

# Choreographed Exhibition/Exhibited Choreography

## How Bodies Design Spaces

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### Abstract

Current museum strategies are by now going towards interdisciplinary forms profiting from the cross-matching between visual arts and performing ones. The negotiation between different art languages engenders a heuristic dialogue which, in turn, enables aesthetic experiences to arise, at the same time that it defines new exhibiting forms: 'choreographed exhibition and exhibited choreography'. Within a migration from the 'black box' to the 'white cube', the theatrical body becomes a work of art through a process of objectification. Simultaneously, the exhibition space turns into a hybrid place of creation. Eventually, the beholder is called into question: his participation is choreographed, as well as the very act of observation. This article probes the dynamism of this situation and analyses a series of study cases from both, the institutions' and the artists' perspectives.

**Keywords:** *Performing arts, new museology, aesthetic experience, exhibition, choreography, contemporary art*

## Introduction

the fences [are coming] down and the labels are  
being removed. An up-to-date aquarium has all the  
fish swimming together in one huge tank.

-John Cage

Over the last five years, one can recognise an increasing interest in moving bodies in exhibition spaces. Besides, as the concept of temporary exhibitions has become the focal point of performance studies and new museology research, a new aesthetical vocabulary has been set up.<sup>2</sup> Expressions like ‘theatrical display’, ‘performed spectatorship’, ‘choreographed space’ or ‘living museography’ have reshaped the contemporary study approach, turning spectators and their aesthetic experience into a subject of theoretical debate. This situation can first be described through the image of cross-cultural interaction between performing and visual arts. A fundamental interplay has given birth to a series of temporary hybrid events where, while the moving body is staged in non-theatrical places, viewers have to rethink their position in respect of the exhibition space and artwork. Indeed, these contexts, by generating new forms of aesthetic experimentation, have insisted, most of all, on the relationship between different aesthetical sources, on the encounter of extraneous creative frameworks, and on the use of alternative spaces and exhibiting approaches. Halfway between ‘choreographed exhibitions’ and ‘exhibited choreography’, these proposals finally upset temporal and spatial spectatorship conditions, as well as the very logic of exhibition display.<sup>3</sup>

This paper starts with these brief reflections and then deepens by utilising historical and contemporary case studies, in order to investigate how interdisciplinary processes, staged in museums and galleries, impact upon the aesthetical experience of the individual. Also, it considers how these processes have rewritten exhibition design methods, thus reinterpreting the

meaning of the act of exhibiting. In particular, the study tries to analyse this interdisciplinary approach through, first of all, a historical perspective. By studying some 20th-century cases of intersection and dialogue between alternative art forms, the article seeks to highlight the transition from a relational dimension of the interdisciplinary encounter (typical of the 1960s) to an economic and conceptual one that characterises contemporaneity. Alongside the analysis of some specific examples and the articulation of museological and museographical issues, the article finally insists on the idea of a ‘choreographed body’ intended as a critical device of transcultural mediation.

Performing arts are indeed invading museum and exhibition contexts.<sup>4</sup> Among others, in Paris, Anna Teresa De Keersmaeker staged an “exhibited choreography” at the Centre Pompidou (2016); Cally Spooner [Fig. 1] showed dancing bodies during the Parisian art fair FIAC (2016); and Mathieu Copeland organised choreographed and spoken exhibitions at the Jeu de Paume (2013). In Turin, Tino Sehgal emptied the entire space of the OGR—Officine Grandi Riparazioni— (2018) to stage what he considered an ‘aesthetical encounter’, and in London, Boris Charmatz invaded the Turbine Hall of the Tate Gallery with his *Musée de la Danse* (2014). These examples describe a sort of migration from the ‘black box’ to the ‘white cube’, where individuals are undergoing a process of objectification that is leading them to become works of art themselves. In particular, the place welcoming these events, despite being in most cases an exhibition space, temporarily loses its structural and statutory hierarchy: neither exhibition space nor theatrical stage, it turns into a hybrid place, a meta-museum.<sup>5</sup> According to art historian Claire Bishop, this hybrid space could even be considered as “the new ‘grey zone’ for performance that has evolved out of the historical convergence of experimental theatre’s black box and the gallery’s white cube.”<sup>6</sup>



Fig. 1

Cally Spooner, Installation view during FIAC, 2016, Paris. Photo: Pamela Bianchi  
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Points of view change. The renaissance monocular vision, typical of the relationship between the individual and the artwork, disappears, depriving spectators of their traditional theatrical positions. The historical linear perspective—based on the reading of fictional space—no longer defines the conventional museum and theatre behaviour. Indeed, in these cases, the ordinary comprehension of space is subordinated to a form of decentralised perspective recalling the phenomenon of parallax. Points of view multiply; thus, new paths, trajectories and temporalities arise. By taking place in specific moments overlapping the daily routine of exhibition space, these choreographed events question the spectator’s position. Within hybrid contexts where the watcher interacts with the watched, and vice-versa, spectators not only have to rethink their habits of aesthetic enjoyment but end up choreographing the very act of observation. In doing so, the beholder turns into a “spect-actor,”<sup>7</sup> he/she becomes the viewer, who, by getting on stage to intervene in the action, “acquires freedom of movement and conscience that in turn influences freedom of judgment, [...] mobilises attention, arms a presence, chooses a posture,” as Pier Paolo Pasolini describes.<sup>8</sup>

Within a space without scenery, specific temporality, lighting, apparatus or music, “spectators [are thus] confronted not only with what [is] there to see, but also with how they negotiate their movements.”<sup>9</sup> This displacement from the black-box theatre to the white cube institution, therefore, defines a compromise between different forms of representation, in which the very notion of theatricality undergoes an ontological transformation, becoming an aesthetic device capable of proposing: “[...] a new configuration of artistic experience.”<sup>10</sup>

## **The Relational Dimension of the Interdisciplinary Encounter**

An age that has lost its gestures is, for this reason, obsessed by them. For human beings who have lost every sense of naturalness, each single gesture becomes a destiny. And the more gestures lose their ease under the action of invisible powers, the more life becomes indecipherable.

-Giorgio Agamben<sup>11</sup>

Far from the ancient ambition to enhance boundaries between different artistic languages, the mixing between performing arts and visual arts, between temporal succession and spatial juxtaposition, is currently defended as a source of experimentation. As in a ‘creolization’ system, these two opposing contexts set conditions for reciprocal and productive contamination, involving unknown systems and vocabularies, different aesthetic paradigms and artistic frameworks. That is what one can find in the notion of ‘interartiality’: interaction between different arts that, while maintaining their specificity, still dialogue through an aesthetic and ontological compromise.<sup>12</sup>

This interplay, however, is not newly created. Over time, one can recognise many examples of interdisciplinary encounter in which visual arts and performing arts have across their mutual boundaries. At the beginning of the twentieth century, for instance, the futurist and

surrealist actions, in France and Italy, highlighted the importance of the theatrical and scenography feature in the exhibition design by absorbing spectators inside a meta-exhibition where exhibits were considered more as devices than as artwork. Yet, the ontological peak of this condition can be found in the 1960s, when the artwork was ‘absorbed’ into the process of its exhibiting, by turning a tautology into an experience.

The *Poème Electronique* (1958) is a clear example of this heuristic dialogue. Designed by Le Corbusier, Iannis Xenakis and Edgard Varèse, for the Brussels World’s Fair in 1958, this Pavillon anticipated current immersive environments where the encounter between music, images and architecture defines a potential space of action. Conceived as a total work that combines the aesthetics of the external form with the spatial, sonic and visual enjoyment of the internal architecture, the Philips Pavilion is an interdisciplinary object. Here, the communion between cinema, sound and architecture plunged the public into a meta-space where the phenomenological experience was the very artwork itself. Similarly, Piero Manzoni’s studies of the *Placentarium* (1960)—a balloon aerostatic about 18 meters in diameter—while evoking the panoptic surveillance structure, also offer today the occasion to re-question the spectator’s place inside immersive contexts.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, although it was never built, the *Placentarium* was designed to welcome Otto Piene’s ballets of light (*Lichtballette*): luminous events created by the interaction between sound installations and visual effects, where spectators could experience a kind of kinaesthetic immersion.

In the 1960s, however, the interdisciplinary encounter between arts insisted more on the relational dimension of events, where spectators were directly and theatrically involved in the action or exhibition. In this respect, among others, the exhibition programming of Fabio Sargentini’s gallery, L’Attico, seems to claim this relational approach.<sup>14</sup> Sargentini suggested the exit from the pictorial two-dimensionality, the invasion of the social place, and the advent

of alternative spaces, ways of aesthetical reflection and art curating. An example is *24 ore su 24* (24 hours a day) (1975), an event he organised as a succession of artistic projects, held consecutively 24 hours a day for six days, with which Sargentini sought to insist on the temporality of the gesture and on the theatricality of the exhibition.<sup>15</sup> By staging hybrid events, halfway between theatrical exhibitions and exhibited performances, he moved away from the traditional use of the exhibition and space, to question, on the contrary, the spectator and his/her relationship to art. *Ginnastica mentale* (1968) [Fig. 2], and *Danze—Costruzioni* (1968) are, in this sense, two exhibitions which precisely insist on the mixing between the moving body, dance, performance and experimental music.



Fig. 2

Fabio Sargentini, *Ginnastica Mentale*, 1968, Installation view, Galleria L'Attico piazza di Spagna, Rome © Archivio L'Attico

For the first exhibition Sargentini organised a series of gym sessions and during the second one he invited the American choreographer Simone Forti to stage some of her performances. On these two occasions, a “multifaceted, [...] articulated, aggressive spatiality

emerges, based on the use of new materials [...] unrelated to the good practices of plastic art.”<sup>16</sup> The new material, evoked by Renato Barilli, is nothing more than the body in movement, intended both as the spectatorship body and as an authorial body. In this sense, Sargentini could be considered as the spokesperson, in Italy, of a form of theatricality whose roots lie in the “philosophy of spontaneity and of liberation through the irrational” typical of the first Surrealist exhibitions, of Futurist incursions or Dadaist excursions.<sup>17</sup>

In the 1960s and 1970s, other interventions continued to insist on the choreographed gesture of the public or of the artist, such as the visual experiences proposed by Peter Campus or the filmed performances by Joan Jonas.<sup>18</sup> Anyhow, this period seems to have highlighted the media status of the gesture, as defined by Giorgio Agamben:

If dance is gesture, it is so, rather, because it is nothing more than the endurance and the exhibition of the media character of corporal movements. *The gesture is the exhibition of a mediality: it is the process of making a means visible as such.* It allows the emergence of the being-in-a-medium of human beings, and thus it opens the ethical dimension for them.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, a new spectator consciousness seems to arise within a hybridisation process of the traditional exhibition system and spectatorship approaches. Indeed, in the analysed examples, the body of the spectator becomes, very often, the object of an implicit transformation that, depending on contexts and exhibition goals, transforms the visitor into a device, an obstacle, or the real subject of the artistic proposal.

However, unlike the 1960s and 1970s, in which the aim was to widen the limits of art, today, the relational paradigm seems to be a search of purpose, both concrete and abstract. Concepts such as those of de-territorialisation, transcultural invasion, spatial overlap, fragment aesthetics, or institutional nomadism, bring the notion of relation to a meta-artistic dimension in which the spatial issue acquires more and more interest. In this sense, as the artwork is today no longer a “place of [relational] negotiation,” but a potential space of action, the contemporary

exhibition space is, in turn, no longer merely a place to be experienced in duration, but a space to live and to traverse.<sup>20</sup>

### **When the “Alternative” Becomes Ordinary**

In the current artistic context, while artwork can no longer be considered outside of its modes of presentation, the exhibition is by now: “[part] spectacle, part socio-historical event, part structuring device.”<sup>21</sup> At the same time, the exhibition space ends up becoming a hybrid place where the beholder experiences a new body awareness. The idea of aesthetic experience stemmed from these latter considerations. It metaphorically draws first a space in which the creation is achieved in its development, and secondly an embodied encounter, in a specific space and time, between the seer and the seen.<sup>22</sup> The aesthetic experience thus appears, as Noel Carroll points out, as an experience “self-rewarding.”<sup>23</sup> Inserting this reflection into the specific context of the interdisciplinary artistic proposals, the mixing between arts seems even to consider the aesthetic experience as a real work of art. This consideration, while it shifts the analysis towards the issue of contemporary artistic marketing, also combines performing arts issues with the museum’s necessity to both seduce a broad audience and define alternative ways of exhibiting.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, as places of art are intended as places of “sociability” and, therefore, have to provide visitors with “the enjoyment of specific experiences,” one of the main objectives of cultural institutions is to captivate the spectator by fulfilling their needs.<sup>25</sup> From a museological and sociological point of view, the encounter between visual and performing arts might, therefore, be considered as a medium of cultural marketing, for which alternative modes and places of exhibiting are seen as heuristic devices.<sup>26</sup> In particular, the idea of ‘alternative’ should be understood as an advertising apparatus to attract spectators’ curiosity towards new artistic

contexts and to awaken their interest through ‘spectacular’ aesthetic experiences. This condition recalls the well-known Jean Davallon’s ‘viewpoint museology’, that is an engaging presentation method centred, not on the exhibited artwork, but on the spectator. In his own words,

Objects and knowledge are present as before, but they are used as materials for the construction of a hypermedia environment which encourages visitors to evolve, offering them one or more points of view on the subject of the exhibition.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, in the current art system, the ‘subject of the exhibition’ mentioned by Davallon finds an equivalent in the spectator who turns into an artwork. In brief, the aesthetic experience of an artistic event, while it seems implicitly to transform the individual into a device, also turns out to be a form of exploitation of performing arts, aspiring to spectatorship seduction. In any case, the beholder ends up becoming the focal point of the exhibition system.<sup>28</sup>

This condition could thus be considered as a new exhibition approach which uses the communicative, economic and social power of specific art programs—in this case, performing arts in galleries or museum spaces—to create a new exhibition paradigm.<sup>29</sup> Among others, the interdisciplinary program *Nocturnes du Vendredi*, at the Louvre is a typical example. By staging ballets and theatrical pieces in traditional exhibition rooms, it exemplifies the ambiguous role of these events, halfway between a publicity stunt and an artistic experiment. At these occasions, dancers stage choreography using the collection works as scenographic elements. Drawing a sort of silent dialogue with motionless sculptures, dancers move freely within ephemeral sets devoid of theatrical demarcation. Within a choreographic performance, art objects temporarily lose their nature of an artwork, becoming, instead, accessories and mere decorations for a transient stage. Simultaneously, dancing bodies are objectified, acquiring the status of an artwork. The exhibition space, for its part, becomes a scenic design: through a conceptual overlapping, exhibition rooms misplace their primary role of containers to become

Bishop's 'grey zone'. This interaction between performing arts, the collection, and the architectural ornament of exhibition rooms, questions the limits of the spectatorial gaze, by putting in dialogue the acts of the re-presentation. Therefore, a new temporary exhibition arises. That is a stage without a real distinction between scene and parterre, where the beholder can wander at will, being free to meander into space, changing his/her point of view towards dancing bodies and the exhibition layout of the museum.

The Parisian example also draws the metaphorical image of the 'encounter with artwork', and emphasises several questions concerning spectators and their role in the exhibition process. Beyond the concepts of 'objectified body' and 'aesthetic experience', this example crosses boundaries of the space of art, the theatre, and the beholder's privileged place. The displacement from the theatre to the exhibition space involves a series of ontological adjustments that resize, not only the idea of the moving body and spectator gaze, but also the idea of space, thus evoking a "spatial dramaturgy"<sup>30</sup> where the aesthetic enjoyment becomes an act to be choreographed.<sup>31</sup> Within this hybrid place, then, the perception is both activated by a multipurpose environment and involved in the choreographed exhibition. While they observe, spectators also participate in the exhibition, and their behaviour consequently becomes an aesthetic exercise of creation. This kind of hybridisation process seems to exploit the communicative power of theatrical languages, not only to propose new ways to live the museum experience and to enjoy its collections, but also to reconsider the role of the museum through the lens of marketing strategies.

Indeed, according to Bishop, it seems that: "the steering question for the museum is not whether people will visit the museum but how they will view the works."<sup>32</sup> Whether it is for aesthetic or more pragmatically commercial purposes, the contemporary attention to the crossing of interdisciplinary boundaries becomes an ordinary condition of museum

programming or artists' creative approaches. Anyway, it seems that the rereading of the relationship between visual arts and performing arts implies a new vocabulary, a new questioning of the way the museum opens up to the logic of the scene, and on what it means to exhibit today.

### **Performing the Spectatorship Gaze**

Currently, art institutions using an interdisciplinary approach to exhibit are countless. *A Year at the Stedelijk: Tino Sehgal* at the Stedelijk Museum of Amsterdam (2015), *Move! Choreographing You* at the Hayward Gallery in London (2011), *Do Disturb* at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris, or the European *Dancing Museum* (2016) are some of the many cases that stage the encounter between theatrical and museum languages. Here, individuals are spatialized as exhibition devices inside a performing stage where the body (of the dancer or the actor) becomes a kind of moving interface.<sup>33</sup>

In this respect, the cycle of events organised by Mathieu Copeland over the last ten years shows how theatrical language can be used as a creative device within a contemporary exhibition process. In 2013, for instance, a French curator proposed a series of spoken and choreographed exhibitions at the Jeu de Paume in Paris. Here, he considered the possibility of exhibiting artwork through its verbal and oral translation. By staging actors into an empty space, he encouraged beholders to rethink their habits of aesthetic apprehension during the visit. Another Copeland exhibition, *Une exposition choréographiée*, organised in 2008 at the Ferme de Buisson, turned the moving body into a narrative device. For over a month, three dancers interpreted movements and choreographed gestures, following instructions provided by eight invited artists (including Roman Ondak, Michael Parsons and Jennifer Lacey). Every day, for

six hours, in a space free from any museological decoration or devices, dancers defined ephemeral temporalities and drew trajectories inside and outside the art centre, forcing the spectator to move according to their gestures. This dynamic led to the constant repositioning of the viewer in a space devoid of standard architectural references, and in which the proximity between the public and the dancers' movements reshaped new hierarchical relationships. With *Une exposition choréographiée*, the inscription of the gestures in an exhibition context reveals the narrative potential of the body and, once again, denies the object as artwork.

Beyond institutions' proposals, also several artists have embraced this interdisciplinary attitude, by showing how the critical reinterpretation of these languages and their narrative potential can lead to new creative processes.<sup>34</sup> Among others, the choreographed invasions by Sasha Waltz in the MAXXI in Rome and the Neues Museum in Berlin (2009), or the choreography *Atlante del gesto* (2015) staged by Virgilio Sieni at the Prada Foundation in Milan suggest this transcultural encounter [Fig. 3].



Fig. 3

Virgilio Sieni, *Atlante del gesto, Rituale* (choreographic cycles), 2015, Fondazione Prada, Milan,  
Photo: Ela Bialkowska, OKNOstudio ©Fondazione Prada. Courtesy Fondazione Prada

Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's exhibition at the Centre Pompidou (2016) allows us to go further in this reflection.<sup>35</sup> Her work, *Work/Travail/Arbeid*, was indeed an itinerant exhibition with which the artist imagined the choreography as an exhibition. She first staged it at WIELS in Brussels over nine weeks in 2015; then she moved it to the Centre Pompidou in Paris and the Tate Modern in London [Fig. 4]; and finally, she arrived at the MoMA (2017). For the Centre Pompidou exhibition, the choreographer conceived a ten-hour-a-day show for nine days: a "choreographed exhibition", executed by the dancers of her company, Rosas, and exhibited in the South Gallery of Beaubourg.<sup>36</sup> During this period, dancers walked and danced to music by Gerard Grisey, following geometric and circular paths they traced with chalk on the floor. Musicians, likewise, were on the scene, playing and sailing on the same trajectories, thus reinterpreting dance in the exhibition space. In this moving landscape, spectators were thus free to wander in the exhibition space, even to invade the scene in a peremptory way, finally becoming a kind of obstacle for dancers. Musicians, dancers, and spectators then intersected each other, by sharing the same space, which was also connected with the outside, through the large glass window of the gallery which overlooks the Tinguely Stravinsky Fontaine.



Fig. 4

Anna Teresa De Keersmakear, *Work/Travail/Arbeid*, 2017, Installation view, Tate Modern, London © Anne Van Aerschot. Courtesy of the artist

This exhibition, compared to the *Nocturnes du Vendredi* at the Louvre, did not take advantage of the narrative potential of works of art of the collection to create interdisciplinary dynamics of encounters. This choreographed exhibition, on the contrary, interrogated the profound significance of the act of putting on a display. Rosas' dancers were the only 'objects' to contemplate in the gallery. Unlike the Louvre example, where dancers, as semantic devices, questioned viewers on their relationship with the museum objects, in the Centre Pompidou exhibition, the public has been invited to intervene in the development of the choreography. In this case, spectators played the same role which is played by works of art in the Louvre collection, that is, narrative and heuristic devices with which the dancers were interacting. Moreover, while the Louvre event has had a specific duration—with a defined start and end—, this exhibition followed museum opening times and exploited exhibition temporalities to stage choreography. Within an empty space filled by moving bodies, the distinction between dancers and spectators, mingled in an ephemeral stage, was almost impossible to see. Indeed, the non-enunciation of the choreography, performed for nine hours a day without any break, allowed the public to attend the exhibition at any moment. This spectatorial freedom highlights the

ambiguity of the role played by the beholder in this event, who ended up also playing the ‘role’ of a dancer for other spectators.

The solo show of the Norwegian artist Ragnar Kjartansson, at the Palais de Tokyo in Paris in 2016, concludes our reflection. Indeed, this exhibition shows a case in which the theatrical language met that of contemporary art. Among the various artworks displayed by the artist, *Bonjour* (2015) was a performance which repeated, during the entire duration of the exhibition (a month), the fleeting encounter between a man and a woman in a life-size setting [Fig. 5].



Fig. 5

Ragnar Kjartansson, *Bonjour*, 2015. Performed as part of *Seul celui qui connait le désir* at Palais de Tokyo, Paris. 21 November 2015 to 10 January 2016, daily for 12 hours, Co-produced by Palais de Tokyo and Festival d’Automne à Paris. Photo: Justin Emard © Ragnar Kjartansson. Courtesy of the artist, Luhring Augustine, New York and i8 Gallery, Reykjavik

The repetition of the scene, continuously interpreted by the two actors, during the opening hours of the art centre, allowed spectators to experience different theatrical moments. In particular, it enabled them to live the narrative potential of the random encounter within an exhibition context, thus combining the ideas of exhibition visit and theatrical vision. At the same time, the performance was played within a scenic design that, by appropriating the

theatrical language, completely overturned the traditional relationship between stage and parterre. While the performing repetition inside a museum context enabled spectators to become aware of a new meta-theatrical temporality, the theatrical installation in an exhibition space interrogated viewers on their place and their favoured points of view.

Indeed, the two-level installation, located on the second floor of the Parisian art centre, was visible both from one of the balconies of the second staircase of the building and from the ground floor. This scenic installation was thus exhibited as an almost sculptural art object, and this condition allowed spectators to walk around the whole stage, experiencing the ‘behind the scenes’. At the same time, this placement also showed the artwork from an entirely overturned point of view, emphasising the communicational and aesthetic power of an interdisciplinary encounter.

Finally, whether for Copeland’s curatorial proposal, Keersmakear’s exhibited choreography or Kjartansson’s exhibition that appropriates theatrical language, the action of displaying merges with the creation process, thanks to the theatrical gesture. In these cases, moreover, the question of temporality and duration of action seems to go hand in hand with the ontological definition of the performing gesture. According to Copeland: “Time is fundamental in an exhibition made of, and in, movement. In this orchestrated time, these gestures only last as long as it takes for them to be realised and experienced. To choreograph an exhibition is to confront the ephemeral nature of movements.”<sup>37</sup> Here, Copeland highlights the interdependent relationship between the idea of realisation and the idea of the exhibition process, revealing the ephemeral nature of both contemporary exhibition and aesthetic experience. “A choreographed exhibition will only exist for the time needed for its overall realisation.”<sup>38</sup> In this way, spectators lived a nomadic visual experience, chasing bodies in motion, and repositioning themselves at every displacement of the artwork/body. Finally, a new idea of space arises, and a fluid space

opens to the phenomenological experimentation of spectators who are thus free to follow random paths and to write a personal exhibition tale.

## Conclusion

Beyond marketing strategies embraced by art institutions, the encounter between different artistic languages seems currently to be deconstructing normal exhibition modes, invading the place, crossing boundaries of traditional exhibition space, and exploring the narrative potential of the 'alternative'. In the meantime, a spatial dimension of the interdisciplinary process echoes to a relational dimension of the exhibition space—intended as a meta-theatrical space of encounter. By exploiting the potentiality of the 'here and then' of an exhibition, the interdisciplinary approach leads to the exhibition becoming a living event, and spectators becoming itinerant. Through erratic nomadism, they invade the scene, they transgress the boundaries and migrate towards aesthetic itineraries, thus suppressing the academic *Noli me tangere*. Spectators' movements finally meet dancers' movements: by superimposing each other, they highlight the polysemic nature of the objectified body. Likewise, actors and spectators turn not only into objects to be contemplated but also into critical devices allowing the interrogation of strategies of art history writing.

A new spectatorship awareness thus appears, as well as a new form of spatial and aesthetic knowledge, which claims the narrative potential of the theatricality of the exhibition space. In conclusion, choreographed exhibitions—or exhibited choreography—organised within live programming of art institutions, while they have to shape a negotiation between arts, also impact the spectator's role within an exhibition context. Contemporary dynamics of

fruition into exhibition venues transform the concepts of temporality and spatiality, by finally defining the choreographed body as a critical device of transcultural mediation.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup> John Cage, *Empty Words: Writings '73—'78* (Middletown, CT.: Wesleyan University Press, 1979): 179.

<sup>2</sup> See: Georgina Guy, *Theatre, Exhibition, and Curation: Displayed & Performed* (New York: Routledge, 2016); Jackson Shannon, “Performing Show and Tell: Disciplines of Visual Culture and Performance Studies”, *Journal of Visual Culture*, 4.2 (2005): 163-77; Susan Bennett, *Theatre & Museums* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Erin Brannigan, “Dance and the Gallery: Curation as Revision”, in *Dance Research Journal*, 47.1 (2015): 5–25; Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012); François Mairesse (eds), *Nouvelles tendances de la muséologie* (Paris : La documentation française, 2016); François Mairesse, “New trends in museology”, in *ICOFOM Study Series*, 43b (2015): 15–17.

<sup>3</sup> Copeland, *Chorégrapheur l'exposition, op.cit.*; see the notion of “theatrical museography” in Merleau-Ponty Claire and Ezrati Jean-Jacques, *L'exposition. Théorie et Pratique* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> See the distinction between performing arts—dance, music and theatre—, and performance art, intended as an experimental corporal practice which is “exhibited in a direct, face-to-face relationship between the performer and the audience”. While the performance art criticizes methods of reproducibility typical of

performing arts: “[...] methods of narrativity, spectacularisation, and representation,” on the contrary, performing arts underline the unrepeatable nature of performance, and its attachment to the spatiality and the temporality of the present. See Barbara Formis, “Performance Here and Then”, in Mathieu Copeland, *Chorégrapheur l'exposition* (Dijon: Les presses du reel, 2013): 56.

5 It should be noted that most of the current museums are equipped by auditoriums or stage spaces to accommodate “spectacular” propositions. However, the tendency to present performing arts in their specific places seems to be overshadowed by a current approach which exhibits performing arts into museum spaces, from the entrance to connecting spaces, rest areas, or passageways. “it is surely time to think about theater and museums together since so many others do: cultural policy makers, urban and regional planners, arts and other marketing agencies, and of course, visitors.” Bennet, *Theatre & Museums*, *op.cit.*, 77.

6 Claire Bishop, “Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention”, in *The Drama Review*, Vol. 62, 2 (Summer 2018): 22–42.

7 See Jean-Louis Weissberg, *Présences à distance* (Paris: Editions L’Harmattan, 1999).

8 Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Che cosa sono le nuvole* (1967); Françoise Parfaite, ‘La projection vidéo : un dispositif mental’, in Alexandre Castant (eds), *ImagoDrome : des images mentales dans l’art contemporain* (Blou: Monographik éditions, 2010): 188–203, here 190. “[...] un spectateur ayant acquis une liberté de mouvement et de conscience à laquelle il conditionne une liberté de jugement par rapport à la prolifération du visuel qui l’environne. Un spectateur averti donc, qui peut mobiliser une attention, affirmer une présence, choisir une posture [...]”

9 “the result of a perceptive dynamic, that of the gaze which connects someone or something watched (subject or object) and a watcher”. See Josetta Feral, *Théories et pratiques du théâtre : au-delà des limites* (Montpellier: L’Entretemps, 2011): 102; Julie Pellegrin, ‘This is not a Catalogue’, in Mathieu Copeland (eds), *Chorégrapheur l'exposition* (Dijon: Les presses du reel, 2013): 17.

10 “Une nouvelle configuration de l’expérience artistique” Jacques Sato, ‘Littéralité et théâtralité’, in Louis Dieuzayde et al. (eds), *Le Langage s’entend mais la pensée se voit*, Aix-en-Provence: PUP): 172.

11 Giorgio Agamben, *Mezzi senza fine. Note sulla politica* (Turin: Bompiani, 1996): 53.

12 Édouard Glissant, *Introduction à une poétique du divers* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996); Walter Moser, “L’interartialité: pour une archéologie de l’intermédialité”, in Marion Froger and Jurgen E. Muller (eds), *Intermedialité et socialité* (Münster: Nodus, 2007): 69–92.

13 See Pamela Bianchi, *Espaces de l’œuvre, espaces de l’exposition. De nouvelles formes d’expérience dans l’art contemporain* (Paris: Connaissances & Savoirs, 2016).

14 See Maurizio Calvesi (eds), *Roma anni ’60* (Rome: Carte segrete, 1990); Luca Massimo Barbero and Francesca Pola (eds), *L’Attico di Fabio Sargentini* (Milan: Electa, 2010).

15 From that moment Sargentini adopts a new time slot, opening the gallery at night and no more during the day. See also the “Teatro delle Mostre” program, organized by Plinio de Martiis in his gallery La Tartaruga (Rome), where, throughout May 1968, he organized one exhibition a day. See Barnardi, Ilaria, *Teatro delle mostre. Roma, maggio 1968* (Milan: Scalpendi, 2014).

16 Renato Barilli, “Invadere lo spazio”, in *Quindici*, n°11, 15 (June 1968).

17 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationnelle* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 1998): 12.

18 See Pamela Bianchi, “Retransmettre la performance filmée : de la documentation à la présentation”, *Culture & Musées*, 29:1 (Summer 2017): 97–116.

19 Giorgio Agamben, “Notes on gesture,” in *Infancy and History: The Destruction of Experience* (London and New York: Verso, 1993): 58–59.

20 Nicolas Bourriaud, *Esthétique relationnelle* (Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 1998), 26.

21 Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, Sandy Nairne, *Thinking about Exhibitions* (London, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005): 2.

22 “the aesthetic experience is the sensitive relation that one maintains with the environmental context.” Marianne Massin, *Expérience esthétique et art contemporain* (Rennes: PUR, 2013):28.

23 Carroll argues on four methodological approaches to study the notion of aesthetic experience: the traditional account, the pragmatic account, the allegorical account, and the deflationary account. See Noël Carroll, “Four Concepts of Aesthetic Experience”, in *Beyond Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge U.P., 2001): 41–62, here 44.

24 See Claire Bishop, “Black Box, White Cube, Gray Zone: Dance Exhibitions and Audience Attention”, *op.cit*

25 Dominique Poulot, *Musée et muséologie* (Paris: La Découverte, 2009): 112.

26 Daniel Jacobi, 'Exposition temporaire et accélération : la fin d'un paradigme ?', in *La lettre de l'OCIM*, 150 (Winter 2013): 15–24, here: 16–18; See Harmut Rosa, *L'accélération. Une critique sociale du temps* (Paris: La Découverte, 2010).

27 In his text, Davallon proposes three models of museology which correspond to as many types of exhibits and exhibition spaces: object museology, idea museology and viewpoint museology. See Jean Davallon, 'Le musée est-il vraiment un média ?', in *Publics et Musées, Regards sur l'évolution des musées*, 2 (1992): 99–123. "Objets et savoirs y sont présents comme dans les autres formes, mais ils sont utilisés comme matériaux pour la construction d'un environnement hypermédiatique dans lequel il est proposé au visiteur d'évoluer, lui offrant un ou plusieurs points de vue sur le sujet traité par l'exposition."

28 See the "theatrical" advertising campaign organized by the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam to inaugurate the reopening of the museum after years of closure.

29 Jean-Jacques Boutaud, 'Du sens, des sens. Sémiotique, marketing et communication en terrain sensible', in *Semen*, 23 (2007).

30 Isabella Vesco, 'Teatro non a teatro: luoghi e spazi', in Giovanna Donini (eds), *L'architettura degli allestimenti* (Rome: Kappa, 2010): 148.

31 Copeland, *Chorégrapheur l'exposition*, *op.cit.*

32 Claire Bishop, *Radical Museology: or, What's "Contemporary" in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (London: Koenig Books, 2013): 37.

33 See Pamela Bianchi, 'Exposer la performance : une forme nouvelle d'interface spatiale', in *Les chantiers de la création*, n°8 (2015), online, <http://journals.openedition.org/lcc/1055>. Accessed 12 January 2019.

34 Lili Reynaud Dewar, Ragnar Kjartansson, Dector & Dupuy, Cesare Pietroiusti, Nadia Vadori-Gauthier, Julien Prévieux, Boris Charmatz, Sasha Waltz, Jérôme Bel ...

35 *Work / Travail / Arbeid*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, 26 February-6 March 2016.

36 Each hour, seven dancers and seven musicians realized different choreographic combinations.

37 Copeland, *Chorégrapheur l'exposition*, *op.cit.*, 21.

38 *Ibid.*.