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SENSORY LANDSCAPES

Art research paper

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to provide a wider range of environmental disciplines by highlighting a series of reflections, processes and artistic projects for a sensitive approach to our environment involving a combination of bodily experience and landscape awareness. Sensory Landscapes are based on practical research into progressive action designed to raise awareness and increase our understanding of the natural and human environment through the conception and results of artistic approaches to landscape using senses and experiences. As part of the process, a conductive thread weaves diverse geographies with the sensory experience of touching, smelling, observing, tasting and listening. Throughout this article, various ways of thinking and acting are explored, interweaving disciplines, media and places. At the same time, this article raises a series of questions that broaden the understanding of site-approximation and landscape concepts through a dialogue between artistic practice, critical thinking and environmental mindset. With this in mind, *Sensory Landscapes* is designed to be a conceptual framework for exploring various perceptions as a medium for approaching a given scenario, connecting tangible and intangible concepts to transform sensual concepts - smells, textures, tastes, sounds, scenes - into experiences.

Keywords

Senses; Perceptions; Sensory interventions; Art Interventions; Landscape; Site-Specific; Environmental Art; Artistic Practice; Multidiscipline

Introduction

Contemporary societies are dealing with challenges addressed by design and artistic disciplines searching for sensitive dialogues to generate ways of coexistence between natural and human-made environments. According to the definition of nature as “the phenomena of the physical world as a whole, including plants, animals, 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 article examines and provides a series of reflections and examples on how artistic-design practice can provide sensitive and mindset-based approaches to our landscapes.

In recent decades, human activities have significantly increased the impact of nature degradation.

Degradation occurs when the Earth’s natural resources are depleted. The resources affected include water, air and soil. Degradation also has an impact on our wildlife, plants, animals and micro-organisms³.

This process, together with existing environmental issues, is significantly increased by anthropogenic effects rather than natural factors. To preserve and enrich livable environments, we must shift our main priorities in life towards more ecological and sensitive behaviour.

We need to optimise the use and management of resources, sustainable development, adoption of green concepts and, above all, community participation in all developmental activities⁴.

In terms of artistic practice, sensory experience has become an essential approach to environmental issues that can provide receptive insights by raising emphatic questions on the relationship between human beings and nature. How do people perceive, experience and respond to their environment? How can perception and experience be a source for developing a landscape intervention? What is the relationship between landscape and sound, smell, taste, touch or vision? How can humans, animals and plants co-exist? How can we make this possible and transform our habitats from a biocentric point of view and not only an anthropocentric one?

With this perspective, my main field of interest focuses on the relationship between environmental design disciplines and artistic practices, and how this connection can be a means of establishing dialogues between natural habitats and society. Throughout this article, I will examine how, through nature-based approaches, I intend to establish artistic narratives for relating people and environment by exploring new aspects to redefine the boundaries between natural habitats and humankind by creating sensitive interventions that leave spaces for new encounters. This article provides a broader

1 *The Oxford Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (2 ed.), 2006, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>.

2 Council of Europe, *European Landscape Convention*, „European Treaty Series”, no 176, 2000.

3 M.P. Choudhary, G.S. Chauhan, Y.K. Kushwah, *Environmental Degradation. Causes, Impacts and Mitigation*, [in:] *National Seminar on Recent Advancements in Protection of Environment and its Management Issues*, Kota, Rajasthan 2015.

4 M.P. Choudhary, G.S. Chauhan, Y.K. Kushwah, *Environmental Degradation...*

understanding of these ideas, exemplified through a series of site-specific interventions examining how art-design practice, in connection with nature and perceptual experience, could provide a conceptual framework to intervene in specific cases.

Nature-based approach

Current artistic practices focused on nature-based approach as a main input are mainly centered on the premise of -learning from nature-. According to environmental sound composer Frederick Bianchi, “artists have always been drawn to the principles of design and structure inherent in nature”⁵. When considering how to interact within nature and how to intervene in a particular landscape, it is essential to perceive and understand the natural environment from a holistic point of view. To emphasise its natural dynamics and be 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 create a dialogue with it, without trying to modify or control its biological dynamics or spontaneity. On the contrary, we should try to let nature perform its own role, as a living and interconnected organism in constant evolution, of which the human being is only a part. To 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, because nature grows, rests and regenerates itself. To understand the temperament of nature, which expresses itself in different ways, at moments of complete calm or at times when it expresses its sheer strength and impetuosity, because natural phenomena underline the power of nature over human beings. To understand the role and significance of each ecosystem and how it functions as part of an interconnected and unified whole. To understand that each element or organism that conforms our environment, regardless of its scale, micro or macro, is a fundamental part of the natural balance, part of a whole, and how each of them adapts and interacts according to the conditions of its own environment.

When thinking about designing something within nature, it may be useful to consider new approaches based on sensitiveness, empathy and reciprocity, replacing existing models based only on the human being as a central figure: approaches that underline the essence of nature in order to promote a positive impact on the natural environment while at the same time providing benefits to local communities.

Perceptual approximation. Sensory Landscapes

The body is our general medium for having a world (Maurice Merleau-Ponty)⁶

Sensory Landscapes is an approach to research developed within my artistic practice. It aims to raise awareness of, explore and understand the natural and human-made environment based on the conception and results of artistic design processes derived from perceptions and experiences. The aim of this approach is to develop a broader comprehension of landscape and new approaches to it, using diverse processes that appeal to different senses and increase people's awareness of the environment by exploring human perceptions. This approach also aims to increase bodily experience and natural environment awareness by using perceptions as a method of approaching the context, connecting concepts that transform different aspects of sense into experiences: smells, textures, tastes, sounds, scenes. The research is linked by a guiding thread that intertwines textures, smells, sounds, tastes, scenes and other perceptive landscapes.

Conductive thread: Cartography of senses

During the process, a conductive thread weaves intertwines geographical areas with the sensory experience of touching, smelling, observing, tasting and listening.

- Soundscapes: the acoustics of natural and urban environments.
- Tastescapes: productive landscapes, urban agricultures and gastronomic landscapes.
- Scentscapes: Cultural and natural smellscapes. The sense of smell as an evocative connection associated with space, memory and experience.
- Hapticscapes: The experience of touching and feeling temperatures.
- Visualscapes: The visual perception. Scenery and time and the cyclic sense of time and nature.

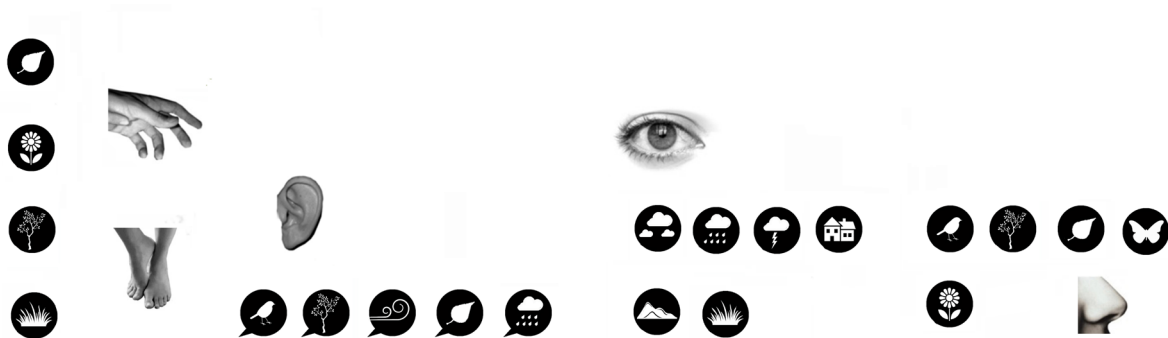


Fig. 1. *Body-nature-senses*, Ivan Juarez.

6 M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 1945.

Theory and praxis

According to different studies on the use of senses in artistic environmental practices, and how this approach has become a conceptual frame for intervening in the cultural and natural environment, researchers, theoreticians and practitioners have provided important contributions to this connection. A body of literature is based on the association between perceptual experience and site approximation and how these concepts have contributed as a theoretical framework to explore a meaningful approach to artistic- design practice and as an essential step towards the development of discipline. The following paragraphs examine concepts related to the notion of place: Pope (1731), Heidegger (1971), Norberg-Schulz (1980) i Lynch (1960). They also examine ideas based on tangible and intangible landscapes in connection to the sensory characteristics of site: Pallasmaa (2005), Careri (2013), Hedfors (2003), Ingold (2007), Porteus (1985), Gordon, L.J. (2018), Tolaas (2009).

Site approximation: The Genius Loci. Sense of Place

Place is a centre of meaning constructed by experience (Yi-Fu Tuan)⁷.

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 the *genius loci*. The initial notion genius loci in landscape design came in the eighteenth century, when romantic writers, inspired by the Picturesque style, developed a new aesthetic appreciation of landscapes⁸. The English poet Alexander Pope introduced the Latin term meaning -the genius of the place- as an essential value in garden design. In his verse - Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington - he suggests the commitment of the architect to be sensitive to the unique qualities of the place. He also asserts that

[...] gardening must be adapted to the context in which it is located, in terms of architecture and gardening [...] and everything must be adapted to the genius of the place, and [...] beauties not forced into it, but resulting from it⁹.

In the twentieth century, the term *genius loci* was associated with the concept of place-making, initiated from the philosophical discourse of -phenomenology of place-. According to Elie Haddad, a researcher from the Lebanese American University, the phenomenological perception in architectural theory used the later writings of the German philosopher Martin Heidegger as its main reference point, particularly the series of essays: *On the Essence of Truth, The Origin of the Work of Art, and Building, Dwelling, Thinking*¹⁰. 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

7 Y.-F. Tuan, *Place. An experiential perspective*, „The Geographical Review”, 65 (1975), no 2, p. 151.

8 G. Jivén, P.J. Larkham, *Sense of Place, Authenticity and Character. A Commentary*, „Journal of Urban Design”, 8 (2003), nr 1, pp. 67–81.

9 A. Pope, *Epistle IV, to Richard Boyle Earl of Burlington*, 1731, pp. 57–60.

10 E.G. Haddad, *Christian Norberg Schulz and the Project of Phenomenology in Architecture*, „Architecture Theory Review”, 15 (2010), no 1, pp. 88–101.

book, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, introduces the concept -spirit of the place-, suggesting that the meaning of this term must be understood before being developed. For the historian and theoretician Norberg-Schulz, it is essential to comprehend the landscape-related concepts of order, character, light, configuration and location¹¹.

Soundscapes. Listening landscapes

Sound is invisible but has the power to change the space characteristics we occupy (J. Schulz-Dornburg)¹².

While sound has not received significant emphasis, compared to vision, in the perception of place, it performs a fundamental part in an individual's notion of landscape. This field explores concepts that have contributed to the understanding of the discipline in the field of sound and acoustics. 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 environment¹³. As Pistrick and Isnart, stated: the term of soundscape was first created by R. Murray Schafer. In his book *The Tuning of the World* (1977)¹⁴ Schafer describes the soundscape as any acoustic field of study; it may be a musical composition or an acoustic environment. For Pistrick and 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»"¹⁵. In his thesis, Hedfors analyses sound in a landscape architecture context. He proposes a theoretical instrument, named *The model of prominence* as a starting point for landscape perception¹⁶.

Even though acoustic space does not have specific boundaries and is less precise in terms of orientation and localization¹⁷, 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 immersed¹⁸.

11 Ch. Norberg-Schulz, *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture*, New York 1980.

12 J. Schulz-Dornburg, *Art and Architecture. New Affinities*, Barcelona 2000.

13 E. Pistrick, C. Isnart, *Landscapes, soundscapes, mindscapes. Introduction*, „Etnográfica. Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia”, vol. 17 (2013), no 3, pp. 503–513, <http://etnografica.revues.org/3213> [accessed: 16/04/2016].

14 E. Pistrick, C. Isnart, *Landscapes, soundscapes, mindscapes. Introduction*.

15 E. Pistrick, C. Isnart, *Landscapes, soundscapes, mindscapes. Introduction*.

16 P. Hedfors, *Site Soundscapes. Landscape architecture in the light of sound*, PhD Thesis dissertation, Uppsala 2003.

17 J.D. Porteous, *Environmental aesthetics: ideas, politics and planning* Routledge Academic, London 1996, p. 33.

18 T. Ingold, *Against soundscape*, [in:] *Autumn Leaves: Sound and the Environment in Artistic Practice*, ed. E. Carlyle, Paris 2007, pp.10–13.



Fig. 2. *Sound mappings*, Odra river, Wrocław, Poland, photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Smellscape and scentscape experience

The nostrils awake a forgotten image and fall into a vivid dream. The nose makes the eyes remember (J. Pallasmaa)¹⁹.

Intangible landscapes are particularly defined by scents, providing significant information on micro and macro aspects of our environment. By discussing this topic, I intend to explore the human sense of smell as an intangible connection to landscape which is closely associated with emotion, memory and orientation. Ethereal landscapes that highlight the olfactory experience. Based on the concept -smellscape-, cultural geographer Douglas Porteus explores the emotional effects associated with place and time and the importance of this sense for cultural landscape identity. He asserts “The smellscape is an emotive environment, not an intellectual one, and, as such, it should be cherished”²⁰. In his opinion, smellscape is “fragmentary in space and episodic in time”²¹. For the Norwegian contemporary artist Sissel Tolaas “smell is the first sense through which we interact with the world and react to it. We smell before we see”²². For her “smells are very closely associated with personal and group

19 J. Pallasmaa, *The eyes of the Skin. Architecture and the Senses*, Wiley Academy, Great Britain 1994.

20 J. D. Porteous, *Smellscape. Progress in Physical Geography*, „Earth and Environment”, 9 (1985), pp. 356–378.

21 J. D. Porteous, *Smellscape...*

22 S. Tolaas, *The city from the perspective of the nose*, [in:] *Ecological Urbanism*, ed. M. Mostafavi, G. Doherty, Zürich 2009, pp. 37–38.

identity”²³. In the book chapter titled *The city from the Perspective of the Nose*, Tolaas has reviewed how people and designers can learn and discover new codes, methods and interactions through smell-related environments. In her research project -Talking Nose_Mexico City-, based on smell as a medium for navigating through the city, she concludes that the study of smells provides additional dimensions to understanding our cities. Smell enriches sensual experience by providing inputs for environmental design²⁴.

Tactile landscapes and haptic environments

The hands want to see, the eyes want to caress (W. Goethe)²⁵.

Surfaces, textures and materials transmit a complex language that can suggest emotional responses. Concerning tactile experience as a significant source of spatial and place connection, the Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa defines touch as “the sensory mode which integrates our experience of the world and of ourselves”²⁶. Pallasmaa has developed an extensive body of literature on the significance of touch as a bodily and emotional expression. In his writings *Hapticity and Time* (2005) and *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (1994) he reflects on the significance of the haptic sense in spatial disciplines and how “all the senses, including vision, are extensions of the sense of touch”. In his opinion, “senses are specialisations of the skin, and all sensory experiences are related to tactility”²⁷.

According to research studies from Takehito Kikuchi, from the University of Oita in Japan, it is essential to recognise the importance of the foot sense for the environmental identification²⁸. From a complementary point of view, in accordance with the Health site, walking on natural textures can stimulate body areas, helping the human being to stay healthy in body and mind and, consequently, there are positive reasons to perform this activity: it connects to the Earth, stimulates the senses and the whole body, calms the mind and neutralises electrical energy²⁹.

Natural textures and surfaces also transmit positive haptic perceptions, and through them it is possible to perceive patterns, spots, cracks, stripes or lumps. This area also examines the positive relationship between tactile perception with natural phenomena such as fog, wind, rain or weather, and its connection with natural elements, such as water, leaves, barks or trees. What does a plant leaf feel like? Is it smooth? hard or soft?, warm or cold?, wet or dry?

23 S. Tolaas, *The city from the perspective of the nose*.

24 S. Tolaas, *The city from the perspective of the nose*.

25 J.W. Goethe, *Römische Elegien V*, 1790–1795.

26 J. Pallasmaa, *Hapticity and Time. Notes on Fragile Architecture*, „Architectural Review”, 207 (2000), pp. 78–84.

27 J. Pallasmaa, *The eyes of the Skin. Architecture and the Senses*.

28 T. Kikuchi, *Contribution of senses of foot for identification of shape, elasticity and tilt angle of ground*, [w:] *23rd International Conference on Artificial Reality and Telexistence (ICAT)*, Tokio 2013, pp. 61–66.

29 Health site, thehealthsite.com.



Fig. 3. Trees barks, Wrocław, Poland, photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Landscapes of taste

This theme explores interactions between people, food and landscapes, and focuses on searching dialogues between gustatory perception and the landscape concepts of -productive landscapes, urban agriculture, site food production, local gastronomy, food systems and gastronomical landscapes-. The research also highlights the importance of finding connections between agricultural practices and artistic strategies to redefine the boundaries between community and productive landscapes within contemporary life. On this topic, landscape architects Andre Viljoen, Joe Howe and Katrin Bohn examine the value of urban agricultures, highlighting farming values integrated inside the edible city in their book *Continuous Productive Urban Landscape* (CPUL). They also propose a series of strategies to reinforce the importance of this activity by implementing community models of environmentally sustainable urban living³⁰.

On the other hand, local food and gastronomy are key concepts for the definition of cultural landscape identity, human health and sustainable environment. On this theme, Dr. Line Gordon, director of the Stockholm Resilience Center³¹ and board of directors of the EAT Foundation, a science-based global platform for food system transformation³², conducts innovative research focused on -gastronomic landscapes-. In order to find connections and sensory narratives on this specific subject, Gordon investigates local food practices that emphasise the role of seasonality, ecological practices, land-use models and local biological-cultural heritage.

30 A. Viljoen, K. Howe, *Continuous Productive Urban Landscapes (CPULs): Designing Urban Agriculture for Sustainable Cities*, Architectural Press, UK 2005.

31 <https://www.stockholmresilience.org/>.

32 eatforum.org.

Visual landscapes: scenery and 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 (Luis Barragan)³³.

This approach is focused on the way of seeing landscapes. It is based on how the cyclical sense of time and seasonal change suggest a temporal process to observe the environment. Using this approach, connections between the visual sense and the environment are explored, as a symbiotic relationship, with a view to understanding landscape scenarios. This field also provides an insight into visual approaches to landscape visual, focusing on the notions of scenery and close-up view, in which the value of an individual part is highlighted to emphasise the whole pattern.



Fig. 4. Trees seasonality, Wrocław, Poland, photographs: Ivan Juarez.

According to Karanika Myrto, a researcher from the Royal College of Art “spatial experience is a synthesis of all of our senses, and in the modern perception of the approach to sensory issues, vision has been the dominant sense”³⁴. On the other hand, Dr. Yi-Fu Tuan, professor of geography at the University of Minnesota, asserts:

[...] 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 objectively³⁵.

In his opinion, seeing is thinking, in the sense that it is a discerning and constructive activity; it creates patterns of reality adapted to human purposes³⁶.

33 L. Barragan, *Pritzker Prize Acceptance Letter*, The Pritzker Architecture Prize, 1980, The Hyatt Foundation, http://www.pritzkerprize.com/.../1980_Acceptance_Speech [accessed:15/11/2021].

34 M. Karanika, *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, UK*, 2009 <http://www.aisb.org.uk/convention/.pdf> [accessed: 12/04/2016].

35 Y.-F. Tuan, *Place. An experiential perspective*, p. 151.

36 Y.-F. Tuan, *Place. An experiential perspective*, p. 151.

Seasonality and landscapes

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 principle „Garden in Motion” in his own experimental garden – La Vallée. For him „the *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 and olfactory. This design experience was first described by Clément in 1984 on his article *Mastering Neglected Land*, and subsequently developed as a theory, which was extended to other contexts and scales³⁷. A complementary time-based approach comes from the Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf, who also emphasises the seasonal life cycle of the vegetation in his compositions. 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 approach as main principle for garden design, in which time and space are essential factors in creating changing rhythms and constant seasonal flows³⁸.

Research performed in the field of senses & landscapes

Based on concepts and practices explained previously, and along with my practice-research trajectory, I have developed a body of work focused on academic, artistic and cultural initiatives that explore diverse connotations associated with the human perception of landscape and site as well as on-site interventions exploring the integration of landscape concepts and natural cycles. This field of research includes the conception of a variety of site-specific works conceived in different contexts and geographies. A series of site-intervention projects in relation to people’s connection to locality that promote and integrate experience and nature-based processes. I have developed these concepts through a wide variety of projects, ranging from landscaping projects, ecological and site-specific interventions, public art engagement, place making, low-impact interventions and urban acupuncture in installations, body architectures, bio-sculptures, devices as well as handicrafts and objects.

37 G. Clément, *El jardín en movimiento*, Barcelona 2012.

38 P. Oudolf, N. Kingsbury, *Planting Design: Gardens in Time and Space*, Timber Press, UK, 2005.

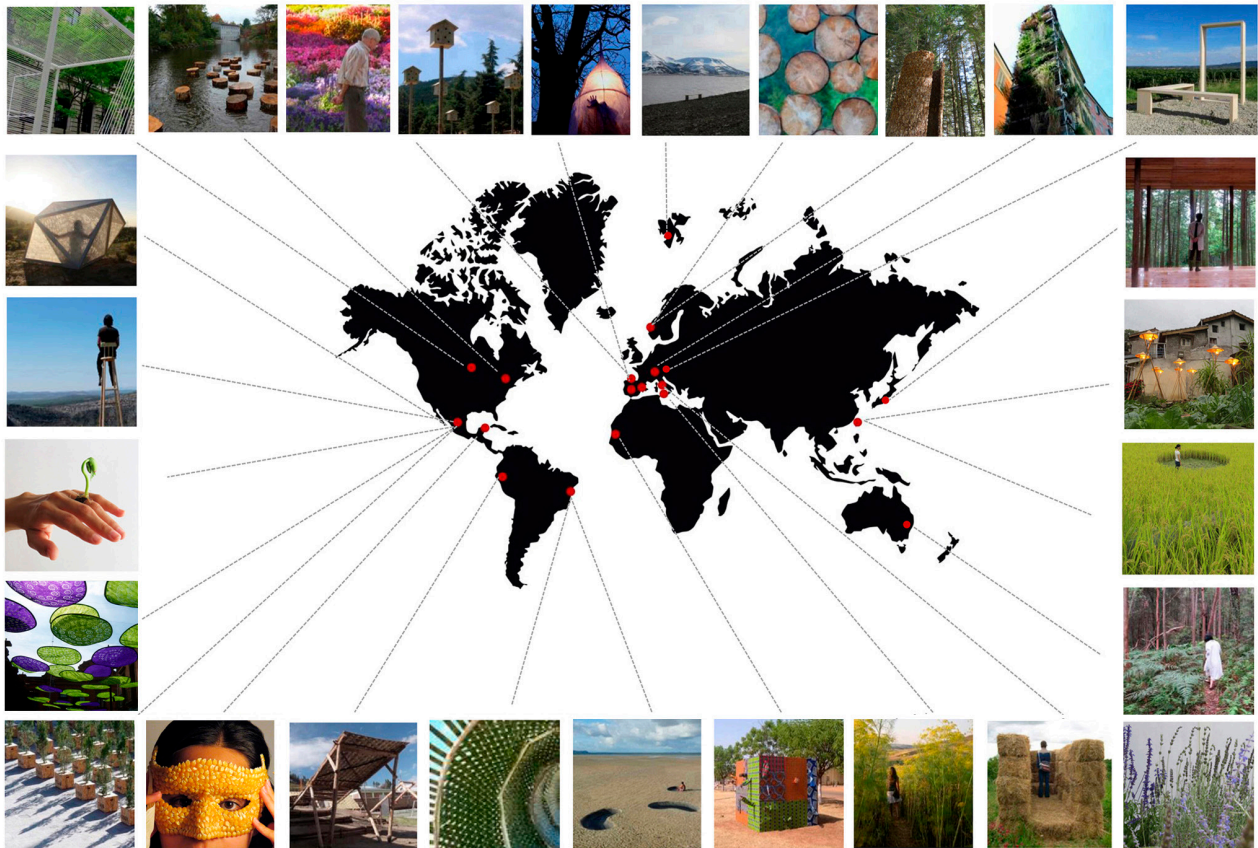


Fig. 5. Site-specific interventions, Ivan Juarez.

Multi-directional and dynamic research process

During the development of the research, I propose to carry out a process that is not necessarily linear, but multidirectional, intuitive and dynamic, in which each project can be ramified into different areas or narratives. New paths emerge from each experience, generating diverse explorations that can be integrated as gears in the body of work. The research integrates cross-disciplinary contributions and examines connections between theory, sensitive approaches and practice, by exploring diverse methods of searching – collecting, interpreting, experimenting, mapping or intervening.

Development of phases

Although the process is not necessarily linear and involves intuition as part of the creative process, in general terms, the phases in which I constantly elaborate site projects are developed through the following main steps:

- Developing main research questions and contextual framework
- Recognising the natural and cultural values and understanding how the environment functions
- Experiencing specific environments through sensorial perceptions and approaches to specific sites
- Interpreting the concepts that have been experienced and recognised through sensory art-design projects.

Artworks. Site-specific interventions

In order to provide a broader comprehension of the ideas mentioned previously and give examples of said ideas, I will briefly describe a series of artworks that have been developed in different landscapes. The examples described below explore and reinterpret specific sites in connection with bodily experience and in response to their physical context - in other words, site works that could not be generated in any other places than that where they were conceived and realised.

Soundscapes

Echoes from the sea, Mallorca, Spain. A sensory experience of the Mediterranean landscape

Based on the idea of listening to the symphony of the Mediterranean Sea, with its rhythms, musicality, and sonic ambience, this project proposes a new dialogue with the surrounding landscape through the sensory experience of hearing. The acoustic installation, as an instrument that plays sounds from nature, is located on a steep cliff on the east coast of the Island of Majorca, above the Mediterranean Sea. From the lime stones, the piece gives a sensitive notion to the natural environment, bringing a new perception to the marine context through bodily experience. In this way, the piece makes a connection to the ocean through its acoustic environment by amplifying the echoes from the sea; wind, birds, rain and breeze.

The acoustic device explores the use of a local material terracotta, a handmade resource that responds to the cultural environment of the island. The project has been implemented with the support of the Utzon Foundation³⁹ and the Danish Arts Foundation Committee for Architecture⁴⁰.

39 Utzon Foundation, <https://utzoncenter.dk/en/content/the-utzon-foundation-6136>.

40 Danish Arts Foundation Committee for Architecture, <https://www.kunst.dk/english/architecture-1>.



Fig. 6. Soundscapes, Mallorca, Spain, project and photograph: Ivan Juarez.

Sound Device. Body and sound, Granada, Hiszpania, Ivan Juarez and Francisco Manuel Diaz, luthier and guitar maker from Granada

Sound Device pays tribute to the musical heritage of Granada, a city recognised internationally for its extraordinary patrimony of guitar makers. The handmade guitar is a local craft of great tradition in Granada with important contributions to the Spanish and Flamenco musical instrument that has been transmitted over several generations. In this way, the piece pays homage to the cultural environment of the city by exploring new ways of bodily interaction, carrying an acoustic instrument. The piece proposes a new approach to the string instrument as a device related to the body, integrating sculpture and sound by exploring the auditive perception through corporal and tactile experience. The piece has been handmade using a process that applies the same techniques and materials used in the construction of the traditional guitar. The object has been made of Cypress wood from the Alhambra and Palo Santo wood. The work is meant to be a thought-reflecting invitation towards new dialogues between body and cultural intangible landscape.

The project is the result of co-operation between Francisco Manuel Diaz, a luthier and guitar maker from Granada and Ivan Juarez, as part of the cultural project -Handcrafters, Artists and Designers Meeting-, organised by the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Granada and the Albaycin Centre.

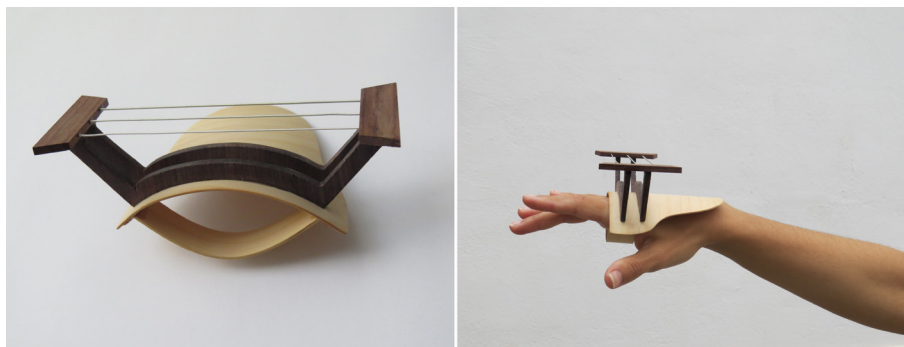


Fig. 7. *Sound device*, Granada, Hiszpania, artwork by Ivan Juarez and Francisco Diaz, photographs: Ivan Juarez.



Fig. 8. *La Alhambra*, Granada, Spain, Cultural heritage, photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Tascapes

Inner Rice Field, Kamiyama, Japonia

The natural scenery of Kamiyama village, located on Shikoku Island, Japan is characterised by a continuous dialogue between the forest, agricultural and water landscape. Over the centuries, the geography of this mountainous territory has been culturally modified, shaping a landscape of significant historical value. Its slopes and steep areas have been transformed into a landscape system of terraced rice (*tanada*⁴¹ in Japanese), in which the water, during its descent, performs an important role. This pays a tribute to the rice seed as an essential cereal in Japanese culture. At the same time, it also pays a tribute to the agricultural activity of rice farming which has been common practice in Japan for thousands of years, emphasising the importance of this agricultural activity and the cultural and symbolic landscape that it generates.

The intervention was conceived during the autumn, a fundamental harvest season, when the terraced rice fields change their colors into bright golden tones. The intervention creates a void made from the action of harvesting, a circular inner space that represents the natural cycle and from which it is possible to contemplate the scenery of the landscape.

The action was carried out in co-operation with local farmers of Kamiyama, with the support of the KAIR Kamiyama Cultural Association⁴².

41 Tanada, 棚田, <https://www.japanese-wiki-corpus.org/history/Tanada.html>.

42 KAIR, in Kamiyama. <https://www.in-kamiyama.jp/en/en/art/kair/>.



Fig. 9. *Inner Rice Field*, Kamiyama, Japan, artwork and photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Scentscapes*Aromatic & Pollinator garden, Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Sicily, Italy*

Conceived as a tribute to the Mediterranean landscape, this site-specific intervention was located in a public outdoor space in Farm Cultural Park, a cultural complex located in the Sette Cortili (Seven Courtyards) neighborhood of the town of Favara in Sicily. Farm Cultural Park⁴³ is a community model that in recent years has positively transformed the urban and social fabric through artistic and cultural projects, where the inhabitants co-exist among terraces, patios, squares and gardens in connection with public art works, murals, exhibition spaces and educational institutions such as the School of Architecture for Children.

The garden intervention recovers an ancient disused terrace and gives a new meaning to this place by providing a collection of plants that represent the heritage of the Mediterranean culture. The installation proposes an olfactory and pollinator area where the fragrances of various aromatic plants are mixed: lavender, thyme, rosemary, peroska, sage and mints - natural fragrances that attract diverse species of bees, butterflies and other insects by activating scent experience and memory. In this way, the project serves as an interactive and experiential space that appeals to the diversity of plant and animal life in urban habitats by activating different senses.

43 Farm Cultural Park, <https://www.farmculturalpark.com/>.

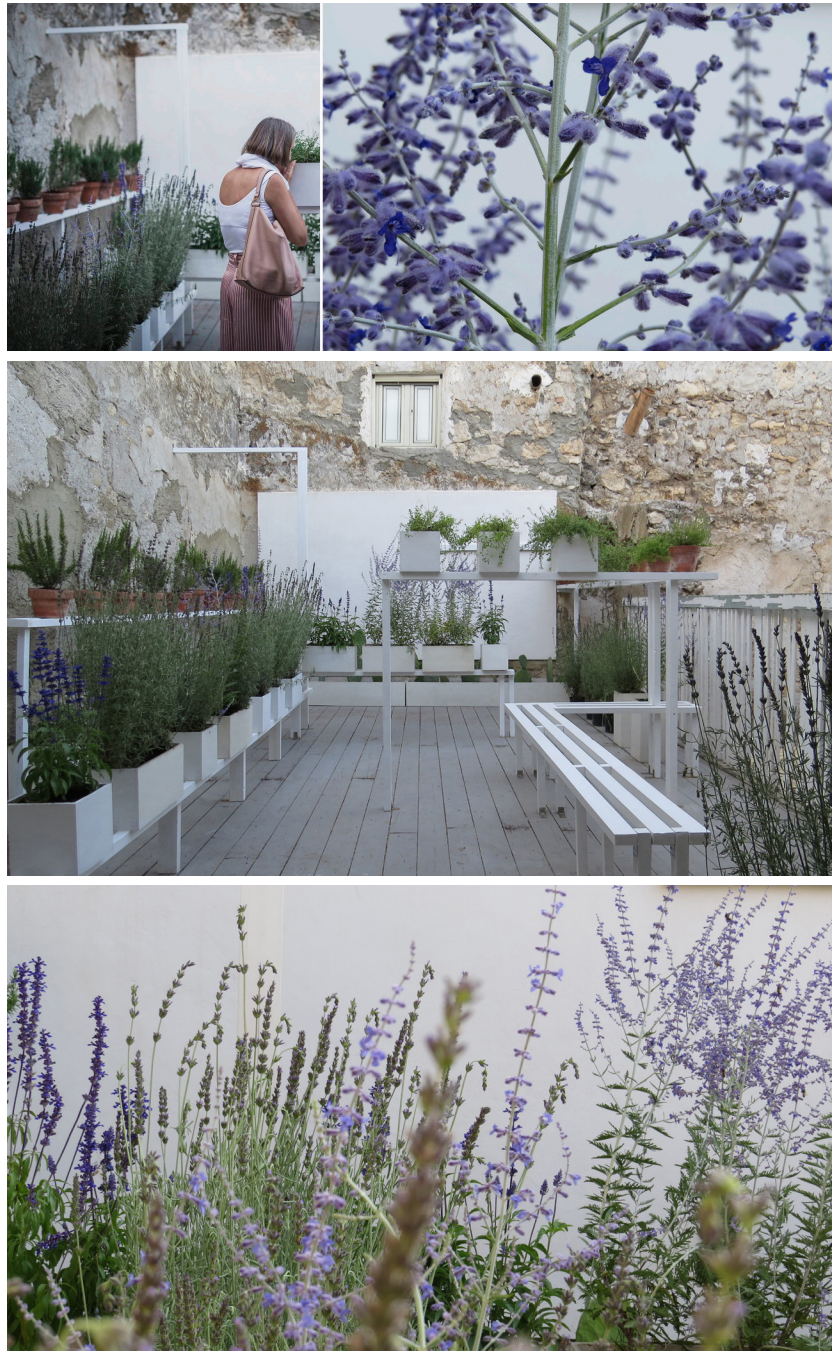


Fig. 10. *Pollinator space*, Farm Cultural Park, Favara, Sicily, Italy, artwork and photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Hapticscapes

Traces. Unveiling surfaces, Jørn Utzon's Can Lis House, Mallorca, Spain

Can Lis house⁴⁴ conceived by Danish architect Jørn Utzon in 1971, describes the expressive potential of materials to interpret the varied coastal landscapes of Majorca and vernacular details and building solutions that can be found in the local culture, in the stables and farmhouses spread throughout the island's countryside.

This is series of drawings that examine the significance of touching materials as a bodily experience. Traces from haptic surfaces are used as a poetic language to reflect how time passes and raise awareness of deterioration caused by exposure to the ocean. Rain, salty wind or sunlight; temperature and climate; natural factors that give the house a kind of sensitive materiality.

The drawings pay homage to the dialogue between time, matter and the Mediterranean landscape of Majorca. Drawing as an experience that unveils diverse tactile qualities -carving patterns, cavities, impurities, corrosion- or the direct traces of production, preserving the marks left by the process of fabricating tools.

It is a series of traces used as textural transcriptions in which the haptic perception of the hands explores tectonics, matter and diverse states: smooth, rough, soft, sharp, cold, warm. The materials express various perceptual properties: the warm, porous and rough surfaces of the Marès sandstone, used for exterior walls and pillars; Santanyi limestone on the beige color range; porous and denser for the house floor; or the warm-gray, cool-silver gray and reddish colors with perceptible year rings from Madera Norte, a Majorcan pinewood used for wooden doors.

The series of drawings have been made with various materials, such as graphite and charcoal from a pine tree, burnt by thunderstorm lightning, located in the surroundings of the house.

The project was implemented with the support of the Utzon Foundation and the Danish Arts Foundation Committee for Architecture.

44 Utzon Center, Can Lis house, <http://utzoncenter.dk/en/content/can-lis> [accessed: 17.11.2021].



Fig. 11. *Traces. Unveiling surfaces*, Jørn Utzon's Can Lis House, Mallorca, Spain, artwork and photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Visualscapes

Sky-Cabin, Pyrenees, Andorra

The Pyrenees mountain range, in the principality of Andorra, embraces a complex landscape of forests, high mountains and hilly meadows, with diverse landforms and distinctive natural and cultural values. The site intervention *Sky-Cabin* pays homage to this landscape, as well as the medieval chapels and mountain shelters. Pyrenean rural architecture is characterised by small and simple constructions that form a kind of dialogue with the natural environment.

The *Sky-Cabin* is located on the eastern slopes of Coma Pedrosa, the highest mountain in Andorra. This intervention emerges from the horizon through a wooden enclosure that absorbs the beholder into the landscape of the Pyrenees, directing his or her gaze towards a fragment of the sky. From the inside, this frames and creates a scenery as well as an inner space of light and shadow where the atmosphere transforms constantly: a different sky color for every moment and a unique experience for each person. The intervention seeks to create a place for self-reflection by expanding the limits of the space through people's sensory experiences. From the inside, it is possible to hear the surrounding landscape and recognise the symphony of the mountain forest that adds soundscapes to the site.



Fig. 12. *Sky-Cabin*, Pyrenees, Andorra, exterior and interior view, project and photographs: Ivan Juarez.

Final thoughts / Summary

The purpose of the concepts, experiences, processes and examples described above, which highlight the connection between perceptual experience and approaches to given sites, is to raise awareness of and promote open dialogues between artistic practice and landscapes. From diverse experiences developed throughout my artistic practice, which have been enriched and inspired by the vision of various theorists and practitioners, this article does not exactly provide answers to any questions; instead, it proposes a series of reflections on how to form a dialogue with our landscape by being receptive to it as we explore our senses. The creative research process emphasises the importance of how, since its conception, the artistic project should be closely joined to its surroundings, developing a connection with the landscape by exploring natural cycles, local knowledge, materials and techniques. In this way, the site work interacts with the environment, generating new forms of co-existence. With this in mind, *Sensory Landscapes* seeks to explore sensitive forms of co-existence between human beings and nature by promoting artistic attitudes to environmental issues. This raises a series of questions as to how the phenomenological approach could become an artistic design medium to understand and intervene in the cultural and natural environment, and how we can shape our reflections, concepts and attitudes towards reflective thinking and practice.

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