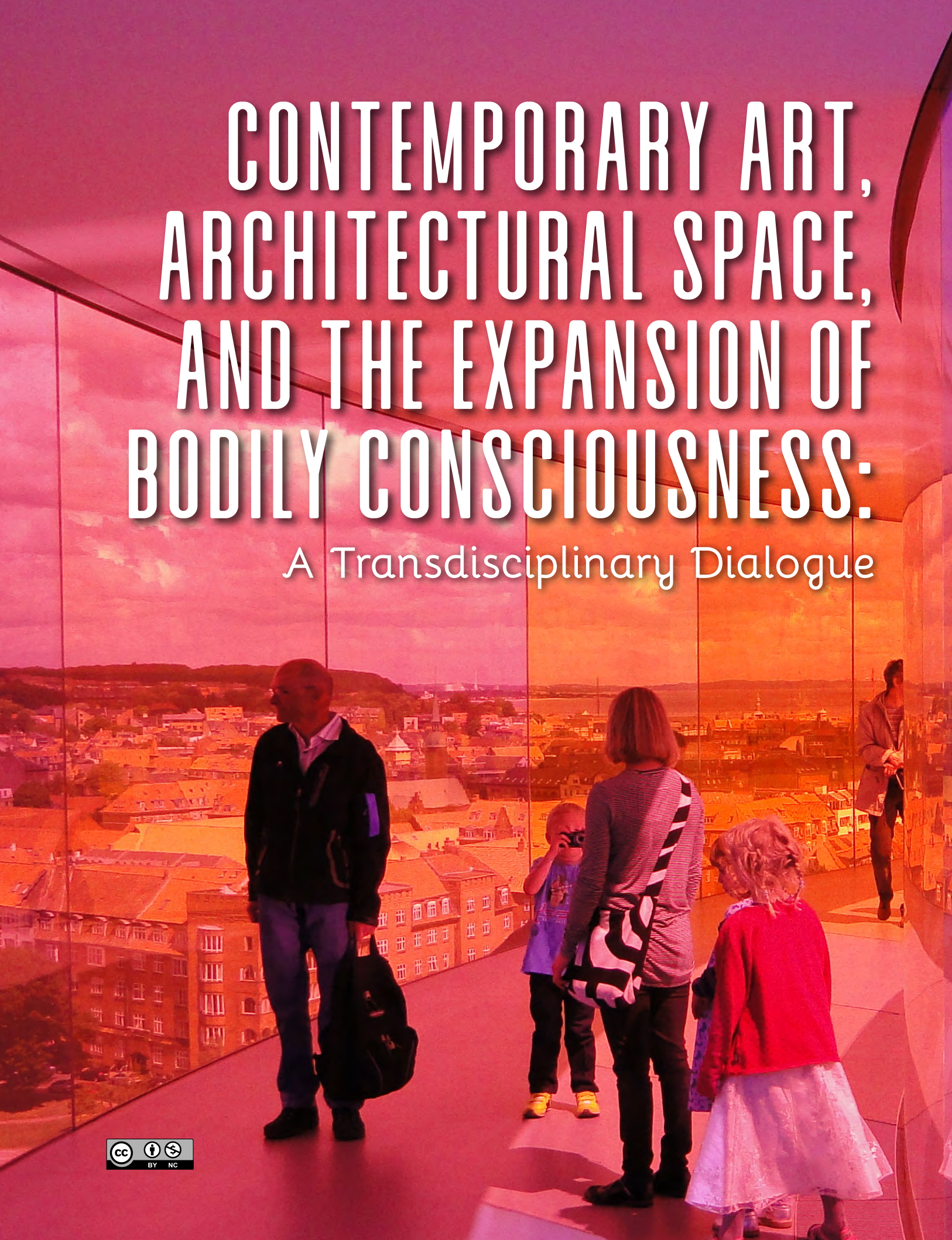
CONTEMPORARY ART, ARCHITECTURAL SPACE, AND THE EXPANSION OF BODILY CONSCIOUSNESS:

A Transdisciplinary Dialogue



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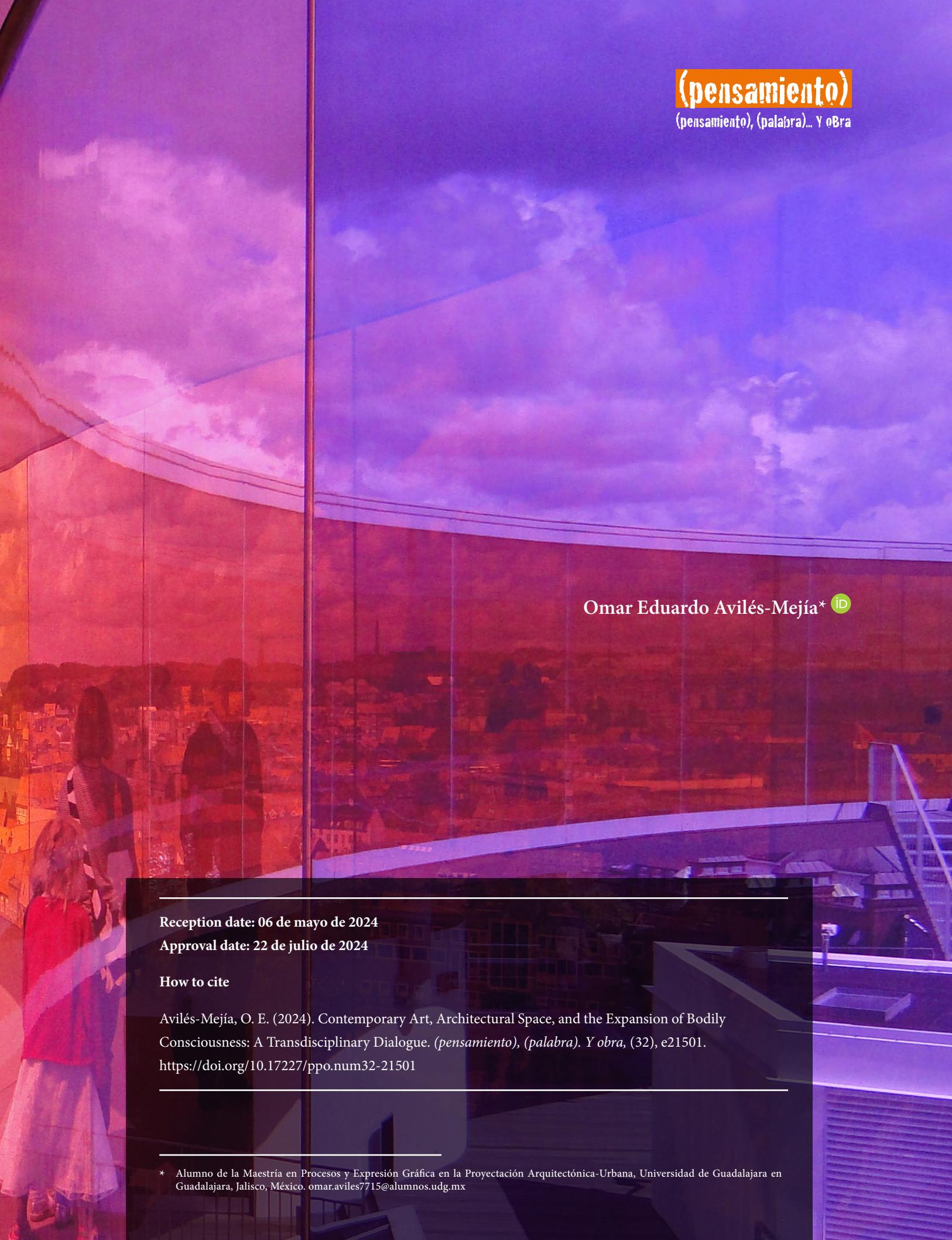

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Reception date: 06 de mayo de 2024
Approval date: 22 de julio de 2024

How to cite

Avilés-Mejía, O. E. (2024). Contemporary Art, Architectural Space, and the Expansion of Bodily Consciousness: A Transdisciplinary Dialogue. *(pensamiento), (palabra). Y obra,* (32), e21501. https://doi.org/10.17227/ppo.num32-21501

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Abstract

This paper critically analyzes contemporary architectural practices, focusing on the tendency towards the visual, which Juhani Pallasmaa calls "ocularcentrism". This preference for the visual minimizes the integration of and attention to the other senses in the architectural experience, presenting a significant challenge to the sensory perception of spaces. In parallel, the article establishes a link between architecture and other art forms, such as those proposed by contemporary art, which, by interacting in the architectural space, can foster the development of bodily intelligence, a concept proposed by Howard Gardner in his theory of Multiple Intelligences. It also highlights how the conventional boundaries between these disciplines are becoming increasingly blurred, creating spaces that promote active physical interaction and sensory immersion.

Keywords: contemporary art; architectural space; multiple intelligences; movement; interactivity; senses; perception

Arte Contemporânea, Espaço Arquitetônico e a Expansão da Consciência Corporal: Um Diálogo Transdisciplinar

Resumo

Este artigo apresenta uma análise crítica das práticas arquitetônicas contemporâneas, com especial incidência na tendência para o visual, aquilo a que Juhani Pallasmaa chama "ocularcentrismo". Esta preferência pelo visual minimiza a integração e a atenção aos outros sentidos na experiência arquitetônica, representando um desafio significativo para a percepção sensorial dos espaços. Paralelamente, o artigo estabelece uma ligação entre a arquitetura e outras formas de arte, como as propostas pela arte contemporânea, que, ao interagirem no espaço arquitetônico, podem promover o desenvolvimento da inteligência corporal, um conceito proposto por Howard Gardner na sua teoria das Inteligências Múltiplas. Além disso, salienta como as fronteiras convencionais entre estas disciplinas estão tornando-se cada vez mais tênues, criando espaços que promovem a interação física ativa e a imersão sensorial.

Palavras-chave: arte contemporânea; espaço arquitetônico; inteligências múltiplas; movimento; interatividade; sentidos; percepção

Arte contemporáneo, espacio arquitectónico y la expansión a la conciencia corporal: un diálogo transdisciplinar

Resumen

Este documento plantea un análisis crítico de las prácticas arquitectónicas contemporáneas, con un enfoque particular en la tendencia hacia lo visual, a lo que Juhani Pallasmaa denomina "ocularcentrismo". Esta preferencia por lo visual minimiza la integración y atención hacia los demás sentidos en la experiencia arquitectónica, presentando un desafío significativo en la percepción sensorial de los espacios. Paralelamente, el artículo establece un vínculo entre la arquitectura y otras formas de arte, como las propuestas por el arte contemporáneo, que, al interactuar en el espacio arquitectónico, pueden fomentar el desarrollo de la inteligencia corporal, un concepto propuesto por Howard Gardner en su teoría de las Inteligencias Múltiples. Además, se destaca cómo las fronteras convencionales entre estas disciplinas se están volviendo cada vez más difusas, creando espacios que promueven una interacción física activa y la inmersión sensorial.

Palabras clave: arte contemporáneo; espacio arquitectónico; inteligencias múltiples; movimiento; interactividad; sentidos; percepción

Introduction

This theoretical document adopts a qualitative approach, delving through an interpretive analysis into how architectural spaces serve not only as static backdrops for artistic works but also as living sets that enhance people's sensory and physical experiences, thus promoting the development of bodily intelligence as proposed by Howard Gardner. Through this study, we aim to stimulate deep reflection on the dynamic interaction between architectural space and contemporary art, emphasizing how this symbiosis can significantly enrich both the functionality and perception of spaces.

The general objective of this analysis is to delve deeper into how architectural spaces do not merely function as passive backdrops but rather catalyze enriching and multidimensional experiences that invite the user's active reflection and physical participation. Specific objectives include analyzing how contemporary art, through its diverse experiments, utilizes architectural space to create dynamic interactions, as well as examining the role of movement and applied technology in artistic expressions, in the transformation of architectural spaces into sensorially rich and participatory environments.

To achieve these objectives, the study is based on an analytical and interpretive methodology, focused on the qualitative review of key texts and examples that demonstrate the interaction of both disciplines in the creation of profound spatial experiences. This approach allows not only a theoretical understanding of trends in architectural space as a participatory stage for art but also a practical application through the observation of projects and works that exemplify these interactions.

The expected results of the analysis aim to provide a greater understanding of how the conscious and collaborative integration of disciplines enriches the creation of spaces that are both functional and holistic, directly influencing the user's perception and experience of the space. This understanding could benefit various areas and disciplines by integrating art and architecture to enrich the human experience.

Finally, the document's conclusions will synthesize the findings and highlight how the sought-after integration of architecture and contemporary art, as well as the conscious use of technology and movement, can facilitate richer and more stimulating environments, fostering not only greater interaction with the built space but also a deeper and more enriching understanding of it. This will underline the importance of designing spaces that not only fulfill aesthetic or practical functions but also activate and transform individuals' sensory experiences.

Framework

Throughout history, architecture has forged deep connections with diverse artistic expressions, including painting, sculpture, literature, music, theater, and cinema. This interaction is highlighted by Masís in her article *Art and Architecture: The Interpretive Processes Immersed in the Creation of a Work,* where she affirms that "architecture shares with art a series of sensibilities and creative searches that, from many of its manifestations, such as painting, literature, and sculpture, modify our experience of the world" (2017, p. 94).

The dynamic intersection between architecture and contemporary art has emerged as a transdisciplinary dialogue that redefines the perception and use of architectural space, transforming it into an active element within artistic and experiential encounters. Traditionally conceived as a mere container for activities, architectural space is now understood as a participatory entity that interacts with the user and enhances the sensory and perceptual experience. Theorists such as Josep Maria Montaner, Rem Koolhaas, and Christian Norberg-Schulz have pointed to a significant shift in the function and meaning of contemporary architectural spaces, pointing towards the integration and reflection of enriched and meaningful human experiences, thus challenging the idea of architecture as a simple physical container.

For its part, contemporary art, interacting with architectural space, alters the perception of the built environment, fostering an immersion where the architectural setting becomes an integral part of the artwork, facilitating an ongoing dialogue between the observer and the environment. Expanding the framework of traditional

perception, authors such as Juhani Pallasmaa and Peter Zumthor have explored how sensory stimuli profoundly influence the experience of space. This underscores the importance of designing spaces that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also actively engage people's multiple senses, thereby enriching the interaction with the space.

This suggests that the study of the interaction and influence between architectural space and contemporary art offers a fertile field for exploring how designed spaces can be living stages that not only house but also activate and transform the cultural and sensory experience. By delving into how these architectural spaces do not merely function as passive backdrops, but rather seek to catalyze enriching and multidimensional experiences that encourage the user's active reflection and participation.

The interdisciplinary, and currently transdisciplinary, influence of these disciplines, entails a series of benefits and challenges that help transform how human beings understand and develop within the surrounding architectural environment. This synergy is particularly evident in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a crucial period in the development of modern architecture. During this time, numerous architects and artists made significant forays into the design of architectural spaces, blurring the boundaries between disciplines.

A notable milestone of this era was the founding of the Bauhaus by Walter Gropius, representing a serious commitment to the synthesis of the arts and reflection on the social function of objects. Larroyo Solís points out that "in architecture, a perspective was sought in which the building as an entity had to possess a composite character in which all the arts had to converge" (n.d., p. 48-49).

Jürgen Habermas in *Modernity: An Incomplete Project* argues that the project of modernity, with its radical transformations in our societies, has had a significant impact on the creative and artistic scene, turning aesthetics into a "conscious project." The modern artist, then, is dedicated to "working in the search for the expression of their experiences, experiences of a decentralized subjectivity, freed from the pressures of routinized knowledge or everyday action" (1984, p. 30).

Habermas' perspective highlights how, through this conscious search for artistic expressions liberated from daily activity, artists began to transform the way they conveyed their concerns. This shift allowed viewers to interact with art in a different way, moving away from the traditional perception of art as an object that often sought to represent reality, towards a more immersive and subjective experience.

Figure 1: *Casa Batlló Hallway (1904-1906). [Photograph]. Taken from Flickr: https://www.flickr.com/photos/justenoughfocus/22217410839/*

Source: Schwartz R. (2015).

During this period, unique opportunities arose for artists to explore architectural spaces and actively participate in architecture projects. Subsequently, architects began to explore their own artistic sensibilities, backed by a deep knowledge of their discipline. Architects like Frank Lloyd Wright and Antoni Gaudí embarked on a quest for forms and patterns that deviated from historical customs. Gaudí, through his works (figure 1), questioned the concept of functionalism in its purest form, combining artistic and structural components in a new way, due to his preference for organic forms and intricate ornamentation.

E. Lunn, as cited by Alex Callinicos (1993, p. 25) in *Against Postmodernism: A Marxist View*, describes how the changes in this period include an aesthetic self-consciousness, where the work becomes the center of itself; juxtaposition, where the work is composed of fragments taken from different discourses and cultural media; uncertainty, where the work presents a world that loses coherence and identifiable rationality; and, finally, the dehumanization of the work, which no longer represents an integrated individual.

As the 20th century progressed, postmodernism emerged as a critical and reflective response to modernism, questioning fundamental premises about originality and the distinction between high culture and popular culture. This period witnessed the birth of conceptual art and pop art, movements that radically challenged previous conceptions of art and its purpose. Artists such as Marcel Duchamp and Andy Warhol revolutionized the art world by incorporating everyday objects and cultural elements into their works (figure 2).

Figure 2: *Judd, D. (1970). Julie Finch, Flavin Judd, and Rainer Judd in the family bedroom on the fifth floor of 101 Spring Street,New York, 1970. [Photograph]. Taken from TATE: https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-38-autumn-2016/bed-donald-judd*

Source: Turner (25 de junio del 2019).

Simultaneously, movements such as minimalism emerged, represented by figures like Donald Judd and Sol LeWitt, who focused on simple geometric forms and the dynamic interaction between the artwork, the observer, and the space, generating new dialogues and experiences in art and redefining the relationship between the viewer and the work.

According to Montaner (2015), in recent years, one of the main concerns in architectural practice has been the growing interest in integrating the senses, perception, and human experience into space. At this point in history, we can affirm that art, in its diverse manifestations, and architecture have evolved at different rates. Although they have shared certain similarities and influences, each period has been marked by different interests and concerns.

On the one hand, while architecture has focused on the visual and contemplative, it has gradually distanced itself from user interaction, orienting itself towards the creation of spaces that, while photogenic, often neglect the sensory integration that should be intrinsic to their nature. This has led to instances where some projects seem more like large sculptures intended solely for admiration in a museum or gallery. On the other hand, art, especially contemporary art, has explored various forms that mark a transition from the contemplative art-object to experiential participatory art, through happenings, performances, installations, and other artistic expressions.

The beginning of contemporary art is marked by various interpretations and key moments in the history of art. Although it could be related to the beginning of the contemporary era, commonly identified by the French

Revolution, the reality is that the boundaries of contemporary art do not align as precisely with conventional historical periods (Giunta, 2014). Giunta's observation suggests a period of transition and experimentation that eventually led to the development of modern art and, subsequently, contemporary art.

Contemporary art, understood as a period of transition and experimentation, brought about profound transformations in the interrelation between artistic expression and architectural space, promoting a revaluation of the senses and human experience. According to Fraile Martín and Olivio Román, "we have moved from modern art, which belongs to the regime of consumption, to contemporary art, associated with the society of communication […] The space where it is exhibited and the discourse that constitute the work are essential for its identification as an artistic object" (2017, p. 278).

This interdisciplinary influence has stimulated both fields, art and architecture, to adopt more experimental and collaborative approaches, seeking to integrate interactive experiences into architectural practice. This emerging approach has been significantly enriched by the phenomenology of philosophers such as Edmund Husserl, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Edith Stein, and Gaston Bachelard, as well as by the existentialism of Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt. A vision that transcends conventional realism, is oriented towards an interpretation centered on sensory and existential experience, inspired by these thinkers, has emerged in the realm of arts and architecture.

When addressing the experiential and participatory environments proposed by contemporary art and its integration into architectural spaces, it is relevant to consider Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences. In *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Gardner provides an interesting framework for understanding how active participation in space not only enriches the experience itself, but also influences the conception of space. Gardner (2001) challenges the traditional notion of a single, homogeneous cognitive intelligence, arguing instead that there are multiple forms of intelligence that facilitate people's interaction with their environment. Among these, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence is particularly relevant.

Gardner describes bodily-kinesthetic intelligence as part of a trio of object-oriented intelligences. This trio also includes logical-mathematical intelligence, which allows for the identification of numerical and logical patterns, and spatial intelligence, which focuses on the ability to navigate and modify physical space. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence involves a deep understanding of how the body moves and responds to its environment (2001, p. 187). Gardner's proposal is related to both mastery of one's own body and the ability to interact physically with external objects, which is essential in the experience of architectural spaces through contemporary art.

In this context, architectural space is not only considered a functional environment, created to meet specific needs, but also as a living and mutable stage designed for experimentation and bodily expression as proposed by contemporary art expressions. By doing so, it invites users to participate actively, thus fostering greater body awareness and allowing for a sensory exploration of space. This physical interaction of people with architectural space not only enriches the spatial and sensory experience but also acts as a vehicle for the development of bodily intelligence, as suggested by Gardner.

The Architectural Canvas

By redefining architectural space as not merely a backdrop for artistic expression, but as an integral part of the work itself, it transforms from a passive, containing stage to an immersive scenography that actively participates in the participants' bodily experience, affecting their senses and perceptions, and transforming architecture into an enveloping stage.

By transforming space from a passive container to an active scenography as an integral part of the artwork, architectural space is redefined. This architectural scenography, as part of artistic expression, immerses the viewer in an alternative reality that, although it does not exist per se, is grounded in their individual perception of the world. These environments proposed by artists evoke deep emotions and sensations, creating connections with the viewer's memories and experiences, as well as with their way of interpreting reality through sensory experiences and spatial awareness. Often, these scenographies adopt a self-referential character, creating a universe of their own that distances itself from direct references to external reality, which underscores the importance of the multisensory experience and the dynamic interaction between body, memory, and space.

Jean Baudrillard (2002) offers a provocative interpretation by arguing that these spaces can symbolize a "non-reality" or an "extermination of reality" which he defines as simulacra. For him, they are "hyperreal" spaces, which

no longer belong to conventional reality, since they are more real than reality itself. For Baudrillard in *The Perfect Crime* (2000), this is a "high-definition reality" because it is perfect and absolute. In his work *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard reflects on the nature of reality and states that: "If the real is disappearing, it is not because of its absence; rather, there is too much reality […] and it is this excess of reality that puts an end to reality" (2002, p. 57). Hyperreality, then, in this context, refers to an intensification of the experience of the real world through architectural space, so that the space is perceived in a deeper, more vivid and detailed way than would commonly be experienced.

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In this context, Fuentes Farías emphasizes how contemporary architectural scenographies not only transform the visual perception of a space but can expand this experience to incorporate multiple sensory and social dimensions. According to Fuentes Farías, 'meaning and sensory experience seem to be inextricably linked, not only to the visual but also to the corporeal, kinesthetic, and socialized through communicative and symbolic interactions' (2022, p. 12). In contemporary architectural scenographies, reality is amplified and redefined, configuring itself as hyperrealities where meaning and experience transcend mere visualness to involve all the senses. Thus, spaces not only affect visual perception but also encompass bodily and kinesthetic experiences, as well as fostering communicative and symbolic interactions that reinforce social bonds.

In these spaces, movement and interactivity are essential to promoting an immersive and multisensory experience through the body. In the book *Singular Objects: Architecture and Philosophy*, Jean Baudrillard and Jean Nouvel engage in an interesting discussion and argue that the notions of displacement, speed, and memory, in relation to an imposed

or known trajectory, allow us to conceive of an architectural space not only from the visible, but also through what is memorized in a sequence of sensorially linked experiences. From this conception emerge contrasts between what is created and what was already present at the origin of the perception of space, thus enriching the viewer's interaction with the architectural environment (2006, p. 15).

Contemporary architectural scenographies, by reconfiguring the physical environment and fostering an ongoing dialogue between space and its users, not only challenge traditional perceptions but also enrich interpretations of architectural space. These environments not only affect visual perception but involve all the senses, promoting interactions that transform the experience of space into a more integral and significant one.

Architectural space as a stage for bodily intelligence

Interactive spaces

According to Juhani Pallasmaa, architecture should advocate for the complexity of the human sensory experience and promote spaces that adopt a more holistic and corporeal approach. Pallasmaa emphasizes that the understanding of architecture must transcend superficial visual perception, suggesting that "a work of architecture is not experienced as a series of isolated retinal images, but in its full and integrated material, corporeal, and spiritual essence" (2005, p. 16). Pallasmaa highlights the importance of generating an architectural experience that involves all the senses, promoting a deeper relationship with the built environment.

Interactive contemporary architectural scenographies transcend simple visual contemplation. These spaces evolve into experimental scenarios that actively involve the user in a deeper way, fostering the development of bodily intelligence, as proposed by Gardner. These dynamic spaces not only redefine interactions with architectural space but also expand the understanding of what these spaces can mean and how they can function within social and emotional contexts, promoting active and continuous user participation and thus enriching the sensory and bodily experience.

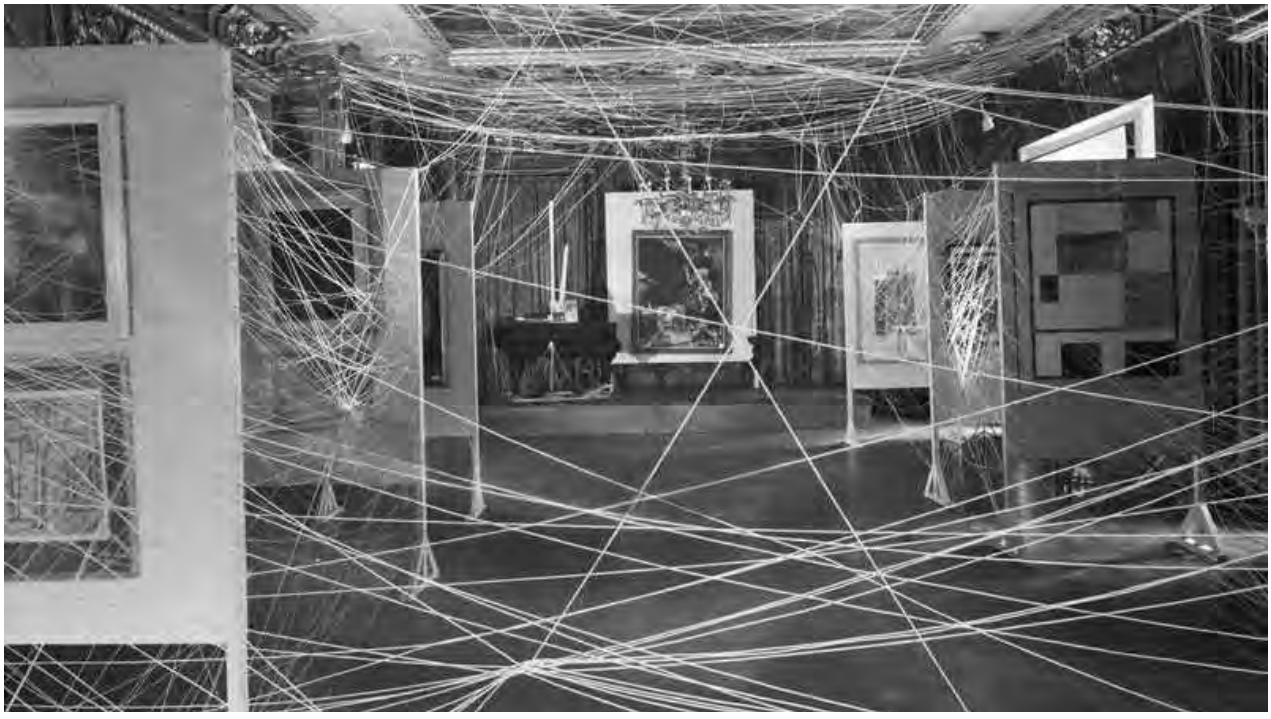

Figure 3: *D. Schiff, J. (1942). Installation of the exhibition "First Papers of Surrealism" showing His Twine, by Marcel Duchamp, 1942. Philadelphia Museum of Art [Photograph]. Taken from TATE: https://www.tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/22/duchamp-childhood-work-and-play-the-vernissage-for-first-papers-of-surrealism-new-york-1942*

Source: Hopkins (2014).

To understand the shift from contemplative object art to experiential participatory art, it is essential to consider the work of Marcel Duchamp. His work is key to understanding the dynamics between art and architectural space, as well as the proposal of interactive spaces that promote both the visitor's movement and bodily exploration through the senses. The integration of sensory and bodily experience in artistic and architectural practices represents a significant change in how spectators interact with and perceive art and the space that surrounds them.

In the 1942 New York exhibition "*First Papers of Surrealism*" (Figure 3), Duchamp radically transformed the configuration of the exhibition space by installing a mile of string that forced visitors to actively move through and over it to access the artworks, thus transforming artistic contemplation into a bodily and immersive experience. This intervention not only modified the physical distribution of the space but also redefined the relationship between architectural space and artistic experience, challenging conventional norms of interaction with art.

Movement

Movement is a crucial component in various contemporary art expressions, profoundly redefining the relationship between space and the user. This shift transforms how users interact with artworks, evolving from a passive and contemplative role to an actively participatory one, essential to the realization and expression of the work. This evolution underscores the importance of the user's physical interaction, enhancing their understanding and appreciation of exhibition spaces, and highlighting how active participation enriches the artistic and spatial experience.

Howard Gardner, in *Multiple Intelligences*, highlights the complexity of the human body and its interaction with the environment, stating that "most segments of the body (and the nervous system) participate in one way or another in the execution of motor actions" (2001, p. 169). Gardner's observation underscores how muscles, joints, and tendons play a crucial role in kinesthetic perception and the development of bodily intelligence, thereby enriching experiences within contemporary architectural settings designed to foster these types of interactions.

Gardner further explains that:

> […] an individual's perception of the world is affected by the state of their motor activities: information regarding the position and state of the body itself regulates how subsequent perception of the world occurs. In fact, perception cannot develop normally in the absence of this kind of feedback from motor activity (2001, p. 169).

According to Gardner, architectural space is experienced not only visually but through a dynamic, bodily dialogue influenced by motor activities. Through contemporary art expressions such as installations and *performances*, architecture transcends its traditional role as a mere stage to become a living, ever-evolving stagecraft. This dynamic invites the user to participate actively, not only as a spectator but as an integral element of the artwork. This type of interaction, which stimulates bodily movement and challenges sensory perception, promotes the development of the individual's bodily intelligence, allowing them to acquire a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the space they occupy and how it interacts with them.

Technology

The Russian avant-garde of the 20th century, along with architects such as Félix Candela, Rem Koolhaas, and Steven Holl, and artists like Soledad Sevilla and Miquel Navarro, exhibit a rich and multifaceted fusion between art and architecture that challenges traditional conventions (Martínez, 2015). At the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st, the digital age marked a notable evolution that profoundly changed the interaction between art and architectural space, expanding and deepening the dialogue between these disciplines. This confluence was largely driven by technological advancements, which enabled new and complex explorations in form, space, and interactivity, contributing to a dynamic reinterpretation of both disciplines in the contemporary context.

Dan Graham, one of the most emblematic artists in this dialogue between art and space, explored how the public interacts with the artistic environment through the strategic use of mirrored walls, amplifying the effects of glass and its reflections. Graham's installations provided unique experiences, influenced by location, time of day,

weather conditions, sunlight, traffic, and the presence of people and trees, which altered each viewer's individual perception.

Figure 4*: Trilnick, C. (n.d.). Time Delay Room, 1974 [Photograph]. Retrieved from IDIS: https://proyectoidis.org/dan-graham/*

Source: IDIS (s. f.).

Dan Graham was a pioneer in integrating technologies such as recorders, monitors, and mirrors, thereby enriching the interactivity of his works. In this installation "Time Delay Room" (Figure 4), viewers could see themselves in real time and with an eight second delay, using screens and mirrors. This created a disorienting experience that questioned conventional notions of presence and absence, provoking reflection on how time and space mediate and construct reality.

Artists with diverse explorations and interests have been able to expand the boundaries of traditional art through the use of new technologies. Sensors, computers, and lasers have facilitated deeper experimentation and explorations that have intensified interactivity in works of art, becoming crucial elements in enriching the artistic experience. In particular, movement, an essential component in certain contemporary art expressions, has been transformed through the integration of technology. This technological fusion not only redefines the user's interaction with space but also elevates physical activity to a central component of the artistic experience.

A notable example of this trend is the project "Medusa" (Figure 5), conceived in 2021 by Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto in collaboration with the studio Tin Drum, and presented at The Raphael Court of the Victoria & Albert Museum. This work demonstrates how collaboration between artists and architects can generate a space that is both interactive and experimental, opening up new possibilities for spatial perception and experience through the innovative use of

technology. In an interview for the "*London Design Festival,*" Yoyo Munk, chief scientific officer of Tin Drum, highlighted the impact of technology on spatial perception, stating:

> "This virtual architecture cannot provide real shelter. But on the other hand, the virtual nature of the structure also means that it is released from any obligation to adhere to the laws of gravity, or to physically support itself"[1] (Chicco, 2022, par. 4).

Figure 5: *Pioneer Works (2023). Medusa: Tin Drum. [Digital Render]. Taken from Pioneer Works:https://pioneerworks.org/exhibitions/tin-drum-medusa*

Source: Pioneer Works (2023).

Munk (Chicco, 2022) highlights that technology enables the exploration of new paradigms in the construction and perception of space, freeing architectural space from physical constraints and allowing it to transform into an immersive and dynamic experience. This revolution can profoundly change how users perceive and interact with space, offering new ways to experience and understand architectural space.

The use of technology in the exploration of art and architecture, particularly in the creation of contemporary architectural sets, redefines the understanding of reality, freeing it from

1 Personal translation of: "This virtual architecture cannot provide real shelter. But on the other hand, the virtual nature of the structure also means that it is released from any obligation to adhere to the laws of gravity, or to physically support itself,". Avilés, O. (2024)

its traditional limitations. This transformation not only intensifies spatial perceptions but also transforms the spectator from a passive observer into an active participant in the spatial interaction of the work. As Munk emphasizes, although advanced technologies are used, the main objective is to create deep and meaningful human connections, beyond mere technological demonstrations. This approach not only enriches the architectural and artistic experience but also fosters a new way of interacting and understanding the environment, strengthening the relationship between space and the individual. Contemporary architectural sets, designed to be dynamic and immersive, promote multisensory and interactive experiences that enhance the integration of individuals with the transformed space.

Body awareness and spatiality

Contemporary architectural sets play a crucial role in fostering body awareness and spatiality. These spaces transcend the function of mere containers of activities to become active elements that enhance users' perception and sensory experience. According to Merleau-Ponty, "I am not in front of my body, I am in my body, or rather, I am my body" (1945, p. 175).This can be understood in the importance of the intimate integration of the being with its environment, where architecture and interactivity play essential roles.

As people move, explore, and experience the staging, they interact intensely with the configuration of spatial and technological elements incorporated. This dynamic not only facilitates a richer and more immersive experience but also expands the perceptual and sensory capacities of users, inviting them to a deep exploration and to engage in a constant dialogue between the body and the built environment.

In his work, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that perception and bodily experience are inseparable from the spatial context we inhabit, highlighting a fundamental connection between the being and its surroundings. This relationship not only enriches sensory and perceptual experience but also fosters a deeper understanding of how our bodies are linked to and respond to the spaces we occupy.

> Bodily movement can only play a role in the perception of the world if it is itself an original intentionality, a way of referring to the object distinct from knowledge. It is necessary that the world be around us, not as a system of objects that we synthesize, but as an open set of things towards which we project ourselves." (1945, p. 44)

Spatial perception is shaped through the consciousness of the moving body, allowing users to immerse themselves in a multisensory experience where the architectural space becomes a medium for exploring and understanding the surrounding environment in a deeper and more meaningful way. Bodily experience, as argued by Merleau-Ponty (1945), is not merely a particular case of knowledge; rather, it provides a mode of access to the world and objects, a "practognosia" that must be recognized as original and perhaps as the most original form of perception. This perspective emphasizes how architectural space can facilitate a more intimate and genuine connection between the individual and their environment, challenging the traditional limitations of spatial perception and promoting a more holistic and embodied interaction with space.

> Finol delves deeper into this concept, explaining that "the body and movement, crucial themes in the French philosopher's corporeality, construct structures through which we interact with the world, construct it, and define it. In turn, in interaction with others, the body itself is self-defined" (2015, p. 20). These ideas highlight how architectural space can extend and enrich bodily and perceptual experience, facilitating a more holistic and participatory understanding of the environment.

An artist who exemplifies how art can influence perceptual experience is Olafur Eliasson, known for creating installations that foster awareness of the body and spatiality. Eliasson uses geometric games and reflective materials to distort and enrich perceived reality, inviting viewers to actively explore the architectural environment. Through mirrors, lights, and sensory textures, his works challenge conventional perceptions of space and promote a deeper and more conscious experience of the surroundings.

Figure 6*: Guichard, A. (2020). Your spiral view Olafur Eliasson. [Photograph] Retrieved from Flickr:https://www.flickr.com/photos/aguichard/49334898647*

Source: Guichard (2020).

This expanded understanding of space not only challenges the traditional limitations of spatial perception but also fosters a more embodied and holistic interaction with the environment. By recognizing that physical interactions and movements within a space not only determine the perception of the environment but also contribute to the ongoing signification of the self in relation to that environment, we better understand the influence of contemporary architectural scenographies. These are not merely passive spaces; they become dynamic fields of interaction that constantly challenge and redefine users' sensory and cognitive experiences.

The body's motor experience transcends mere knowledge, offering a unique and essential way to interact with the environment. By facilitating this interaction, contemporary architectural scenographies not only allow for direct perception of space but also enrich our understanding of the world, transforming the interaction with space into a comprehensive and meaningful experience. This transformation highlights how architecture can act as a catalyst for a deeper and more enriching connection between the individual and their environment.

Sensory

In the configuration of architectural spaces, human perception transcends the passive reception of isolated sensations. Merleau-Ponty, in his analysis of perception, argues that it is significantly enriched by the intervention of judgment, which complements sensations to facilitate a more integral perception: "Judgment is often introduced as what sensation lacks to make perception possible" (1945, p. 40).

This perspective implies that sensations, although fundamental, do not on their own configure all perception. Merleau-Ponty clarifies: "Sensation is no longer assumed to be the real element of consciousness, but when we want to draw the structure of perception, we do so relying on the dotted line of sensations" (1945, p. 40). In this context, judgment is not reduced to an isolated intellectual act, but emerges as a conscious process that organizes and gives meaning to sensations.

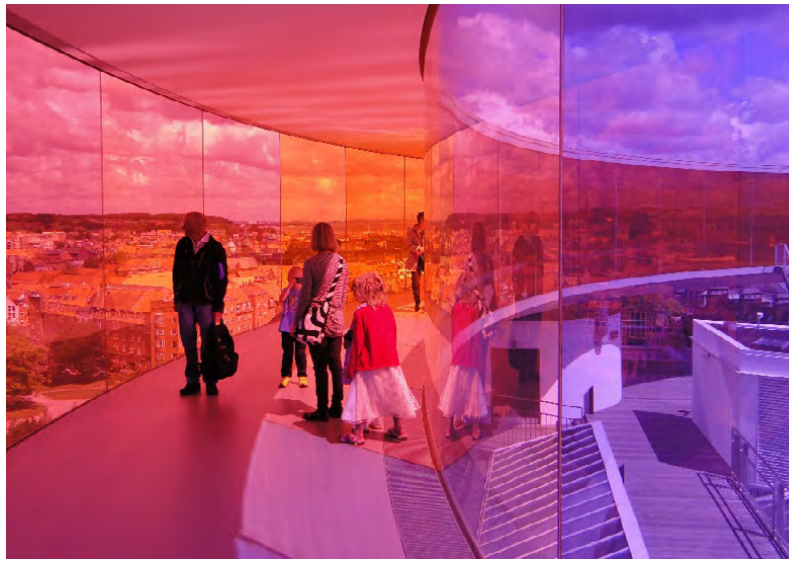

Figure 7: *Harkolufs. (2012). "Your Rainbow Panorama" by Olafur Eliasson (2011). [Photograph] Retrieved from Wikimedia Commons: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eliasson_Your_rainbow_panorama_2.JPG*

Source: Harkolufs (2012).

Contemporary architectural scenographies, through a careful selection of materials and a deliberate interaction with elements such as light and sound, seek not only to evoke isolated sensations but to integrate them into a

broader and more coherent perceptual experience. In this meticulous design, sensations become active components that, through cognitive judgment, weave a rich network of perception. For instance, the installation *Your Rainbow Panorama (*figure 8), by artist Olafur Eliasson, consists of a circular passageway with colored panels located on a museum rooftop, offering visitors a kaleidoscopic experience of the surrounding urban environment that changes according to the viewer's movement and position. This work not only plays with light and color but also invites a dynamic interaction between space and user, fostering an active and sensory exploration of the environment.

This interplay between perception and judgment underscores the vital role of contemporary architectural scenographies in stimulating the senses and inviting users to actively engage their minds. These spaces not only offer visual or auditory experiences but foster a complete multisensory experience. This, in turn, promotes a deeper and more enriched understanding of the architectural space, allowing users not only to observe but to experience the environment holistically. This interaction enriches the experience of space, enhancing both its aesthetic appreciation and functionality, and underscores how architecture can facilitate sensory experiences that go beyond the visual, engaging the body in a continuous dialogue with its surroundings.

Conclutions

The transdisciplinary integration of contemporary art expressions and architectural spaces has catalyzed the development of spatial proposals that not only transform the perception and experience of space but also actively promote the development of bodily intelligence, as theorized by Howard Gardner. These spaces, with a special emphasis on movement, technology, sensory design, and interactive features, go beyond their utilitarian function to become dynamic spaces that enhance physical interaction and body awareness, redefining the human body as an essential tool for perceiving and understanding the world.

Movement, in particular, has been transformed by the integration of technologies, profoundly altering the interaction between the user, the space, and the artwork, transitioning from a contemplative object to an experiential space. These interactive scenographies facilitate an experience and approach to art and architecture, challenging traditional perceptions and deeply enriching the individual's bodily and sensory experience within these spaces.

Furthermore, the conscious incorporation of sensory elements in these spaces, such as light, sound, and tactile materials, has allowed contemporary architectural scenographies to stimulate the senses in a more integrated and coherent manner. This holistic approach not only enhances the aesthetic quality of spaces but also intensifies the emotional and cognitive connection of users, promoting a greater appreciation and understanding of the space.

In conclusion, by adopting an approach that transcends the merely aesthetic and functional, and by placing bodily intelligence at the center of the perception and understanding of built spaces, architecture has succeeded in creating contemporary scenographies that significantly deepen the human experience. These environments not only enhance the quality of life by fostering physical and sensory interaction with the space, moving away from the photograph-worthy object and transforming into a bodily space, but also offer new ways to interact with and understand it. This invites continuous reflection on how architectural spaces can serve not only as stages for artistic works but also as living elements for sensory enrichment and the development of people's bodily intelligence.

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