assisi or Thomas Aquinas.

³⁸ Maderuelo, J. (2015). El Pensamiento Paisajero, lecture. Repositorio Institucional de la Universidad de Málaga (RIUMA), Málaga, Spain

³⁹ Maderuelo, J. (2006). El Paisaje Genesis de un Concepto, Abada Editores, Madrid, Spain. [quoted in Sainz V. (2019) Proyecto, Progreso, Arquitectura, Universidad de Sevilla, Spain

⁴⁰ Sci-News (2014). Çatalhöyük Map Mural. In Sci-News.com. [online] www.sci-news.com/archaeology/science/catalhoyuk-mural-volcanic-eruption [16.06.2022]

⁴¹ Cartwright, M. (2014) Akrotiri Frescoes. In: World History Encyclopedia. [online]: worldhistory.org/article/673/akrotiri-frescoes [16.06.2022]

During the historical period of the Middle Ages, the idea of landscape is expressed between two opposing conceptions. On the one hand, the natural world outside the walls. The unknown, uncontrolled and unsafe; and on the other hand, the intramural, human-made, spiritual and controlled nature, mainly manifested and represented in symbolic and medicinal enclosed gardens, such the *Hortus Conclusus*. Both conceptions were depicted in painting, but also depicted in *herbalists* or *bestiaries*. The artistic approximation to the natural world was also present in the emerging intellectual and visual culture of the *Renaissance*, which represented idyllic natural settings as backgrounds through biblical narratives (Giovanni Bellini and Giorgione). An era that, in contrast to the natural world, emphasized the human being as the central figure. Renaissance was mainly characterized by the contributions in painting based on perspective and proportion, which was manifested and transferred into the tangible world of architectural, urban and territorial spaces. Posteriorly, the appearance of the first works of Dutch landscape painters in the early seventeenth century, originated a new genre as an autonomous theme in painting that intended to represent visual landscape narratives (Aelbert Cuyp, Meindert Hobbema and Jacob van Ruisdael).⁴²

According to Javier Maderuelo, a new sensitivity on the landscape emerged in Great Britain, within a period that covers approximately one hundred years, from the mid-eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century, a time period when the term *Picturesque* arises.⁴³ The Picturesque is conceived not only as an artistic style, but as an intellectual approach in which artists and thinkers manifested their way of understanding their world, their territory, their natural-urban environment, based on philosophical, political, and artistic ideas manifested in painting, gardening, poetry and architecture. It was emerged as intellectual and artistic conception that sought a new sensibility contributing with important reflections within the *Romanticism* movement in the European framework of the age of *Enlightenment*.⁴⁴ In this period, the aesthetic and philosophical ideas about beauty and the sublime emerged from English *empiricism*, which was characterized by situating philosophy within reality, considering the experience of the senses as a source of cognition, and emphasizing the importance of analytical thinking-knowledge. It also embraced the beauty to be found in nature and art.

⁴² Blumberg, N. (2020) Landscape Painting. In: Encyclopedia Britannica. [online] <https://www.britannica.com/art/landscape-painting>. [14.06.2022]

⁴³ Maderuelo, J. (2012) La Percepción del Paisaje y la Formación de la Ciudad Industrial. Juan March Fundación. [online lecture] www.canal.march.es/es/coleccion/imperio-arte-introduccion-pintura-britanica-historia-su-imperio

⁴⁴ Blumberg, N. Op. cit.

From the mid-18th century in England, sensibility was considered equated with reason, natural history with geometry, and landscape painting with architecture. With this approach, the interest in the picturesque and in nature emerged from poetry, thus initiating a landscape era, in which architecture, literature, gardening and painting merged into a single landscape art. From picturesque art and from landscape painting as main source, emerged a way of conceiving and observing the territory, where art was at the disposal of nature, where the reality was projected from the poetic landscape. A way of thinking and conceiving the landscape from which the art of *landscape gardening* emerges.⁴⁵

From the decade of the 1850s, particularly in France, landscape painting moved away from realist representations and romanticism conceptions, searching for a more subjective way of expression. Impressionist artists, such as Claude Monet, Georges-Pierre Seurat, Camille Pissarro or Pierre-Auguste Renoir worked directly in situ, within the landscape scenery *en plein air*. In their artworks they explored the concept of temporality in landscape, the constant variation and effect of light and weather through innovative uses of color and pictorial techniques that later influenced generations of artists, such as the *post-Impressionists* as Paul Cézanne or Van Gogh, and the *Fauves* such as André Derain, Raoul Dufy or Henri Matisse.



Evening, Honfleur (detailed views) 1886 | Georges-Pierre Seurat | MoMa, NY | photographs: Ivan Juarez

⁴⁵ Maderuelo, J. (2012) La Percepción del Paisaje y la Formación de la Ciudad Industrial. Juan March Fundación. [online lecture] www.canal.march.es/es/coleccion/imperio-arte-introduccion-pintura-britanica-historia-su-imperio



Water Lilies (1914-1926 series) | Claude Monet | MoMa, NY | photographs: Ivan Juarez



Left: The Starry Night. Saint Rémy, 1889 Vincent van Gogh | MoMa, NY | photography: Ivan Juarez
Right: The Dream, 1910 (detailed view) | Henri Rousseau | MoMa, NY | photography: Ivan Juarez

Landscapes Towards Aesthetic Experiences and Cross-Approaches

Since the twentieth century, artistic approaches to landscape have expanded to different concerns, media, concepts and scopes of reference. In the field of contemporary art, it is worth mentioning the landscape explorations of *Environmental Art*. An artistic form conceived, embodied and made present for, within and towards nature, in which the aesthetic experience of place and the territory can be considered as being the artwork itself. The precursors of this artistic exploration are, *Earth Art* (1960s), *Land Art* (1970s) and *Eco Art* (1960s). The main sources of reference for Environmental Art are the experience of the natural world in a holistic sense, but it also expands its concerns to biodiversity, climate and/or sustainability. Aesthetic experience that addresses ecological, political and social concerns, conceived primarily in the form of in-situ interventions, which has evolved from three-dimensional artworks to conceptual, processual, experiential or interdisciplinary artistic explorations.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Art Safiental (2022). Land & Environmental Art. In: Institut for Land and Environmental Art, Switzerland. [online] <https://artsafiental.ch/en/as2022/ueber/land-art/> [13.05.2022]



After Nature | Exhibition by Australian environmental artist Janet Laurence | MCA Australia | Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, 2019 | photographs: Ivan Juarez



The Genius Loci | Sense of Place

Place is a center of meaning constructed by experience ⁴⁷

Tuan Yi-Fu

Site-approaching is closely connected to the essence, character or atmosphere of a particular location; to the notion of the *spirit of the place*, which is mainly known as *genius loci*. The initial notion *genius loci* in landscape design came in the eighteenth century, where romantic writers inspired by the artistic approach of the *Picturesque*, developed a new aesthetic appreciation of landscapes.⁴⁸ The English poet, Alexander Pope introduced the Latin term meaning *-the genius of the place-* as an essential value in the conception of gardens. In his verse *Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington*, suggests the commitment of the gardener to be sensitive to the unique qualities of the place. It attests that gardening must be adapted to the context in which it is located, and in relation to architecture and gardening, “all must be adapted to the *genius of the place*, and (...) beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it.”⁴⁹ In the twentieth century, the term *genius loci* has been associated to the concept of *place-making*, initiated from the philosophical discourse of *phenomenology of place*. According to Elie Haddad, researcher from Lebanese American University, the phenomenological perception in architectural theory took as its main reference point the later writings of German philosopher Martin Heidegger, particularly the series of essays *On the Essence of Truth*, *The Origin of the Work of Art*, and *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*.⁵⁰ At the end of the twentieth century, inspired by Heidegger’s writings and the structuralist studies of semiotics, sociology and psychology, Christian Norberg-Schulz in his book, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, introduces the concept *spirit of the place*, suggesting that every place has a poetic and spiritual sense that should be integrated into the design as an essential attribute. For the historian-theoretician Norberg-Schulz, it is essential to comprehend and incorporate the landscape concepts of order, character, light, configuration, and location.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Yi-Fu, T. (1975). Place: an experiential perspective, The Geographical Review 65, 2, Wiley-Blackwell, U.S.A.

⁴⁸ Gunila, J. & Larkham, P.J. (2003). Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character: A Commentary Journal of Urban Design, Vol. 8, No. 1, Carfax publishing, p. 67–81

⁴⁹ Alexander, P. (1731), Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington, lines 57–60

⁵⁰ Haddad, E.G. (2010). Christian Norberg Schulz and the Project of Phenomenology in Architecture Architecture Theory Review, University of Sydney, Australia, p. 88-101

⁵¹ Norberg-Schulz, Ch. (1980). Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture, Rizzoli International Publications, New York.

THINKING SENSES

*Nothing is in the intellect that was not first in the senses*⁵²

Thomas Aquinas

The present theme, *Thinking Senses*, emphasizes the importance of senses as significant human source of knowledge and comprehension of the world. *Thinking Senses*, explores ideas, theories and works from different thinkers and practitioners who search how, sensitive cognition contributes to understand, interpret and perceiving the surrounding environment. This view is complemented by ecological, social, philosophical, artistic, and historical concerns.

Sense: A faculty by which the body perceives an external stimulus; one of the faculties of sight, smell, hearing, taste, and touch⁵³

Perceptions: The ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses⁵⁴

From the Aristotelian Theory of Perception Towards the Expansion of Senses

One of the essential concerns of Western philosophy since ancient civilizations, centers on how humans understand, interpretate, experience or assimilate the surrounding world through perceptions. This concern is expressed in reflections of the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), manifested in his doctrine of perceptual content, which is included in his main written treatise *De Anima* (II.5-III.2) (350 B.C.), and as well as in the treatise *Sensu et Sensibilibus*.⁵⁵ For Aristotle, sensory perception was considered the minimum characteristic of animal life, and the fundamental attribute on which most human cognitive capacities are based.⁵⁶

⁵² Aquinas, T. De veritate, q. 2 a. 3 arg. 19

⁵³ Oxford English Dictionary (2021). Sense. In: Lexico.com. [online]: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/sense>

⁵⁴ Oxford English Dictionary (2021). Perception. In: Lexico.com. [online]: <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/>

⁵⁵ Campeggiani, P. (2020). Aristotle on Perceptual Interests. *Apeiron*, vol. 53, no. 3, p. 235-256. [online]: <https://doi.org/10.1515/apeiron-2019-0001> [02.05.2022]

⁵⁶ Campeggiani, P. Op. cit.

As a synthesis of his theory of perception, according to S. Marc Cohen, professor emeritus of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Washington, and specialist in the history of ancient Greek philosophy, Aristotle discusses on *perception* as follows:

Perception;

- Occurs in being moved and affected
- Seems to be a type of alteration
- Is a process in which -like is affected by like-

On the physics and physiology of perception

- Each sense has a sense-organ
- Each sense has a medium (e.g., air, water)
- Each sense has its own proper objects
- The proper object of a sense is a qualification of an external object
- Perception is (or involves) a causal process leading from the external object through the medium to the sense-organ, and ultimately to the “primary” sense organ in the heart

* Excerpt from *Aristotle on Perception* by Dr. S. Marc Cohen ⁵⁷

In the treatise *De Anima*, Aristotle mentions five senses: *sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell*, which have been a fundamental idea to understand the evolution of the conception of human sense over the course of history. However, it is important to note that this concept has not been universal across all cultures.

Aristotle establishes a hierarchy of each of five senses, considering smell and hearing as superior senses, and sight as the most elevated sense. Under this consideration, the lower senses are touch and taste. Tactile as the most common and ordinary, being the lowest since it is possessed by all organisms and taste as a variant of touch.

⁵⁷ Cohen, S. M. (2008) Aristotle on Perception, lecture. University of Washington. [online]: <https://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/433/PerceptionLecture.pdf> [02.05.2022]

Natural Senses and Multi-Sensitivities within the Natural World

The initial Aristotelian conception of the five human senses has resonated for centuries in Western culture. However, in recent centuries this notion has evolved from scientific, sociological, psychological or cultural contributions, which have identified and studied an increasing number of senses, expanding the initial approaches based solely on biological terms, from complementary humanistic and scientific concerns that are also considered to be determinant. With this approach, a series of studies and methods, mainly based on neurology, have identified and classified a larger number up to twenty senses.

From the field of philosophy, according to the American science and philosopher writer, Dr. Guy Murchie (1907-1997), in his book *The Seven Mysteries of Life: An Exploration of Science and Philosophy*,⁵⁸ he identified the sensibilities interwoven into more than thirty senses. At the same time, Dr. Murchie, in collaboration with Dr. Michael J. Cohen, ecopsychologist and program director of the Institute for Global Education, Department of Ecology, have identified and classified more than eighty different biological sense-sensitivities in our natural world.⁵⁹ Below is an excerpt of these emerging approaches:

The Radiation Senses

1. Sense of light and sight, including polarized light
2. Sense of seeing without eyes such as heliotropism or the sun sense of plants
3. Sense of color
4. Sense of moods and identities attached to colors
5. Sense of awareness of one's own visibility or invisibility and consequent camouflaging
6. Sensitivity to radiation other than visible light including radio waves, X rays, etc.
7. Sense of Temperature and temperature change
8. Sense of season including ability to insulate, hibernate and winter sleep
9. Electromagnetic sense and polarity which includes the ability to generate current (as in the nervous system and brain waves) or other energies

The Feeling Senses

10. Hearing including resonance, vibrations, sonar and ultrasonic frequencies
11. Awareness of pressure, particularly underground, underwater, and to wind and air
12. Sensitivity to gravity
13. The sense of excretion for waste elimination and protection from enemies
14. Feel, particularly touch on the skin
15. Sense of weight, gravity and balance
16. Space or proximity sense
17. Coriolis sense or awareness of effects of the rotation of the Earth
18. Sense of motion. Body movement sensations and sense of mobility

⁵⁸ Murchie, G. (1981). *The Seven Mysteries of Life. : An Exploration of Science and Philosophy*. (ed.) Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.

⁵⁹ Greensong (2020). 54 Natural Senses and Sensitivities. In: Greensong.info (online): <https://www.greensong.info/natural-senses>. [02.05.2022]

The Chemical Senses

19. Smell with and beyond the nose
20. Taste with and beyond the tongue
21. Appetite or hunger for food, water and air
22. Hunting, killing or food obtaining urges
23. Humidity sense including thirst, evaporation control and the acumen to find water or evade a flood
24. Hormonal sense, as to pheromones and other chemical stimuli

The Mental Senses

25. Pain, external and internal
26. Mental or spiritual distress
27. Sense of fear, dread of injury, death or attack
(25-27 are attractions to seek additional natural attractions in order to support and strengthen well-being)
28. Procreative urges including sex awareness, courting, love, mating, paternity and raising young
29. Sense of play, sport, humor, pleasure and laughter
30. Sense of physical place, navigation senses including detailed awareness of land and seascapes, of the positions of the sun, moon and stars
31. Sense of time
32. Sense of electromagnetic fields
33. Sense of weather changes
34. Sense of emotional place, of community, belonging, support, trust and thankfulness
35. Sense of self including friendship, companionship, and power
36. Domineering and territorial sense
37. Colonizing sense including compassion and receptive awareness of one's fellow creatures, sometimes to the degree of being absorbed into a super organism
38. Horticultural sense and the ability to cultivate crops, as is done by ants that grow fungus, by fungus who farm algae, or birds that leave food to attract their prey
39. Language and articulation sense, used to express feelings and convey information in every medium from the bees' dance to human literature
40. Sense of humility, appreciation, and ethics
41. Senses of form and design
42. Sense of reason, including memory and the capacity for logic and science
43. Sense of mind and consciousness
44. Intuition or subconscious deduction
45. Aesthetic sense, including creativity and appreciation of beauty, music, literature, form, design and drama
46. Psychic capacity such as foreknowledge, clairvoyance, clairaudience, psychokinesis, astral projection and possibly certain animal instincts and plant sensitivities
47. Sense of biological and astral time, awareness of past, present and future events
48. The capacity to hypnotize other creatures
49. Relaxation and sleep including dreaming, meditation, and brain wave awareness
50. Sense of pupation including cocoon building and metamorphosis
51. Sense of excessive stress and capitulation
52. Sense of survival by joining a more established organism
53. Spiritual sense, including conscience, capacity for sublime love, ecstasy, a sense of sin, profound sorrow and sacrifice
54. Sense of Unity, of natural attraction as the singular mother essence and source of all our other senses

Excerpt from *Reconnecting with Nature: Finding wellness through restoring your bond with the Earth*
by Dr. Michael J. Cohen ⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Cohen, M. J. (1997) *Reconnecting with Nature: Finding wellness through restoring your bond with the Earth*. (ed.): Ecopress, Corvallis, WA.

Phenomenological Approach

One of the main fields of study within philosophy related to the embodied cognition, perception and to the modes of understanding the world, is based on *Phenomenology*, initiated in the 20th century by the German philosopher and psychologist Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), who established the method and school of phenomenology in 1920's,⁶¹ which is mainly based on the study of how phenomena appear to individuals, and on the understanding of the meanings or interpretations that individuals assign to their own experiences -*subjective experience*-; to their own phenomena (understanding *phenomena* as *experiences of consciousness*). These theories were later developed by several philosophers, such as the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), or by the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961), who in his fundamental publication, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), a work that contributes to the *Gestalt Theory*,⁶² emphasizes the primacy of perception as an active dimension that embodies a fundamental notion to the world.⁶³

Mind Ecologies: Body, Brain & World

In recent years, these philosophical approaches have been complemented by ecological, scientific and humanistic concerns. As an example, the publication *Mind Ecologies: Body, Brain, and World*, by Matthew Crippen, a biologically oriented philosopher of mind, and Jay Schulkin, a behavioral neuroscientist. Both authors explore the pragmatic and multi-disciplinary aspects of philosophy, in relation to *Gestalt psychology*, praxis, phenomenology, embodied cognitive sciences and neurobiology, offering an interdisciplinary theory of mind. The authors consider that cognition and perception merge from -action- where thoughts, emotions and skills are the result of the human being as a living ecology, which is interwoven with the environment, culture and the surrounding world.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Walton, M.V. (2008). Phenomenology In: A Site, a place, of Philosophical Notes & Aids. [online]: <http://aquestionofexistence.com/Aquestionofexistence/Phenomenology.html>

⁶² Gestalt theory: emphasizes that the attributes of the whole are not deducible from analysis of the parts in isolation. In: Britannica. [online]: <https://www.britannica.com/science/Gestalt-psychology>

⁶³ Merleau-Ponty, M. (1945). *Phenomenology of Perception*. (ed.): Routledge, U.K.

⁶⁴ Crippen, M. & Schulkin, J. (2020). *Mind Ecologies: Body, Brain, and World*. (ed.): Columbia University Press, U.S.A.

The Phenomenological Landscape Approach as an Educational Concern

As an example of the interconnection between pedagogy, praxis and perceptual cognition, is manifested in the introductory text of the MLA course *Sensing the Built Environment*, at Harvard University GSD, by Professor Sonja Dümpelmann, who stated that, in 1961 the Canadian landscape architect Michael Hough (1928-2013), founder of the Landscape Architecture program at the University of Toronto, encouraged the use of the senses within the discipline of landscape architecture. “There is a desperate need to create new spaces where the senses may be revived.” Hough also emphasized on the “responsibility of landscape architecture to revitalize the dormant senses and teach people to see and enjoy their surroundings through them.” He also argued that landscape architects have at their disposal “the forces of nature, the man-made building materials, and our five senses which can become tools in the designer’s hand to shape the environment to suit social and spiritual needs.”⁶⁵

⁶⁵ Sensing the Built Environment (2016). In: GSD Harvard University, MLA Course. [online]: <http://www.gsd.harvard.edu/cgi-bin/courses/faculty.cgi?term=201240&person=148906> [07.08.2016]

Based on the previous ideas, and with the aim of complementing the conceptual approach framed in *Thinking Senses*, the following paragraphs outline a theoretical, cultural, artistic and ecological outlook focused on soundscapes, scentscapes, hapticscapes, visualsapes, and tastescapes.

SOUNDSCAPES | Listening Landscapes

Sound is invisible but has the power to change the space characteristics we occupy ⁶⁶

Schulz-Dornburg, J.

While sound has not received significant emphasis compared to vision in the perception of the environment, it performs a fundamental role in an individual's notion of the landscape. This field explores concepts that have contributed to the understanding of the discipline through the sound and acoustic environment.

To w szyby deszcz dzwoni deszcz dzwoni jesienny

Leopold Staff

Sound experience has played an important role in the history of art, and particularly in literature. One of the most significant examples that integrate sound, landscape and literature can be found in the poem *Autumn Rain (Deszcz Jesienny)*, published in 1903 by the Polish writer Leopold Staff (1878-1957), considered one of the most important artists of contemporary classicism, who, through the rhythm and sonority of his poetry, and through the use of the *onomatopoeia*, which consist of the selection of words that imitate the sound of certain phenomena, the author activates the reader's sense of hearing by associating the words with the sounds produced by the rain, thus generating a sonorous and visual atmosphere within the poetry. "In Autumn Rain there is an accumulation of stylistic means. These intensify the rainy, melancholic and decadent atmosphere experienced by the lyrical subject (...). Leopold Staff reproduces the monotonous sound of falling rain, which intensifies the onomatopoeic effect achieved by the accumulation of words containing soft, whispering sounds."⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Schulz-Dornburg, J. (2000). *Art and Architecture-New Affinities*. (ed.): Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, Spain

⁶⁷ MamaDu Editorial (2021) *Autumn Rain by Leopold Staff*. [online] www.mamadu.pl/deszcz-jesienny-leopold-staff

From another sound-environmental perspective, according to landscape architects Eckehard Pistrick and Cyril Isnart, in their article *Landscapes, soundscapes, mindscapes*, the interconnection between sound and place suggests that sounds actively take part in the meaning of the spatial-temporal environment.⁶⁸ As they stated “the term of soundscape was first created by R. Murray Schafer. In his book *The Tuning of the World* (1977).”⁶⁹ According to Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer, the soundscape, “is our sonic environment, the ever-present array of noises which we all live. Beginning with the primordial sounds of nature, we have experienced and ever-increasing complexity of our sonic surrounding.”⁷⁰ Schafer describes the *soundscape* as any acoustic field of the study; it may be a musical composition or an acoustic environment. Within the academic and research field, in the early 1970s, Schafer developed *The World Soundscape Project*, a project based in the *Sonic Research Studio of the Department of Communication* at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada, dedicated to research on soundscapes and acoustic ecology, integrating art and science of sound towards the multidisciplinary conception of Acoustic Design research studio. For the authors Eckehard Pistrick and Cyril Isnart, “the most noticeable study on the relationship between landscape architecture and soundscape is Hedfors’s thesis *Site Soundscapes: landscape architecture in the light of sound*.”⁷¹ In his thesis, Hedfors analyzes sound in landscape architecture context. He proposes a theoretical instrument, named *-The model of prominence-* as a starting point for landscape perception.⁷²

⁶⁸ Eckehard, P. & Cyril, I. (2014). *Landscapes, soundscapes, mindscapes: introduction*. Etnográfica, Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia, vol. 17 (3) p. 503-513

⁶⁹ Eckehard, P. & Cyril, I. Op. cit.

⁷⁰ Schafer, M. (1977). *The Soundscape. Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. (ed.): Destiny Books, Vermont, U.S.A.

⁷¹ Eckehard, P. & Cyril, I. Idem.

⁷² Hedfors, P. (2003). *Site Soundscapes: landscape architecture in the light of sound*. PhD Thesis dissertation. Department of Landscape Planning Ultuna, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Sweden, Uppsala

Even though acoustic space does not have specific boundaries and is less precise in terms of orientation and localization,⁷³ auditory perception is considered a vital sense for perceiving the environment through spatial experience. According to British anthropologist Tim Ingold, who is interested in environmental perception, sound should be considered as a phenomenon medium of experience in which we are immersed.⁷⁴

The connection between sound and place has expanded in recent years, as well as the concern for sound in relation to the environment in the ecological-artistic sense.

Environmental sound art is an emerging and recent concept that embraces a range of artistic practices in which environmental sound is the source, the medium, material and the theme of the artwork. For American composer, author and professor Joel Chadabe, in the introductory text to the *Environmental Sound Artists: In Their Own Words* edition, "the recognition of environmental art, in all its forms, as an essential aspect of our lives has inspired artist to create a large body of works, all of which, connect us to the world."⁷⁵ The book, edited by composer Frederick Bianchi and professor of Music Technology V.J Manzo, highlights a panorama related to the environmental sound art movement through the vision of various artists, such as John Luther Adams, Ximena Alarcon, Joseph Bertolozzi, Dawn Scarfe, Andrea Polli, among others, featuring diverse approaches and sound strategies around the world that address political, social, scientific and aesthetic issues, expressed through different compositions, mappings, media, technologies and methods.

⁷³ Porteous, J. D. (1996). *Environmental Aesthetics: ideas, politics and planning*. (ed.): Routledge Academic Publishing, London, U.K. p.33.

⁷⁴ Ingold, T. (2007): *Against soundscape*. In: Carlyle, Autumn Leaves: Sound and the Environment in Artistic. (ed.): Double Entendre, Paris, p. 10-13.

⁷⁵ Chadabe J. Bianchi F. and Practice V. J. (2016): *Environmental Sound Artists: In Their Own Words*. (ed.): Oxford University Press, U.K.

Echolocation | Acoustic Perception

Relationship with the Objective World Through Sound

Conversations & Interview with Thomas Tajo

In relation to acoustic perception and *echolocation*, in February 2021, I had the opportunity to conduct a series of conversations-interviews with blind thinker Thomas Tajo, who is originally from northeast India (Himalaya) and currently based in Belgium. The conversations were later complemented by a series of artistic collaborations which form part of the present research. The following outlines Thomas Tajo's artistic biographical approach, as well as some excerpts from those conversations.

Thomas Tajo is a blind thinker, researcher, inclusive artistic, consultant, inclusive activist and educator, who developed the theory of Visual Culture having its foundation in prehistory. He is one of the pioneers of human echolocation. He developed the pedagogy of Inclusive Mobility under the framework of new international non-profit Vision Inclusive which he co-founded. Vision Inclusive seeks to bring people with and without disabilities together to build and promote a culture of openness. For the last few years, he has been travelling across Europe giving echolocation and mobility lessons and workshops to organizations for the blind, families of blind children, and to both individuals and groups of blind children and adults.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Vision Inclusive (2021). Thomas Tajo. [online] www.visioninclusive.org/about/ [05.07.2021]

Conversation on Sound as a Way of Understanding the Objective World February 4, 2021

(...) For me, when I hear a sound, I have to analyze it, to understand it. Then, I have to think about how I can use it to understand the world better. How I can use it to live in this world. It is a completely different form of interaction with sound. Much, much, much deeper form of interaction. It is a relationship with sound, a relationship with the objective world through sound.

So, it brings back that we are talking about earlier by laying a foundation for human relations, human connections. I think through senses, through language. This is how the form of human relationships really begins initially, when you are born into the world. -How do we interact with each other? It is through the senses, and how the senses are built. It is also related to how we live (...).

Conversation on Echolocation April 7, 2021

Echolocation makes you understand what kind of spaces around you have. It also tells you about what kind of objects, the density and what kind of material are made of. If you echolocate, you can also hear information about the environment from a lot further away than it was brought possible for blind people, so it completely breaks away with the myth that blind people acquire spatial information immediately to their body, around their body. Echolocation can allow you to obtain information about the space from hundreds of meters away. For example, you can hear a house for 400 or 500 meters away. A tree, you can hear it from 15 or 20 meters away. Then, disability depends on person to person, it can be incredibly fine-tuned.

With echolocation blind people can acquire real time spatial information, just by listening and analyzing the reflections, the echoes, and in that way, they will be able to form 3D image, 3D mental picture of the space around. So, that gives you the whole world

freedom of navigation. Gives you the confidence, the skill to navigate through the information you received from hearing, but it also changes the way you think about your body, your hearing.

Normally we don't think of hearing as capable enough of giving you information about the objective world in that kind of refined, fine-tuned way. So, I think the echolocation is an example of what kind of capacity of hearing the body has, if you really deep into it, and if you really understand it. There is so much capacity that it can be developed.

Unfortunately, in blind people the capacity for navigation through sound, the incredible detail information they can obtain from sound by listening to the reflections are not being taught by organizations, by culture, and these are capacities that we have been untapped. So, if you teach these to blind people along with a lot of other skills, (obviously it's not enough to teach skill), but also, they are the cultural issues, emotional issues, so we can free them to be able to comfortably use skills like echolocation, because there are cases where we teach people echolocation, but because of the cultural reasons they are not able to use it because they feel uncomfortable.

That is one of the strategies. To teach this kind of skill and this changes, the way you look at your own body, your hearing capacity, the way you relate to the world through sound. But obviously for blind people, to effectively use this thing, we also have to take into account other facts.

In simple terms that is echolocation. It can give you information about the things around you in incredible detail, so you can get information about the distance, dimensions, density, properties of the objects around you; just by listening to them. So, it complements the navigational data that blind people can have by using white canes, but the information you get gain from the whine cane is limited to the length of it. Echolocation can allow you to get information incredibly from distance impossible for the longest cane to reach. So, it totally adds to the spatial information you get, combining the key new textual information you get from your feet, from your body, from your cane,

and combine it with that echolocation, you get huge piece of data that gives you so much confidence to navigate safely on your own. It does add to the confidence of these people.

In brief, that is what echolocation and navigation are, and how it works for blind people. But, obviously for sighted people, hearing through echolocation completely changes the way of thinking about the hearing and the capacity of human hearing. Once you begin to understand by listening, to the information that is contained in echoes or reflections, so much information about the objective when you get normally are not trained to notice.

I think that's one of the things we can also offer as training, something I call acoustic perception training for sighted people, because I remember having this kind of workshops or conversation with musicians. Musicians are really good at noticing different frequencies of chords and notes, but often when they talk about sound, is about emotions. But the thing that we don't often think about is the objective information that sound can give you about objective world. So, I think that is really the one that is missing. We don't often think about sound and objective reality connected (...).

Thomas Tajo, 2021

SMELLSCAPES | Scentscape Experience

The nostrils awake a forgotten image and fall into a vivid dream.

The nose makes the eyes to remember ⁷⁷

Juhani Pallasmaa

Intangible landscapes are particularly defined by scents, providing significant information on micro and macro aspects of our environment. Through this theme, I intend to explore the human sense of smell as one of the most essential means of interacting with the environment; as an intangible connection to the landscape which is closely associated with emotion, memory and orientation.

*Smell, also called olfaction, the detection and identification by sensory organs of airborne chemicals.*⁷⁸

*Olfactory system, the bodily structures that serve the sense of smell. The system consists of the nose and the nasal cavities, which in their upper parts support the olfactory mucous membrane for the perception of smell and in their lower parts act as respiratory passages.*⁷⁹

Ethereal scape highlighted by the olfactory experience: Based on the concept *smellscape*, cultural geographer Douglas Porteus explores the emotional effects associated to place and time, and the importance of this sense as cultural landscape identity. He asserts “The smellscape is an emotive environment, not an intellectual one, and as such, should be cherished,”⁸⁰ for him, smellscape is “fragmentary in space and episodic in time.”⁸¹ For the Norwegian contemporary scent artist and researcher Sissel Tolaas “smell is the first sense through which we interact through the world and react to it. We smell before we see.”⁸² For her, “smells are closely associated with personal and group identity.”⁸³

⁷⁷ Pallasmaa J. (1994). *The eyes of the Skin, Architecture and the Senses*. (ed.): Wiley Academy, U.K.

⁷⁸ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2019). Smell. Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/science/smell>. [15.06.2021]

⁷⁹ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2019). Olfactory system. Encyclopedia Britannica, <https://www.britannica.com/science/olfactory-system>. [15.06.2021]

⁸⁰ Porteus, J. D. (1985). Smellscape. *Progress in Physical Geography: Earth and Environment*. 9, pp.356-378

⁸¹ Porteus, J.D. Op. Cit.

⁸² Tolaas, S. (2009). The city from the perspective of the nose, In: Mostafavi, Moshen, Doherty Doherty Gareth (ed.): *Ecological Urbanism*, Harvard University Graduate School of Design, Lars Müller Publishers, Baden, Switzerland, pp.37-38

⁸³ Tolaas, S. Op. Cit.

Tolaas highlights on her research *An Alphabet for the Nose*, and in the book chapter titled *The city from the Perspective of the Nose*, how people and designers can learn and discover new codes, methods and interactions through smell environments. On her research project *Talking Nose-Mexico City*, based on smell as a medium for navigating through the city, she explains that study of smells provides additional dimensions to understanding our cities. Smell enriches sensual experience providing inputs for environmental design.⁸⁴

Emotional experience, memory, visual-spatial orientation, and olfactory cognition:

American psychology educators and researchers Howard Ehrlichman and Linda Bastone, asserts that “olfaction and emotion are closely connected with the sense of smell.” For them “smells provoke the evocation of emotional experiences. They influence mood, evoke intense experiences of pleasure or displeasure, produce alertness or relaxation, and evoke long-forgotten emotional memories.”⁸⁵

An editorial research approach to city smells has been undertaken by Victoria Henshaw, Professor of Urban Design and Planning in the U.K., whose publication *Urban Smellscapes, understanding and designing city smell environments*, is a contribution to the literature on senses, design and urban space. The publication approaches to English cities and small towns, emphasizing the perception of place through smellscapes, mapping and identifying public parks, factories or breweries, while generating a series of open reflections, and offering to urban designers and planners with tools and strategies to use smell as an active instrument for their practice.⁸⁶

Olfactory perception and scent have been also consolidated and expanded within the current fields of contemporary art through *Olfactory art*, giving rise to a series of explorations, such as olfactory sculptures, objects, installations, perfumes, olfactory gastronomy, as well as those related to space and environment, such as olfactory atmospheres, mappings, ambient scenting, aromatic architectures, or olfactory actions, among others.

⁸⁴ Tolaas, S.Op. Cit.

⁸⁵ Ehrlichman, H., & Bastone, L. (1992). Olfaction and Emotion. In: Serby, M.J., Chobor, K.L. Science of Olfaction. (ed.): Springer, New York, NY. [online] https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4612-2836-3_15

⁸⁶ Henshaw, V. (2014). *Urban Smellscapes, Understanding and designing city smell environments*. (ed.): Routledge, U.K.

In this field, it is worth mentioning the Belgian artist Peter De Cupere, considered one of the most relevant olfactory contemporary artists, who throughout his wide artistic career, has developed an extensive production and research work related to the intangible world of olfactory art, integrating the associative effect of smells, in connection with the multisensory experience. The body of his work and philosophy, has recently been collected in an extensive edition entitled *Scent in Context; Olfactory Art*.⁸⁷

Also relevant are research studies related to the sense of smell in olfactory art, such as the publication *Art Scents-Exploring the Aesthetic of Smell and the Olfactory Arts*, by American philosophy professor Larry Shiner, who addresses a broad study that integrates cultural, scientific, historical, philosophical, and artistic knowledge about the sense of smell in art.

Parallel, it is worth mentioning the spaces dedicated to the dissemination of the sense of smell and fragrances, which explore the olfactory experience from an aesthetic and cultural point of view. Among them are the *Perfume Museum* in Granada, Spain, the *Perfume Museum* in Mexico City, the *Museum of Spirits (Spritmuseum)* in Stockholm, Sweden, or specific exhibitions such *The Art of the Scent* exhibition 1889-2012 curated by Chandler Burr at the Museum of Art and Design in New York in 2013.



Above: Perfume Museum | Granada, Spain

Below: Spritmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden

Photographs: Ivan Juarez

⁸⁷ De Cupere, P. (2017). *Scent in Context, Olfactory Art*. (ed.): Stockmans Kalenders, Belgium

TACTILE LANDSCAPES | Haptic Environments

The hands want to see, the eyes want to caress ⁸⁸

Goethe, W.

Surfaces, textures and materials transmit a complex language that can suggest emotional responses. According to Haptic scientist David Gueorguiev, who focuses on haptics & neuroscience, “the tactile modalities are considered to be: proprioception, nociception, thermal perception, vibrotaction and discriminative touch. In addition, several recent studies have emphasized the relevance of pleasant and affective touch.”⁸⁹ Concerning to tactile experience as a significant source of spatial and place connection, the Finish architect Juhani Pallasmaa defines touch as “the sensory mode which integrates our experience of the world and of ourselves.”⁹⁰ Pallasmaa has developed an extensive body of literature on the significance of touch as bodily-emotional perception, way of thinking and environmental connection. In his writings, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (1994), *Hapticity and Time* (2005) and *The Thinking Hand, Existential and Embodied Wisdom in Architecture* (2009), he reflects on the significance of the haptic sense in human being from environmental disciplines perspective, highlighting how, “all the senses including vision, are extensions of the sense of touch,” for him “senses are specializations of the skin, and all sensory experiences are related to tactility.”⁹¹ In his book, *The Thinking Hand*, Pallasmaa traces a journey through tactile perception, illustrating the relationship of tactile sense as a form of knowledge, thought, expression, communication, and as an instrument of creation. He highlights the primacy of touch in the aesthetic experience, its relationship with the environment, emotion, and imagination. Pallasmaa underlines the significance and relevance of the hand for human beings. The mysterious hand and its relationship with the brain, language, and with the other senses. The hand that works, highlighting the importance of the act of making and the significance of crafts. The hand that draws, drawing as a form of thought and the tactility of drawing. The hand that thinks.⁹²

⁸⁸ Goethe, J. W. (1790-1795) Römische Elegien V

⁸⁹ Gueorguiev, D. (2016). Tactile perception of natural and simulated textures: a psychophysical approach. Dissertation. Dial Research Publications. [online] <https://dial.uclouvain.be/pr/boreal/object/boreal:176765> [15.05.2022]

⁹⁰ Pallasmaa J. (2000). Hapticity and Time. Notes on fragile architecture: Architectural Review 207, London U.K. p.78-84

⁹¹ Pallasmaa, J. (1994). The eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses. (ed.): Wiley Academy, U.K.

⁹² Pallasmaa, J. (2010). The thinking hand: Existential and embodied wisdom in architecture. (ed.): Wiley Academy Chichester, U.K.

Haptic Sense & Performative Field

Conversation-Interview with Jasmin Schaitl

At the end of the year 2020, I had the opportunity to conduct a series of conversations, in the form of an interview with visual artist Jasmin Schaitl. An interview, in which she explains, from her artistic practice connected to performance, a broad vision about the importance of the haptic sense in the human being, as well as the relationship between haptic sense, performance and neuroscience. The conversation becomes relevant because it took place at the time of the *Coronavirus* pandemic, when touch and physical contact in social relationships was the sense most affected. The following are excerpts from these conversations.

Jasmin Schaitl is a visual artist, performer, lecturer and associated artist at the Angewandte Performance Laboratory at the University of applied Arts Vienna. Since 2017 she is researching on the intersection of materiality, haptics and memory within performative practices including her interest in neurosciences. The main medium of expression in her work is the body: in performance, sculpture, drawing and video. Within the field of performance and sculpture, she is researching the connection of, and effect between the haptic sense and the memory. This includes the exploration of audience involvement, participation and objects or materials that are to be touched. Jasmin examines how durational pieces and intimate one-on-one performance, and installation settings affect and change the perception of time and space for an audience. Her goal is to raise individual awareness and heighten senses to perceive what is in front of us and what surrounds us. The aspect of perceiving time more consciously intends to provide a frame to be aware of a possible fullness within the emptiness, an appreciation of the unspectacular. This emphasizes the underestimated meaning of beauty within details, through mere dedication on one matter.⁹³

⁹³ Jasmin Schaitl. [online] website: www.jasminschaitl.com [02.17.2021]

Conversation on Haptic Sense

Performative Field and the Relevance of the Haptic Sense for the Human Body

December 3, 2020

I got to know about Martin Grunwald book at the end of 2018 when it came out. It's a book called Homo Hapticus⁹⁴ (coming from Homo Sapiens). Grunwald is a scientist in the field of the haptic sense, and one of the pioneers in Europe. Also, he is giving talks and lectures, and he has written a lot of different books about the importance of the haptic sense from the scientific perspective. Homo Hapticus was a book which was written for non-scientists, for common people.

Grunwald wished to inform about the importance and the relevance of the haptic sense for the human body. I heard about it, and I was reading it, and from then I was really fascinated with the haptic sense because he explained it simply. The way that haptic is the first sense that humans developed in the human body; even in the fifth week of pregnancy, the fetus is able to feel through the skin its surrounding. It is the sense that makes us aware that there is a world around us, because through it, and without any other sense you are able to use the haptic sense as a small fetus. You basically start to realize that there is something. A body, or a liquid around you.

So, after reading this book, I really was fascinated, not only from the knowledge that it is very important for the whole human beings, because it is basically the only sense we cannot live without. Which it is also interesting because we often are not aware of that. It is a sense that we would not be able to survive without it; which it is also proven that we wouldn't be able to walk, or we wouldn't be able to know where is up and down without the sense of touch, because it is connected to the sensorimotor and the receptive haptic cells in the skin. The biggest sense physically, the biggest sense we have. It is the whole skin basically.

⁹⁴ Grunwald, M. (2017). Homo Hapticus. (ed.): Droemer & Knauer, Munich, Germany

And then, I got connected or got interested to it, because I am working with the body in performance, since such a long time. I am working very often with my hands. My performance is always focused on my hands, or the actions I am doing with the hands, which were often very fragile. I was working with thread, or thin wire, or wool. Working with teasing something with the hand to somewhere. It was something that I developed naturally in my practice, but then, it became much more evident that it is about the use of the hands and the use of how I work with the material with these hands. And that is how I think I was also drawn to the subject of the haptic sense, and through this book, it made me realize that the haptic sense is not limited, as often as we think, to adjusting our hands or something we touch, but it's something that is constantly around us all the time. It was very inspiring.

Also, in 2017, I started to deal with that important issue, to start to deal with meditation and mindfulness. I was interested in trying to combine how the haptic sense, not only of the hands, but of the whole body, can affect our way of thinking and our way of perceiving the environment. That it's not only through the skin, but it's also related to the mind or the brain.

So, that is how I connect this interest within the performative field. I connect the haptic sense research or knowledge I gained with some neuroscientific approaches or contemplative sciences, which is meditation for one part, or mindfulness-based strategies, for the other part. I try to work with them within performance and sharing performative practices through experiencing the haptic sense. Using, facilitating, highlighting the haptic sense, and relating it in different ways on how we perceive, how we think and how we become aware of emotions, and then connecting them to touch or the objects we touch or the things we touch.

Especially in the last work, it is a dual work with another performer. We were basically developed a method where we merge or morphing into one body. (It's a bit abstract). It was about full body touch with each other. And then, we also invited a neuroscientist who is also performer, and she gave this outside eye on this very physical thing that happens. We were basically on a plateau, like a living installation, just merging into one body and moving really slowly over half an hour. Basically, merging together and then separating. It was just like two million naked bodies merging and then separating.



The Touch Can Tell | Performance by Jasmin Schaitl in collaboration with Tereza Silon

*Moving together and distorting the normal appearance of a body, there is a head, there are two legs, and they are two hands. But when you merge together with this full body, basically become an all-morphed creature. Then, she, as neuroscientist, gave this outer perspective on it. She also introduced a guided audience to be aware that what you see it is also what you experience as a body. That is also in neuroscience, a very nice discovery, it's called **mirror neurons**. This topic goes on with neuroaesthetics into much more detailed research. Basically, what is mirror neurons is what you see as a human being on other bodies. You also experience it in the one or the other way and it's proven by measuring the magnetic resonance in certain brain areas. When you see two people touching, you also experience touch in your own body, because we are trained as human beings, and that comes also from this primordial development that when you see something on other humans, it also does a very similar thing in your body, as what you see in the other body. It is also why, for example, watching dance is recreational for the brain and the body, because when you watch dance, you fire your mirror neurons on, and they make you experience physically on a certain level. The same thing like the moving body you are observing.*

So, this was, for example, the last performance in which we also worked introducing the audience. The intention of this work we developed in October was to have more audience interaction, something that now in Corona Times does not work. Especially when working with the sense of touch. It's just simply not possible anymore. To touch people in a performance or even to ask them to touch their neighbors. The topic of touch at the moment is very fragile and sensitive.

So, we dealt with it in that way that the neuroscientist gave this very specific, but poetic impulses to think about -What happens in the body when you see other bodies being touched?

(...) On performances, reducing what is your focal point, which comes from mindfulness-based strategies, focusing only on one thing, but then analyzing it and perceiving it in a different way, through seeing, through smelling, and then through touching

Also, for example, working with a memory from the past. You work with that specific object. Or induce some kind of past memory that may arise because you give the right framework for the tactile sense to work on your own body and observe what it really is. Introduced through touching it in your own body.

Getting deeper into the topic of mindfulness strategies, not only from the practical perspective, but also from the theoretical perspective. I really observe that nothing can be separated from what is experienced, from what is in the mind. Whether it comes from the mind, the skin or the haptic sense (...)

Jasmin Schaitl, 2020

Tactile Sense & Natural Environment

The natural scene is an important component of everyday tactile experience, namely, texture perception, and thereby characterize the stimulation patterns experienced by cutaneous mechanoreceptors during the exploration of textured surfaces ⁹⁵

Manfredi, L.R. & Saal, H.P.

How does a plant leaf feel like? is it smooth? hard or soft? warm or cold? wet or dry? The sense of touch plays a crucial role for exploring and identifying the natural environment, “when we run our fingers over the surface of an object, we acquire information about its microgeometry and material properties,”⁹⁶ but also information about the surrounding context. In addition, by perceiving nature through tactile sense, it can provide a positive influence on mental health. With this approach, the present theme examines the relationship between tactile perception with natural scapes.

Touching Trees & Barks

Natural textures and surfaces can transmit positive haptic perceptions. According to *NHEST Organization (Natural History Education, Science, Technology)*, the haptic textures offered by plants, provide pleasure and knowledge, where trees are considered the principal organisms of the ecosystem and, because of the sense of touch, it is easy to identify between them.⁹⁷ Through tactile perception, people can be closer to their natural surroundings. What does a tree trunk feel like? The texture of barks speaks through tactility, and through it, it is possible to perceive some properties such as patterns, spots, cracks, stripes or lumps. The Beech bark (*Fagus sylvatica*) is smooth; Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) is also smooth and shredded, with vertical markings; the oaks, like *Quercus petraea*, usually have rough barks, deeply ridged and furrowed. Large oak trees develop very thick barks cracked into deep furrows; Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) generally have a smooth bark when young.

⁹⁵ Manfredi, L.R. & Saal, H.P. (2014). Natural scenes in tactile texture. In: American Journal of Physiology [online] <https://journals.physiology.org/doi/full/10.1152/issue-6> [20.02.2021]

⁹⁶ Weber, A. (2013). Spatial and temporal codes mediate the tactile perception of natural textures. Proc Natl Acad Sci U.S.A.

⁹⁷ Natural History Education, Science, Technology (2017). Gardening for Non-Visual Aesthetics. [online] <http://www.nhest.org/nvisgard.html> [12.07.2021]

Touching Leaves

The sense of touch can be stimulated by the particularities of the texture of the leaves. Each plant species has its own characteristics, and the shape of the leaves is often used for plant identification. Leaves can be identified by their margin, by their arrangement on the stem, by their general structure, or by the attachment of the leaf to the stem. They can be also identified by their overall shape (leaflet).⁹⁸ Leaves can be simple, as a single leaf blade, or compound, with numerous leaflets. They may have a regular or irregular margin, be smooth, or bearing hairs, bristles, or spines. In compound leaves, the arrangement and form of the edges determine the overall leaf shape, as well as the arrangement of the veins.⁹⁹ For example, the beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) leaf is simple and has alternate arrangement with wavy entire margins; Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) leaves are alternate, with conspicuous veins giving a characteristic corrugated texture, and a serrated margin; The main characteristic of oak trees (*Quercus*), is that their leaves are symmetrical, having lobed leaves with rounded knobs.

Hugging Trees

While walking through green areas, people can find a tree to hug. Hugging a tree, ancient, young, wide, or smooth is a way of communicating with nature and being closer to it. Hugging a tree or being in its closeness can make people feel healthier and more relaxed. In relation to the positive connection between humans and trees, author Matthew Silverstone highlights, in his published book, *Blinded by Science*, that trees can positively affect human health and mental well-being by altering the vibrational frequency.¹⁰⁰ Another example comes from initiatives taking place in Canada and the United States of America, through the *AdventureSmart, Hug-A-Tree program*. This is a program that helps lost children to survive in the forest. According to this program, “one of the greatest fears anyone can have is of being alone. Hugging a tree and even talking to it, calms the child down and prevents panic. By staying in one place, the child is found by searchers far more quickly.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Randal, C. N. (2012). The Description of Leaves Leaf shapes. In University of Rochester site [online] <https://www.cs.rochester.edu/users/faculty/nelson/wildflowers/glossaries/leaves/index.html>

⁹⁹ Randal, C. N. (2012). Op. Cit.

¹⁰⁰ Silverstone, M. (2011). *Blinded by Science*. (ed.): Lloyd's World Publishing, U.K.

¹⁰¹ Hug-a-Tree and Survive (2016). AdventureSmart [online] homepage: <https://www.adventuresmart.ca/programs/hug-a-tree-and-survive> [02.04.2022]

Foot Sense | Walking on Natural Textures

When we walk on grass we stimulate the nerve endings of the foot, where thousands of nerve endings converge. These nerve endings get gently yet directly stimulated by the grass, helping the body stay in a state of equilibrium ¹⁰²

Health Site

According to research studies by Takehito Kikuchi of Oita University in Japan, it is essential to investigate the importance of the foot sense as a factor that influences on the cognitive and motor function, as well as on environmental recognition.¹⁰³ From a complementary point of view, according to Pavitra Sampath, writer at the *Health site*, the feet are significant reflexology zones that link to various organs in the body. Stimulation of particular acupoints can contribute to maintaining certain organs in a healthy state. Feet have connection points to the eyes, ears, lungs, facial nerve, stomach, brain, kidneys and to some other organs.¹⁰⁴ Consequently, walking barefoot on natural textures can stimulate these areas, helping to be healthy in body and mind. According to the *Health site*, there are positive reasons to perform this activity: it connects to the earth, stimulates senses and the whole body, calms the mind and neutralizes electrical energies.¹⁰⁵ Grasslands, especially meadows, are activator-areas for barefoot walking.

¹⁰² Health site (2014) Walking can stave off memory decline [online] <https://www.thehealthsite.com/news/walking-can-stave-off-memory-decline-239779> [15.04.2022]

¹⁰³ Kikuchi Takehito (2013): Contribution of senses of foot for identification of shape, elasticity and tilt angle of ground. In: 23rd International Conference on Artificial Reality and Telexistence (ICAT) The National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation EE Publisher, Tokyo. p.61-66

¹⁰⁴ Sampath, P. (2016) Walking on grass. In: The Healthsite [online] <https://www.thehealthsite.com/diseases-conditions/top-5-reasons-to-walk-on-grass> [02.04.2022]

¹⁰⁵ Sampath, P. Op. Cit.

The Haptic Sense as a Means of Interacting with the Natural World

Conversations & Interview with Kinga Bartniak

In regard to the haptic sense and its relationship with the natural environment, I was interested in a particular video-performance titled *Interspecies Vehicle* by Polish visual artist Kinga Bartniak, who created a sensory mattress made of grass in which the artist wrap herself in it, to be immerse into the surrounding meadow. At the end of 2020, I had the opportunity to hold a series of conversations with Kinga Bartniak. The conversations focused on her bond with the sense of touch and the natural environment. In parallel, and a posteriori, we developed a series of artistic collaborations in relation to these themes (the actions and artworks will be described further on in the chapter dedicated to *-Explorations-*). The artwork mentioned and the excerpt of the conversations are outlined below.

Interspecies Vehicle, Grass Mattress by Kinga Bartniak

*The artwork focused on the topic of skin hunger and touch deprivation, which become leading issues in a modern technological society. The distance between humans grows proportionally with a widening of a social network. While I always envied flies, other bugs and animals that they could feel impunity while sitting on peoples' skin, I grew up in a society with an inviolable personal space. I struggled with an overwhelming desire for contact that could not be fulfilled. Eventually, I have created a cabin that takes a human into interaction with another species. A sensory mattress, a house for hundreds of organisms.*¹⁰⁶



Video-performance *Interspecies Vehicle* by Kinga Bartniak

¹⁰⁶ Bartniak, K. (2019). *Interspecies Vehicle*. [online]: <https://bartniakkinga.wixsite.com/portfolio/interspecies-vehicle> [28.12.2020].

Conversation with Kinga Bartniak

December 1, 2020

About Interspecies Vehicle: *Interspecies Vehicle is about haptic sense, but also about the sense of smell. If you rolled into it, your whole body will be fully covered, so you would feel the smell of the grass and you would also have a very limited eyesight. A limited feel of seeing. It is meant for all senses. I had that realization because I was watching bugs walking on my friend's hand. And I was quite envy; jealous that the other species can cross the tactile border. And me, as a human, I can only communicate with another person via voice -sounds, or the image -visuality. I cannot communicate through touch. I think that it was this particular issue that triggered me to make the mattress from the grass.*

Connection with haptic sense: *As an example, I could mention the way I buy clothes in the shop. I never look at the clothes (I look at them, but later). But first, I have to touch them and see if the textile is suitable for me, or if it is not. Even if it is visually pretty, I wouldn't wear it because it wouldn't feel good with me. There are these three main groups of people, those who focus on visuality, those who focus on sounds and those who focus on touch, and I am in this last group -touch. - For example, when I speak, I use words that are connected to tactility. If we are talking together, and if I understood you, I would not say, -oh, I see- but rather I would say, -oh, I feel you. - I focus more on that feeling, on touch and tactile things. So maybe that's why it also translates into my artwork.*

Another example was the foot walk we had. I wanted to share the feeling of walking barefoot and sharing that feeling with other people. Rather than sharing something visual, I would rather invite people to walk barefoot on the grass. Rather to go and see a movie or doing some other visual activity, I would prefer to invite somebody to drink a tea, or eat something, or prepare something together, something tasty, something in the kitchen, rather than to experience something visual, or something for hearing or listening. So, if you read about those type of sensory related groups, the people that focus on tactility, are like 5% of them in society. Very, very few.

Natural environment and tactile sense: *I just feel safer when I know the natural species around me. For example, when I went to Spain, I remember I felt for the first time that I was farther from my country, because if I was presented in Germany or in Czech Republic or in Lithuania, there were the same species of trees and bushes and similar nature as in Poland. But when I was in Spain, I experienced for the first time that feeling that I was farther away, because I couldn't identify the species, so it was seriously the first time that I felt distant, I didn't know at least like 40% of trees that were there. It was not just about the tactile thing. I just feel safer when I know the nature around me (...).*

Recovering the significance of tactile sense: *As a society we are overwhelmed by the visuality and sounds. And there are people who started searching that the sense of touching was before, and that it is actually one of the main senses. I feel that at this moment people are looking again towards nature and recovering the artisanal approach, making things with hands, revaluing and recovering the haptic sensation that we have been deprived of in times of pandemic.*

Feet & feel: *Because of the tactile sense we can stimulate some of the nerve endings, and then introduce or activate some specific hormones or specific substances in the body that make us happy. Like those graphic charts, when they show which parts of the foot are joined to some part of the body or to some organs. It works because they are nervous, there are neurons that go through all the neural connections in the body connecting the brain and specific organs.*

Kinga Bartniak, 2020

VISUAL LANDSCAPES | Scenery & Time

The Art of Seeing. It is essential to an architect to know how to see: I mean, to see in such a way that the vision is not overpowered by rational analysis ¹⁰⁷

Luis Barragan

This theme is focused on the way of seeing landscapes. It is also connected on how the cyclical sense of time and seasonal change suggest a temporal process to observe the environment. The approximation focuses not only on the static gaze, but on the visual sense related to the transformation of nature, timescapes and the constant variation occurring in natural cycles. This theme is complemented by the visual approach related to the displacement of the body. The slow and philosophical act of walking. The visual journey. Through these reflections, the interaction between the visual sense and the environment is exanimated as a symbiotic relationship to comprehend landscape scenarios.

Experience is a cover-all term for the various modes through which a person knows his world.

Experience constructs place at different scales

Yi-Fu Tuan

According to Karanika Myrto, researcher from Royal College of Art “spatial experience is a synthesis of all of our senses and in modern perception and in sensory approaching, vision has been the dominant sense.”¹⁰⁸ On the other hand, Dr. Yi-Fu Tuan, professor of geography at the University of Minnesota, assets “with taste, smell, and touch we feel as though we are simply registering sensations provoked by external stimuli. With hearing, and particularly with seeing, we seem to be actively exploring the world beyond us and getting to know it objectively.”¹⁰⁹ For him, seeing is thinking, in the sense that it is a selective and constructive activity; it creates models of reality adapted to human pursuits.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Barragan, L. (1980). Pritzker Price Acceptance Letter. The Pritzker Architecture Prize, The Hyatt Foundation http://www.pritzkerprize.com/1980_Acceptance_Speech [15.11.2021]

¹⁰⁸ Myrto, K. (2009). Haptic Space and Bodily Expressions: A Bi-directional Relation of Affect. In: Symposium on Mental States, Emotions and their Embodiment The Society for the Study of Artificial Intelligence and Simulation of Behaviour (AISB) Convention, U.K.

¹⁰⁹ Yi-Fu, T. (1975). Place: an experiential perspective, The Geographical Review 65, 2, Wiley-Blackwell, U.S.A. p. 151

¹¹⁰ Yi-Fu, T. Op. Cit.

Landscape and the Visual Aesthetic Experience

The perception and enhancement of the landscape as natural scenery is a significant approach constantly found in the field of visual arts. One of the most representative and studied works of Western art in landscape painting, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog* (1818), by German artist Caspar David Friedrich, depicts the connection of the viewer with the landscape, conceived as a scene of sublime contemplation of nature. A new way of representing the landscape through the eye of the spectator. The Romantic-era painting shows the observer standing with his back in the foreground, gazing at the mountainous landscape covered in mist, merging the horizon line with the sky, while giving the sensation of immensity. The work represents the instant when the person is moved by the beauty of the scenery, both natural and spiritual.

Another aesthetic reflection associated to the visual landscape, comes from the artist painter Jon Schueler (1916-1992), describing nature in his own words, “when I speak of nature, I speak of the sky, because the sky has become all of nature to me.” He also defines the natural landscape as a continuous movement which could be compared to a living painting:

*I can see the drama of nature charged and compressed. Lands form, seas disappear, worlds fragment, colors merge or give birth to burning shapes, mountain snows show emerald green. Or, for a long moment, life stops still when the gales pause, and the sky clears after long days of careening sound and horizontal rain or snow*¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Jon Schueler Foundation (1999-2022). [online] homepage: <https://www.jonschueler.com> [17-04.2020]

Human being has an infinite capacity to adapt and get information from their own landscape. In this way, people can feel the great joy of the analysis of all things

César Manrique

A pioneering example that emerged in the middle of the last century, in terms of artistic approach to the natural environment, understood as a visual scenario to be highlighted, and as an aesthetic approach closely linked to environmental consciousness, is exemplified in the artistic work that César Manrique (1919-1992) has created in the volcanic island of Lanzarote in the Canary Islands, Spain. For César Manrique, painter, sculptor, and ecologist, who reimagined and reconfigured his native island into a complex and poetic living-artwork, the artist has the key role of teaching how to see. With this approach, Manrique conceived and shared in this endemic territory, a sensitive body of work consisted of non-intrusive spatial and landscape interventions: *Jameos del Agua*, *The Cactus Garden*, *The Viewpoint of the River*¹¹² works in which he connected nature, visual artscape, aesthetic experience and ecological awareness.

Walking as a Sensorial-Visual Experience

All truly great thoughts are conceived while walking

Friedrich Nietzsche

Walking as a method of approximation to the landscape is an exploration that connects concepts, traces and narratives to recognize the natural environment through perceptual experience. This human activity, dedicated to understanding and perceiving the landscape through sightseeing in movement, connects situations and experiences with specific places.

On his book *Walkscapes: walking as an aesthetic practice*, Italian architect Francesco Careri, explores the act of walking as a perceptual and critical instrument. He suggests this performing activity as a new look to observe the landscapes. He also analyzes the act of walking through diverse moments of art history such as *Dada*, *Surrealism*, *Situationist* and *Land Art*.¹¹³

¹¹² César Manrique Fundación (2015). [online] homepage: www.fcmanrique.org [17-04.2020]

¹¹³ Careri, F. (2013): *Walkspaces: walking as an aesthetic practice*. (ed.): Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, Spain

A complementary vision on the relationship of perception and cognition through the walking experience, comes in the book *A Philosophy of Walking* by Frédéric Gros, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Paris, who along the different chapters, such as *Outsides, Slowness, Solitudes, Silences, Energy, Pilgrimage, Gravity* or *Elemental*, traces a personal journey, describing in first person the act of walking as an act of thinking. It is worth mentioning the publication *Notes on Walking, Dandelion has not Field*, by the artist-architect Sepa Sama. Visual-artistic editorial research conducted within the Doctoral School of the Academy of Arts in Wrocław, which, from a photographic gaze, connects a series of walking journeys and thoughts, presented in the form of a lexicon.

In the urban context, American theoretician, and urban planner Kevin Lynch, on his work *The Image of the City*, studies the city from the environmental psychology's perspective. He theorized how the physical context determines the perceptual understanding of urban environments, and how citizens comprehend and associate their own surroundings through mental maps.¹¹⁴

Walking | Seeing Beyond Seeing

The Aesthetic Walking Experience of Richard Long

A walk defines the form of the land in space and time beyond the scale of sculpture or the fixed image. Some of my walks are formal (straight, circular, rhythmic) almost ritualised. I have climbed around mountains instead of to the top; I have made walks about slowness, walks about stones and water. I have made walks within a place as opposed to a linear journey; walking without travelling

Richard Long

¹¹⁴ Lynch, K. (1960). *The Image of the City*. (ed.): MIT Press, Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies Series. Cambridge, Mass, U.S.A.

A key example of approximation to landscape through the artistic experience comes from the British artist Richard Long (1945). His land artwork, which is part of the broader conceptual movement of the 1960s and 1970s, is based on his own walks across different geographies. Richard Long documents his journeys of solitary walks through photography, maps and texts.¹¹⁵

*In the nature of things:
Art about mobility, lightness and freedom.
Simple creative acts of walking and marking
about place, locality, time, distance and measurement.
Works using raw materials and my human scale
in the reality of landscapes.*

*My art is about working in the wide world,
wherever, on the surface of the earth.
My work is not urban, nor is it romantic.
It is the laying down of modern ideas
in the only practical places to take them*

Richard Long

His land artwork is defined as a reflection of the environments through which he walked, and in some of his artistic site-experiences, the landscape has been transformed by the act of walking. His action documented in photography; *A Line Made by Walking* (1967), is a representative pioneer example of this conceptual approach.

¹¹⁵ Tate Britain. Landart. In: Tate Britain. [online]: landart<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/l/land-art> [03.04.2020]

Visual Sense | Nature, Timescapes & Seasonality

Approximation focuses on the aesthetical variations of landscapes through seasonal cycles and dynamics of nature. Under this approach, according to the French gardener and writer Gilles Clément, who is professor at the National School of Landscape Architecture in Versailles, the main task of a gardener is to guide, maintain, enhance and interpret the spontaneous growth of the natural vegetation process, without altering its natural cycles and dynamics. Since 1977, Gilles Clément has continuously applied his landscaping principle *Garden in Motion*, in his own experimental garden *La Vallée*, located in Creuse, France. For him “*Garden in Motion* is subject to the evolutionary process resulting from long term interaction.” This garden conception, based on seasonal variation and constant change, is essentially originated from the self-sowing and self-migration of vegetal species. For him, moving gardens, should be not only visual, but tactile, olfactory, and dynamic. This garden design experience was first described by Clément in 1984 on his article *Mastering Neglected Land*, and subsequently developed as a theory, which has been extended to other investigations and site-contexts.¹¹⁶

Piet Oudolf | Time-Based Gardener

A complementary time-based landscape and biological approach comes from the Dutch gardener and designer Piet Oudolf, who emphasizes in his garden compositions the seasonal life cycle of the vegetation. Oudolf, mainly uses perennial herbaceous plants and varieties of herbs for his plant designs. Through his gardening, he highlights the wide range of colors, the structural characteristics, and the changing interactions that the plants generate throughout the year. In his book *Planting Design: Gardens in Time and Space*, he suggests a naturalistic-ecologic garden approximation as main principle for garden design, in which time and place are essential factors to create changing rhythms and constant seasonal flows.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Clément, G. (2012). *El jardín en movimiento*. (ed.): Gustavo Gili, Barcelona, Spain

¹¹⁷ Oudolf, P. Kingsbury Noel (2005). *Planting Design: Gardens in Time and Space*. (ed.): Timber Press, U.K.

Meadows Foundation (Fundacja Łąka) | Poland



Meadow | intervention by Fundacja Łąka in the urban space of Wrocław
photography: Ivan Juarez

As an example, at the local level in Poland, where the visual experience of the cityscape is highlighted through the connection to the natural scape and environmental awareness, it is manifested in the projects and initiatives carried out by *Fundacja Łąka (Meadows Foundation)*. A non-profit organization, focused on promoting the cultivation of flower meadows in public green spaces across different towns and cities on the territory of Poland. Through their interventions they generate pollinator spaces which, during the spring and summer seasons, show a wide range of colors and textures through different species of flowers.

*The dominance of lawns in cities does not support the protection of biodiversity. Monoculture lawns have even been called "green deserts." These are areas where plants grow, but only two or three species. So, they have nothing to do with the natural biodiversity present before human intervention.*¹¹⁸

The organization carries out various environmental and community engagement activities, such as workshops, meadow flower seed banks, research; but above all, it promotes educational, advocacy and dissemination actions to raise awareness of the aesthetic-environmental importance of the meadow flower, and how it provides ecosystem services and contributes to biodiversity and the health of cities.¹¹⁹ The present research explores and documents, through photography, a number of meadows areas that this foundation has implemented in the city of Wrocław (chapter: *On-Site Explorations-Visualscapes*).

¹¹⁸ Fundacja Łąka (2017). [online] homepage: www.laka.org.pl [23.08.2021]

¹¹⁹ Fundacja Łąka. Op. cit.

LANDSCAPES OF TASTE

***Foodscape** as a metaphorical landscape of foods and their production methods and cultural associations.¹²⁰*

***Foodscapes** are the geographical components of the global food system, a combination of production system and place that represents the world food system spatially.¹²¹*

Food is an essential value for the human being. It is a fundamental good for the health and the well-being of body and mind. It is a primary need, a source of nutrition, a common good, a cultural identity. Furthermore, the main issues associated with food, in relation to production, transport, trade and consumption are closely related to the environmental health of the planet.

This theme explores interactions between people, food and landscapes, and focuses on examining dialogues between gustatory perception and the concepts of gastronomical landscapes, site food production, productive landscapes, local gastronomy, or urban agricultures. It also highlights the interconnections between food and artistic practices that seek to redefine the concerns between foodscapes and society in contemporary life.

¹²⁰ Glosbe Dictionary (2001). Foodscape. In: Glosbe Dictionary. [online]: <https://glosbe.com/en/en/foodscape> [02.01.2022]

¹²¹ European Union (2021). Foodscapes. In: European Union website. Global Food and Nutrition Security Global Food and Nutrition Security, Toward Food System Transition Global Food and Nutrition Security [online] homepage: https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/publication/foodscapes-toward-food-system-transition_en [04.05.2022]

Gastronomy & Cultural Landscapes

Cooking is a language, through which society unconsciously reveals its structure

Lévi-Strauss

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines culture as "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group and that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs."¹²² Within this definition, UNESCO recognizes gastronomy on a broad sense as a category within the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Understood as "traditional knowledge about cooking, agricultural cycles, herbalism and traditional medicine, as well as myths and conceptions of the universe and nature."¹²³ According to this notion, gastronomy is considered as an intangible heritage with significant cultural value for the human being. In this context, Francesc Fusté, Spanish professor and researcher at the University of Girona, specialized in rural gastronomic tourism, defines cultural heritage as "an element of cultural communication, which channels cultural traditions and the natural idiosyncrasy of a place."¹²⁴ For him, "gastronomy is a territorial symbol, a sample of both, culture and nature that defines us as human beings with roots in a certain place."¹²⁵ For Pauline Adema, who teaches at the *Culinary Institute of America*, the gastronomic landscapes are defined as "the social, cultural, political, economic or historical landscapes that, in one way or another, are related to food."¹²⁶

¹²² UNESCO (2001). Culture. In: UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural, Paris, France Diversity [online]: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/5_Cultural_Diversity_EN.pdf [05.04.2020]

¹²³ UNESCO (2003). Intangible Landscape. In: Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, edition. UNESCO, Paris, France.

¹²⁴ Fusté-Forné, F. (2016) Landscapes of Culture: Gastronomy and Culinary Heritage, Dixit vol.24 no.1 Montevideo, Uruguay

¹²⁵ Fusté-Forné, F. Op. cit.

¹²⁶ Adema, P. (2006). Festive Foodscapes: Iconizing Food and the Shaping of Identity and Place. Austin: The University of Texas, U.S.A.

With this insight, gastronomy is closely connected to the territory and the place where food is produced or consumed, providing bonds with the ecological context, and establishing historical, ethnographic and social associations. In this sense, the interconnection between specific geographic territories and their gastronomy gives rise to cultural foodscapes.

The *National Park Service* defines a cultural landscape as "as a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person, or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."¹²⁷ UNESCO distinguishes and values significant cultural landscapes around the world and, according to this organization, the term cultural landscape "encompasses a diversity of manifestations of the interaction between humanity and its natural environment."¹²⁸ For this organization, "cultural landscapes often reflect specific techniques of sustainable land use, taking into account the characteristics and limits of the natural environment in which they are established, and a specific spiritual relationship with nature."¹²⁹ *The Cultural Landscape Foundation* (CLF) defines that, cultural landscapes can be man-made expressions of visual and spatial relationships that include large estates, in which farmlands are also included. Alongside this, cultural landscapes include works of art, texts and narratives of cultures, and expressions of regional identity.¹³⁰

With this approach, gastronomy is closely connected to specific landscapes, generating an important cultural legacy inherent to the communities. An intangible value of identity expressed through food production practices, farming, traditional recipes, regional products, dishes, ways of cooking and eating. Additionally, gastronomy is also connected to specific territories that preserve significant intangible layers of history, tradition, or social interactions.

¹²⁷ National Park Service (2021). Cultural Landscape. In: National Park Service. [online]: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/understand-cl.htm> [04.10.2021]

¹²⁸ UNESCO (2019). Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World, Heritage Convention [online]: https://whc.unesco.org/en/compendium/action=list&id_faq_themes=1534 [04.10.2021]

¹²⁹ UNESCO. Op. cit.

¹³⁰ Cultural Landscape Foundation. Cultural Landscape. [online]: <https://www.tclf.org/places/about-cultural-landscapes> [04.10.2021]

As opposed to agricultural and alimentary models centered on large-scale monocultures, standardized or extractive food production, and on the consumption of processed or industrialized foods, there is a current concern in society to produce and consume food on a local and sustainable scale, healthier for people and for the planet. An awareness that emerges in both rural and urban areas.

These concerns focus on return to the soil, valorization of traditional agricultural systems, recovery of land-based and local knowledge, promotion of sustainable food practices, implementation of concepts such as *Slow food* or *Zero Km Food*,¹³¹ as well as the valorization of biodiverse practices of food production and consumption. Local food and local gastronomy are also key concepts in determining the identity of foodscapes, as well as for human health and sustainable environment. There are also significant food practices that are representative testimony to the historical and traditional interaction between humankind and land. Positive examples of coexistence as a dialogue between people and territory.

Based on a range of concerns and practices, the following section complements the previous reflections by outlining an overview of different thinkers, researchers and creators related to the social, environmental, political and artistic perspectives associated with the landscapes of food and taste.

¹³¹ *Slow food* is the concept that defines food grown locally, mainly organically and seasonally, by farmers and workers who receive a fair remuneration.

Zero kilometer is an ecological and economic concept associated with the *Slow food* movement, which designates food that is produced, sold and consumed locally. It refers to food that travels a short distance between the place of consumption and the place of production or harvesting and does not circulate through global trade and transport chains.

EAT Foundation, Stockholm Resilience Centre & Sustainable Food Planning

In the field of sustainable food research, it is worth mentioning Dr. Line Gordon, director of the *Stockholm Resilience Center* and member of the board of directors of the *EAT Foundation*, a science-based platform for food system transformation.¹³² Dr. Gordon conducts research focused on gastronomic landscapes and resilience thinking, among other ecological insights. With the aim to find connections on these subjects, Gordon investigates local food practices that emphasize ecological concerns, land-use models, and biological-cultural heritage. Another example in the field of food research is *Sustainable Food Planning*, a group coordinated by Professors Dr. Arnold van der Valk and Kevin Morgan, which is part of the *Association of European Planning Schools* (AESOP). The non-profit group brings together academics, policy makers and practitioners, and provides a platform for dialogue and development of sustainable food systems.¹³³

Farmscapes

Phoebe Lickwar and Roxi Thoeren, both American professors of landscape architecture, in their book *Farmscape: The Design of Productive Landscapes*, examine land-production design practice, presenting through a series of case studies from diverse geographies that highlight and shape farming processes. The book approaches from a historical perspective, beginning in the eighteenth century to the present day. It describes agricultural practices that generate productive farms, focusing on aesthetics, agro-design, ecological conservation and remediation, both in rural and peri-urban areas.¹³⁴

¹³² EAT (2018). [online]: homepage: www.eatforum.org [15.09.2021]

¹³³ AESOP Sustainable Group Planning (2008). In: Sustainable Food Planning). [online]: <https://www.aesop-planning.eu/thematic-groups/sustainable-food-planning> [15.09.2021]

¹³⁴ Thoren, R. & Lickwar, P. (2020). *Farmscape: The Design of Productive Landscapes* (ed.): Routledge, New York, NY, U.S.A.

Productive Urban Landscapes

As a complementary approach to *Farmscape*, which is mainly focused on rural areas, it is also essential to include the urban agriculture, a concern focused on food production practices within urban environments. Since in recent decades most of the world population inhabits in urban areas, it has become a concern that cities also should produce their own food, implementing a range of environmental-social actions which can be manifested in urban orchards, either at the domestic scale or included in the social and urban fabric of the city. Under this approach, landscape architects Andre Viljoen, Joe Howe and Katrin Bohn on their book *Continuous Productive Urban Landscape* (CPUL) examine the value of urban agricultures, highlighting farming benefits integrated inside the *edible city*. A concept understood as a sustainable attitude towards the incorporation of urban farming in the planning of the city's green infrastructure. With this perspective, the authors propose a series of strategies to strengthen the importance of this activity by implementing community models of sustainable urban living.¹³⁵



¹³⁵ Viljoen, A., Bohn, K., & Howe, J. (2005). Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes (CPUL): Designing Urban Agriculture for Sustainable Cities. (ed.): Architectural Press, U.K.

Tastescapes

Gustatory system

The gustatory system is the sensory system responsible for the perception of taste and flavour. In humans, the gustatory system is comprised of taste cells in the mouth (which sense the five taste modalities: salty, sweet, bitter, sour and umami), several cranial nerves, and the gustatory cortex ¹³⁶

Taste

The flavour of something, or the ability of a person or animal to recognize different flavours. The sensation of flavour perceived in the mouth and throat on contact with a substance. ¹³⁷ *A perception that results from stimulation of a gustatory nerve. Taste belongs to the chemical sensing system. Tasting begins when molecules stimulate special cells in the mouth or throat* ¹³⁸

Taste & Gastronomy

The individual experience of taste is constituted through subjective experience and the interplay of internal senses, external surroundings, and recurring practices ¹³⁹

Peter Barham

In recent decades, the exaltation of taste in food, integrating the other senses as a complete sensory experience, has proliferated through the culinary creations of several food creators and chefs from different geographies. These creators have explored the concept of gastronomy, by integrating traditional and avant-garde food techniques, gastronomic knowledge, and sustainable thinking, while integrating local and ecological products from organic farms, local orchards, or community markets.

¹³⁶ Nature, multidisciplinary science journal (2012). Gustatory system. [online]: www.nature.com/subjects/gustatory-system [08.10.2021]

¹³⁷ Cambridge dictionary (2021) (last updated). Taste [online]: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es-LA/dictionary/english/taste> [08.10.2021]

¹³⁸ MedicineNet (2021). Taste [online] <https://www.medicinenet.com/taste/definition.htm> [08.10.2021]

¹³⁹ Barham, P. (2010). Molecular Gastronomy: A New Emerging Scientific Discipline. In: Chemical Reviews 110 (4)

In parallel, food creators have enriched the conception of cooking and eating, expressing it through dishes, recipes, performative initiatives or disseminating it through editorial projects, exhibitions, or pedagogical initiatives. As an example, is the Spanish avant-garde cuisine, with chef Ferrán Adrià (*elBulli Foundation*) as a pioneer. This food scene also includes *Can Rocca*, in Girona, Spain; Juan Mari Azrak and Andoni Luis Aduriz from *Mugaritz*, both in the Basque Country, with the complement of *The Basque Culinary Center-Foundation*, as a space for formation, innovation and research.

Food & Artistic Spheres

The relationship between art and food has evolved historically. From the beginning it has been represented especially in the form of painting and sculpture, evolving to the present forms of experiential, social and ecological art practices. The earliest antecedents can be found in the rupestrian examples of Paleolithic art, captured in murals or reliefs in caves, which represented the symbolic universe of human beings and their relationship with the natural world, especially with its fauna -bulls, bison, horses, deer, bears, goats- animals that provided the main source of food, which was obtained through hunting practices.

As examples of the interconnection between human beings and food, understood as a cosmogony connected to the natural and divine world, artistic manifestations are found in different latitudes of Africa, Asia, America, Europa and Australia through the various layers of historical civilizations, whether in Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece-Rome, ancient China, or in the Inca or Mesoamerican cultures, in which societies depicted their cosmovision and their conception of the natural world connected with their agricultural cycles and practices. In most cases, these conceptions are represented through figures of divinities that are depicted in sculpture, relief, painting, mural or pottery. Among these examples it is worth mentioning the Mesoamerican civilization, in which *Chicomecóatl* is represented as the goddess of corn, as well as *Tláloc* and *Chalchiuhtlicue*, both representing fertility through water.

Throughout history, the pictorial tradition has also represented the relationship of human beings with their agricultural landscapes. Significant examples are *Des Glaneuses* (The Gleaners) (1857) by Jean-François Millet, which centuries later the filmmaker Agnès Varda would reinterpret as a metaphor, in a personal and poetic cinematographic vision through the documentary titled *The Gleaners and I* (*Les glaneurs et la glaneuse*) (2000).

Art depicting scenes of society and meals is also expressed in paintings of domestic life, such as *The Milkmaid* (1657-1658) by the Dutch artist Johannes Vermeer, or in symbolic paintings, such as *The Last Supper*, the most representative iconographic meal scene in the history of art, and whose main example is the Italian High Renaissance mural *The Last Supper* (1495-1498) by Leonardo da Vinci. Further examples that integrate food and painting are the depictions of meals -fruit, bread, plants, banquets or eating utensils- in *still life*. A pictographic genre present since antiquity and the Middle Ages, it acquired relevance as an artistic medium in Western painting at the end of the 16th century and later in the 17th century with the Dutch painters.¹⁴⁰ Representative paintings of this genre are *Fruit Basket* (1595) and *Fruit on Stone Ledge* by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio; *Fruit on Porcelain* (1630), by Jacob Van Es; *Still Life with Apples* (1894) and *Still Life with Skull* (1898) by Paul Cézanne, and the series of still life paintings of Picasso and Braque made in the first half of the twentieth century.



Still Life with Lemons in a Wicker Basket (1643-169) by Spanish Baroque painter Juan de Zurbarán
The National Gallery, London, U.K. | photographs: Ivan Juarez

¹⁴⁰ Getty Education (2021). Still Life. [online]: <https://www.getty.edu/news/what-is-a-still-life> [15.04.2022]

Taste & Artistic Thinking

The relationship between art and food has evolved to the present day, exploring the world of food and the sense of taste from a broader perspective. In the field of contemporary art, a large number of creators, researchers, collectives, organizations and institutions have emerged exploring current food concerns related to production, distribution or consumption from various aesthetic, political, health and environmental points of view. The creations and initiatives include various artistic media, such as meals, gastronomic walks, collective culinary practices, cultivations, talks, actions, performances, editions or exhibitions. Below are some examples of such artistic food practices.

The Creative Food Cycles explores modes of communication, social integration and formative initiatives related to food, art and creativity, which are manifested through workshops, installations, exhibitions, symposia and publications, such as the *Food Interactions Catalogue* edited by the *Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia* (IAAC), Spain, an edition that features a series of projects from around the world related to the practices of food, design and art.^{141 142}

Foodcollective, based in Singapore, aims to co-create an equitable and inclusive circular food system. They work as a group with the aim of shaping communities and *agrihoods* through collaborative practices.¹⁴³ Complementarily, *Foodscapes* is a community platform and editorial space connected to Foodcollective, which focuses on events and publications that promote dialogue and insights into the ecology and culture of food.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴¹ Creative Food Cycles (2020). [online] homepage: <https://creativefoodcycles.org/about/objectives> [15.03.2022]

¹⁴² Markoupoulou, A., Farinea, Ch. & Ciccone, F. (2020). *Food Interactions Catalogue*. (ed.): Institut d'Arquitectura Avancada de Catalunya (IAAC), Barcelona, Spain

¹⁴³ Food Collective (2015). [online] homepage: www.foodscapecollective.com [15.03.2022]

¹⁴⁴ Foodscapes Organization (2020). [online] homepage: www.foodscapepages.org [15.03.2022]

Vienna-based *Honey & Bunny*, founded by Austrian performance artists Sonja Stummerer and Martin Hablesreiter, examine culinary culture through performance, design, architecture, academia and publishing.¹⁴⁵

From another latitude, *Colectivo Amasijo* is a collective of Mexican women from different generations and backgrounds who conceive collective cooking as a network of interrelationships, as a way of taking care of the territory as well as the social relationships that are achieved through them. They interact across a range of platforms: performances, research initiatives, workshops, and actions-celebrations in galleries, museums and cultural spaces.¹⁴⁶

The Politics of Food

Delfina Foundation is a non-profit organization based in London founded in 2007 that promotes and facilitates artistic exchange and the development of creative initiatives through residencies, collaborative practices, and public programming. One of the key programs from Delfina Foundation is *Politics of Food*, an artistic initiative that emerged in 2014, focused on reflecting on food cultures through various activities, such as residencies and public programs, which are enriched through multiperspective viewpoints: artists, activists, agronomists, artisans, bakers, butchers, chefs, economists, farmers, fermenters, foragers, historians, scientists, policy makers, nutritionists.¹⁴⁷

Among the emerging initiatives coming from Politics of Food, is the book under the same name, by editors Aaron Cezar, who is the founding director of the Delfina Foundation, and Dani Burrows, researcher and curator. The book traces a food-art insight, exploring different topics: Food Journeys, Food Futures (agroecology and food), Food and Identity, Food and Hospitality, among others.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ Honey & bunny (2014). [online] homepage: <https://www.honeyandbunny.com> [15.03.2022]

¹⁴⁶ Colectivo Amasijo (2017). [online] homepage: <https://www.colectivoamasijo.org> [15.03.2022]

¹⁴⁷ Politics of Food (2014). In: Delfina Foundation [online]: <https://www.delfinafoundation.com/programmes/the-politics-of-food/> [15.03.2021]

¹⁴⁸ Cezar, A. & Burrows, D. (2020). Politics of Food.(ed.): Sternberg Press. U.K.

The Svalbard Global Seed Vault & The Seed Cultures Initiative

The Svalbard Global Seed Vault

In a deep cavern carved inside a frozen mountain on an island high up in the Arctic lies the most biodiverse room in the world. The Svalbard Global Seed Vault holds over one million samples of seeds from all around the world. However, the Seed Vault contains no information about the cultural significance of seeds; no stories about how they are cultivated, by whom, for what purposes, using what rituals, etc. The seeds are frozen in isolation from all the social practices, ecological relations, and cultural histories that give them life ¹⁴⁹

The Seed Cultures Initiative is an artistic, scientific and environmental research project framed within the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, the world's largest seed bank. "The Seed Cultures Initiative aims to create an archive of visual artworks to help preserve the cultural heritage of seeds."¹⁵⁰ The Seed Cultures Initiative, is a project curated by Dr. Fern Wickson, ecologist, philosopher, scientist and researcher at the Arctic University of Norway. Dr. Wickson connects transdisciplinary visions by building up scientific knowledge and dissemination practices from her field of expertise, related to environmental sciences. Wickson's concept for the Seed Cultures Initiative is to offer a gaze from creators related to environmental artistic disciplines in order to generate an archive of visual works that contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage of seeds. The project aims to honor how seeds live within broad networks of interrelationships, and the connections generated from biological and cultural diversity in agri-food systems. In 2018 and 2019, *Seed Cultures Initiative*, together with a selection of artist, deposited a collection of artworks inside a frozen mountain on the Arctic Island of Svalbard.¹⁵¹



The Svalbard Global Seed Vault | photography: Ivan Juarez

¹⁴⁹ Seed Cultures (2018). The Svalbard Global Seed Vault. [online]: <https://www.seedcultures.com/about>

¹⁵⁰ Seed Cultures. Op. cit.

¹⁵¹ Seed Cultures. Idem.

Mestiza de Indias | Mexico

Mestiza de Indias is an agriculture project revaluing native farming traditions and heirloom seeds in the tropical forest of Yucatan, Mexico.¹⁵² The native traditional agricultural system of the Mayan culture from this region, is the cultivation of *La Milpa*, “the traditional agricultural system made up of a polyculture, which constitutes a dynamic space of genetic resources. Its main species is corn, accompanied by various species of beans, pumpkins, chili peppers, tomatoes, and many others depending on the region.”¹⁵³ The initiative *Mestiza de Indias*, co-founded by former journalist Gonzalo Samaranch Granados, seeks towards the sense of community that is created on the local farm, as opposed to harmful agricultural practices. The farm produces fruits and vegetables free of agrochemicals. A place for environmental and social regeneration, medical benefits and, above all, for promoting values and respect for nature.¹⁵⁴

Milpa Collaboratory | From Mexico to Poland

Inspired by the bio-agricultural system from Mexico *La Milpa*, understood as an ecological, cultural and social practice, in which different species grow and mutually support each other, the collective *Milpa Collaboratory* was born in 2020 in the city of Wrocław, Poland. Co-founded by a group of artists, practitioners and thinkers from various disciplines, whose objective is to create an open platform where a range of initiatives related to forms of collaborative artistic and educational practices emerge. In the forthcoming chapter entitled *On-Site Explorations*, the different initiatives developed by this collective will be explained in more detail.

¹⁵² Rigg, S. (2021). *Mestiza de Indias*, Regenerating the Yucatán. In: *Slowness Journal*. [online]: <https://slowness.com/journal/mestiza-de-indias/> [15.02.2022]

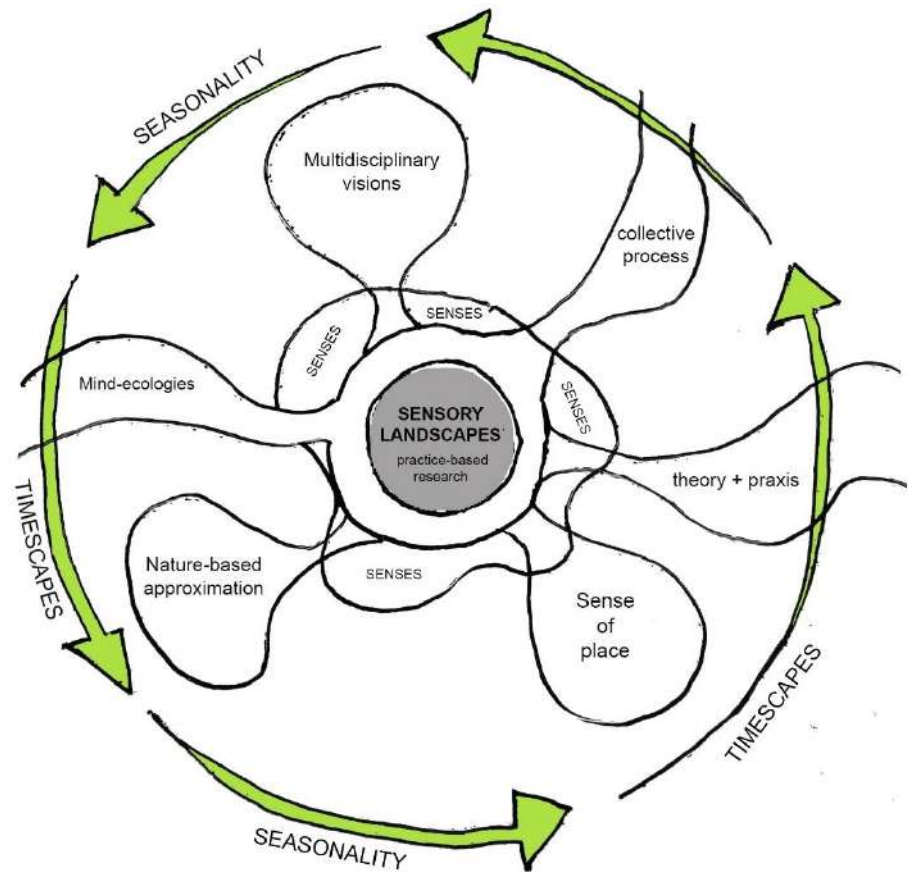
¹⁵³ Lozada, A. M. & Ponce, M.A (2016). *La Milpa*. In: *Biodiversidad Mexicana*. [online]: <https://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx/diversidad/sistemas-productivos/milpa> [15.02.2021]

¹⁵⁴ Rigg, S. Op.cit.

CHAPTER 4

**SITE APPROXIMATIONS
&
LANDSCAPE CONCERNS
TOWARDS
THE ARTISTIC DESIGN
PROCESS**

SITE APPROXIMATIONS & LANDSCAPE CONCERNS TOWARDS THE ARTISTIC DESIGN PROCESS



- How do perceive, experience, and interact with our landscapes?
- How to explore personal experiences and environmental concerns towards the artistic design process?
- How to incorporate landscape sensibility into the artistic process?
- How to comprehend cultural and natural landscapes towards a sensory art intervention?
- How are perception and experience a source for a sensory landscape project?

Every question becomes an open search
Each new approximation becomes a window to discover
and experience new possibilities

Along the practice research process, different approximations have been explored, and rather than emphasizing only the results and outcomes, I would like to highlight the research-praxis as a continuous process and a constant search, which has been enriched by multiplicity of visions, methods and approaches.

Based on a series of questions, reflections and encounters, a guiding thread interweaves time-based, site experience, contextual knowledge, and eco-social mindset. The research has been enhanced from interdisciplinary ideas, examining interconnections of theory, landscape perception, and praxis. The main insights gathered during the process have been translated into interconnected layers that shape a holistic insight. Exploring theoretical, conceptual, and practical aspects, the research provides a framework for integrating ecological, social and phenomenological concepts into landscape art practice. With this perspective, this section highlights key approximations, methods and concerns that have been addressed for the development of the research process.

- **Nature-Based Approximation**

Nature not only as a result, but as a process that highlights life cycles.

Timescapes, ephemeral states, natural awareness, exploration of biological processes, natural phenomena, ephemeral states present in nature, temporal landscapes, or seasonality as concepts searched within the research process.

When thinking how to interact and coexist with nature and how to intervene in a particular landscape, it is essential to perceive and understand the natural environment from a holistic sense. To be emphatic to its natural dynamics and being sensitive to the tangible and intangible factors that are part of its essence. To learn from its biological and physical processes as the best medium to dialogue with it, without trying to modify or control its biological dynamics or spontaneity. On the contrary, try to let nature perform its own role, as a living and interconnected organism in constant evolution in which the human being is only a part.

Understand its natural cycles and its self-regenerating essence. To be sensitive to its rhythm, sonority, plasticity and temporality. To understand natural phenomena as part of its essence and complexity. To be perceptible to its transitory and seasonal changes. Nature grows, rests, and regenerates itself. Understand the temperament of nature, which expresses itself in different ways, at moments in complete calm and at others expressing its strength and impetuosity. Natural phenomena make evident the power of nature over human beings.

Understand the role and significance of each ecosystem and how each of them functions as part of an interconnected and unified whole. Understand that each element or organism that conforms our environment, independently of its scale, micro or macro, is a fundamental part for the natural balance, being part of a totality, and how each one of them adapts and interacts according to the conditions of its own environment.

- **Timescapes**

A multi-dimensional treatment of time.

A function of time that is dependent on the position of the observer ¹⁵⁵

In nature nothing is static. The process is dominant over the result. One of the key research approximations is related to the concept of *timescapes*, especially to the concept of time in connection to nature. Within this concept, the research practice has been developed over three years, a time frame that addresses how the landscape varies and how it is perceived, experienced and interpreted from different timescapes, with an emphasis on the seasonal cycles present in nature.

- **Ephemerality**

I am interested in exploring the concept of non-permanence in the artistic process, referring to nature as a source of inspiration and as a living system in constant transformation. A living system that does not necessarily have a precise beginning and end, but its essence is related to the cyclical concept of time. With this approach, most of the artworks and actions carried out during the research are inscribed in the concept of *ephemerality* or *impermanence*. Artworks that do not physically remain; artworks that transform, dilute, fade or disappear with the passage of time. A transitory moment of presence in a specific site. Since the artworks have an ephemeral character, most of them are premised on the momentary experience, the suspended moment. Artwork as aesthetic experience documented through photography, recording or drawing. These traces document actions or works that occurred in specific places in a momentary time frame.

¹⁵⁵ Glosbe Dictionary (n.d.) Timescape. [online]: <https://glosbe.com/en/en/timescape> [05.02.2022]

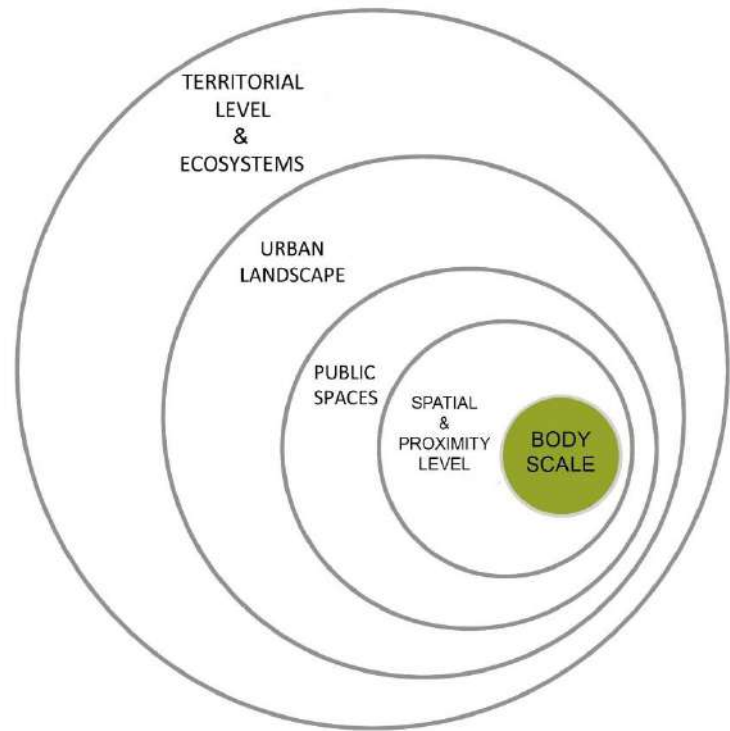
- **Sense of Place: Contextual Approximation & Site-Approaching**

Listening to the landscape. What does the landscape say to us when we listen to it?

Sense of place as a multidimensional approximation that emphasizes the relationship between people and territory. Sense of place as a perceptual, mental and physical site-notion focused on the conscious experience of the tangible and intangible surrounding.

The interaction between human and place, associated with the notions of perception, identity or sociocultural belonging. With this perspective, the research process is closely linked to the territory, establishing a dialogue with the *genius-loci*. Based on the close dialogue with the territory, the site-actions and works emerge from the place in which they are conceived, as a symbiosis associated with it. From its conception, I intend that the creative process is closely related to the place, where I develop a dialogue with it, interpreting local concepts and meanings. The historical context, the symbolic connotation, the memory of the site or the preserved tradition, provide a framework to develop a series of ideas and explorations. In this way, I try to generate spaces of encounter with the site. I try to increase our understanding of the environment by emphasizing our senses. In some specific projects, I intend to expand the scope of the landscape and the space of imagination beyond the physical limits. In this way, the site-work becomes an instrument that connects the character that identifies the local scape into experiences.

- **Multi-Scope & Multi-Scale**



One of the main issues addressed by the research is to examine a wide-ranging scale and a multi-scope approximation that goes from particular to complex, from micro to macro, from local to global, from intangible to tangible.

In order to establish broad approximations to the environment, the research examines the landscape across different scales. From the proximity at a detailed level to the large scale, up to the territorial level. On the one hand, the research establishes an approximation at a closer scale, at the detailed level, where it is possible to explore and interact with the natural and cultural factors at a closer proximity, such as the objectual scale or the intimate relationship with the human body. On the other hand, it establishes an approximation to the territorial scale, an approach that allows to understand broader interrelationships, from landscape patterns to the natural and cultural systems.

- **Living-Research Lab**

Base on the above concepts and inspired by the book *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*,¹⁵⁶ by French philosopher, anthropologist and sociologist Bruno Latour, the research proposes the landscape context as a living laboratory. A research-lab, space for knowledge, exploration, creation, action, and dissemination. Living-lab as a geographical and temporal place where a series of actions are performed in connection with different dynamic landscape scenarios.

- **Encounter, Situation, Unpredictability & Intuition**

Encounter and unpredictability as significant concepts within the exploration and creation process. Along the artistic process, diverse ways of site-approaching and time approximation have been explored, emphasizing spontaneous and unexpected encounters within the process. In this sense, intuition is also significant as a means of discovery, as it is open to aesthetic experience in a non-predetermined way. The outcome emerging from the encounter, where unpredictability and intuition are considered not necessarily as the final achievement, but as the situational experience that emerges from the process.

- **Walking as a Sensory Experience**

Walking as a key method of approaching to the landscape. The process of walking as an experiential activity in which the body is involved as an action towards the landscape perception. The aesthetic and sensory experience of walking as a source of discovering, learning and cognition. From the embodied dynamic process, all the senses are involved. Walking, listening, observing, smelling, touching, feeling. From this process, different landscape locations have been explored. Forest, mountains, fields, river walks. Streets, roads, sidewalks, promenades, urban environments, squares, parks, bridges, observation towers. Rain, snow, sunlight, lights, shadows.

¹⁵⁶ Latour, B. & Woolgar, S. (1979). *Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts*. (ed.): Princeton University Press, U.S.A.

- **Material Exploration & Local Expertise**

Through the creative process, I have explored the use of low-impact and local organic materials that respond to the context. In parallel, local artisanal and community handcraft expertise have been integrated. Along the process I have also explored the use of nature, providing a close dialogue with earth, water, soil, snow, leaves, wood, plants, but also wind, sound, temperature, rain, light, shadow, scent or textures.

- **Mind-Ecologies & Environmental Concerns**

Another important aspect of the research is the engagement with current environmental challenges. How to reimagine our habitats from biocultural and sociocultural interactions and not only from anthropocentric perspectives. Topics of concern include biodiversity, sustainable food systems, productive urban landscapes, water bodies, local ecologies, use of sustainable materials, ecological awareness.

- **Multi-Directional & Dynamic Research Process**

During the development of the research, it is proposed to carry out a process that is not necessarily linear, but multidirectional, intuitive and dynamic, in which each question branches into different explorations or narratives. The initial insight or starting point of the research is expanded by opening different possibilities. From each question new paths emerge building up a body of work as a totality. The investigation is complemented by multiple sources, references, case studies and specific scenarios. In this sense, the research process is carried out through a non-linear process, as a dynamic and multidirectional search that allows to weave a series of concepts and explorations that are constantly and progressively expanded.

- **Cross-Disciplinary Approximation**

Throughout the creative and research process, a multidisciplinary approximation has been developed, emphasizing cross thinking that connects transversal themes through knowledge exchange. Various fields have been explored, in this sense, the research process has been enriched from multiple perspectives, examining significant discourses related to the main issues raised in the investigation. Multidisciplinary visions are brought together, integrating past and contemporary knowledge, linking theory and praxis and incorporating complementary fields of knowledge, such as ecology, sociology, phenomenology biology or agriculture.

- **Collective Process**

I believe that team collaboration leads to inspiring questions that complement each other from diverse perspectives and experiences. I also believe that common goals emerge from constant dialogues and mutual scopes, where knowledge, ideas and understanding of others enhance collective processes.

In some particular actions, the investigation has been complemented and enriched from various collaborations, working closely with different people and communities from diverse cultures and social groups. At the same time, a number of artistic actions and initiatives have been developed through cooperation with various institutions, organizations, actors and practitioners. The research has provided spaces for exchange, mutual learning, collective thinking, co-creation and participation, encouraging interdisciplinarity and teamwork. In this sense, the research has created collaborative environments based on ways of sharing and learning, promoting diversity, curiosity, reciprocity and porosity.

- **Community & Artwork Interaction**

I propose to emphasize how community can discover, participate and interact, and how people, can reflect on their context by having a new perception of their own place. In this way, some specific artworks and actions explore ideas centered on audience participation, providing open spaces for public interaction and educational experience.

- **Seeding & Dissemination**

Along the research-practice, I have had the opportunity to spread and germinate seeds in the form of ideas, reflections, experiments and exercises among new generations of scholars within the educational environment. Understanding the academic space as a laboratory to explore and disseminate new ways of thinking, imagining, and creating.

I have also been able to disseminate the research process, experiences, findings, outcomes and achievements with a wider community, cooperating with organizations, stakeholders and/or communities, thus connecting cross-cultural issues by knowledge exchange through various forms of dissemination at several cultural and artistic public venues (museums, galleries, cultural and academic spaces, among others). These issues include publications, exhibitions, workshops, lectures and conferences.

CHAPTER 5

**ON-SITE
EXPLORATIONS**
artistic-based research

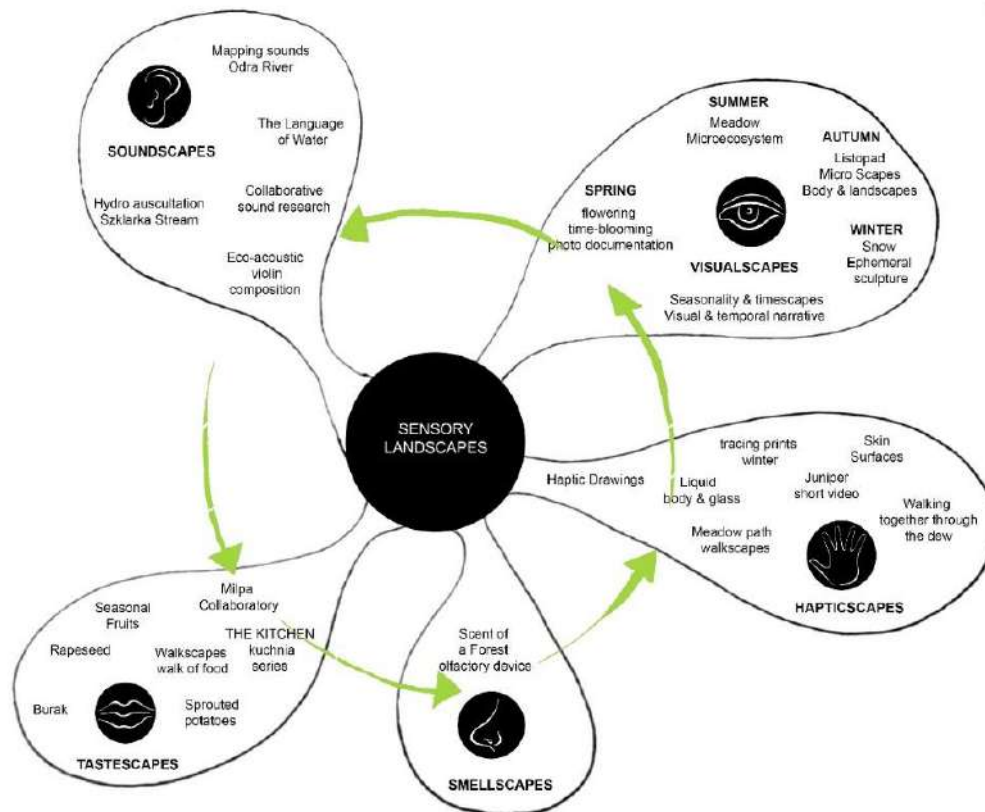
Series of artworks
site-specific interventions
&
actions



VISUALSCAPES . SOUNDSCAPES . HAPTICSCAPES . SCENTSCAPES . TASTESCAPES

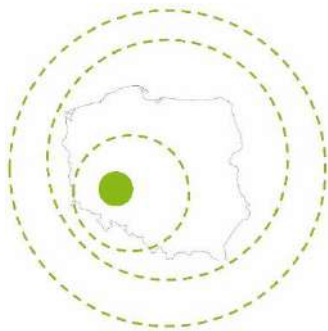
ON-SITE EXPLORATIONS

Artworks, Site-Specific Interventions & Actions



The present section *On-Site Explorations*, brings, implements and materializes the previous ideas into the creative research practice, by tracing an itinerary through different landscapes of Lower Silesia and Wrocław, territory proposed as epicenter and geographical scope. Conceived as a living laboratory that is based on a temporal and spatial framework, along the itinerary a body of work is created in the form of an archipelago of actions, artworks and interventions. It is proposed as open processual research that connects sensory experiences and site-explorations. The artistic based research intertwines visualsapes, soundsapes, tactilesapes, scentscapes and tastescapes.

On-Site | Conceptual & Geographical Context



Poland | Lower Silesia | Wrocław



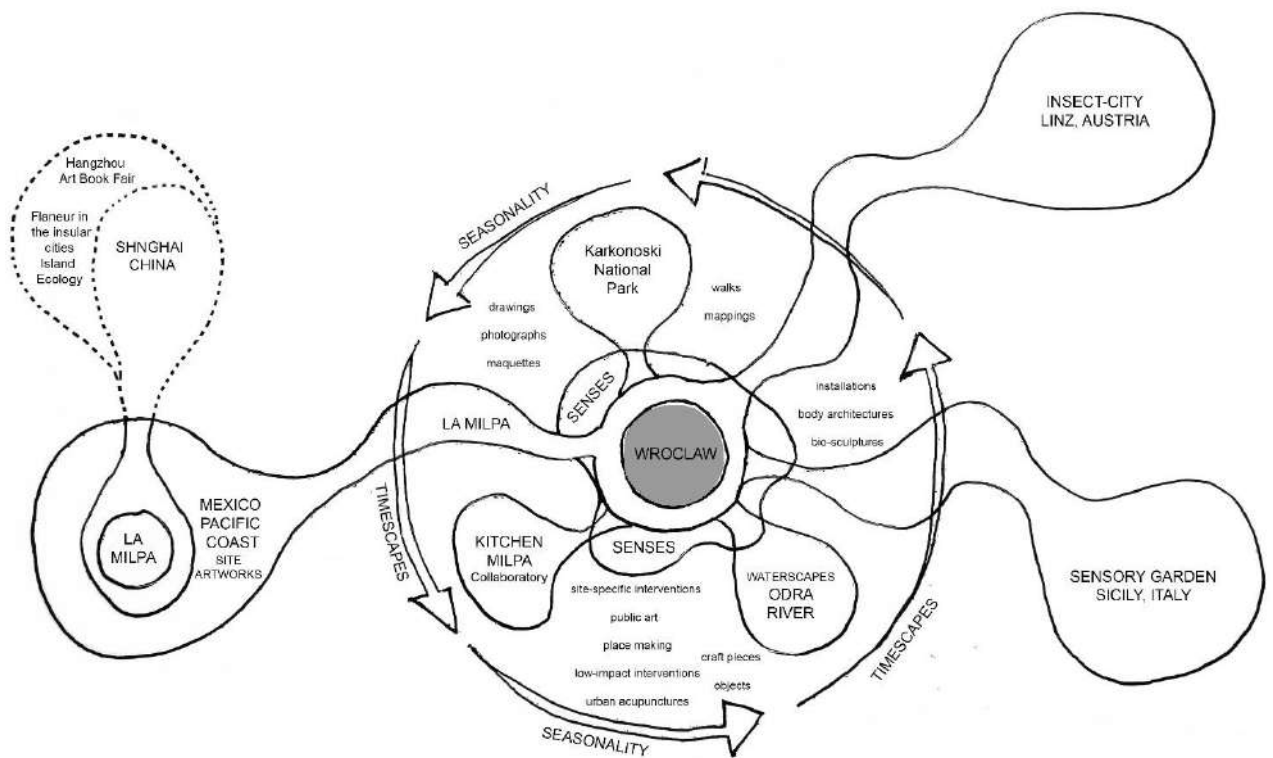
Along the process diverse landscapes have been explored: waterscapes, forest landscapes, mountain landscapes, farmscapes, as well as a range of cityscapes. Among the specific locations in Lower Silesia that have been explored, mapped and intervened include: the *Karkonosze National Park* (soundscapes and scentscapes), the *Milicz Ponds Nature Reserve* (tastescapes), the *Wojsławicach Arboretum* (visual landscapes), the historical site of *Świdnica* (tastescapes), as well as farmscapes in Oleśnica and Krakowiany (tastescapes / scentscapes). Among the urbanscapes explored in the city of Wrocław, include the liquid and riparian landscape of the Odra River and the Olawa Stream (soundscapes, visual and hapticscapes), as well as various greenscapes in the city, such as urban meadows, courtyards and public parks, including *Grabiszyński Park* (haptic / tastescapes), *Wschodni Park* (tastescapes) and *Juliusz Słowacki Park* (soundscapes and visuals), among others. Spaces such as the city market *Hala Targowa* (tastescapes), *Główny Train Station* (soundscapes) and the kitchen space *Kuchnia* at the Wrocław Academy of Art and Design (tastescapes), a space proposed as a taste laboratory for collective and pedagogical art explorations.

On-Site | Media Explorations

Along the practice-based research, diverse media have been explored, ranging from ecological and site-specific interventions, low-impact interventions, urban acupuncture, gardens, bio architectures, place making, landscaping projects to ephemeral installations, body architectures, bio-sculptures, bio-architectures, sensory devices, ephemeral sculptures, craft pieces and objects. The artistic scope has been complemented through diverse visual and three-dimensional media, such as cartographies, collages, videos, sketches, expanded graphics, paintings, maquettes and 3dmodels, as traces of the site-specific works. During the process, intangible explorations have been developed, such as sensorial maps, acoustic mappings, sound recordings, acoustic compositions, olfactory explorations and as well as diverse ephemeral actions and artistic-perceptual searches, such as walks, fluvial explorations, auditory walks, food walks, and performative actions. Parallely, the research explores collaborative artistic processes and actions, such as group conversations, collective cooking, collective sewing, storytelling, and field visits.

The research approach has been developed both individually and collectively, focusing on naturalistic and humanistic aspects, based on interdisciplinary and practical investigation where complementary knowledge of ecology, sociology, biology, art, phenomenology or agriculture is connected.

In order to complement and disseminate the process, the research has been enriched through a series of didactic, academic, and cross-cultural initiatives, prompted by lectures, publications, workshops, exhibitions, biennials, conferences, symposiums, art residencies, curatorial and jury activities, collaborating with diverse art institutions, museums, public venues, organizations and community groups.



With the aim of implementing the ideas and concepts that have emerged from the investigation, it is important to mention that the research context has expanded to other geographies, in Europe (Austria: *Insect City* and Italy: *Sensory Garden*), Asia (China, Shanghai *Island Ecology*, remotely), and America (Pacific Coast Mexico), displayed through a number of specific interventions that will be outlined and described further on.

In parallel, a collaborative link has been established with Poland in relation to Mexico, based on the concept of the Mesoamerican agricultural system known as *La Milpa*. From this metaphor has emerged the collective *Milpa Collaboratory* in the city of Wrocław, which develops several artistic, social and pedagogical practices.



VISUALSCAPES

seasonal landscapes

Visual approximations based on the connection between sight perception and natural environment. A relationship that explores the cyclical sense of time and nature, complemented with a notion of scenery and close-up view; from the territorial scale to the detailed level where the landscapes perform a changing canvas across sites and seasons. Photographs, drawings, actions, bodily architectures, ephemeral interventions.

The visual narrative highlights the vegetation and landscape variations, presented according to the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn and winter. In spring plants sprout, leaves unfold and flowers bloom. In summer, as the warmest time and the most daylight, plants grow rapidly. In autumn, temperatures drop, and many trees shed their leaves, helping to improve soils. Time of crops and harvests; and in winter, with cold weather and low daylight, a time of dormancy and limited plant growth.¹⁵⁷ And then again in the spring, the dormant plants begin to grow again.

With this approach, the visual narrative is presented focusing on the seasonal phenomena of plants *phenology*, highlighting their cyclical and periodical changes according to their annual growth, including: budding, branching, leaf expansion, flowering, fruiting, defoliation, and dormancy.

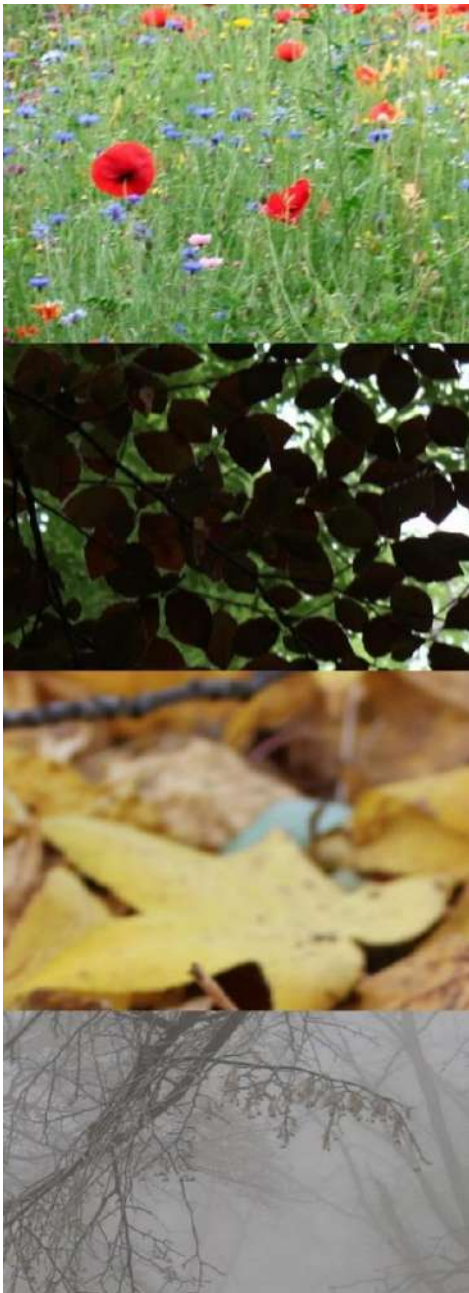
¹⁵⁷ National Geographic Education (2022). Season. In: National Geographic.org. [online]: <https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/season>

Seasonality & Timescapes

Visual & Temporal narrative

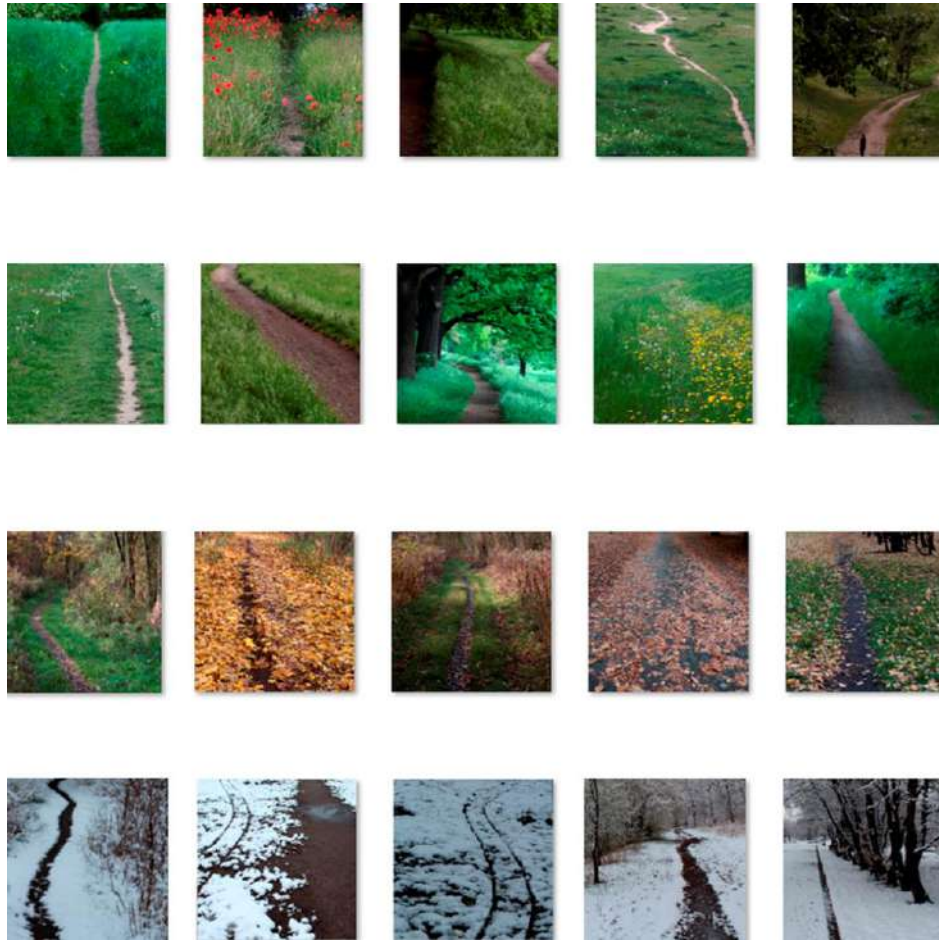
Photo Documentation | series

Wrocław, Poland



Landscape temporal narrative | Wrocław

Temporary landscapes where nature continues its own cycle, process and dynamic. A slow and progressive time that manifests itself in minimal events happening every moment. Landscapes in constant transformation that manifest how life continues, is reborn and becomes present. Seasonality and timescapes that explore the phenological characteristics of specific places.



Landscape temporal narrative | Lines: Desire Paths | Wrocław

Series of photographs taken across seasons,
depicting the cyclical variations of the landscape over time.

51°06'13 "N 17°02'44 "E

Visual and temporal narrative
The cyclical sense of time in a city-landscape scenario



While human activity stops for a moment, nature continues its own cycle, process and succession, showing us from the window its own temporal narrative. Time for reflection, time for nature, time for understanding, observing and listening to it. Rethinking other ways of interacting with it from its cyclical and temporal landscapes. A parallel journey through a slow and progressive time that manifests itself in minimal events that happen every day. A landscape in constant transformation that shows us how life (even without us) continues, is reborn and becomes present.

The series documents through the window the cyclical process of a fragment of urban landscape in the city of Wrocław, Poland. From autumn, when the leaves take on golden tones and begin to fall, passing through the transition phase between winter, when the trees are already leafless, and the beginning of spring when they begin to sprout again, rapidly acquiring greater greenery.



Landscape temporal narrative | Wrocław



Landscape temporal narrative | Olawa Stream | Wrocław

VISUALSCAPES

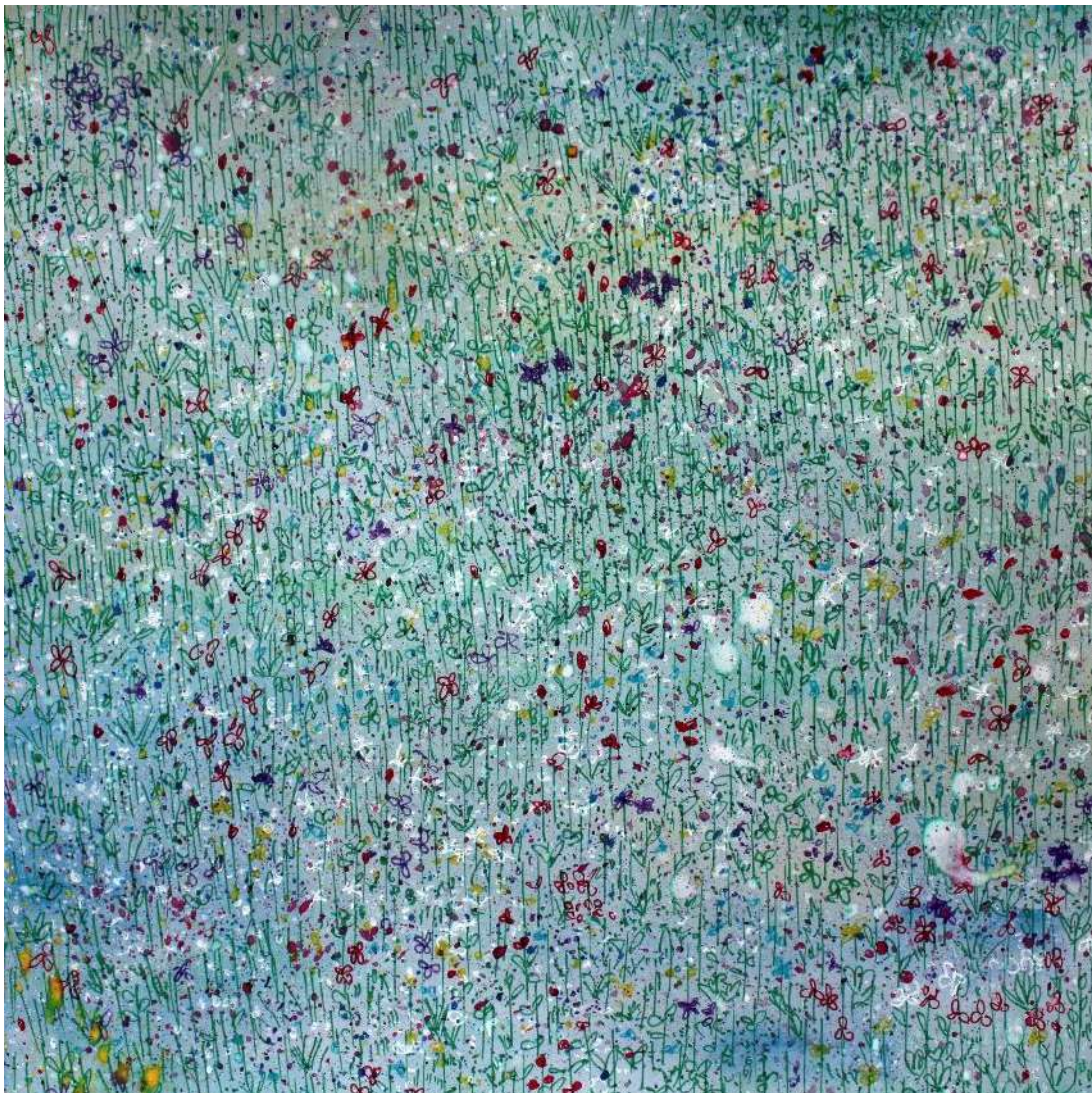
SPRING | SEASONALITY



SPRING | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Meadows Blooming

Wrocław, Poland



Spring Meadows | blooming | drawing

SPRING | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Meadows Blooming

Photo Documentation

Wrocław, Poland



Spring Meadow | flowering time-blooming | Wrocław





Spring Meadow | still life | Wrocław



Meadow flowering shadow | photographs

SPRING | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Blossom Trees | *Rhododendron* & *Prunus*

Photo Documentation

Arboretum Wojsławice | Lower Silesia, Poland



Spring | blossom trees | *Rhododendron* & *Prunus* | Arboretum Wojsławice

SPRING | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Urban Blossom Trees

Photo Documentation

Wrocław, Poland



Spring | flowering time-blooming

SPRING | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Castanea Sativa | Urban Blossom Trees

Photo Documentation

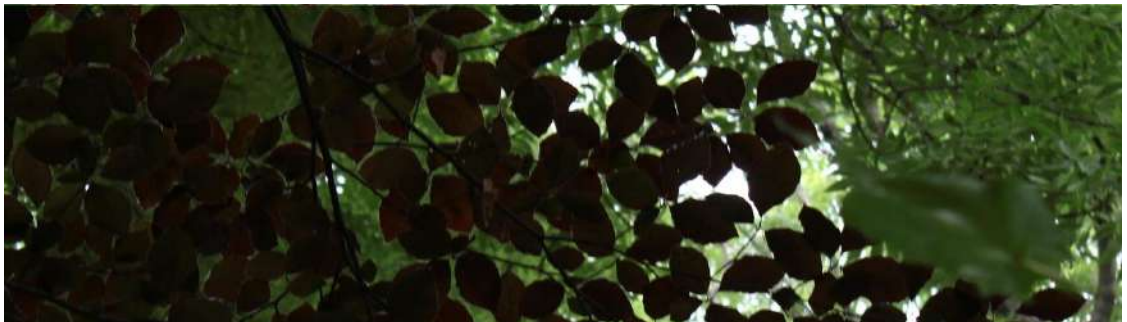
Wrocław, Poland



Castanea Sativa | temporal narrative | spring blooming | Wrocław

VISUALSCAPES

SUMMER | SEASONALITY



Meadow | Microecosystem

Wildflower Islands | Seasonal Pruning

Site-Specific Ephemeral Intervention

Odra Riverbank | Wrocław, Poland



Meadow | Microecosystem | wildflower islands | site-specific ephemeral intervention

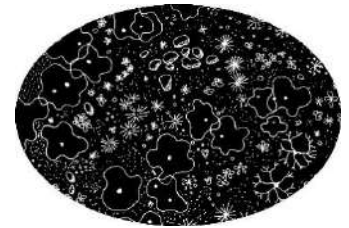
Series of site-specific ephemeral interventions made in the meadows along the Odra River, conceived as a series of botanical islands that highlight the significant biodiversity in which several endemic species of flora and fauna coexist. The interventions were made in the transition period between summer and autumn, the time of the season when the urban meadows begin to be pruned.

Meadow | Microecosystem

Wildflower Islands | Seasonal Pruning

Site-Specific Ephemeral Intervention

Odra Riverbank | Wrocław, Poland



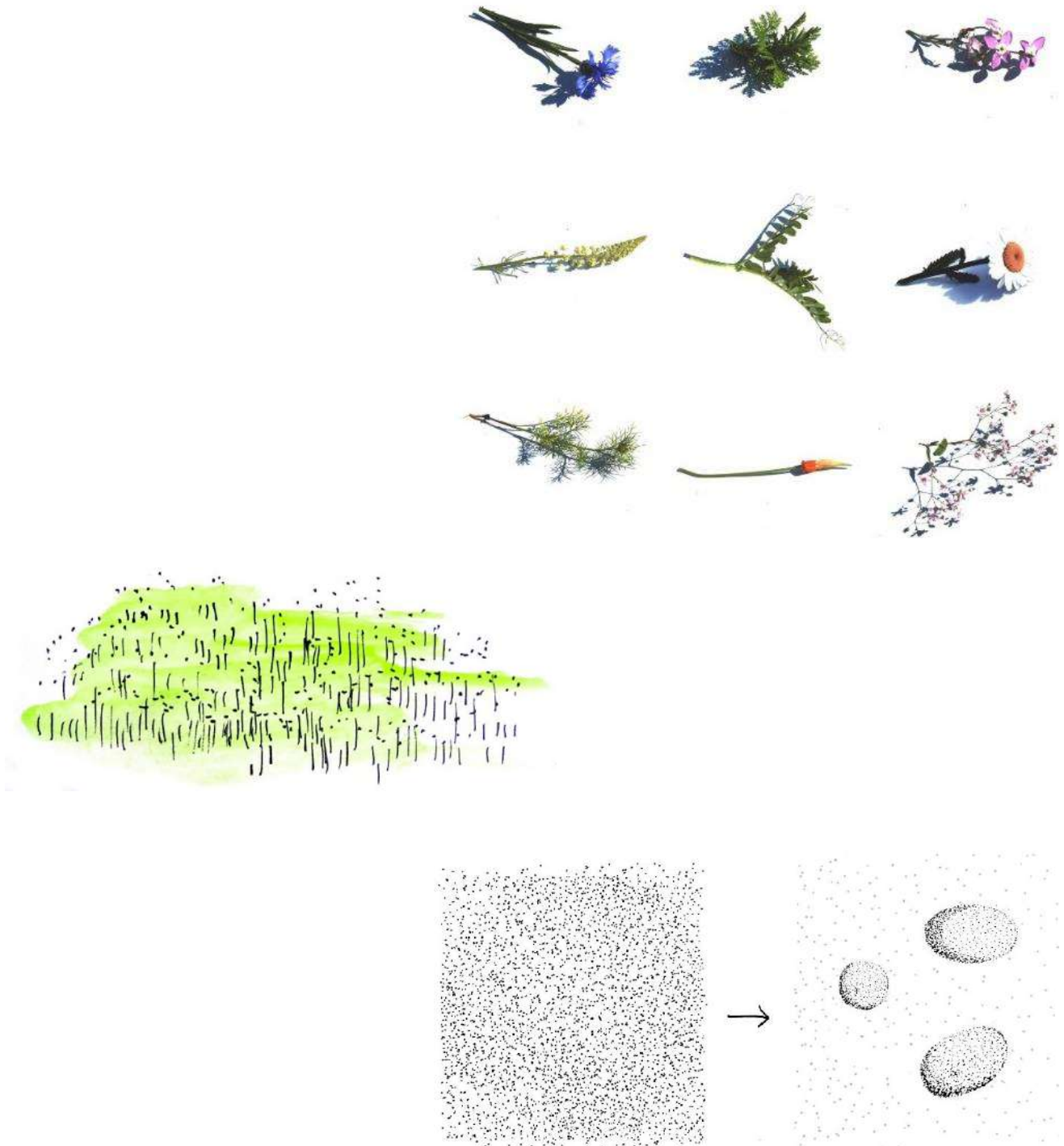
Meadow | Microecosystem | site-specific ephemeral intervention

Meadow | Microecosystem

Wildflower Islands | Seasonal Pruning

Site-Specific Ephemeral Intervention

Odra Riverbank | Wrocław, Poland



Meadow | Microecosystem | wildflower islands | photographs and sketches

VISUALSCAPES

AUTUMN | SEASONALITY



AUTUMN | VISUAL NARRATIVE



Autumn Forest Landscape | Śnieżnicki Park Krajobrazowy | Lower Silesia

AUTUMN | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Photo Documentation & Drawings

The series document the cyclical process of nature in the Autumn foliage. A natural phenomenon when the leaves acquire golden, reddish, purple, and brown tones and begin to fall. Time of nature, time to understand it, to look at it and to observe it.



Leaves

The plant's leaf mainly functions to produce sugars and carbohydrates. Substances that are the energy source for its metabolic processes: growth, root development, flower, and seed production. Leaves also provide benefits such as emitting oxygen, filtering out particulates and air pollutants, intercepting precipitation to minimize erosion, and shading the ground to moderate surface temperatures.¹⁵⁸

Autumn foliage: colors

*As the green fades, yellow and orange pigments known as **carotenoids** are revealed in the leaves of many species. In other plants, pigments called **anthocyanins** accumulate in the leaves at this time, giving them shades of red and purple. Without the presence of **chlorophyll** in the leaves, the colors of various deciduous trees and shrubs change their shades as a natural self-protection and energy-saving strategy prior to winter.¹⁵⁹*

Symbiosis of leaves & soil

Autumn as an important season for soil improvement. A time when the symbiosis between leaves and soil plays an important role in the natural cycle. As leaves lose their colors and shades, they fall and decompose in the soil as organic matter, a sponge, providing it a great source of nutrients, nourishing earthworms and micro-organisms, retaining moisture and adding nitrogen.

¹⁵⁸ Smiley, T. (2016). Defoliation on Shade Trees: Urban Forest. In: Bartlett Tree Experts. Resource Library. [online]: <https://www.bartlett.com/resources/defoliation-and-tree-vitality.pdf>. [18.03.2022]

¹⁵⁹ Petruzzello, M. (n.d.). Why Do Leaves Change Colour in the Fall?. In: Encyclopedia Britannica. [online]: <https://www.britannica.com/story/why-do-leaves-change-colour-in-the-fall>. [18.03.2022]

Microscapes | Listopad

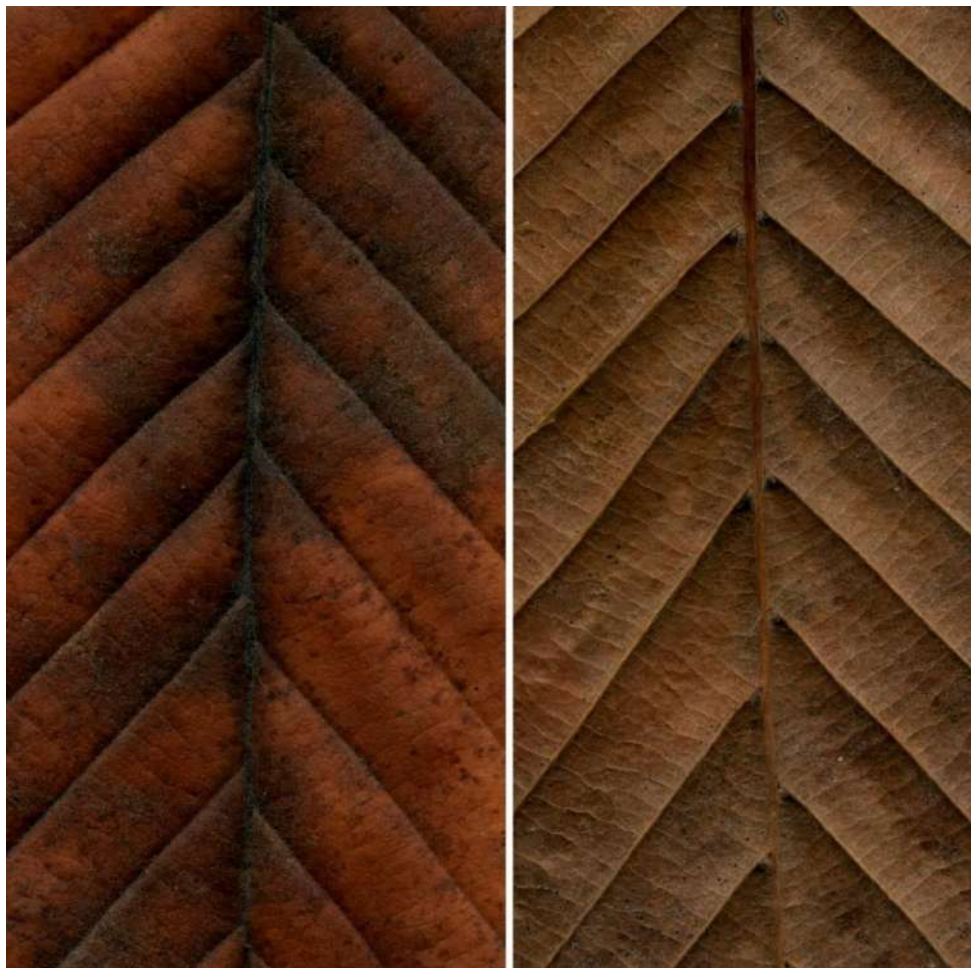
Autumn Fall Foliage | Photo Documentation

Wrocław, Poland



Microscapes | Listopad | Autumn leaves | photo scanning | high resolution | 6400 dpi optical resolution

Exploration into the autumn landscape *fall foliage* through a close-up view as a detail scale for visual research. The insight emphasizes the value of an individual part highlighted into micro-patterns.



Microscapes | Listopad | Autumn leaves | photo scanning | high resolution | 6400 dpi optical resolution

The visual exploration was carried out with a high-resolution scanner at the Studio of *Digital Printing and Experimental Techniques* of the Academy of Fine Arts in Wrocław.

Microscapes | Listopad

Autumn Fall Foliage | Photo Documentation

Wrocław, Poland



Microscapes | Listopad | Autumn leaves | photo scanning | high resolution | 6400 dpi optical resolution

Listopad | Body & Landscape

Wrocław, Poland



Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | body & landscape

Listopad | Body & Landscape

Wrocław, Poland



Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | body & landscape

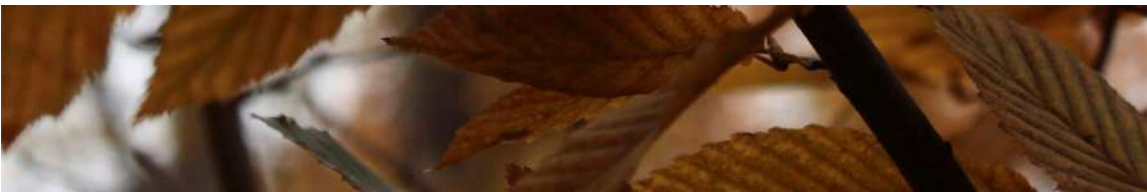
The Polish word *Listopad* (November) means the time of the year when the leaves fall.

Body & landscape: Metaphor of ephemeral nature in which the body connects with the cyclical process of autumn foliage and leaves become part of the body. The series examines the relationship of the human body with nature by honoring the phenomenon of autumn leaves. Time of nature, time to understand it, to observe it. Rethinking other ways of coexisting with it as part of our presence.

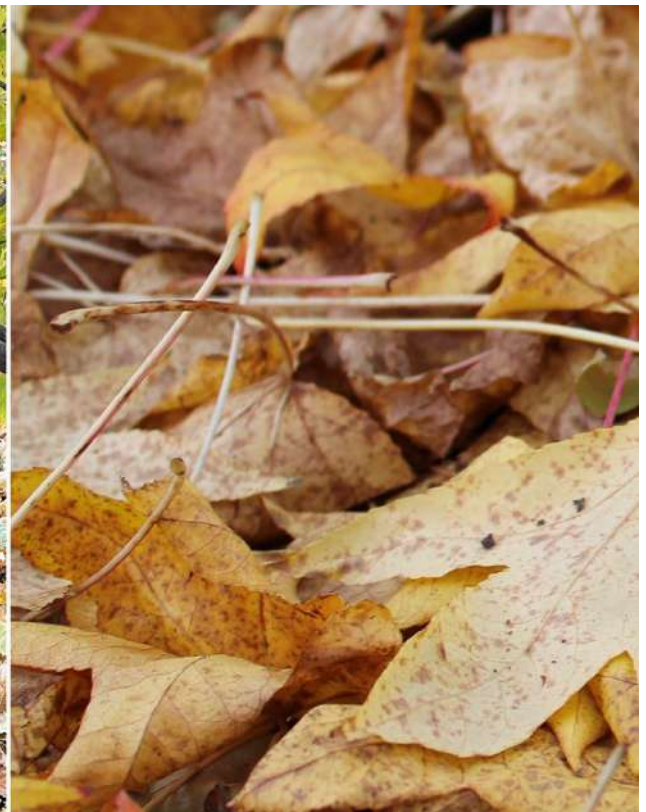
Special thanks to Elizaveta Razmyshlyeva and Evghenia Gritscu



Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | body & landscape



Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | body & landscape





Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | leaves + light + glass

Listopad | Body & Landscape



Listopad | Autumn fall foliage | body & landscape

VISUALSCAPES

WINTER | SEASONALITY

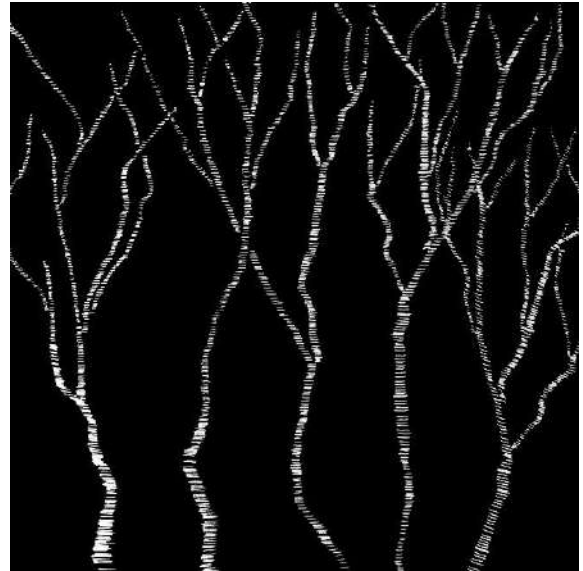
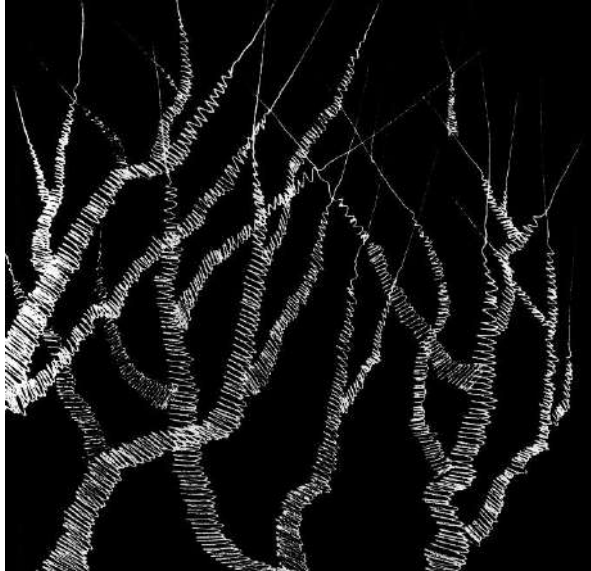


WINTER | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Drawings & Photographs

Plant Branch Structures

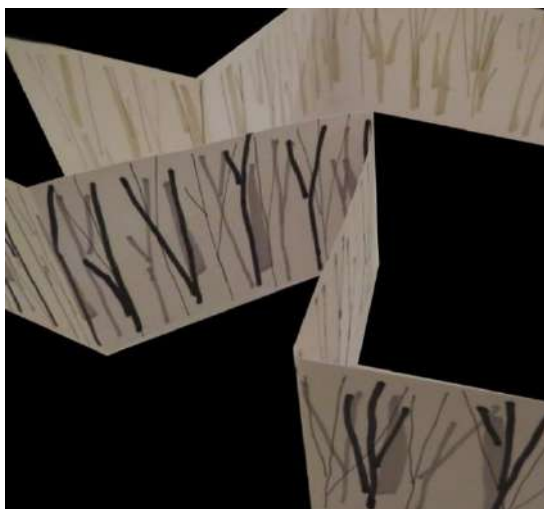
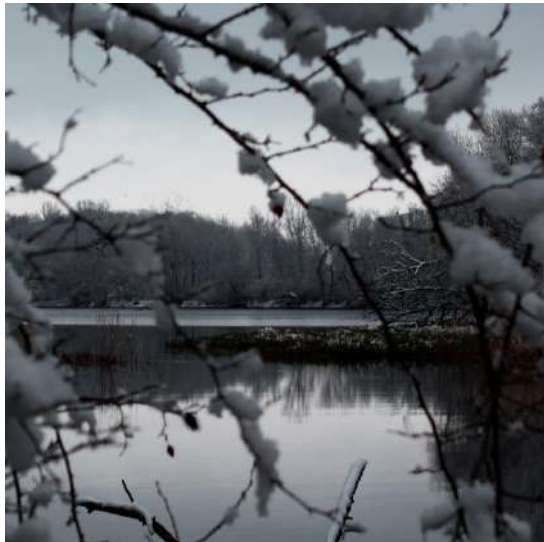
Wrocław, Poland



Winter | time on dormancy | plant branch structures | visual narrative



Winter | time on dormancy | plant branch structures | visual narrative



Winter | time on dormancy | visual narrative



Winter | Site-specific light intervention
Wrocław, Poland



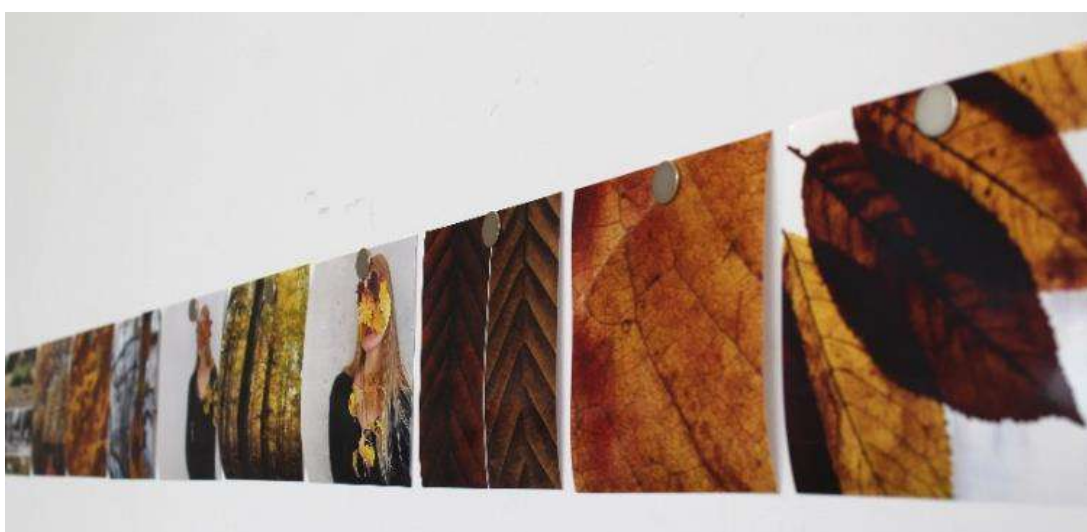
Microscape & Timescapes | Winter

VISUALSCAPES | VISUAL NARRATIVE

Collective Exhibition | Bodies in Process

Gallery Neon | Center for Applied Arts | Center for Innovation

Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław





SOUNDSCAPES

A series of sound mappings, sound compositions, hydro auscultations and acoustic actions across various natural landscapes of Lower Silesia: *Karkonosze National Park* and *Barycz Valley Landscape Park* and the urban soundscape of the city of Wrocław. The research explores and highlights natural and cultural sound diversity, where water, as one of the main protagonists, is manifested itself in different landscape scenarios. The explorations have been carried out individually and through collaborative processes.



SOUNDSCAPES | Symphony of Forest

Park Krajobrazowy Dolina Baryczy (*Barycz Valley Landscape Park*)

Milicz, Lower Silesia



How does the landscape express itself through sounds?

Walking in the forest or being with eyes closed, one can perceive and identify the symphony of the surrounding landscape. Silent and loud at the same time. While walking, it is possible to hear the rustling of leaves underfoot, or the soft sound of footsteps through the natural textures: earth, bushes, ferns. It is also possible to hear the chirping of birds that incorporate soundscapes into the environment. The dripping of the rain, the whisper of the wind through the trees, or the rustling of their branches and trunks, as if they were conversing with each other. Soundscapes that provide a relaxing atmosphere to the natural scenery.



Soundscapes | Barycz Valley Landscape Park



Singing birds: As most birds communicate vocally using call notes, within the forest habitat they produce a variety of sounds such as chirping and chattering, giving a sense of dynamism or relaxation. The presence of birds, mostly small songbirds (also called passerines or oscines), accentuates an enveloping atmosphere through multiple sounds. For example, the sounds of various species of woodpeckers nesting in the hollows of the trees are also often perceived. Woodpeckers are distinguished by the loud sound they make against the bark of trees. It is a continuous pecking sound that resonates and echoes within the woods.

Insects: Insects also communicate by sound. During spring flowering, they are attracted to flowering plants, and, in grassland areas, the buzzing of bees and some other insects can be heard as a natural orchestra.

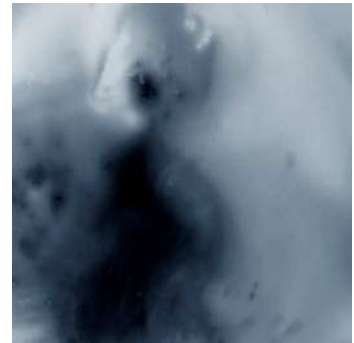
Wind blowing: The sensation of wind and its sound are also suggestive. Tree leaves produce different types of sounds related to wind. For example, the stems of flat leaves produce an undulating sound in the wind. While other trees, such as oaks (*Quercus*), produce a rustling sound. Evergreen trees, such as pines (*Pinus spp.*), sound like breathing, depending on the length of the needles. Some hanging seed pods can produce different types of clapping sounds when they are tapped together in the wind.

Rain dripping sounds: The sounds of water, and especially the dripping of rain, produce a certain feeling in human beings. The varieties of dripping rain in the forest bring a musical message to the ears.



SOUNDSCAPES

The Language of Water

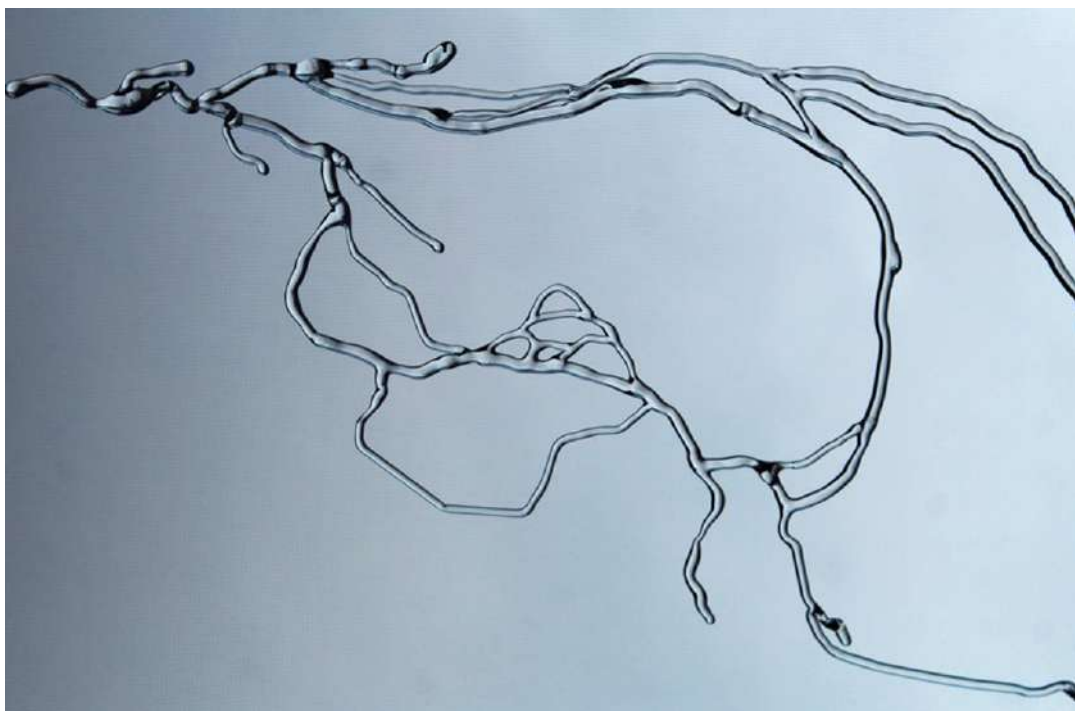


What does the river express?

What emerges when listening from the surface and from underwater as one follows the river?

What does it murmur and what resonance is produced along its way flow?

What does soundscape express in relation to water?

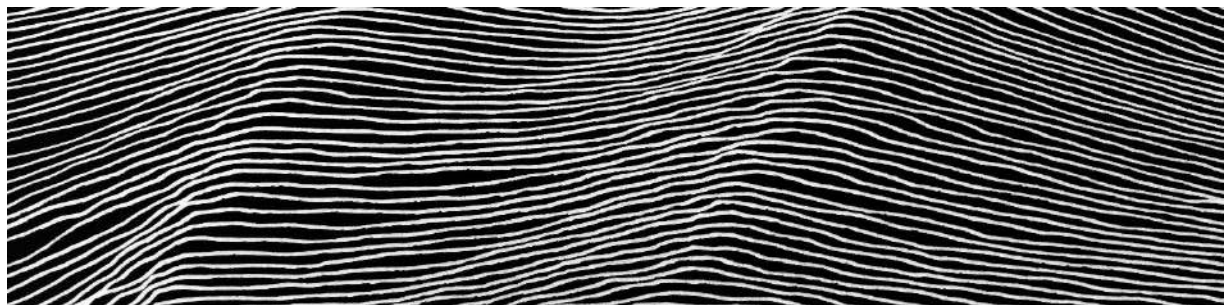
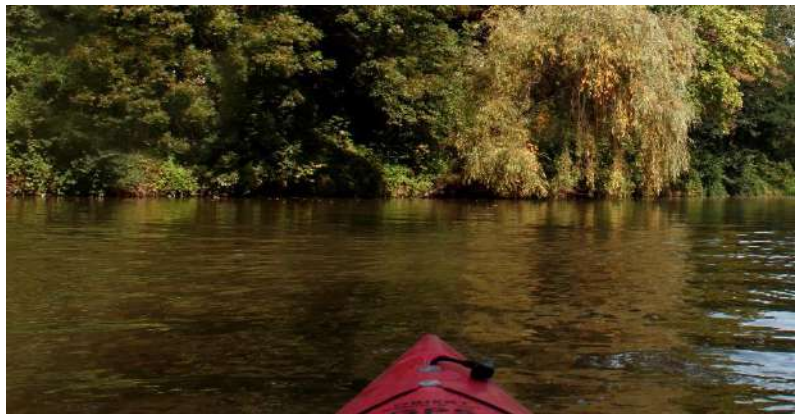
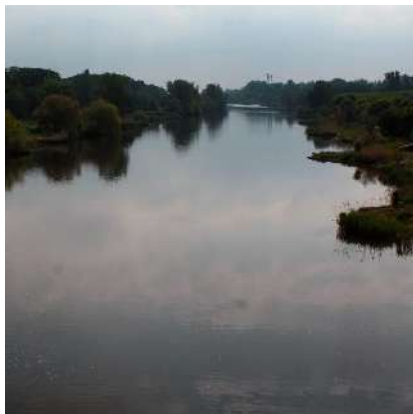


Odra river | glass model, Wrocław, Poland

The Language of Water | Mapping Sonic Environment

Odra River & Olawa Stream | Wrocław

River narrative through a series of sound mappings. Soundscape as an intangible notion that describes landscape scenarios. The sonic actions identify, map and record diverse waterscapes, exploring the relationship between sound and the aquatic ecosystem, its dynamics and the surrounding scape.



rivers, forests and roads had their existence too —they were living beings that mapped our space and built a sense of belonging, an enigmatic Raumgeist. The landscape surrounding us was alive too, and so were the Sun and the Moon, and all the celestial bodies —the entire visible and invisible world ¹⁶⁰

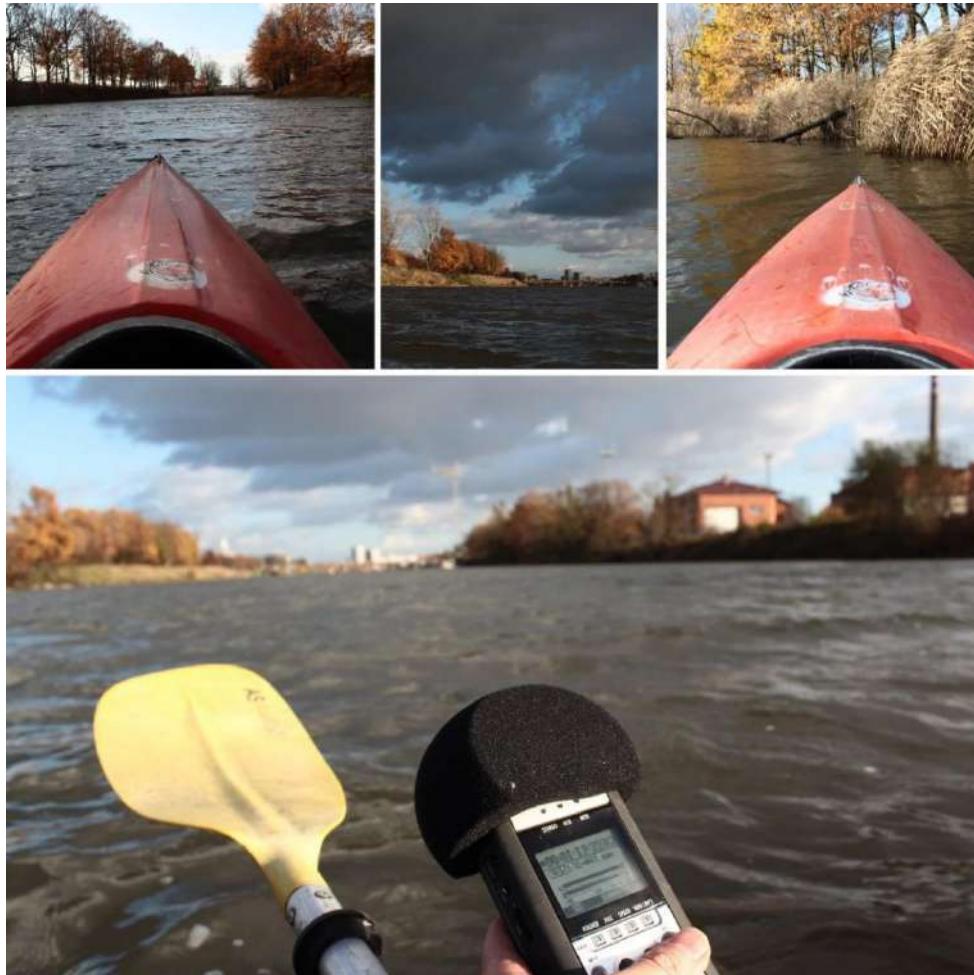
Olga Tokarczuk

¹⁶⁰ Tokarczuk Olga (2019). The Tender Narrator, Nobel Lecture, The Nobel Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden. pp.15-16

The Language of Water | Mapping Sonic Environment

Odra River | Wrocław

In collaboration with Diego Valladares

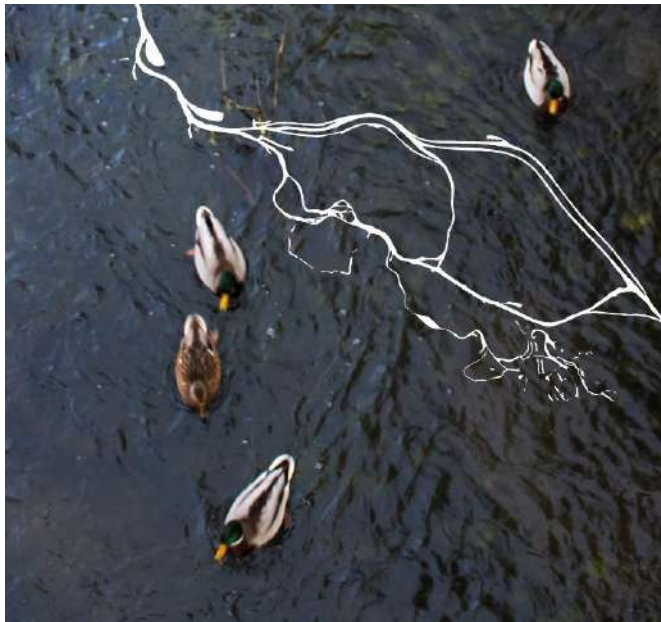


Water listening and acoustic mapping from the floating raft, where sounds of the Odra River and its surroundings are documented. Mapping the river using on-site recordings and hydrophones, complemented with visual media in order to search connections between sound and waterscapes along the course of the river. With this material we have selected specific sites along the river to perceive the aquatic landscapes through acoustic experiences.

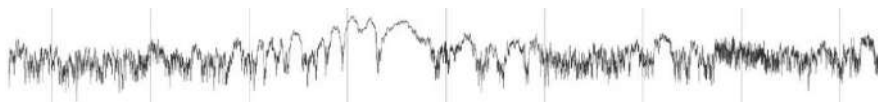


The Language of Water | Mapping Sonic Environment

Oława Stream | Wrocław



The Language of Water | Mapping Sonic Environment | Oława Stream



SoundCloud | Oława stream recordings: <https://soundcloud.com/user-828937664-655569251/waterscapes-odra-river-wroclaw-poland>

The Language of Water | Hydro Auscultation

Szklarka Stream & Waterfall | Karkonosze National Park

In collaboration with Kinga Bartniak and Diego Valladares



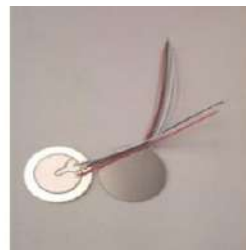
Hydro auscultation at Szklarka Stream and Waterfall

During the winter of 2020 we conducted a series of sound explorations in *Szklarka Stream*. A stream located in the *Karkonosze National Park*, Lower Silesian Voivodeship, which is in the highest area of the Sudetes in the Karkonosze Mountains along the border with the Czech Republic.¹⁶¹ The stream flows down the hills with meltwater, creating several cascades, such as the Szklarkade waterfall. The sound mapping was carried out in the form of underwater auscultations, using a hydrophone we had previously made. We carried out several auscultations at different points along the stream until we reached the waterfall.

¹⁶¹ Karkonosze National Park. [online]: <https://kpnmab.pl/a-bit-of-geography>

The Language of Water | Processes

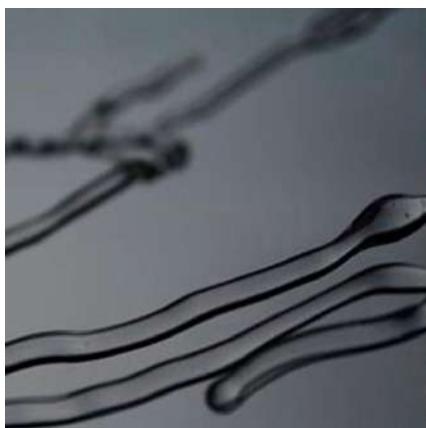
Sound devices



Sound devices: Wooden sound stethoscope and fabrication of hydrophone. The hydrophone is an underwater device that detects and records different sounds of water in motion

Odra Glass Model

The model was made using the glass melting technique in the laboratories of the Faculty of Arts in Wrocław. On the one hand, the model pays homage to the Odra River as an important cultural and natural landscape of the city of Wrocław, and on the other hand, the piece pays tribute to the glass crafts tradition of Lower Silesia, which has played an important role in the history of handicrafts in Poland, with several glass factories and workshops since the Middle Ages.



Odra Glass Model | process

The Language of Water | Sound & Visual Pavilions

Waterscapes Route | Landscaping Project

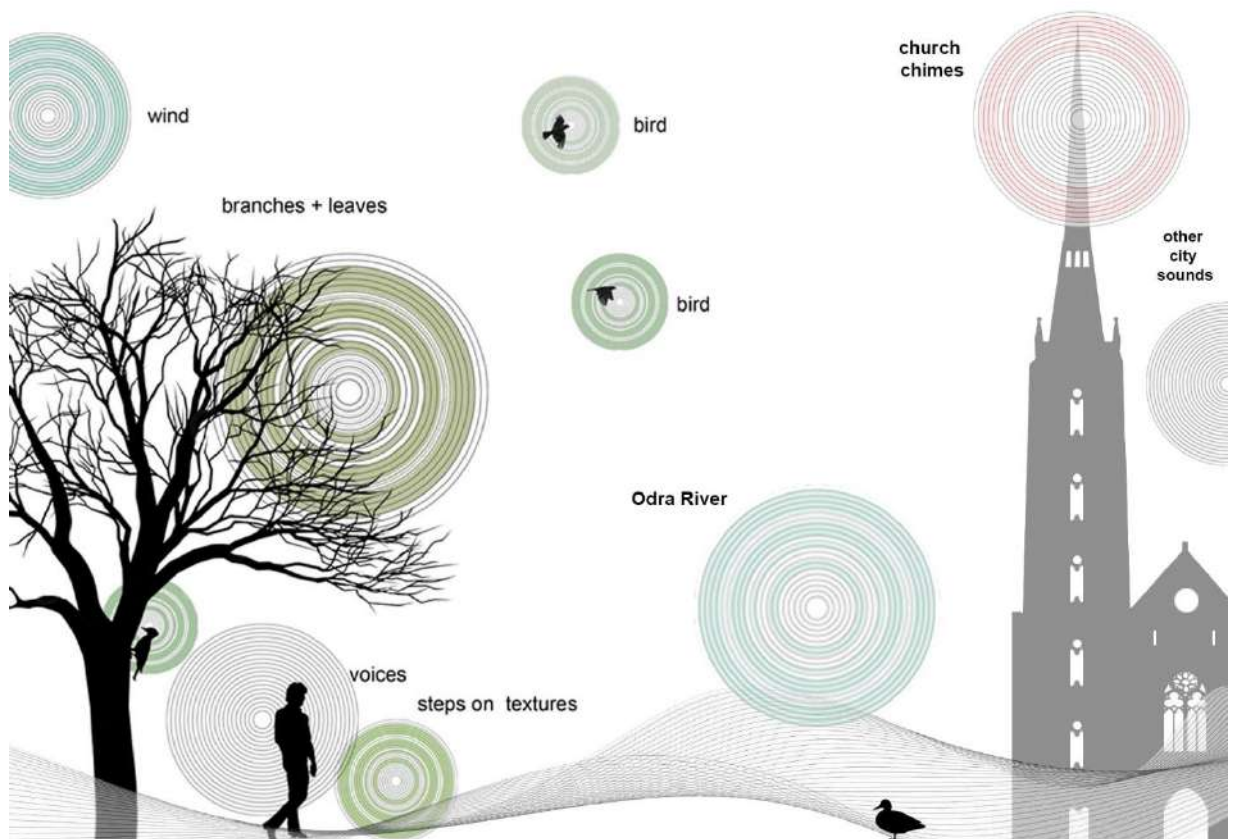
Oława Stream, Wrocław



The landscaping project proposes the conceptualization and design of a trail along the river by connecting a series of pavilions created to listen and contemplate the Oława waterscape in the city of Wrocław.

SOUNDSCAPES

Cityscapes | Wrocław



Odra River promenade | Soundscapes diagram | Wrocław, Poland

Sound Identification: In spring and summer, city sounds are more intense, especially those coming from human activities: murmuring, laughter, barking, footsteps or vehicles. However, during autumn and especially in the winter seasons, the sound environment becomes a quiet place, where sound is absorbed. In those seasons, the perception of sounds becomes intimate and close.

Audio files:

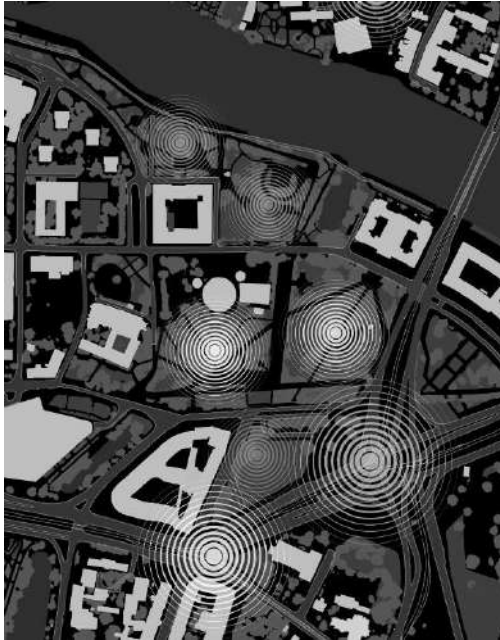
SoundCloud | Wrocław sound recordings:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-828937664-655569251>

Cityscapes | Eco-acoustic Violin Composition Based on an Auditory Walk

In collaboration with Marta Kluba | Designer & Musician

Wrocław



Eco-acoustic violin composition inspired by an auditory walk along a section of the urban landscape of Wrocław

Process

- soundwalk: sound identification and sound sketching
- violin composition based on site scenarios as city time lapses

Urban scenarios as sound time lapses

From an urban loud scenario to a calm natural scenario (river)

- First time-lapse: Junction on Tragutta Street
- Second time-lapse: Juliusz Słowacki Park
- Third time-lapse: Odra River promenade

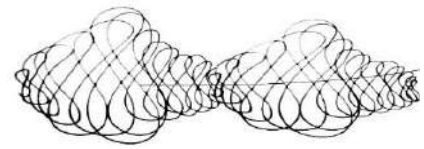


Wrocław urban scenarios | sound mapping performed in autumn 2019 at sunset time



Cityscapes | Eco-Acoustic Violin Composition

Based on an Auditory Walk



First time-lapse: Street junction on Tragutta Street and plac Powstańców Warszawy

Traffic light: as an orchestra conductor, light and sound are synchronized in a programmed sequence to direct the movement of an urban scene. During cyclical periods of time, red and green light alternate themselves, instructing coordinates with acquired connotations to activate or pause the movement of people circulating in the city by different modalities: on foot, by bicycle, motorbike, car, bus or by tram.

The rhythmic, cyclical sound increases its speed over periods of time. The light and sound produced by the traffic light originate parallel urban sounds produced by movement. Cyclical sounds: the braking of the car, the sound of the engine, the sound of the tram warning of its passage along the tracks. A series of urban sounds that form a cyclical symphony in a fragment of the city.

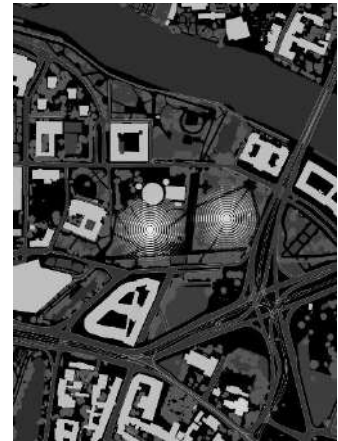
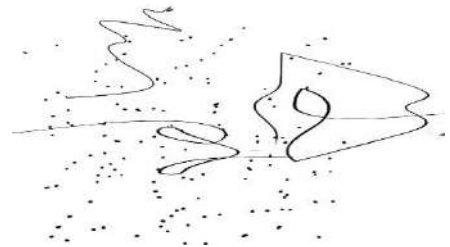


Cityscapes | Eco-Acoustic Violin Composition

Based on an Auditory Walk

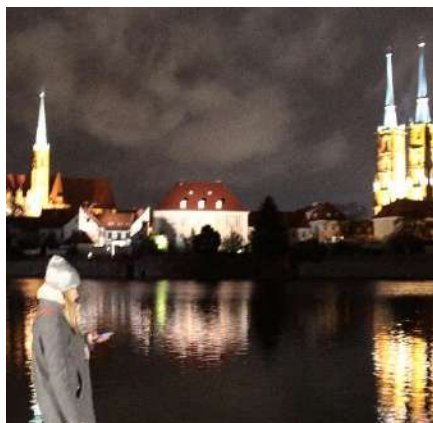
Second time-lapse: Juliusz Słowacki Park

Sunset & birds



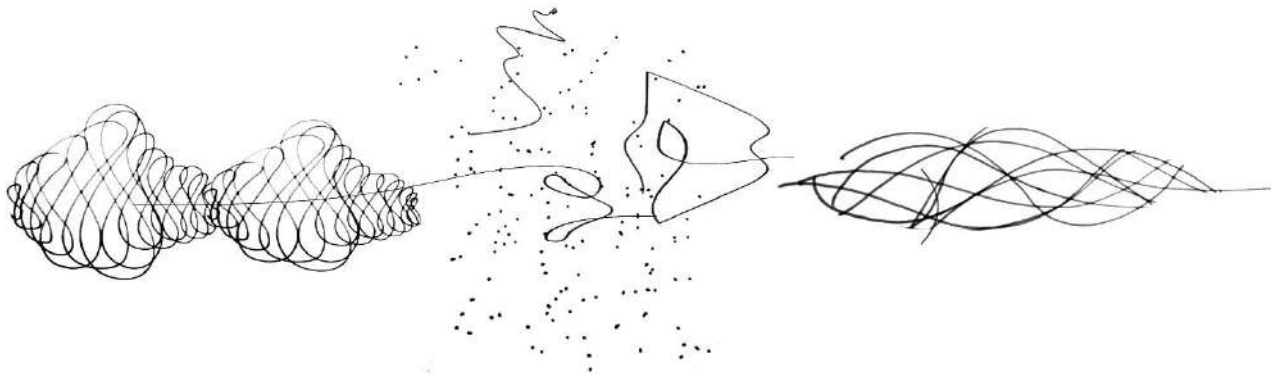
Third time-lapse: Odra River Promenade

City-wide open space, environmental quietness



Cityscapes | Eco-Acoustic Violin Composition

Based on an Auditory Walk



Violin Composition by musician Marta Kluba. Photographs: Rafał Baldysz and Marta Kluba



SoundCloud | audio violin composition: <https://soundcloud.com/user-828937664-655569251/wroclaw-soundscape-violin-composition>

Cityscapes

Collaborative Sound Research Towards Collective Expanded Graphics

within La Milpa Collaboratory | Wrocław

Collective Graphics workshop was realized in collaboration with Diego Valladares (coordinator), Emilia Gręziak, Vinicio Libardoni, Varvara Tokareva, Dagmara Swietek with the support of Mutant Letterpress



Walkscapes and collective soundmappings Nadodrże in Wrocław

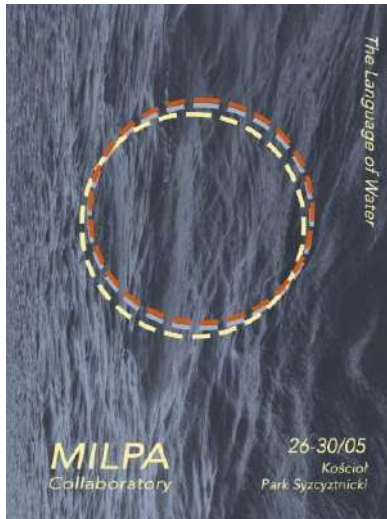
Photographs Diego Valladares

Within the framework of Collective Graphics workshop, an initiative of Milpa Collective, expanded graphic and engraving processes were explored, based on diverse artistic-perceptual searches such as haptic drawing, urban walking and listening to the city, while sound cartographies were created. The workshop took place at *Mutant Letterpress*, a typographic printing workshop in the historic district of Nadodrże in Wrocław. With this place as the core, a series of walkscapes were made, mapping spatial sounds within the neighborhood in locations such as the local market *Targowisko* in Ptasiej and the *Skwer Sybiraków Park*.

Collaborative Sound Research Towards Collective Art Practices

Exhibition as Laboratory for Experimenting | within La Milpa Collaboratory

Park Szczytnicki and St. John Nepomucene Chapel | Wrocław



The Language of Water | Exhibition and social activities | Photographs: Diego Valladares

Milpa-The Language of Water is a search group on the topic of water and listening practices. Surveying and gathering narratives related to water such as water struggles, commodification of water, and building a sonic archive with field recordings from different water bodies.¹⁶²

In May 2021, the cohort organized and designed an exhibition based on a series of participatory actions inside the historical chapel from the XIV Century St. John Nepomucene in Park Szczytnicki as a venue. The former wooden chapel, which was moved to the park from Opole at the beginning of the 20th century, now serves as a social and exhibition space open to park visitors.

¹⁶² Milpa Collaboratory, The Language of Water, <https://makingmilpa.net/Camp-2>



Field recordings from different water bodies: Pacific Ocean, Costa Rica by Diego Valladares (above)
Caribbean coast: sea and cenotes, Mexico by Ivan Juarez (down)

The main axis of the practices was based on the survey and gathering narratives related to water and the assembly of a sound archive with field recordings of different water bodies from different geographies: Caribbean Sea and Pacific Coast in Costa Rica, and Mexico and water bodies from Wrocław, Poland and Berlin, Germany.



Our intervention consisted of using the exhibition as a temporary laboratory for experimenting collaborative art practices. The artistic initiatives included a series of workshops and actions, such as mapping unused spaces, environmental listening, sound improvisation using the venue as instrument, performative lectures together with a sound piece using the sonic archive of water bodies and print documentation about main concept and our collaboration process.

Water and soundscapes | Wrocław
Ivan Juarez and Diego Valladares



Sound improvisation using the chapel space as a musical instrument
by Diego Gutierrez Valladares, Vassilis Theodorou and Kinga Bartniak.
Lecture on saliva and art “Co ślina na język...” by Agnieszka Bandura and Pawel Drabarczyk
Photographs: Diego Valladares



Exhibition space showing print documentation
and process. Photographs: Diego Valladares

The exhibition was hosted by the Centre for Social Development in Wrocław and created in collaboration with Agnieszka Bandura (philosopher, educator), Pawel Drabarczyk (art theorist and educator), Diego Valladares (artist and researcher), Ivan Juarez (artist, architect, researcher), Urszula Lisowska (philosopher and educator), Sepa Sama (artist, architect, researcher, educator), Chiara Sgaramella (artist, researcher, educator), Thomas Tajo (artist, blind activist), Vassilis Theodorou (sound artist).



SCENTSCAPES

Exploration of the olfactory perception from two approximations to the scent landscapes. On the one hand, the fragrance of lavender farmscape, the action of harvesting in summer season during its flowering and aromatic period, followed by the creation of essential oil scent. On the other hand, an approach to the woodscape, by a scent device that encapsulates fragrances and memories of the forest: humidity, mist, wild fruits, wood, pine trees, ferns, moss, wet soil, streams.

Lavender Scent

Farmscape | Harvesting

Krakowiany | Lower Silesia



Lavender Scent | Farmscape | Krakowiany | Lower Silesia

Lavender species: *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote', *Lavandula x intermedia* 'Grosso' and *Lavandula x intermedia* 'Niko' | Summer season

Lavender Scent

Essential Oil | Floral Fragrance



Create lavender scent | Essential Oil

Breath: Scent of a Forest | Olfactory Device

Glass Sculpture, Scent & Micro Forest

Milicz Forestry Park | Lower Silesia

What the forest smells like?

The sense of smell as an evocative connection associated with memory, experience and place



Glass Sculpture and Milicz Forestry Park

Intangible landscapes are particularly defined by scents, providing significant information on micro and macro aspects of our environment. The glass piece contains a fragment of forest. As people approach to the piece, an ethereal scape enhances the olfactory experience. The olfactory device proposes to explore the human sense of smell as an intangible connection to the forest landscape.

Breath: Scent of a Forest | Olfactory Device

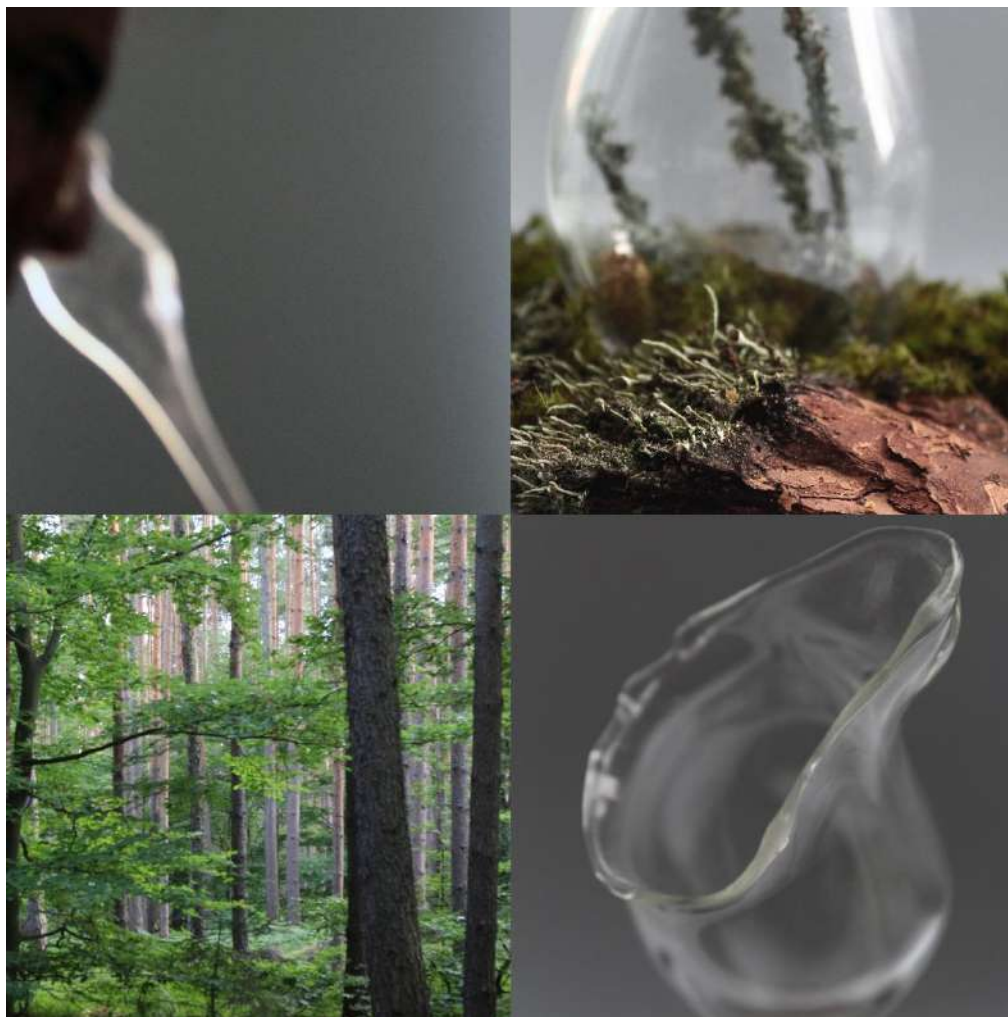
Glass Sculpture, Scent & Micro Forest



Breath: Scent of a Forest | Olfactory Device | glass sculpture, scent & micro forest

Breath: Scent of a Forest | Olfactory Device

Glass Sculpture, Scent & Micro Forest



Breath: Scent of a Forest | Olfactory Device | glass sculpture, scent & micro forest | Milicz Forestry Park

Glass exploration: The piece has been made with glass blowing techniques in the laboratories of the Faculty of Arts in Wrocław. The city of Wrocław, besides its natural surrounding scenery, is also recognized as the cultural center of Lower Silesia, playing an important role in the history of the glass crafts in Poland.



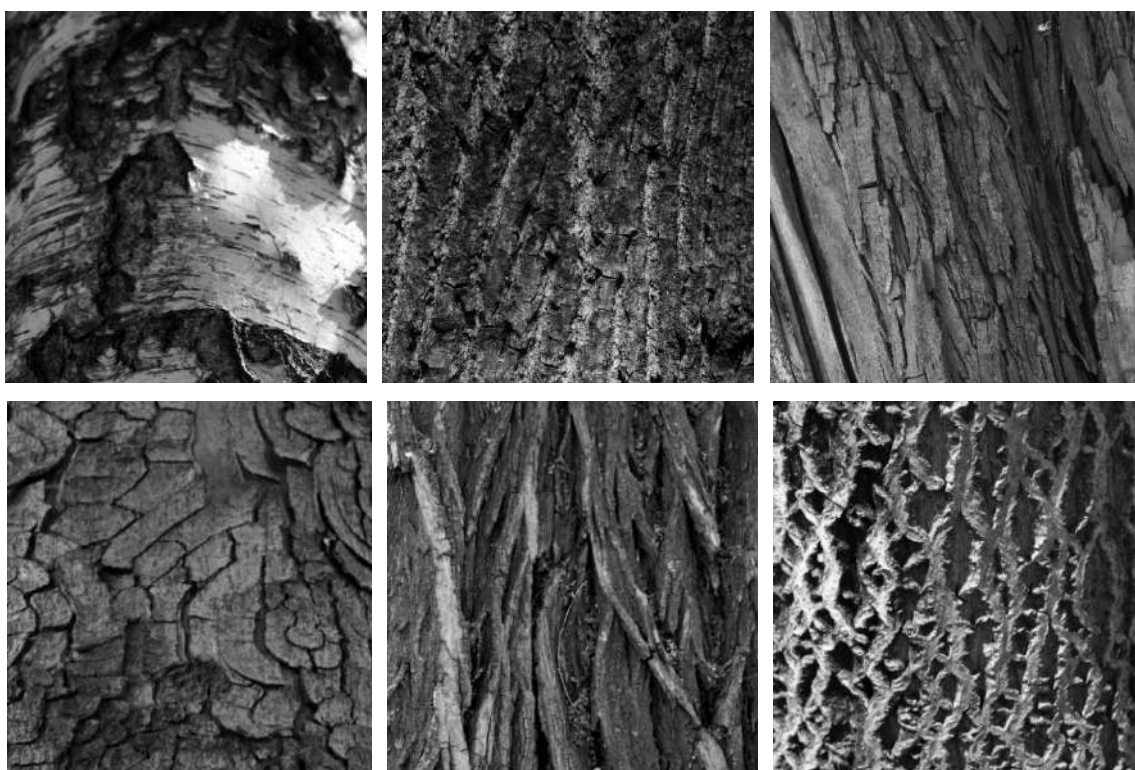
HAPTICSCAPES

Surfaces, skins, textures. Touching with hands, feeling with feet. A series of actions, interventions, videos, drawings, photographs and drawing traces that examines the significance of perceiving landscapes through tactile experiences. Haptic surfaces as a poetic language that transmit the pass of time and skin aging caused from the exposure to the environment. Dialogue between time, matter and landscapes as an experience that unveils diverse tactile qualities. Rain, wind or sunlight; temperature and climate; natural factors that provide a sensitive materiality: patterns, cavities, impurities.

Skin | Surfaces

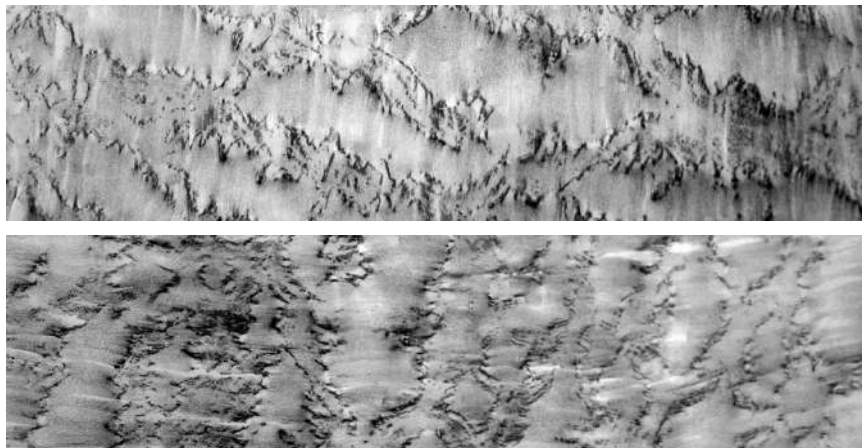
Tree Barks | Photo Documentation

Wrocław, Poland





Series of photographs and drawings as textural transcriptions where hands and observation explore natural surfaces expressed through diverse states: smooth, rough, soft, sharp, moister. The bark surfaces express several manifestations of time and surrounding environment where every single tree express unique skin memory. Porous, fissures, crack. Surfaces that transmit haptic perceptions. The drawing series have been made with several media, such as graphite.



Tree barks | drawing traces

Skin | Surfaces

Tree Barks | Graphic sketches



Tree trunks and barks | drawing sketches

Tree bark

The term tree bark refers to the tissues outside the vascular cambium.¹⁶³ The outer bark is the tree's protection from the outside world. Continually renewed from within, it helps keep out moisture in the rain, and prevents the tree from losing moisture when the air is dry. It insulates against cold and heat and wards off insect enemies.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶³ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020). Bark. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online]: <https://www.britannica.com/plant/tree/Tree-bark>. [20.05.2022]

¹⁶⁴ Arbor Foundation (n.d.) Anatomy of a Tree. [online]: <https://www.arborday.org/trees/ringstreenatomy.cfm> [20.05.2022]

Juniper | Short video

Wrocław, Poland

Ivan Juarez & Kinga Bartniak



Juniper | short video | fragment

Approximation to nature through the haptic experience. Mutual approach in which human body becomes part of nature and vegetation adopts the shape of the body. A reflection on the corporeal surface and the limits of the body (human-nature). The tactile approach has been complemented with a visual-sound narrative in the form of short videos.



Juniper (genus *Juniperus*), genus of species of aromatic evergreen trees or shrubs of the cypress family (*Cupressaceae*), distributed throughout the Northern Hemisphere¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia (2020) Juniper. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online]: <https://www.britannica.com/plant/juniper>. [18.03.2021]

Juniper | Short Video

Geumgang Nature Art Biennale | Nature Art Video Exhibition | Korea

Ivan Juarez & Kinga Bartniak



Nature Art Video Exhibition, Korea | photographs above and down left from Nature Art Biennale Organization
Juniper | short video fragment

The short video *Juniper* has been part of the exhibition *Geumgang Nature Art Biennale 2020 | Nature Art Video Exhibition*, held in Yeonmisan Natural Art Park, Republic of Korea, initiative from Nature Artists' Association Yatoo.

Walking Together through the Dew in the Park

(Chodzimy Razem po Rosie w Parku)

Park Grabiszyński | Wrocław | Poland

Kinga Bartniak (coordinator), Ivan Juarez and Patrycja Mastej



Walking together through the dew in the park | Park Grabiszyński | Wrocław | Poland

Photographs by Ivan Juarez and Kinga Bartniak | 17 Sep. 2020-30 Sep. 2020

Meadow Path | Walkscapes

Natural Passage

Site-Specific Intervention | Seasonal Pruning

Odra Riverbank

Ephemeral intervention that traces a path for walking on the meadow. Walking as an experiential activity in which the body is involved through an action that connects to the landscape

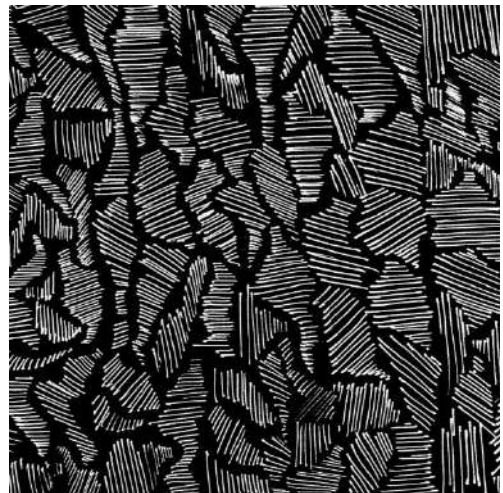


Site-intervention | walking on meadows as a sensory experience

HAPTICSCAPES

Tracing Prints | Winter

Wrocław

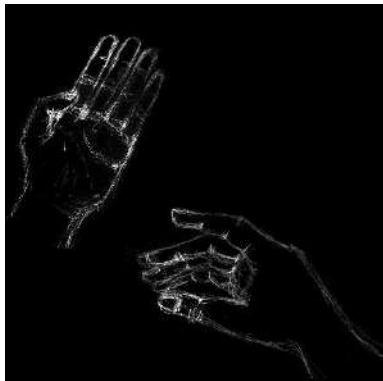


Tracing natural prints | Winter

HAPTICSCAPES

Tracing Prints | Winter

Wrocław



Winter traces | human & animal body prints | Wrocław

HAPTICSCAPES

Winter Timescapes | Snow

Ephemeral Sculpture

Wrocław



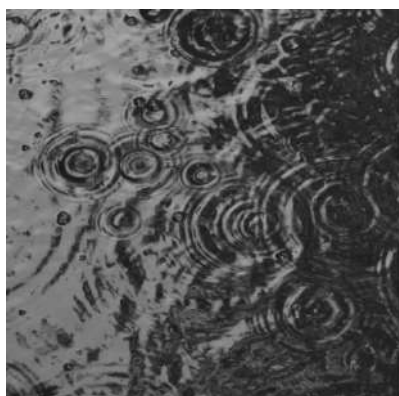
Winter | timescapes | ephemeral snow sculptures



Timescapes
ephemeral sculpture
Wrocław, Poland

Liquid | Body & Glass

Waterscapes | Wrocław



Liquid | body & glass | Waterscapes | Wrocław

Liquid | Body & Glass

Waterscapes | Wrocław



The piece integrates body and sculpture, as a glass device that merges with the body acquiring shape of water. Fluid shapes produced by drops that manifest themselves in a liquid state in nature: rain, dew or waterfalls. The handmade piece is made using the technique of melting glass in the workshops of the Academy of Art in Wrocław.



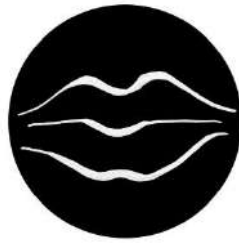
Liquid | body & glass | Waterscapes | Wrocław

Haptic Drawings

Collaborative Tactile-Body Exploration Towards Collective Graphics
within La Milpa Collaboratory | Wrocław



Collective Graphics workshop was realized in collaboration with Diego Valladares (coordinator), Emilia Gręziak, Vinicio Libardoni, Varvara Tokareva, Dagmara Swietek with the support of Mutant Letterpress

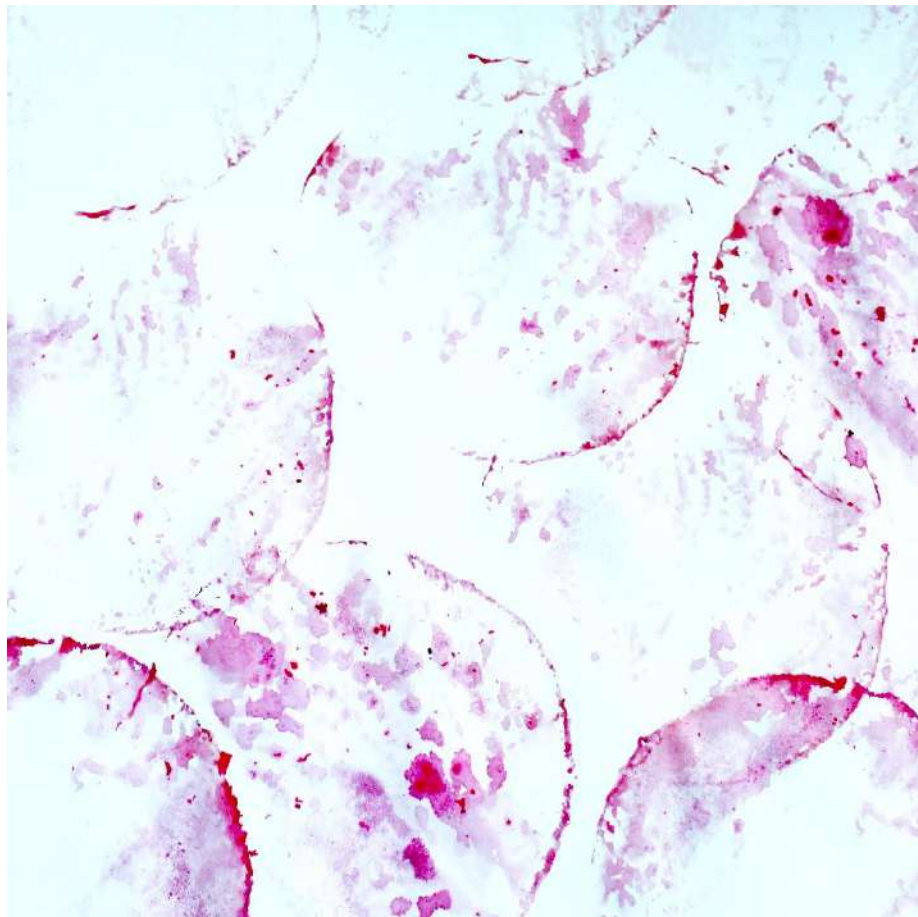


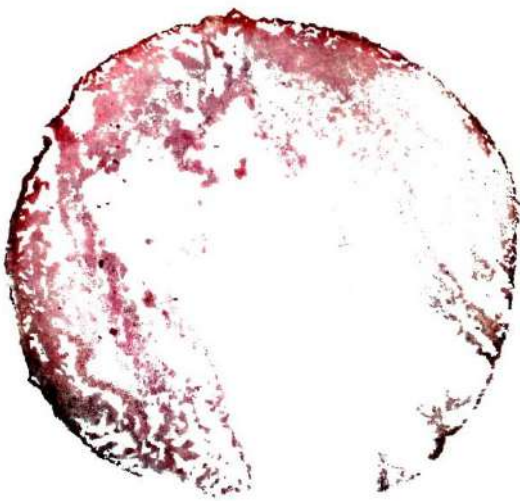
TASTESCAPES

Interaction between people, food and landscapes. Series of explorations, artworks and actions that seek dialogues between gustatory perception and tastespaces. Food cycles, local gastronomy, farmscapes, gastronomic landscapes. Understanding the local territory of Lower Silesia and Wrocław through its food production and gastronomic practices. The research integrates a series of artistic-food explorations, gustatory creations and field actions, such as site-mapping, harvesting, food walks or cooking. In parallel, the research has been complemented with the interpretation, connection and translocation of an ancestral agricultural practice in Mexico, *La Milpa*, in the form of collective initiatives in Poland *Milpa Collaboratory*, which highlights cooperative forms of artistic practice and foregrounds the key role of a kitchen as a laboratory space to explore artistic practices. The act of cooking and sharing food as a means to generate creative processes and collaborative forms of learning.

Beetroot (Burak)

Natural Pigment Explorations | Painting Media





Mapping Farmscapes

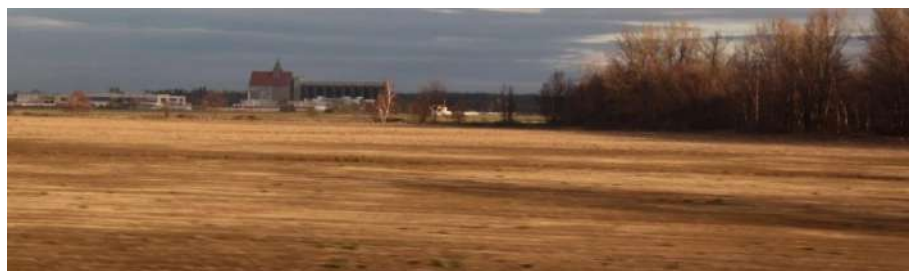
Photo Documentation | Lower Silesia

How do productive landscapes shape
and determine the territory?



Farmscapes | main cultivars | diagram | Lower Silesia

Lower Silesia area is mainly characterized as a fertile land of extensive low plains and large geometrized crops where a variety of cereals, such as wheat, millet, green maize and rapeseed, together with legumes and potatoes are grown.



Mapping Farmscapes | agricultural patches | aerial and site photographs | Lower Silesia | Poland
224

Mapping Farmscapes | Rapeseed (Rzepak)

Photo Documentation | Lower Silesia



Rzepak | Farmscapes | Lower Silesia | Poland

Rapeseed (*Brassica napus*), plant of the mustard family grown for its seeds. Yield canola or rapeseed oil¹⁶⁶ as refined edible vegetable oil.¹⁶⁷ Oilseed cultivation plays an important role in Polish agriculture, which is most evident in the landscape scenery during the spring and autumn seasons when the fields are covered with land patterns formed by carpets of yellow flowers.

¹⁶⁶ Britannica Encyclopaedia. (2021). Rapeseed. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online]: <https://www.britannica.com/plant/rapeseed-plant>. [03.07.2022].

¹⁶⁷ Jahreis, U. & Schäfer, U. (2011) Rapeseed (*Brassica napus*) Oil and its Benefits for Human Health, Chapter 114. [online]: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780123756886101148>

Mapping Farmscapes | Wheat Cultivars (Pszenica)

Photo Documentation | Lower Silesia



Wheat Cultivars | Farmscapes | agricultural patches | Lower Silesia | Poland

Mapping Farmscapes | Potato Cultivars (Ziemniak)

Photo Documentation | Lower Silesia



Kartofla

*Can you feel it? The pagan years smelling of campfire,
Smouldering juniper wood crackling with sparks,
Woolly smoke drifting with the wind,
And raw potatoes wrinkling from the heat.*

*...And never a potato served on the table
Was as tempting as one with burning scent, charred,
Voraciously taken with a clamp-stick
Out of grey, hot flour of the forest ash.*

*Toss it from hand to hand! Blow on it! Watch out! It ' s hot!
Its braised skin burns you when peeled!
Toss it in salt from a piece of paper! Put it in your blowing mouth and devour!
Let it melt on your jumping tongue!...*

Adam Mickiewicz, 1821 | translation by Marek Kaźmierski

Germination Time-Based Explorations



Potato, *Solanum tuberosum*, grown for its edible tubers.¹⁶⁸ A basic food in the culinary culture of Poland, used in a variety of Polish dishes. A domesticated tuber originating from the Inca civilization, Peruvian-Bolivian Andes, and since its arrival to Europe from the XVIII century it has taken a relevant role.

¹⁶⁸ Britannica Encyclopaedia (2022). Potato. Encyclopedia Britannica. [online]: www.britannica.com/plant/potato. [03.15.2022]

Mapping Farmscapes | Organic, Biodiverse & Small-Scale Farms

Photo Documentation | Lower Silesia



Farms | Lower Silesia | Poland

Walkscapes | Walks of Food

Collaborative Identification, Picking, Collecting & Picnic

Park Grabiszyński | Wrocław

Kinga Bartniak, Ivan Juarez and Patrycja Mastej

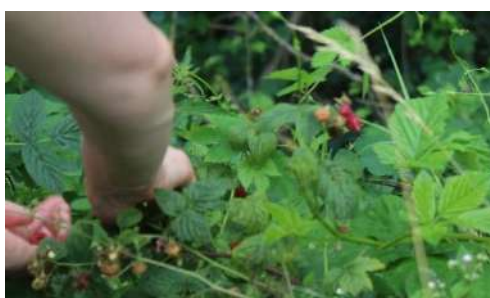


Walkscapes | Walk of Food | Park Grabiszyński | Wrocław

Walkscapes | Walks of Food

Wild raspberries (Malina Właściwa) | Identification, Picking & Collecting

Milicz Ponds Nature Reserve | Lower Silesia



Walkscapes | Walk of Food | Wild raspberries | Milicz Ponds Nature Reserve
Action developed together with Nataliia Guba

Walkscapes | Walks of Food

Lipa (*Tilia*) | Gentle Linden Flower and Leaf & Herbata

Park Wschodni, Wrocław & Świdnica Historic Garden | Summer Season

In the Polish language, as in other Slavic languages, the month **july** (*lipiec*) is named after a linden tree (*lipa*) as the month when those sacred trees were blooming in Polish climate.¹⁶⁹



Linden trees were among the most sacred trees in the Slavic tradition. In Poland, in the old days a linden tree was believed to have symbolic protective properties.¹⁷⁰ Linden tea is an herbal tea made from the leaves and flowers of the *Tilia* genus of trees, native to Europe. Their blossoms are also important nectar sources for bees.

¹⁶⁹ Lamus Dworski (2017). Linden Tree: Trees in the Polish (Slavic). [online]: lamusdworski.wordpress.com. [12.05.2022]

¹⁷⁰ Lamus Dworski. Op.cit.

Harvesting | Strawberries (Truskawki)

Oleśnica | Lower Silesia | Summer season



Harvesting-action developed at farm *Truskawki od Karola*, Oleśnica

Action developed together with Nataliia Guba

Harvesting | Cherry Trees (Wiśnia)

Krakowiany | Lower Silesia | Summer season



Harvesting-action developed at the organic farm Krakowiany
Action developed together with Nataliia Guba

Cherries & Berry Jam

Taste Creation & Glass Sculpture

Products from the Harvesting Practices

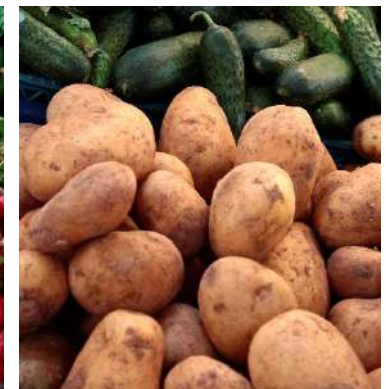


Cherries & Berry Jam | Taste Creation & Basket Glass Sculpture

Seasonal Fruits & Vegetables

Photo Documentation

Spring & Summer | City Market *Hala Targowa* | Wrocław

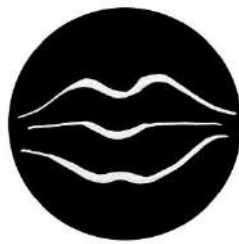


Seasonal Fruits & Vegetables

Photo Documentation

Autumn | City Market *Hala Targowa* | Wrocław





TASTESCAPES
MILPA COLLABORATORY
Mexico-Poland

MILPA COLLABORATORY

From Mexico to Poland

Collaborative Environments Towards Artistic and Learning Practices



From Mexico to Poland | Milpa Collaboratory as a metaphor and model for collaborative forms of artistic practice/research and creating learning environments

La Milpa is an ancestral agricultural system from Mexico Mayan-Aztec, based on collaboration, diversity and interaction between different plant species and social groups. La Milpa consists of a small parcel of land with mix crops where diverse plants -*maize*, *beans*, *squash* and *chile* (among others)- grow together, sharing a common biological space. This parcel creates multiple forms of collaboration between each other based on mutual particularities. In this way, the Milpa maintains constant fertilization of the soil throughout cycles. An open bio system that nurtures the unexpected by facilitating new associations. One element connects with and towards others.



Seeds and germination | Milpa seeds: corn, bean and pumpkin

PEOPLE OF CORN | La Milpa

She | He

Mexico



Sculptures made with corn-nixtamal dough & photographs of Milpa crops in Mexico

A series of ephemeral sculptures made of corn-nixtamal dough that honor the biological and social associations that emerge from *La Milpa*. The series also documents, through photography, parcels of *Milpa* in the Mayan area of Mexico.

PEOPLE OF CORN | La Milpa

She | He

Mexico



Sculptures made with corn-nixtamal dough & photographs of Milpa crops in Mexico

Parallel, the sculptures pay tribute to the symbol of corn in the sacred book *Popol Vuh*, the most significant example of Maya literature which describes the story of creation: *Xmucane shaped human bodies out of maize, which ties human life to the gods.*

MILPA COLLABORATORY | Collective

From Mexico to Poland

Collaborative Environments Towards Artistic and Learning Practices



With the intention of creating a multidisciplinary research practice through a network of artists, makers, mediators, learners and diverse collaborators with common interests, we have formed *Milpa Collaboratory*, from which various artistic initiatives are generated inspired on the agricultural concept of *La Milpa*, exploring forms of collaboration, ways of inhabiting spaces and creating learning environments for diversity and non-hegemonic ways of thinking.



Milpa scaled maquette made with three seed species and corn leaves & photographs of Milpa crops in Mexico

MILPA COLLABORATORY | Collective

Collaborative Environments Towards Artistic and Learning Practices



Curatorial statement of Milpa Collaboratory

MILPA COLLABORATORY is an attempt towards diversity and porosity. We are concerned with investigating forms of imagination, ecologies of care, alternative learning environments, spaces and practices that foster that which is unpredictable, thinking and making with others, exploring non-hegemonic forms of knowledge, making place and different times, surveying what is in-common and notions of well-being among others.

Milpa Collaboratory is a nomadic and translocal network of artists, thinkers, makers, learners and many others, striving towards collaborative art practices, research and micropolitics. Inspired by the metaphor of the agricultural system of La Milpa, which stands for sustainability and biodiversity providing food and multiple harvests throughout the year without degrading the soil as opposed to extractionist and capitalist forms of monoculture.

We are interested in surveying diversity through ecologies of care, radical learning environments, spaces and practices that foster thinking and making with others, exploring non-hegemonic forms of knowledge and making place among other. D.V.

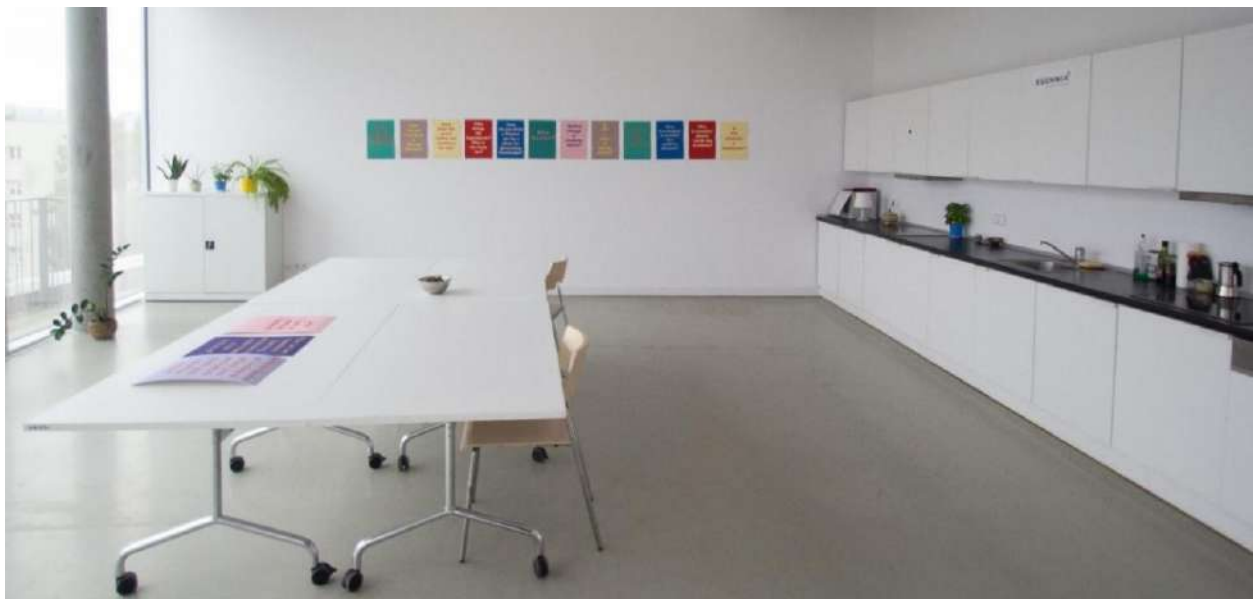
THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory

Kitchen as Art-Lab at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

Participatory Food Initiatives Towards Collaborative Artistic and Learning Process
Series of Collaborative Artistic-Food Practices

- How do artistic-design practices provide opportunities for educational environments?
- How can artistic practices facilitate pedagogical approaches that reflect on environmental issues?
- How does an artistic and social-environmental initiative improve community texture or identity?
- How could community groups determine what to create as a collaborative art-design work?
- How do creative strategies can shape community participation?



Kitchen as Milpa Collaboratory Lab at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław | Summer 2021

The act of cooking and sharing food as a means to generate artistic processes and collaborative forms of creation and learning.

The Kitchen, as a Milpa Collaboratory-Lab, takes place at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław. The Kitchen-Lab is focused on collectively creating a learning environment from a cooking space as place for embracement, sharing, reciprocity, exploring forms of collaborations with diverse communities and forms of knowing. We start by thinking how to open the academy by inviting/ sharing the Kitchen with different audiences who are invisible, absent or even excluded from the academy.

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Participatory Food Initiatives Towards Collaborative Artistic and Learning Process
Series of Collaborative Artistic-Food Practices

How can a kitchen become a research lab and learning environment?

How can we reimagine educational spaces from a cooking-sharing space?

What forms of collaboration, creation and learning are possible from a
cooking-sharing space?



Series of posters placed in the Kitchen and in various spaces of the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Participatory Food Initiatives Towards Collaborative Artistic and Learning Process
Series of Collaborative Artistic-Food Practices

Dates: From July 10, 2021 to October 10, 2021

Place: Kitchen space at Academy of Art and Design, Wrocław, Poland



Workshop 1: Storytelling & Creative Writing for Migrants

Facilitated by Volha Martynenka

Workshop 2: Composting towards (more) collaborative practices

by Gerardo Gomez Tonda 22-24.09.2021

Workshop | Lecture 3#01: Listening to and tasting Otherness in Politics

by Urszula Lisowska 30.09.2021

Workshop | Lecture 3#02: Prehistoric Foundations of Global Visual Culture

by Thomas Tajo 30.09.2021

Workshop 4: Breathing + Sound Improvisations

By Vassilis Theodorou 07-08.10.2021

Workshop 5: Art and Mycelium. Workshops

by Yuri Selivanov & Valentina biolab 26-30.11.2021

Network of collaborators

Agnieszka Bandura: Professor in the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Wrocław and Senior Lecturer at the E. Geppert Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Wrocław.

Paweł Drabarczyk: Art historian and academic professor

Diego Gutierrez Valladares: Interdisciplinary artist, researcher working in collaborative art practices

Ivan Juarez: Architect, landscape architect, practicing artist and educator

Urszula Lisowska: PhD in Philosophy and faculty member at The Institute of Philosophy of The University of Wrocław

Volha Martynenka: Journalist, photographer and media artist

Sepa Sama: Artist, architect, researcher and educator

Thomas Tajo: Blind thinker, researcher, inclusive artistic, consultant, inclusive activist and educator

Vassilis Theodorou: Research analyst, sound artist and movement trainer

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Storytelling & Creative Writing for Migrants | Workshop

Facilitated by Volha Martynenka

With the aim of opening the academy and bringing different voices, communities, and audiences to share the space, resources, and forms of knowing, Milpa Collaboratory made an Open Call inviting migrants living in the city of Wrocław. The aim is to share the space, resources and collaborate together, also attempt to address the difficulties and issues related to long waiting periods for visa/stay permits in the city of Wrocław.

In response to the open call, Belarusian artist Volha Martynenka facilitated and co-organized with Milpa Collaboratory the Storytelling and Creative Writing Workshop for Migrants in the city of Wrocław. A workshop that aims to create a safe house to share and gather stories of migration in the city, start an ongoing and collective process of sharing unofficial narratives in the city.



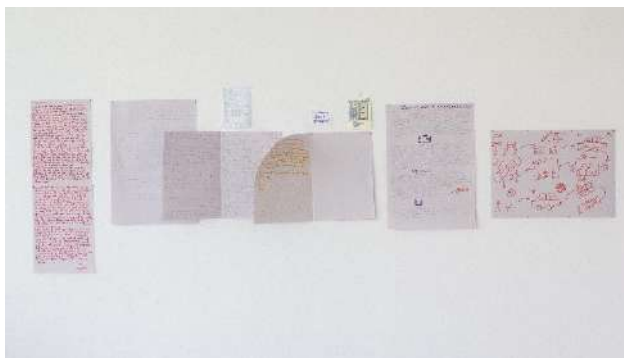
The Kitchen | artworkshop & cooking | series of workshops: Storytelling & Creative Writing for Migrants within Milpa Collaboratory.
Photographs by Diego Valladares and Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Storytelling & Creative Writing for Migrants | Workshop

Facilitated by Volha Martynenka



The Kitchen | artworkshop & cooking | series of workshops: Storytelling & Creative Writing for Migrants within Milpa Collaboratory.
Photographs by Diego Valladares and Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Composting Towards Collaborative Practices Embroidery and Conversation Exercises

Facilitated by Gerardo Gomez Tonda

Composting is a practice of soil renewal. As artistic practice composting works and thinks through forms of belonging. It takes place in form of Eco-social collaborations investigating relationship to land and multi-species encounter.



The Kitchen | artworkshop & cooking | series of workshops: Composting towards collaborative practices within Milpa Collaboratory. Photographs by Diego Valladares, Gerardo Gomez Tonda and Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Listening to and tasting Otherness in Politics | Lecture

by Urszula Lisowska

Prehistoric Foundations of Global Visual Culture | Lecture

by Thomas Tajo



The Kitchen | lectures & cooking | Photographs by Diego Valladares and Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

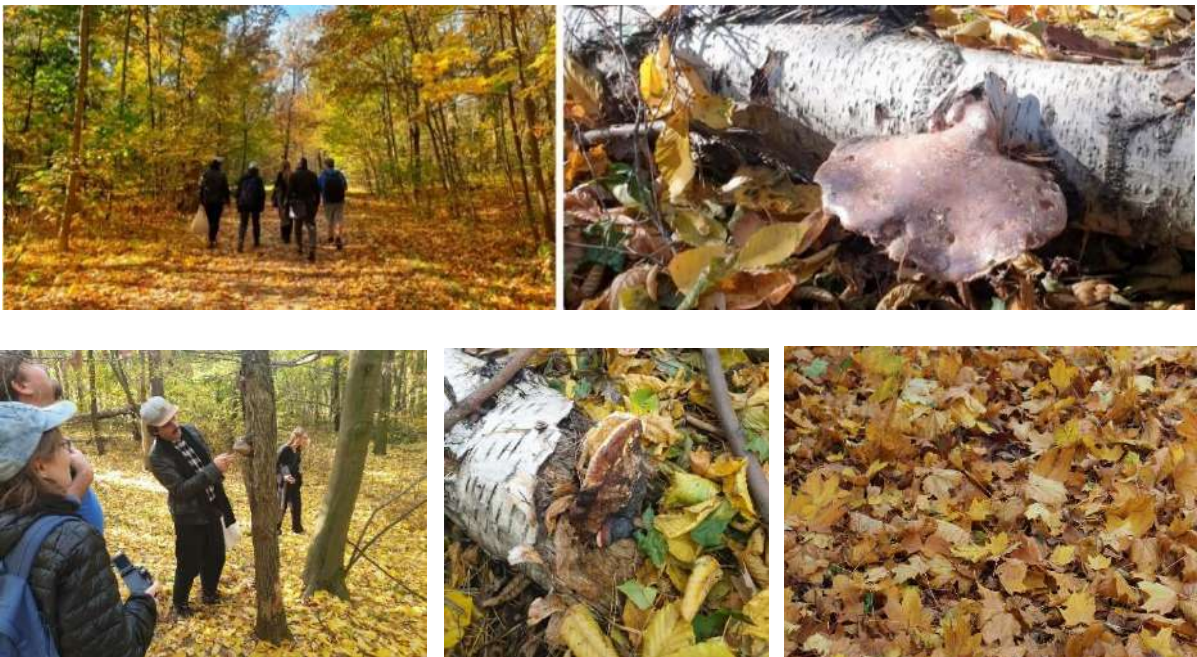
Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Art & Mycelium | Workshops

Facilitated by Yuri Selivanov & Valentina Biolab



The aim of the workshop is to encourage collaborations by offering practical and theoretical knowledge focusing on the role of fungi in ecosystems and its applications to artistic practices. During the 5-day event, participants learn the fungi natural environment and how to grow mycelium in order to discover the possibilities of biomaterials and its application for small-scale sculptural work. The outcome will be a series of sculptures and collective drawings.



The Kitchen | Art and Mycelium | Workshops | Milpa Collaboratory | Photographs by Diego Valladares and Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Art & Mycelium | Workshops

Facilitated by Yuri Selivanov & Valentina Biolab



Growing mycelium - time process | organic material for sculpture

Photographs: Ivan Juarez

THE KITCHEN | *Kuchnia*

Milpa Collaboratory | Art-Lab

Art & Mycelium | Workshops

Facilitated by Yuri Selivanov & Valentina Biolab



Cooking & collective drawings from mycelium natural ink and pigments. Photographs Ivan Juarez



EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES ON SITE-WORKS

INSECT CITY | LINZ, AUTRIA

SENSORY GARDEN | SICILY, ITALY

SITE-INTERVENTIONS | PACIFIC COAST, MEXICO

CHAPTER 6

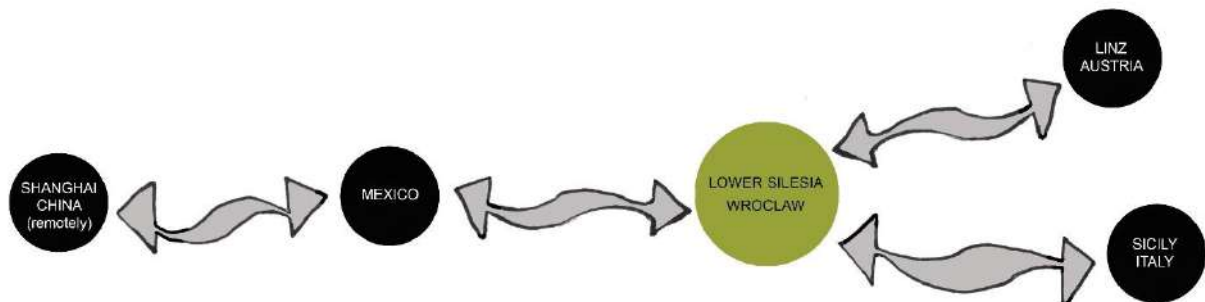
EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES

ON SITE-WORKS

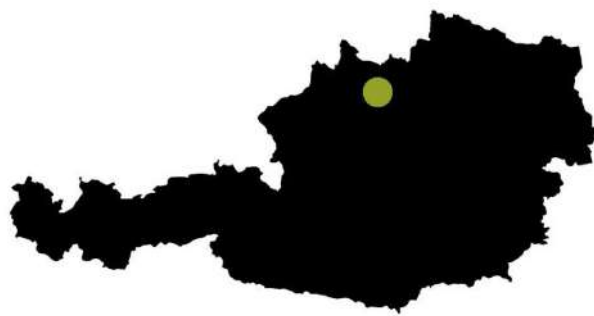
INSECT CITY | LINZ, AUSTRIA

SENSORY GARDEN | SICILY, ITALY

SITE-INTERVENTIONS | PACIFIC COAST, MEXICO



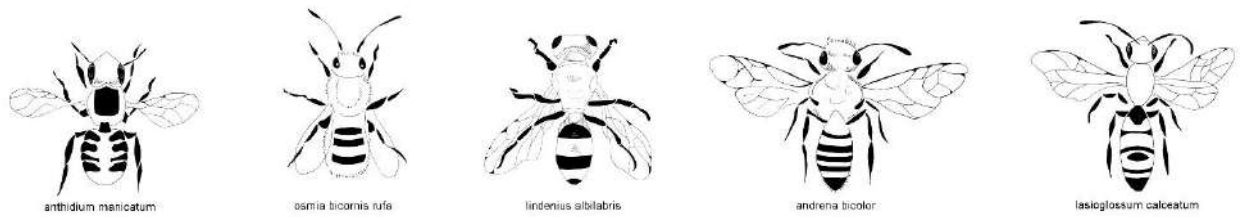
The conceptual and territorial framework of the research offers the possibility of extending to other geographies. With the aim to explore and implement the issues raised in the investigation, it is proposed to establish bridges to other latitudes through the development of three specific site-experiences. Experiences that respond to the collaboration and participation with cultural institutions and organizations as platforms to develop the projects. The first is Insect City, a public sculpture in the city of Linz, Austria, which reflects on biodiversity in urban habitats, and is based on scientific and biological knowledge. The artwork has been created with the support of the *Architecture Forum Upper Austria* with the consultancy of the *Biologiezentrum*. The second experience, Sensory Garden in Sicily Italy, a work carried out as part of the *Biennial of the Mediterranean Garden*, realized with the support of *Fondazione Radicepura* and its botanical park-nursery, in which an interactive garden is conceived and perceived through the five senses. A work that materialized the key concepts raised in this research. The research has also expanded to the context of Mexico, specifically to its Pacific Coast, where the coastal landscape is explored through a series of site-specific interventions that integrate biodiversity, architecture, and ecology. The series was developed within the framework of *Flaneur in The Insular Cities: Island Ecology*, an internet-based residency based in Shanghai, that explores the theme of ocean ecology as a starting point for artistic experimentation.



INSECT CITY
LINZ | AUSTRIA
EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES
ON SITE-WORKS

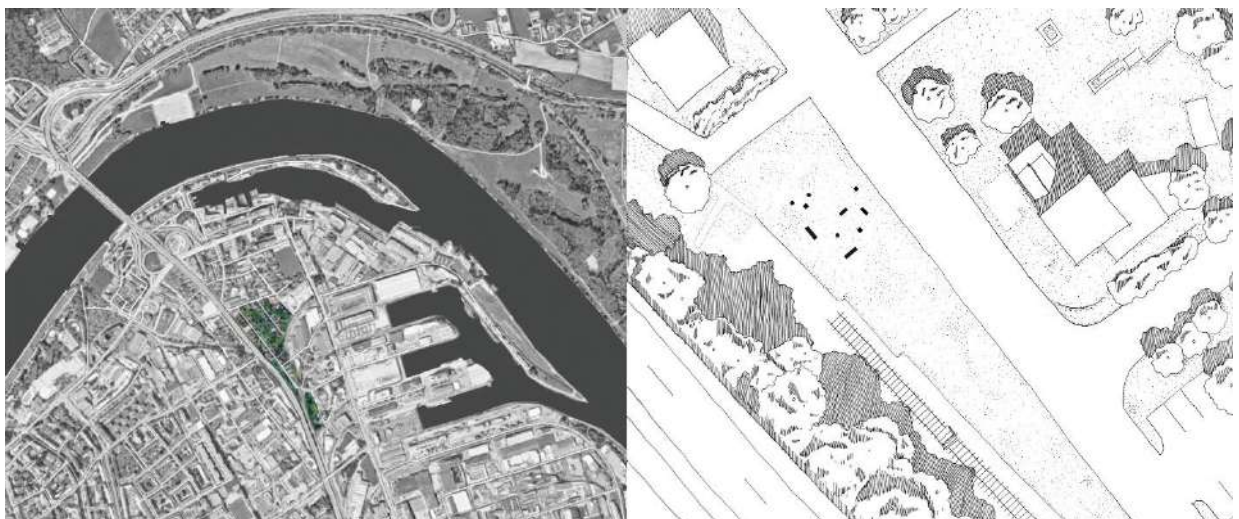
INSECT CITY

Linz, Austria



Insect City explores new approximations to reimagine the boundaries between human and nature, through a site-specific intervention that leaves spaces for new encounters. With this approach, the intervention dialogues with the city landscape, opening alternative ways of cohabitation in our built environments.

The site-work has been conceived in the public space of the city of Linz, Austria, in an undetermined fragment of an urban area in the city, in a transitional area where several natural and cityscapes are diluted together. On the one hand, the site is close to the Danube River and its industrial port, and on the other hand, the site is bounded by a disused railway and the elevated highway. Although the area is characterized as an undefined public space, the site is privileged for its biological richness, since it is located in a self-maintained urban meadow surrounded by houses with orchards and community gardens.



Insect City | Linz, Austria | site location

Insect Insect is conceived as a public bio-space. An abstract landscape composed of a series of geometric wooden pieces that aims to sensitize and raise awareness on ecological and biodiversity values.

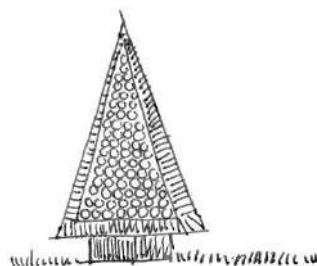
Insect City aims to develop a broader dialogue and new approaches to the diversity of plant and animal life in urban habitats. In this way, the intervention interacts with the city landscape, creating new ways of coexistence between the natural and built environment. A new hybrid urban landscape, as a housing complex for our cohabiting insects: wasps, bees, beetles or bugs.

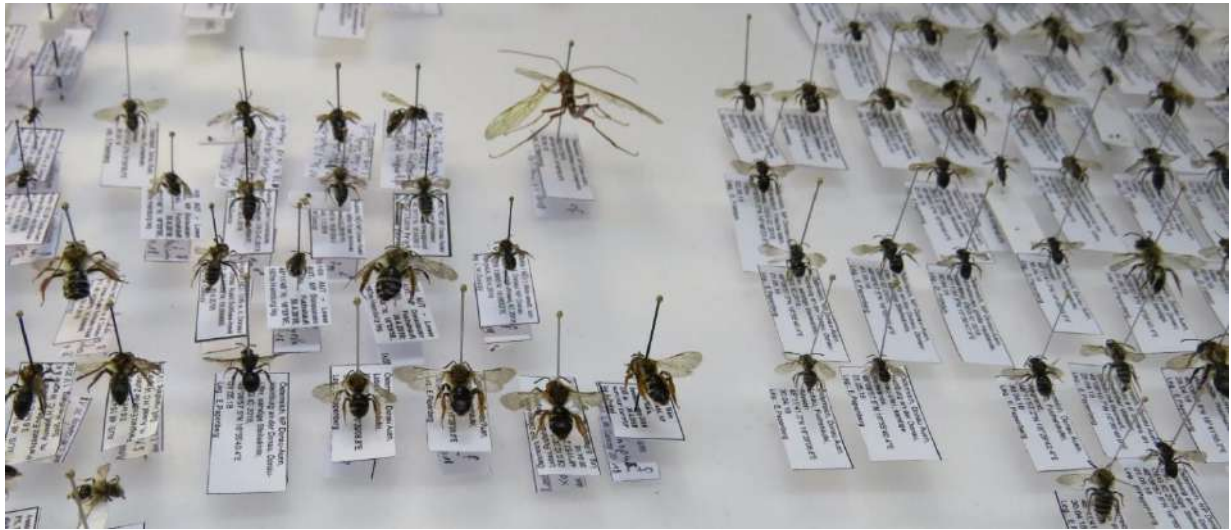


Insect City | Linz, Austria | photography: Gregor Graf

Insect City | Process

The project has been developed with the support and collaboration of the *Architectural Forum of Upper Austria* (afo), with the bio-consultancy of the *Biologiezentrum*, a biology center located in the city of Linz, which has one of the largest insect collections in Europe, dedicated to preserving, researching, documenting, exhibiting, and transmitting knowledge about the flora and fauna.





Insect City | Linz, Austria | Biologiezentrum | insect research collection

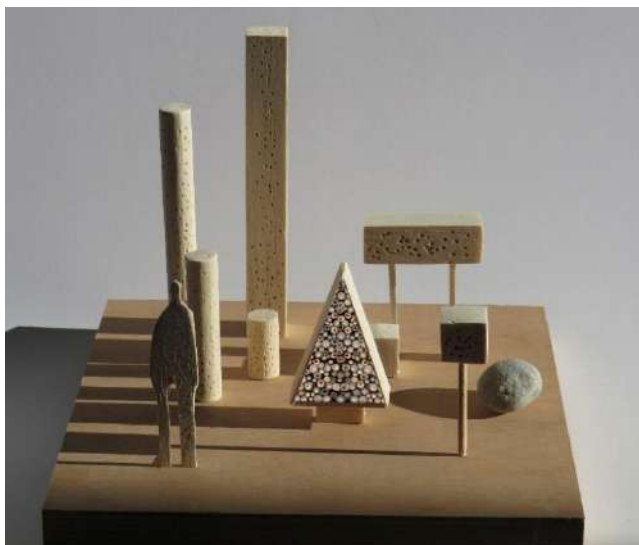
In parallel, during the process, a neighborhood consultation was carried out, with the aim of disseminating the project among local residents towards their own public space and surrounding bio-habitat.



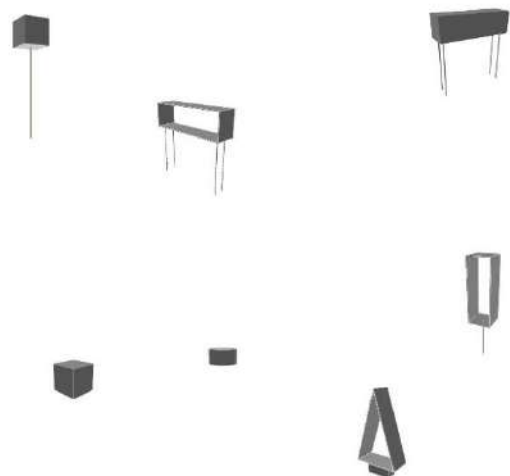
Insect City | Linz, Austria | photography: Gregor Graf



Insect City | Linz, Austria | photography: Gregor Graf



Insect City | Linz, Austria | maquette and system of elements





Insect City | Linz, Austria | photographs: Gregor Graf and Ivan Juarez



Insect City | Linz, Austria | photographs: Gregor Graf and Ivan Juarez



Insect City | Linz, Austria | production process



Insect City | Linz, Austria | conception sketches

INSECT CITY | Dissemination and Recognitions

The public artwork Insect City has been widely disseminated through various publications and exhibitions. It has also participated in the International Biennial of Landscape in Barcelona and was recognized with the award Most Anticipated Hybrid Public Space Design Project- given by BUILD Magazine in United Kingdom.



Insect City at Neon Gallery | Empathic Design Exhibition | Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław



SENSORY GARDEN

SICILY | ITALY

EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES

ON SITE-WORKS

SENSORY GARDEN

Sicily, Italy

Biennial of the Mediterranean Garden

Radicepura Botanical Park

Located in a central position in the Mediterranean Sea, the island of Sicily has been characterized as a territory of encounter, hybridization and constant evolution in which countless biological dynamics and cultural movements have taken place throughout history. On the northeast coast of the island, between the Etna volcano and the Ionian Sea, a unique landscape develops as a biological point of reference in the Mediterranean scenario, framing an exceptional ecosystem influenced by a subtropical climate in which various plant species coexist in a productive land that is constantly nourished by black volcanic sand scattered by the eruptions of Etna.



Mount Etna | vulcano activity | Sensory Garden geographical context | Sicily, Italy

It is in this background that Sensory Landscapes site-intervention has been conceived. Sensory Landscapes pays homage to this particular landscape through a walkable garden that brings together a collection of plants that represent the heritage of the Mediterranean culture. In this way, the project is proposed as an interactive and experiential space that appeals to different senses -touch, smell, sight and taste- and enhances the perception of the landscape through sensitive dialogues.



Sensory Garden | Sicily, Italy



Sensory Garden | Drawing concept | Sicily, Italy

Along the garden, a continuous thread links visitors and sensory experiences. With this approach, Sensory Garden connects a series of scenarios with perceptions, creating a multi-layered garden across different tangible and intangible landscapes -scentscapes (aromatic plants), landscapes of taste (edible plants), hapticscapes (texture plants) and visual landscapes.

The project is also inspired from the culture of container gardening, the Mediterranean practice of growing plants in pots placed by neighbors in urban and outdoor domestic spaces, such as courtyards, balconies, terraces, squares or sidewalks.

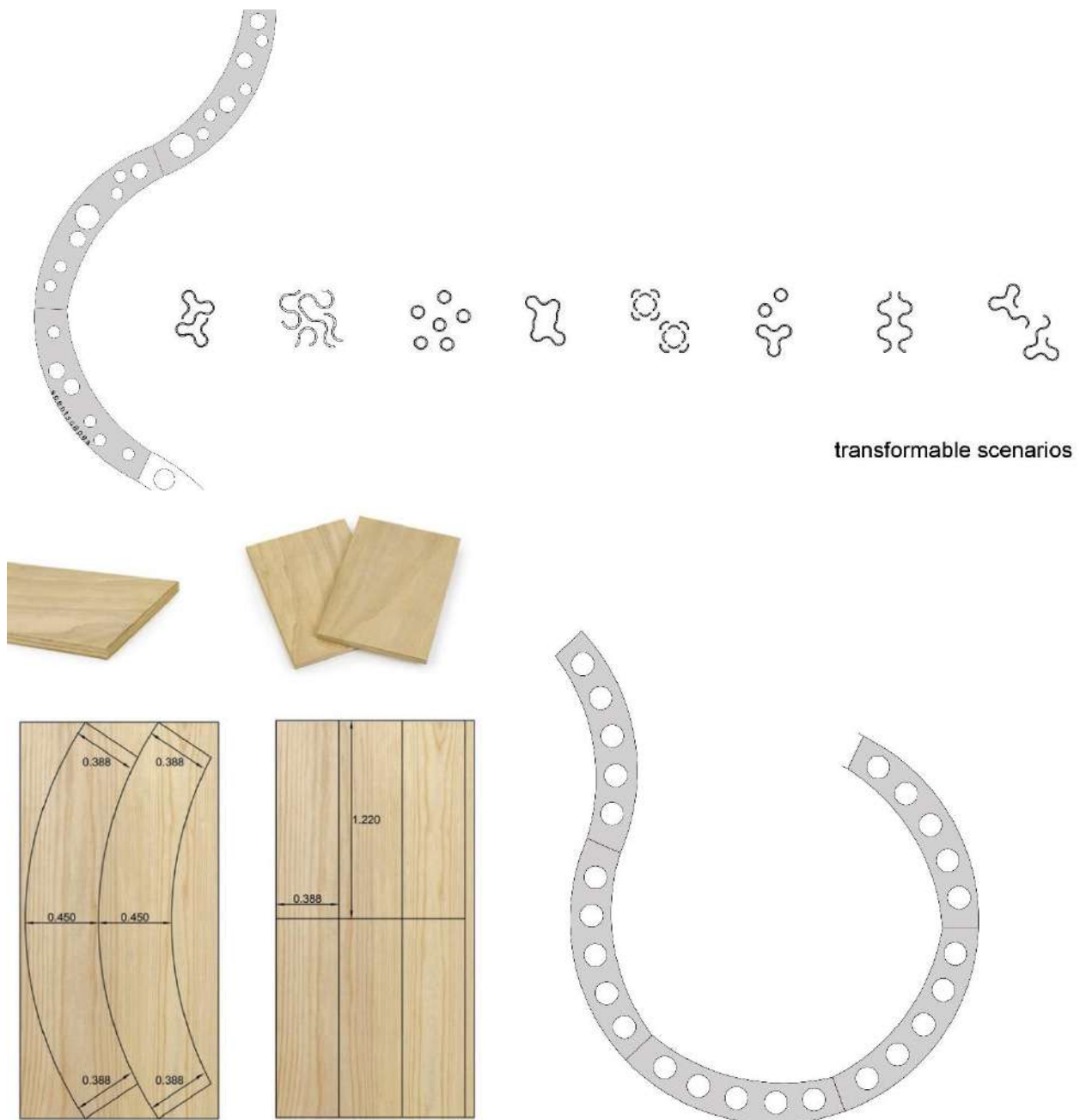


Sensory Garden concept | plan pots on courtyards, balconies, terraces, squares | Sicily, Italy



Sensory Garden | Mediterranean cetacean and succulents plants | Sicily, Italy

Sensory Garden | The System



Sensory Garden | plan system | drawings and technical plans

As an interactive display-system that has the capacity for constant transformation, the installation creates different types of scenarios. The system can be modified by changing its layout; grow or decrease along the site generating different spaces and activities.



Sensory Garden | Scent area | Mediterranean olfactory plants | Sicily, Italy

Sensory Garden has been taking part of *The Biennial of the Mediterranean Garden*, an event curated by Antonio Perazzi and supported by Fondazione Radicepura that rediscovers the Mediterranean garden to promote environmental culture through art, design, literature and music. The Biennial takes place in the Radicepura Botanical Park, a five-hectare horticultural park which is home to more than 3,000 botanical species and focuses on different areas related to botanical education, itineraries or research of the Mediterranean flora. Festival's production director: Luca Gangemi and project design coordinator: Chiara La Rosa.



Sensory Garden | haptic area | leaf identification | Sicily, Italy

Sensory Garden | Participatory Intervention

The project proposes public participation becoming a collective device enriched by the interaction of visitors, offering different ways of engagement: a space for dialogue, dissemination and exchanging. An open space to develop diverse activities: drawing, writing, reading, eating. The installation also promotes the act of sharing plants as a participatory experience, offering the possibility for visitors to bring their own plant, connecting them through the immediacy of sharing.



Sensory Garden | scent, visual and interactive areas | Sicily, Italy

Sensory Garden | Children-Lab

The garden is complemented by the Children-Lab, a space for knowledge and plant growing where children generate their own orchards from local seeds. The space proposes ludic and didactic activities based on experiential learning where they discover and share notions of their own territory in connection to natural cycles, local food practices and farming process: seeding, sowing and harvesting.



Sensory Garden | Children-Lab | seeding area | Sicily, Italy



Plant Species List

Foeniculum vulgare
Salvia officinalis
Cymbopogon citratus
Allium schoenoprasum
Mentha
Santolina chamaecyparissus
Ruta graveolens
Rosmarinus officinalis
Ruta graveolens
Plumbago auriculata
Streptosolen jamesonii
Daucus carota
Thymus vulgaris
Origanum majorana
Solanum melongena
Capsicum frutescens
Opuntia vulgaris
Aloe spinosissima
Crassula
Portulaca afra
Solanum lycopersicum L.
Petroselinum crispum
Cucurbita pepo L.
Alternanthera ramosissima 'Versicolor'

Greenhouse: Pianta Faro

Plant advisor: Franco Livoti





SITE-WORKS
PACIFIC COAST | MEXICO
EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES
ON SITE-WORKS

EXPANDED GEOGRAPHIES | ON SITE-WORKS

PACIFIC COAST | MEXICO

The particularity of the coastal landscape of the Pacific coast of Mexico is characterized as a territory interconnected through diverse aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that identify it as a fragile landscape of important ecological, social, and aesthetic value. A landscape frontier with diverse ecotones. Liquid-solid. A place of exchange and physical-biological transition. This coastal landscape is distinguished for being an ecosystem of great natural plasticity. A dynamic place of transition between water and land, in which the succession of ephemeral events create scenarios in constant transformation. Each of its systems plays an important role. Coastal dunes, for example, filtering barriers that dissipate the energy of storms, reducing winds or hurricanes, and preventing erosion; mangrove, a biological filter that regulates the water level, controlling tides and floods. These aquatic systems are interrelated with the terrestrial tropical deciduous forest, where a range of endemic species coexist. Among the flora that coexists within the ecosystem are diverse varieties of trees, associated with palms, ferns, grasses, mosses, shrubs and wildflowers.

However, in recent decades, due to the intense tourist activity, the accelerated occupation and use of its natural areas and resources, and the excessive building along the coast, the natural and cultural character of this territory has been highly affected.

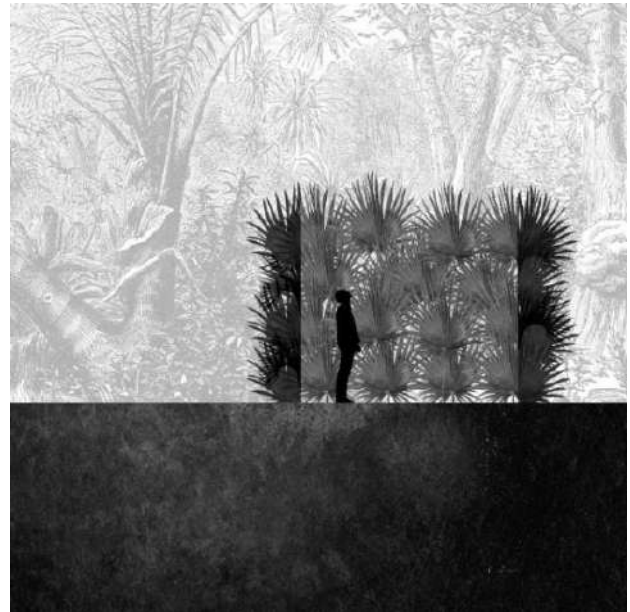
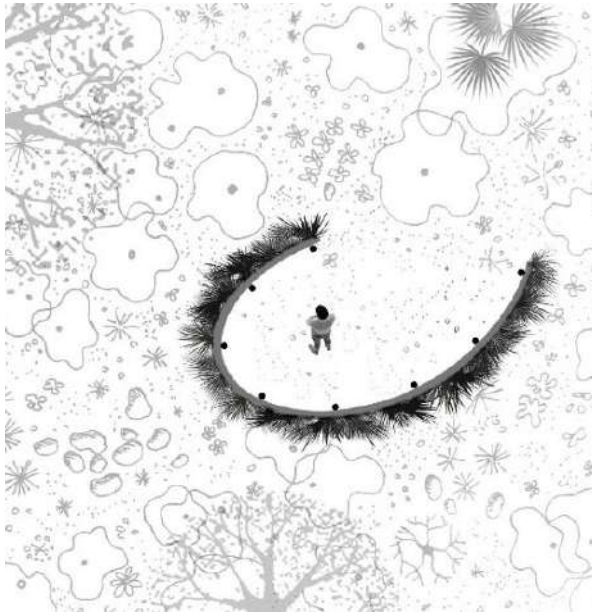
From this geographical and cultural context, a series of interventions, bio architectures and body architectures have been developed. Explorations that aim to reflect on this particular context and dialogue with it. The series aims to raise consciousness about its natural dynamics, biodiversity and biological processes. The site-specific works have been developed within the framework of *Flaneur in Island Cities: Island Ecology*, an online residency based in Shanghai which explores the theme of ocean ecologies as a focal point for artistic experimentation.

PALM PAVILION

Bio-Architecture

Rainforest | Pacific Coast | Mexico

How to generate bio-architectures
based on nature?

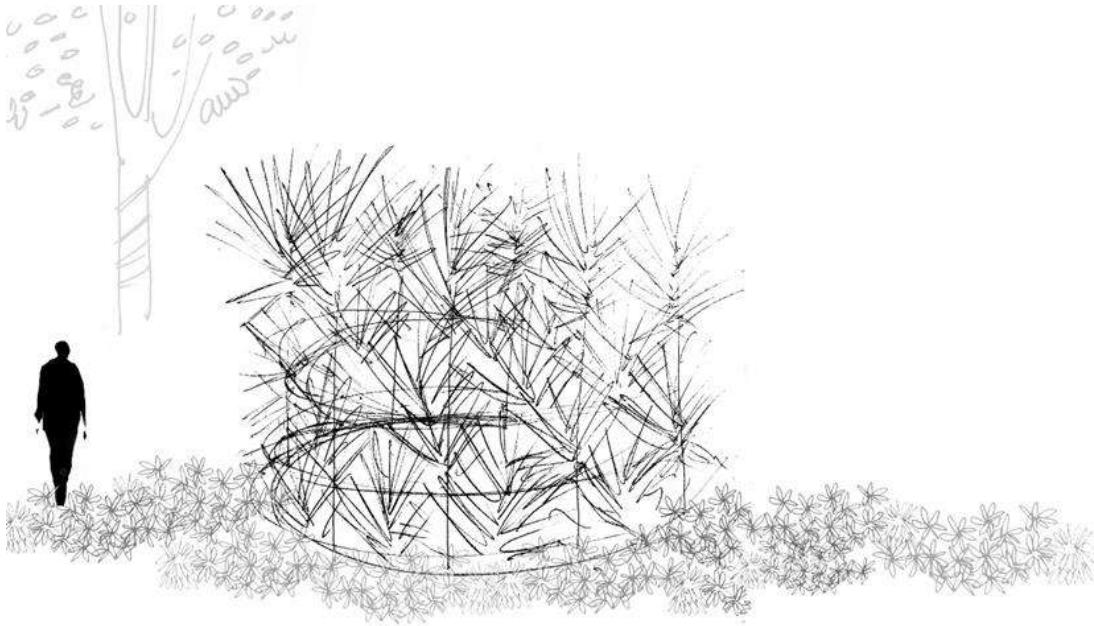


Palm Pavilion | Pacific Coast, Mexico | plan and section drawings

Bio architectural space conceived from and within the rainforest. The pavilion pays homage to the importance of this ecosystem, through a spatial piece that explores and highlights the uses of a natural material, the -palm leaf- as the main element. An interior space for personal reflection merged with the natural environment created through handcrafted processes.



Palm Pavilion | Pacific Coast, Mexico

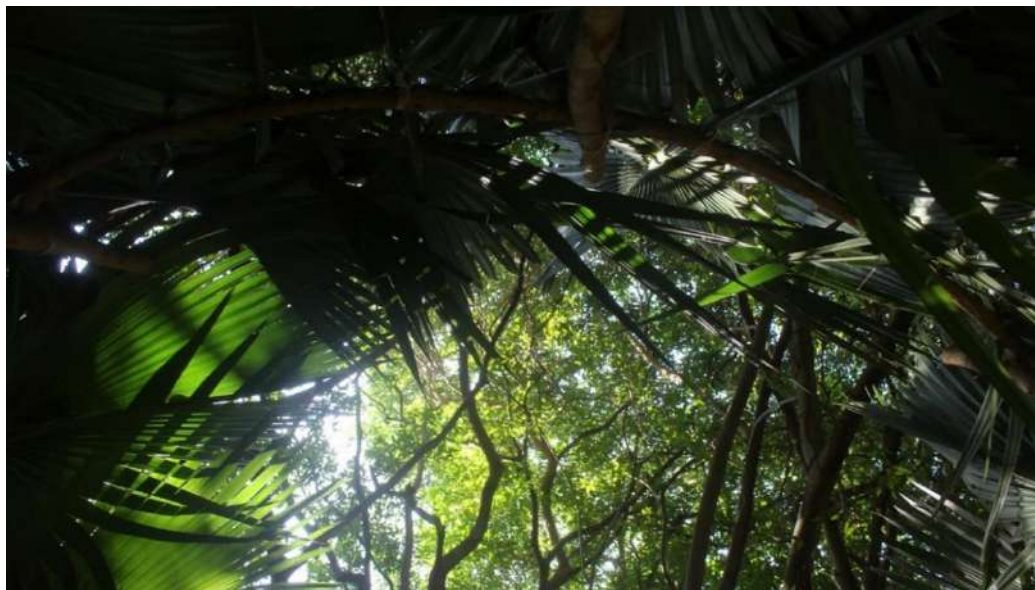


Palm Pavilion | sketch drawing | Pacific Coast, Mexico

The space creates a visual dialogue between the interior and exterior landscape it delimits. From the inside, the pavilion frames and suggests a fragment of forest through the different layers of light and shadow. From this point it is possible to observe the sky through the foliage of the trees, listen to the surrounding environment and recognize the symphony of soundscapes. The spatial limits are defined and blurred by a vegetable skin, fan-shaped leaves, which act as light filters. Throughout the day, the exterior appearance of the pavilion changes through different tones and transparencies. At dusk, the light dilutes its intensity, transforming the pavilion into an illuminated space that blends in with its surroundings.



Palm Pavilion | material: fan-shaped palm leaves | Pacific Coast, Mexico



Palm Pavilion | Pacific Coast, Mexico

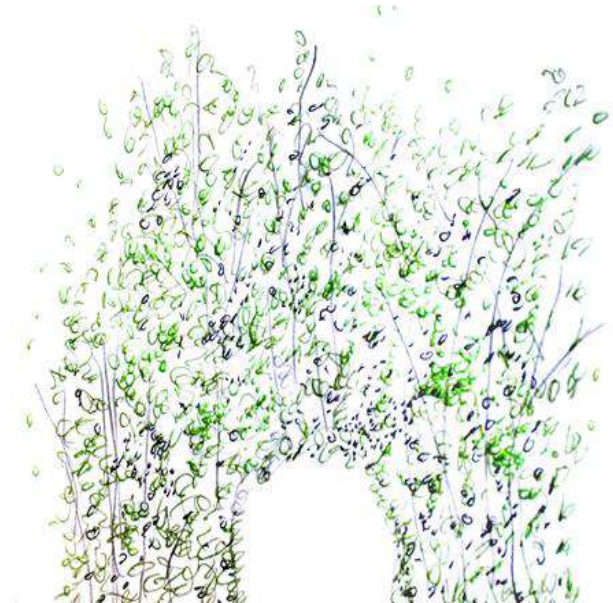


Palm Pavilion | process and materials | Pacific Coast, Mexico

VOID | Architectures for Biodiversity | Living- Lab

Rainforest | Pacific Coast | Mexico

Subtraction Exercise Towards Vegetal Inner Architecture



Architectures for Biodiversity | Living- Lab | Sketch
Pacific Coast, Mexico

How to generate vegetal architectures or bio-interior spaces from the dynamics of nature itself?

The tropical forest ecosystem has been constantly transformed by human activities. Natural habitats with great biodiversity and ecological dynamics that have been reduced to small green patches inserted within urban areas, now considered as potentially buildable residual lots.

The aim of the site-intervention is to reflect and reimagine new sensitive approaches to the biological value of these small mosaics with their own ecosystems. A sensitive approach towards biodiversity and the biological future of these landscape fragments surviving within urban environments where natural heterogeneity and dynamics are emphasized.

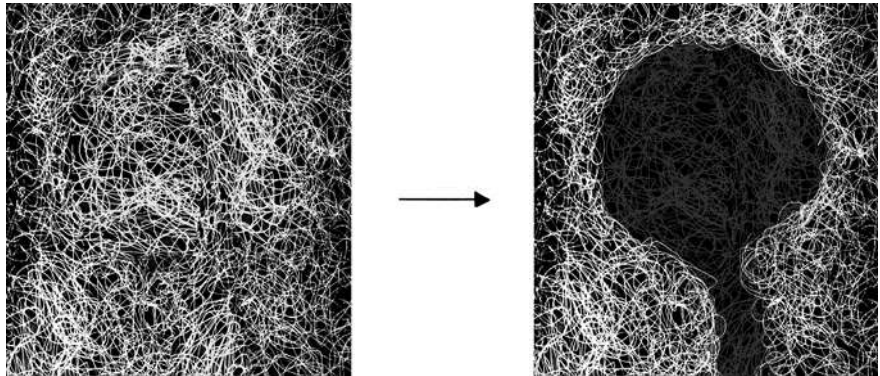
A subtraction exercise that creates an inner bio-architecture. A gate to a portion of pristine forest that highlights its biodiversity and complexity.



Void | Architectures for Biodiversity | Living- Lab
interior and exterior views | Pacific Coast, Mexico

Living-Lab: As a living laboratory, the intervention pays homage to the importance of these ecosystems, through an exercise of subtraction that creates a vegetal inner space. The intervention is conceived as a -living laboratory- that identifies and reflects on the value of these small natural mosaics. Essential landscapes for our environment.

The project is conceived as a symbolic delimitation of a portion of forest in the urban environment. A low-impact intervention, where native plant species and endemic fauna coexist. The limits are blurred by nature itself. Throughout the day, the place changes through different tones, transparencies, sounds. Flora and fauna. A natural space that merges with the environment. Observing, walking, listening. A space of encounter, experience, awareness and knowledge of the landscape.



Void | Architectures for Biodiversity | Living- Lab
subtraction process | sketch | Pacific Coast, Mexico

Vegetation Regeneration Process

The bio-space has been conceived as an ephemeral intervention that emphasizes the natural process of vegetation and encourages nature to continue its own spontaneous growth, erasing the footprint left by human activity by performing its own dynamics again.



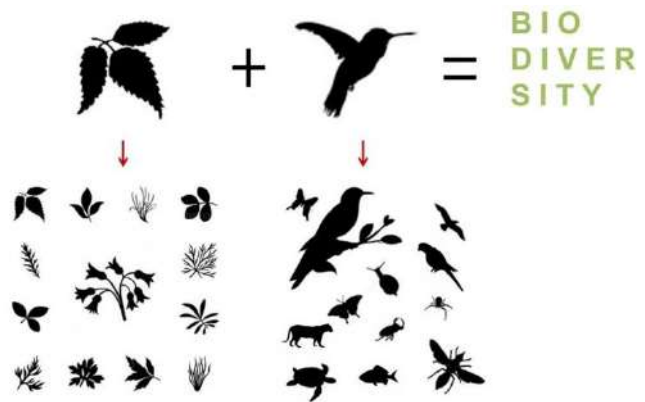
Void | Architectures for Biodiversity | Living- Lab | main entrance | Pacific Coast, Mexico

BIODIVERSITY | VEGETATION PATCH

Body & Landscape

Site-Specific Intervention and Series of Photographs

Rainforest | Pacific Coast | Mexico

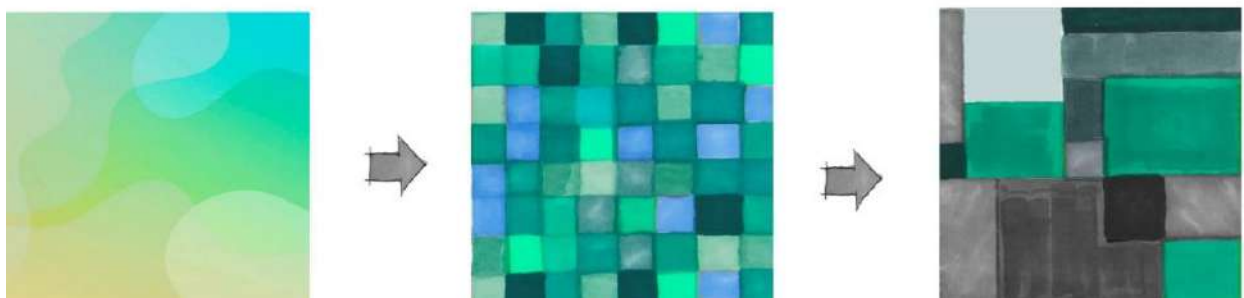


Biodiversity:

A term used to describe the enormous variety of life on Earth. It can be used more specifically to refer to all of the species in one region or ecosystem. Biodiversity refers to every living thing, including plants, bacteria, animals, and humans.¹⁷¹

Patch:

In landscape ecology “a patch is an area of habitat differing from its surroundings, often the smallest ecologically distinct landscape feature in a landscape mapping and classification system. patches of focal interest for the study of ecological processes.¹⁷²



Biodiversity | Vegetation Patch | process of landscape fragmentation | From complex bio-interaction into patches

¹⁷¹ National Geographic (). Biodiversity. In: National Geographic, Resource Library. [online]: <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/biodiversity> [14.06.2021]

¹⁷² Clark, W. (2010) Principles of Landscape Ecology. Nature Education Knowledge 3(10):34. [online]: <https://www.nature.com> [14.06.2021]



The project reflects on the previous theme related to the loss of biodiversity in the coastal rainforest, through a piece that manifests itself on the body and uses printed fabric, as an element with important connotation in the cultural landscape of Mexico. The fabric piece emphasizes how tropical forests have been transformed into small mosaics -patches- due to human activities, understanding the concept of *-patch-* in landscape ecology as a mosaic of small sub-ecosystems. In this sense, the piece proposes a conceptual approach to biodiversity and reflects on the importance of heterogeneity within natural habitats.



Biodiversity | Vegetation Patch | body & landscapes | Rainforest | Pacific Coast | Mexico



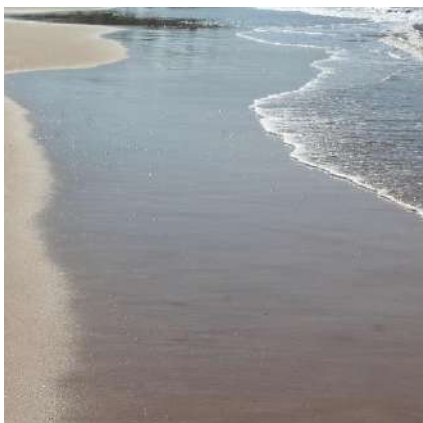
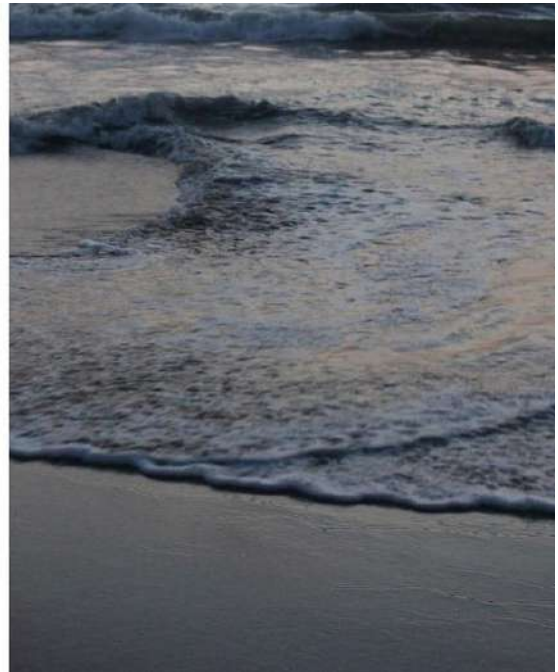
Biodiversity | Vegetation Patch | body & landscapes | Rainforest | Pacific Coast | Mexico

EROSIONS | Seascapes

Body & Seascapes

Site-specific Intervention and Series of Photographs

The work reflects on the cyclical, dynamic and temporal process of the seascape. Its natural cycles and its self-regenerating essence. Its rhythm, sonority, plasticity, its own temporality. The natural phenomena as part of its essence and complexity. Wind, breeze, rain, tides, storms. Transitory and seasonal changes where nature regenerates itself. The notion of the passage of time in human beings. Erosion of our bodies and its relation to time and states of nature.



Erosions | body & landscapes | Pacific Coast | Mexico



Erosions | body & landscapes | Pacific Coast | Mexico

CHAPTER 7

SEEDING

&

GERMINATION

SOIL-DIDACTIC PRACTICES

SEEDING & GERMINATION

SOIL-DIDACTIC PRACTICES

- How do artistic practices generate and disseminate seeds within educational environments?
- How to generate pedagogical and reflective environments understanding the academy as a soil-space?
- How do artistic practices contribute to educational approaches related to environmental-social issues?



Seeding: *To spread seeds in a prepared soil so that they will germinate and bear plants or fruits.*

Germinate: *To sprout and begin to grow plants.*

Contemporary environmental and social challenges require new scenarios for experimentation, knowledge, and dissemination. New spaces to reimagine and think our landscapes. Narratives and positions that contribute to understanding how artistic-design disciplines, enriched by diverse approaches, are able to enhance our biocultural and social habitats. With these concerns, this area emphasizes one of the key questions raised through the research; how these approaches can transform into seeds, and how these seeds can be disseminated and germinated through fertile soil-spaces in order to generate new reflections and questions.

With this sense, the academic space acquires relevance as a laboratory to explore and disseminate new ways of thinking, imagining, and creating. As a space that provides *soil* as learning environment towards the exploration of ways of inhabiting places and ways of being.

Laboratory for Designing Interactive Spaces and Objects

Along the period of the research-practice, I have had the opportunity to develop a fundamental activity within the academic field, a space from which, through the enrichment of complementary views and crossed knowledge, it has been possible to spread seeds and accompany them to germinate in the form of ideas and reflections among academics and new generations of scholars. Over the three-year period, I have had the opportunity to be part of the academic research team of the *Laboratory for Designing Interactive Spaces and Objects* at the Academy of Art in Design in Wrocław, a team coordinated by Dr. Dominika Sobolowska, joined by Sebastian Sobótko, designer and programmer, and researchers and designers Aleksandra Biegańska and Michał Majewski, together with former team member Patrycja Mastej. The aim of the Laboratory's didactic program is to search for connections between spatial practices and achievements of other fields, especially of science and new technologies, to generate responsive approaches that are part of broadly understood social innovation. The Laboratory team *seeks to provide evidence that design can intervene in issues of responsible development, not only as a means to solve problems, but also as a tool to understand emotions, social moods, dialogues with nature and as a tool to manifest, critique, educate or prototype our future environments.*



Laboratory for Designing Interactive Spaces and Objects | Participatory Design for Ukraine | workshops for children



Laboratory for Designing Interactive Spaces and Objects | Design Thinking | series of workshops

The studio places special emphasis on critical learning, work-integrated knowledge, innovative didactic processes and collaborative research-knowledge, manifested in hybrid spaces and pro-social interactive objects. The philosophy of the Laboratory, together with its teaching-learning methods and its active participation within the community, have provided the space to share seeds, and contribute jointly to germinate into new concepts and strategies in reflective sense.



Above: *Naturofon* | Author and photographs: Joanna Wojtaszek, Master student

Below: *Signs of Empathy in Contemporary Design* | book



From the Laboratory, extensive dialogues, reflections and actions have been performed, through conferences, lectures, workshops, supervisions, tutorials, in-situ interventions, community actions, group conversations, as well as publications and exhibitions. Of particular mention is the publication *Signs of Empathy in Contemporary Design*, which synthesizes in book format the philosophy and research work

carried out in recent years by team members together with students. The publication is complemented by a series of exhibitions, titled *Empathic Design*. An itinerary exhibition that has been held in various galleries in the cities of Wrocław and Łódź, Poland.



Above: *Plantstation* | Author and photographs: Marta Kluba, Master student | A modular interactive installation. Artistic and bio-spatial project that combines music and science with technology and craft. It makes it possible to interactively build a relationship between man and nature through sound.

Below: *Palma Pokoju* | Author and photographs: Paulina Woźny | Master student | A palm enclosed in a capsule filters oxygen taken from the outside in the process of photosynthesis. A sensory device prototype as a manifesto against air pollution.

Emphatic Design Exhibition

Neon Gallery at the Academy of Art and Design | Wrocław



Emphatic Design Exhibition | Neon Gallery at the Academy of Art and Design in Wrocław | Spring 2022

FINAL THOUGHTS

FINAL THOUGHTS

- How to interact, coexist and design with, within or towards our landscapes?
- How do we reimagine our habitats from biocultural and sociocultural points of view?

The present challenges we are facing in terms of social and ecological issues raise new sensitivities towards our environment. When thinking how to interact and coexist with our natural and cultural world, and how to engage in sensitive dialogues with our landscapes, it is essential to perceive and understand the landscape from a holistic sense. To be emphatic to its natural dynamics and being sensitive to the tangible and intangible factors that are part of its essence. Understand its spontaneity, porosity, natural cycles, and its self-regenerating essence. To learn from its biological and physical dynamics as the best medium to dialogue with it.

- How senses and experiences are sources for approaching, interpreting and intervening in our landscapes?
- How are our landscapes interconnected with sound, smell, taste, touch and sight?
- How are perception and experience a source for a sensory landscape practice?

With this approach, sensory cognition contributes to understanding, perceiving and interpreting our environment, where human perceptions broaden the landscape scope by connecting the character or atmosphere of particular territories into experiences. The senses become a means of interaction with the world, where site-approaching acquires an active role that embodies a notion and cognition of the surrounding.

On the basis of these initial reflections, the present dissertation raises, examines and elaborates a series of multidisciplinary questions on how, by interconnecting theory and praxis, and intertwining contextual knowledge, bodily experience, time-based and eco-social mindset, it contributes to developing a reflective and processual body of work focused on comprehensive and sensitive engagement of our landscapes. Understanding the broader definition of the concept of landscape as a social and cultural construct that emerges from the interaction of natural and human factors and understanding human senses as a key source of comprehension and interaction with the world, the present research aims to rethink and explore forms of interactivity with our landscapes from porosity and crossed perspectives.

- How to explore site-based experiences and environmental concerns towards the artistic-design process?

Along the research process different concerns have been explored, and instead of emphasizing only the outcomes, the investigation highlights the praxis-research as a constant search and continuous process, which has been enriched by a multiplicity of visions, methods and experiments. In this way, the research has been conceived as an open lab that allows the possibility of being constantly nurtured and enriched. With this premise, the research has been carried out through a process that is not necessarily linear, but multidirectional, intuitive and dynamic, in which each question ramifies into different insights or narratives, contributing from diverse angles to the body of the work, as an archipelago formed by different explorations, ideas and actions.

During the course of the research, a range of places and situations have become an important source of reference. Places, events, scenarios or geographies. Reflections, ideas, concepts, questions or works that have been influential in the development of the creative process. Since its conception, the research has been closely linked to the territory and the specificity of the place, where natural cycles, seasonality, ephemerality, or local knowledge have been constantly present. With this approach, the research offers the possibility of discovering and exploring diverse landscapes, and collaborating with a diversity of individuals, organizations and social groups. In particular actions, the explorations have been based on collaborative thinking, co-creation, participation, as well as interdisciplinarity and teamwork. From each of these experiences, there has been a mutual exchange of learning and reciprocal knowledge.

- How do artistic design practices contribute towards sensitive environmental reflection?
- How to incorporate landscape sensibilities into artistic practices?
- How to comprehend cultural and natural landscapes towards sensitive practices?

A significant aspect of our discipline is its ability to provide a wide range of possibilities that contribute to new forms of practices, methods, strategies, and expertise that address current and future challenges. In this sense, the approximations that emerge from the artistic-design disciplines must play a key role towards new ways of coexisting with our environments. Art and design practices can enhance positive approaches to our landscapes by outlining new narratives and empathic interactions. By exploring new ways of redefining the boundaries between natural and human habitats, art-design practices are able to address concerns towards new approaches to our environment, complemented by social and biocentric perspectives. One of the main issues that I find particularly interesting about environmental art-design disciplines, is the broad vision and wide scope, and how, from empathic approaches, the discipline shows us how to set aside the role of centrality as human beings to recognize ourselves as a small part of our planet. In this way, art-design approaches become a significant tool to activate ideas and processes that contribute to the interpretation of knowledges from complementary scientific, social or philosophical domains, in order to translate them into proximate forms of expression.

As a reflection to contemporary challenges, the present dissertation has raised a series of questions that contribute to rethink the scope of our discipline, opening scenarios and ways of imagining our environments, where humanistic and biological aspects can coexist. The present dissertation, above the specific outcomes or questions to be answered, is proposed as an open processual work that intends to generate questions and open paths of investigation that can be constantly enriched. I believe in research and education as fields of experimentation and continuous learning. I also believe that research praxis should be an ongoing process; in this sense, the dissertation has provided a framework, as a living laboratory, to explore, imagine and disseminate a series of ideas, concerns, and experiments that may contribute to generate new reflections, concepts and strategies, in order to expand and develop a more reflective forward-thinking.

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