Hybrid and Performative Spaces: Towards a New Analytical Lens

Ayman Kassem

Ajman University
United Arab Emirates

Abstract

The exhibition space is a territory where architects and designers have experimented with hybrid and performative spatial qualities. However, such spatial mechanisms have expanded into other spatial practices. As we live in a constantly changing world, these practices allow spatial systems that adjust to continual changes in modes of living. Newer approaches to spatial transformation try to respond to the need for transience and flexibility. Hybrid and performative interventions are elaborated to transform existing spaces with strategic non-architectural rearrangements. As a result, our inhabited spaces, such as exhibitions, are becoming hybrid and performative. However, hybrid and performative may be perceived as tools, or as resulting qualities. The literature review analysis shows many intersections between hybrid and performative. Both terms indicate a flexible built environment that is designed and organised to be multifunctional. Hybrid mostly refers to the various modes of accessing, using and being present in the space, while performative refers to the concept of flexible mechanisms, the openness towards changes and the unpredictable characterisation of a space. Performative is also linked to the ability of the space to multitask and perform different roles, including communicative tasks. This study investigates the repertoire of hybrid and performative through an analysis of a literature review conducted through the lens of exhibition design. We seek to explore and promote applications in spatial interventions and the potential to define a set of analytical tools. Seeing the emergence of a constantly changing world, spatial disciplines are trying to respond with flexible mechanisms. Therefore, newer critical lenses, scholarships, and analytical tools must be investigated, explored, and proposed to cope with such continuous shifts.

Keywords: performative, hybrid, intervention, exhibitions, analytical tools, interiors

Correspondence Address: Ayman Kassem, Ajman University, University Street, Al jerf 1, Ajman, United Arab Emirates. Email: a.kassem@ajman.ac.ae

Hybrid and Performative: A Repertoire

> In the category of the design of displays … there are in fact all the genetic elements typical of a new modernity, which we shall call 'light' and 'diffuse' … . A modernity characterized by the design of flexible or temporary environmental micro-systems, architectural subsystems … . The architecture of city needs more and more the logic of reversibility, adaptation and re-functionalization in an evolutionary context, in the twenty-first century… (Branzi, 2002, p. 100)

The practice of exhibiting was always a field where designers tested flexible spatial qualities. In this regard, Branzi's predictions are actually happening. Spatial design practices are increasingly allowing spatial systems that are open to continual changes in how we inhabit and use our spaces. Unplanned functions and uses may emerge and take place in our spaces, which challenges their original spatial qualities and programs. However, this also allows new phenomenological potentials to be tested. Cultural, social, environmental, and economic contexts are in constant change, and thus prescribed and predictive plans and programs do not work. Newer practices are increasingly influenced by hybridisation, flexible mechanisms, and performative attitudes. Spatial practices seem to draw inspiration from display installations that operate between art, architecture, and the digital realm. These hybrid and flexible approaches to spatial design and spatial reuse respond to the concerns for flexibility and transformability.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed how much our modes of living and production are fragile and constantly exposed to change. Therefore, our modes of inhabiting and using our spaces are continuously updated and challenged, which requires flexible mechanisms that lead to hybrid spatial qualities. The practice of remodelling, transforming, and reusing spaces is a constantly growing practice that responds to contemporary concerns about sustainability, socio-cultural change, and economic limitations. Therefore, new conceptual approaches to spatial transformation appear to be similar to those applied in exhibition design, which are soft and hybrid versions of interventions. Some approaches are elaborated with an anti-architectural gesture that aims to transform existing structures without having to build anything, instead using strategic rearrangement of the existing, which is convenient to cultural and economic limitations (Roberts, 2014).

The terms hybrid and performative are characterised by a semantic width and may include a wide repertoire of key concepts. However,

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in this study, we shall focus on some major definitions. Pedro Gadanho (2012) indicates a performative turn in architecture as the influence of performance on other disciplines, including architecture. A performative turn consists of reconnecting the disciplines with performance art traditions. Thus, architecture is inspiring and borrows from the world of performance new dynamics and mechanisms and performative aspects such as the participatory and the ephemeral aspects in spatial practices, a flexible structure, an emphasis on the scenic and the spectacular, the emphasis on the experience, etc. (Gadanho, 2012).

For David Leatherbarrow (2005), the term performative architecture describes architecture belonging to dynamic environments, indicating a shift in architectural theory from what the building is to what it does. The performative character is related to scripted and unscripted events, referring to how architecture can be productive far from the planned purposes as a play between intentionality and non-intentionality (Leatherbarrow, 2005).

The performative project, as described by Valentina Signore (2015) should always be able to adjust itself for the unscripted by being open and flexible. This idea is based on the concept of open-form, where the project is designed to be open for transformations, opposing the idea of the definitive perfect form of the past modernity where the form and the program were always defined from the very beginning. The performative project "accepts uncertainty, incompleteness, and openness to events and users, urban and interior improvisations, responding to a contemporary complex and changing context" (Signore, 2015, p. 171). The performative has flexible mechanisms rather than linear ones (McKenzie, 2002). The performative is transformative as it can restructure spatial and social order by impacting both audience and context (Carlson, 2008). Performative refers to scenic and theatrical potentials in spatial situations (Janson, 2015). Performative also refers to the ability of the space to communicate, where a spatial performance acts as a communication medium (Kassem, 2022).

Hybrid refers to a complexity due to the co-presence of different features and an original type of 'place' generated by a layering process that evolves over time. Hybrid spaces are indicated in a built environment that is required to be flexible, where multiple functions, users, and space types exist and generate unprecedented solutions. Temporal 'in-betweenness', occasionality of access/presence, activities and functions, and publicness and openness are some of the main determinants of hybridisation (Migliore et al., 2021).

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The characterisation of performative and hybrid seems to require detecting various parameters from the defined repertoire: Flexible, reversible, old/new, multifunctional, openness, unplanned, scenic, event, in-betweenness, and communicative.

Hybrid and Performative via the Lens of Exhibitions

"The pedagogical role of exhibitions is finished. Now it is about a simple, evocative and emotional role" (Rota, 2015, p. 110). The performative qualities of the exhibition space dominate all other characters, as they keep experimenting with evocative and spectacular spatial qualities that are usually the result of hybrid spatial features. Exhibition designer Uwe Brückner used the terms choreographed space, spatial potentials, dramatised space, and making spaces talk. He describes scenography as the area of design where different mediums provide real experiences to visitors in reactive and communicative spaces (Brückner, 2008). This points to the highly hybrid tools that were used to activate the exhibition spaces in order to achieve a certain spatial performance while communicating content.

David Dernie (2006) describes as performative the space designed to induce actions, referring to mutual performativity between the space and visitors. Pam Locker (2011) highlights that "the theatrical opportunities borrowed from multimedia, sound, lighting design and a range of other exhibition technologies, create interesting opportunities for storytelling through performance" (p. 7).

Performance, hybrid, flexible, narrative, and interactive are spatial concepts that emerged with the rise and the abundance of new types of museums and exhibitions. Exhibitions that have unusual and challenging content require creative hybrid spatial strategies in the museum. This situation also leads to ceaseless innovations in exhibition methods and exhibition spaces that keep being experimented on in order to cope with new types of material and immaterial exhibitions (Reinhardt & Teufel, 2010). Interactive spaces, simulated realities, immersive experiences, participatory devices, and theatrical spaces are all exhibition types that are highly hybrid, performative, and multitasking, where a wide variety of tools are employed to make a space perform and communicate and exhibit content.

Exhibition design is therefore also considered an act of innovative spatio-temporal contextualisation and re-contextualisation of content that may go beyond the physical space. In the case of immaterial exhibitions, the emphasis on the spatial performance comes as a compensation for the absence of objects. Therefore, the exhibition space is no longer dedicated to objects and their aura

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but instead is dedicated to spatial performances and experiences that go beyond the physicality of the space through networked and virtual dimensions. It is a shift from Walter Benjamin's aura to Gernot Böhme's atmosphere (Janson, 2015). The object, exhibit, or content is therefore only an excuse to create an experience, and to stage an atmosphere (Reinhardt & Teufel, 2008). The communication of the immaterial content is then manifested through the wholesomeness of the lived spatial experience. The experience results from performative and hybrid tools reflected in the co-presence of various features and the layering of experiences, including space-content, content-visitors, and space-visitors. The emergence of such 'performative' characteristics in spatial design discourses underlines the shift from the design of space toward the design of experience, where the aesthetic of perceiving becomes the aesthetic of experiencing (Brückner, 2008). Hybridisation and performance-oriented making of space push toward some dematerialisation and complex hybridisation of the space.

In a single exhibition display, or in a pavilion, a large amount of data and information are manifested through the use of many exhibition tools. The form is a result of a multi-parameters spatial conception. The architecture of the pavilion or the display installation may combine narrative, and experiential aspects, reversible and flexible structures, ephemeral and interactive features, virtual and digital tools, and individual and collective experiences. In the design of exhibitions, we detect aspects of temporalities, event-mentality, in-betweenness, user diversity, occasionality of access and happenings, activities and functions, scenic presence, publicness and openness, and communicative powers, which are a manifestation of the hybrid-performative repertoire. Such high complexity and hybridisation can only result from a gathering of hybrid design skills.

In some cases, the designer employs quasi-immaterial interventions through the manipulation and staging of artificial environmental factors (pitch, temperature, lighting, etc.) in order to give the existing space a new performance ability, related to the content of the exhibition. Sensorial and experiential are terms often linked to the practice of employing approaches and strategies in interior or experience design, based on modern environmental psychology, to create interactions that may provide intellectual or emotional engagement. The employment of immersive effects such as walk-in films, 360-degree projections, and private audio experiences increases the process of spatial hybridisations by creating various layers of experience within the same space. Such a pavilion can be described as performance-oriented architecture, in which every spatial and architectural element

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is imbued with performative potential and communicative powers. The surfaces, the atmosphere, the lighting, the flooring, etc., can all play a role in the spatial performance and in communicating the content.

Exhibitions provide us with cases and examples that illustrate—for educational and theoretical purposes—the repertoire of performative and hybrid spatial qualities and spatial transformation. Exhibitions and pavilions act as a metaphor for hybrid and performative architecture from which we can draw conceptual and theoretical tools that can be used in education and practice and contribute to the body of knowledge of architecture in general and interventions in particular. Such research methods rehearse analytical tools based on the hybrid and performative repertoire. They also contribute to shaping newer theories or quasi-theories for spatial interventions.

Earlier Spatial Performances and Hybridisation

Performances may be unscripted or planned, with or without audience participation. The performance can be live or via a medium, and it can happen anywhere. Such concepts are derived from visual art and relate to art movements such as Dada and the Situationists International, which catalysed the phenomenon of installation and conceptual art. Performance is usually an ephemeral and authentic experience. However, performance in the space should not be confused with the performance of the space. Our interest is the performance of the space and the participation of the space in a performance where the space and its hybrid performative components are designed to exercise actions upon us, combined with a communicative act.

In the history of art and exhibitions, many iconic figures have already experimented with spatial performance by employing hybrid spatial tools. In their works, they stimulated the latent potential of the exhibition space itself and shifted the interest from the performance in the space toward the performance of the space. Marcel Duchamp, El Lissitsky, Herbert Bayer, Friedrich Kiesler, Bruce Nauman, and Michael Asher were artists who greatly influenced the modern and contemporary conception of museums and exhibition spaces. They had radical ideas about exhibiting art and how to engage the viewer with it (Lansroth, 2016). By analysing the differences between their works, we could differentiate between the diverse tools of performativity and hybridisation. It is also possible to differentiate between the performance of the space, the performance in the space, the performance of objects, the performance of the display installation, and the performance of the visitors/audience. All those features are actually either the tools or the result of the process of hybridisation and performativisation of or in the space.

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Michael Asher attempted to make the space perform by manipulating the sensorium, the environmental factor, and the acoustic factors. He was famous for his 'call to enter the work' approach. 'Enter' the work, rather than 'view' or 'see' it, which means crossing from one environment to another (Peltomäki, 2010). The visitor is called to experience the performance of the manipulated space. *La Jolla* installation is one of his famous works that translate these tendencies. As Kirisi Peltomäki (2010) described:

> *La Jolla* installation was a room that had been systematically altered to provide a distinctive visual and auditory experience. Lighting in the space had been manipulated to be gradually diffused from the center of the room toward the periphery … the ceiling was covered with sound-absorbing material. The natural soundscape that might have resulted from the visitor's movements and other ambient noise was replaced by a single audio tone produced by sound generators and tuned to the shape of the room. … The modification of the room's sound qualities produced an environment in which audio levels were muffled in the center and corners of the room, and subtly increased in other parts of the gallery … (Peltomäki, 2010, p. 22)

Asher made the space perform in his desired way by controlling and manipulating the tectonics, the artificial, and the natural interior environmental factors with tools external to the original space. The resulting experience(s) tackles intimate and collective sensorial and perceptual features while engaging "both individual and collective aspects of spectatorship, providing viewers pathways to self-reflective situations where they can become intensely aware of their own perceptual and cognitive processess" (Peltomäki, 2010, p. 27). This recalls the definition of the performative as the scenic potential within the spatial situations, described by Alban Janson (2015) as an internal narrative experience provoked by intentionally or non-intentionally designed spatial situations.

The Green Light Corridor (1970) by Bruce Nauman is also an example of an art installation that illustrates a spatial event based on the interactions between materiality and bodies. The spatial installation created a set of different physiological and psychological interactions and responses within the audience, and in front of the audience, which makes it performative and hybrid as per the criteria of layering, occasionality, and variety of uses, access, and interactions.

> Materiality also influences their orientation to the interaction itself. Depending on how they enter the gallery space … Those seeing the opening may interpret it as a hallway, something to be walked through; those who see the wall may view Corridor aesthetically, art to be looked at rather than a space to be entered. In this sense, how a visitor orients to the piece … affords different sets of interactive practices. (Griswold et al., 2013, p.345)

Such space is designed and arranged to allow new things to happen. Allowing new things to happen is a concept discussed by Kali Tzortzi (2008) in his analysis of different models and forms of museum layouts to show how the type-typology of the layout can make the space perform differently in the "visitors-art experience" and "visitors-visitors experience" (Tzortzi, 2008, p. 42). Allowing multiple things to happen is a key concept of hybrid characterisation manifested in openness toward different modes of use and encounters with the space. Furthermore, the unprescribedness and unpredictability of the whole event is an aspect that belongs to the hybrid and performative repertoire.

A comparison between such works may reveal different strategies used by each artist to make a space perform and the degree of hybridisation and layering of the experience. Their interest was not just to create autonomous performative installations, but their interest shifted toward the whole spatial performance of the exhibition space that became increasingly hybrid. In other words, the interest shifted from the performance of the installation (the performance of objects and displays), toward the performance of the space, or toward spatial experiences. The hybrid aspects are detected in the employed spatial tools and in the resulting experiences (layers of experiences, openness toward unpredictable interactions, and various modes of encounters).

The strategies of these artists range between two poles: from making the space perform through the manipulation of the internal environmental factors, to intervening with an installation that enters into a transformative performance with the existing space and the viewers. The result can lead to spaces for actions, spaces in action, spaces for reflections, and spaces for sensing. This result can be considered a toolbox that can be used in education and practice.

Art installation has many similarities with exhibition and display design as both are site-specific, usually interior, three-dimensional, involving the transformation of the perception of space, and can

happen in public and private spaces, museums, art galleries, historical places, and expos. They both use and share a variety of media, including film, sound, and light in order to transform and remodel the existing space. Today's exhibition design overlaps with artistic movements such as environment art, performance, and installation art, engaging with interior architecture, graphic design, and lighting design and increasingly engaged with film, projection, virtual reality, and advertising (Locker, 2011).

Exhibitions and museums appear to be increasingly dematerialised, with greater emphasis on the event character that holds all the genetic elements of a hybrid-performative space. Another shift is from an emphasis on the aura of the exhibits (the objects) toward an emphasis on the spatial performance/experience/ambience staged around the exhibition's content. While the aura-strategy exhibition focuses on glorifying the aura of objects, the 'scenography-strategy' exhibition considers the object only as an entrance to a world of ideas and an excuse to create a spatial experience (Reinhardt & Teufel, 2010).

Making Surfaces Perform: Hybrid Skin

An early strategy to create a sort of spatial performativity can be traced in the art of optical illusion, such as the anamorphic arts, the art of the *trompe l'œil*, and later on in the art of cyclorama and panorama. These art forms make a space perform through its surfaces. They are a way to animate the space in relation to the viewer's position and point of view. They employ a hybrid spatial experience as a fusion between reality and illusion. Spatially speaking, the fact that the perception and the meaning-making of an anamorphic image depend on the viewer's position makes the whole experience a kind of performance in which the viewer takes part. In anamorphic art and *trompe l'œil*, two dimensional surfaces are made performative. *Trompe l'œil* in particular, is an attempt to make the flat surface of a space perform an illusion, a spatial-perceptual illusion, which creates a hybrid spatial illusion that combines physical and virtual features.

Such works are a hybrid combination of spatial installation, scenography, optical illusion, and theatre that counts on a spatial performance to communicate content. Optical illusions are now used in scenography, exhibition design, and art as ways to animate and hybridise existing spaces. The strategy is to create a spectacular impact that experiments with surfaces of the pre-existing space while using innovative materials and smart tectonics with mediatectural qualities that perform special visual and sensorial effects. Such practices fall into the discourse of 'making surfaces perform,' which is the most basic strategy but probably the most used one. The

expression 'making spaces perform' resonates with the title of the book *Making Spaces Talk* by Atelier Brückner, in which different projects are described along with the employed strategies to make spaces perform and communicate content (Atelier Brückner, 2011). In exhibition design, those strategies often stay within the range of soft reversible and lightweight spatial intervention. Applying two-dimensional art such as graphics, calligraphy, projections, mapping, anamorphic art, interactive tectonics, etc., is a soft spatial intervention that aims at a performative transformation and hybridisation of the existing space. Sometimes, they can be used to enliven abandoned spaces by animating them with new spatial performances. Surfaces house interactive screens, words, arrows, and colour, while graphics are conceived of as a three-dimensional field that weaves between other display elements (Dernie, 2006). Exhibitions offer rich examples of content-oriented and mediatecturalised spaces.

Exhibitions provide us with examples of performance-oriented hybrid architecture, in which every spatial element is freighted with communicative potential. Everything from the surface, the atmosphere, the lighting, the beams, and others can play a role in the spatial performance. A hybrid-performative repertoire of qualities can be detected as well: a scenic/theatrical presence of spatial features and users, hybrid tools combining virtual and physical elements, layers of experiences (individual, customised, and collective; a variety of interaction modes and in-betweenness. The reversibility of a pavilion is also a quality that responds to the notion of flexibility, ephemerality, event-characterisation, and occasionality, which completes the hybrid repertoire.

Performing Display and Spatial Interventions

The insertion of a display installation into a pre-existing space is an act of spatial intervention from the perspective of spatial hybridisation and performativity. A suggested approach is to examine the transformative performance of the installation in and on the space. In fact, the moment you insert a new spatial body into existing architecture, a spatial transformation occurs in terms of circulation, atmosphere, perception, and others. Furthermore, a contrasting co-existence of new and old spatial features indicates a hybrid aspect, as well as the occasional/temporary functional change of the space. Such generated in-betweenness, occasionality, and event-oriented aspects characterise a process of performativisation and hybridisation.

In exhibition-related literature, the concept of performative display refers to installations that encourage people to explore, touch, try,

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and learn, which refers to a display installation as an independent body inside a space that may remain neutral and still. It is the case when the installation does not have an organic relation with the existing space and acts as a sculpture in performance. However, what interests us is the opposite side of the spectrum, where the installation has a dramatic transformative power on the existing space (the container) as if it is a temporary adaptive reuse or interior intervention. These delicate distinctions allow us to determine two scenarios or discourses, one that stresses the performance of the container and another that stresses the performance of the inserted installation. The hybrid and the performative are therefore expressed in the play between the new and the existing space, and in the occasionality of it, in unprecedented generated uses of the space, and in the transformative power of the performative generated by the exhibition's installations. The dimensions of the installed display could divide the space and create zones and spaces inside the space that offer new modes of accessibility and use of the host architecture. The visitor's sight and path follow the movement of the installation through the existing architecture. The content (objects and exhibits) is encountered within this whole experience.

Exhibitions in historical contexts offer many examples that illustrate a performance between two volumes, two architectures, between an existing and permanent one and an ephemeral temporary one and a hybrid architectural result where the old co-exists with the new. An example is a project by Dario Curatolo for the Oikos company, designed for the Fuorisalone 2014 in Milano and installed at the historic Palazzo Cusani in the Brera district. The project titled *Oikos Colore e materia per l'architettura*, aimed to create an experience, a sensory route of suggestive rooms, to exhibit the products and concepts of the company Oikos, which produces paints, colours, and textured materials. The installation, starting in the courtyard, consisted of a number of scenes portrayed along the walls penetrating the historical 1600s building. It penetrated the palazzo diagonally from the courtyard and exited at the backyard garden. The display structure created a dynamic volumetric performance and recreated smaller intimate spaces of the exhibition inside and outside the existing building (La redazione di Domus, 2014). This hybridised the existing space by providing an occasional new possibility of access and use, while the performativisation is in the event-characterisation, ephemeral, and reversible character of the intervention.

Weaving theoretical relations between the concepts of hybrid, performative, and spatial transformations and architectural interventions allows us to use the lens of exhibitions as a new

analytical approach to study the transformation of spaces based on the repertoire of hybrid and performative spatial qualities that we had detected. In other words, this methodology shapes a new dramaturgy to understand spatial remodelling in general (including urban, architectural, and interior interventions). It is also necessary to note that the hybrid-performative repertoire may simultaneously refer to transformative tools and resulting qualities.

The practices of exhibiting and intervening are both concerned with flexible approaches to spatial transformations. Site-specific art installations and displays are also forms of art that often challenge the pre-existing spaces of museums and cultural institutions as if they are architectural interventions. Some art forms may go beyond the walls of the exhibition space, while others have strong digital and immaterial dimensions. The temporariness and the event-character of this kind of work is also a spatially challenging factor that often produces a hybrid space. As a consequence, the required degree of flexibility and instability puts the institution and its architecture in crisis (Hirsch, 2009). However, this also offers a ground for positive experimentation and potential.

Contemporary exhibitions and art installations are, in fact, temporary spatial interventions. This temporality gives them the character of an 'event' that can induce transformations in space through time. The transformative power that characterises the 'event' is also a key concern for today's designers. The transformative power of the performative is a concept derived from speech act theory and social sciences (Fischer-Lichte, 2015).

As in performance, the installation stands for the enlivening and occupation of the space. The exhibition space is the apparatus that oscillates between event, performance, and installation, containing temporal and spatial aspects (Omlin, 2012). Brooker and Stone (2004) have defined installation as the softer version of interventions among the three remodelling categories of they have described: intervention, insertion, and installation. It is defined when the elements of remodelling exist independently from the building. There are many similarities between a display installation and an art installation. Art installation and exhibition design are both site-specific, usually interior and three-dimensional, and involve transforming the perception of space. They can use various media, including film, sound, and light. They are both concerned with time, space, and the sensory experiences of the audience (Locker, 2011). All of these characterise a hybrid and performative space. Brooker and Stone also suggested that when the existing structures are

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extremely heavy and rigid, restricting the possibilities of reuse, only lightweight installations are possible (Brooker & Stone, 2004). Thus, such limitations push toward creative solutions, such as ephemeral-like and performative installations that soften the dominance of the existing structure.

The practice of exhibiting in as-found reused buildings becomes a territory where we can study the performative practice of spatial hybridisation, while weaving the interconnections between as-found and remodelled spaces, soft and hardcore interventions, event, and transformation, occasionality, and reversibility.

Open-form, Flexibility, and the Unpredictable

The term performative is characterised by a terminological openness. Various scholars have used, defined, and interpreted it in various ways. However, the literature review reveals that most of those interpretations of performative intersect with the concept of openness and flexibility, which are also found in the definition of hybrid. As with the performative, the hybrid space is required to be flexible, where multiple uses, users, and space types exist and an occasionality of functions and publicness and openness is detected (Migliore et al., 2021) characterised by a diverse functional palette (Krasilnikova & Klimov, 2020).

The term performative in architectural/urban discourses relates to the open-form and is considered a response to the symptomatic issue of late modernism (Signore, 2015). The concept was explained as open-form, which is based on the poetic works of Umberto Eco (1962/1989). The open worked, where the notion of openness was central to understanding a shift in art, science, and social sciences. Michael Hensel, in his discourse about performance-oriented architectures, as non-discrete spaces, also referred to Umberto Eco's The Open Work: "Such open work or work in movement is characterized by a deliberate ambiguity of meaning and seeks to avoid conventional forms of expressions and prescribed" (Hensel, 2013, p. 40). The concept of open-form in architecture was interpreted by Michael Hensel (2013) in a more literal way, in the sense of 'non-discreteness' of the built space, where architecture should be

> allowed to participate in a wide range of interlinked environmental and ecological processes, and not being conceived as discreet autonomous object. … as designing non-discrete architecture, nested in the context, with almost no rupture between exterior and interior, with a gradient of interiority and exteriority that makes the project more nested

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into its contest, creating free-running buildings, gradient environments, degrees of 'interiorities and 'exteriorities' and a series of layers of thresholds. (p. 38)

Open and flexible mechanisms can actually be translated into spatial design in different ways. Methods that translate them in terms of flexible machinery and reversible structure adopting an 'archigramistic' aesthetic are used in the Fun Palace by Cedric Price or the Centre George Pompidou by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers. Other ones are expressed in the un-designed and the aesthetic of the unfinished as intentional qualities within the design that allows for future changes. The un-designed and the unfinished become part of the design strategy to allow growth, de-growth, or any other development of the project. This reformulates the idea of design and "produces a shift from the will to predict and program, toward the instigation of the unexpected" (Signore, 2015, p. 172).

Furthermore, 'flexibility' and 'openness' concern the architecture of exhibition spaces on three scales: the scale of the building, the scale of the interior and the scale of the installation. Architecturally speaking, museums and cultural spaces are required nowadays to perform flexibly for constant transformations and be able to respond to the various unusual characters and forms of exhibitions. This aspect of a continuously changing space has a scenic theatrical dimension as if it is a spatial show performed at an urban and interior scale.

Adding extensions to existing museums also contributes to experimentation with new typologies of spaces for new types of exhibitions and exhibits, which eventually hybridise the original architecture. Exhibition spaces, increasingly conceived as performative devices for expositions, are treated as envelopes and are polyfunctional to allow plural and flexible use (Chan, 2011). 'Flexibility' and 'multifunctionality' are key notions that challenge the concept of stability of the institution and its architecture while introducing highly performative and hybrid models. In this regard, Nikolaus Hirsch (2009) indicated that museological and art institutions were opened up to consider two contradictory concepts of 'stability' and 'instability,' within a risk of turning into event-based, while trying to find an architectural strategy that guarantees both physical presence on a specific site and temporal changeability.

Constant transformability through adding, redistributing, installing, subtracting, and others is a kind of spatial performance that is mostly present in architectures such as the Centre Pompidou, which is probably the most expressive example of translating these concepts

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of spatial performativity in this regard. However, the aesthetic of the non-finished and continuously reprogrammable interior spaces does not require a high-tech approach. Le Palais de Tokyo, Vasal, DIA, Hangar Bicocca, and Tate Modern, are examples that represent the continuous attempts to deal with the temporal, the ephemeral, the event, and the performance. The interiors show up every time in a different form as performative-oriented interior architecture, where the interiors are intentionally left unfinished in order to remain open for changing events and occasionalism. The hybrid aspects are detected in the flexible management of the exhibition space and the exploration of various solutions that have temporary timelines. The confused organic relation between the new (the installations) and the existing (the architecture) adds to the complexity when different installations happen or exist simultaneously, which opens the space to various modes of uses and interactions, even in spatial-temporal in-betweenness.

Hybridisation and Performativisation of Urban Fabrics

On the urban scale, the notion of hybrid is also emerging, indicating several concepts and qualities in public space design. Some literature focuses on multifunctionality and multilayering as hybridisation indicators. Krasilnikova and Klimov (2020) describe that "Hybrid spaces are multifunctional architectural and landscape complexes, designed by applying the landscape urbanism approach and having a spatial connectivity with adjacent areas" (p. 92). The quality of the hybrid spaces is defined by multifunctionality that provides services that would be interesting for a wide variety of users. Hybrid public space is therefore multi-layered and allows to create spaces in the city structure that connect different cultural, historical, and social parts of the city. The hybrid urban space may include multipurpose art and architectural objects, and it is based on a functional planning flexibility principle, where the space formation is based on the extension of its functional palette (Krasilnikova & Klimov, 2020). In the same regard, the presence of a versatile mixture of public and private structures, allowing different degrees of accessibility and various usability, also provides public spaces with a hybrid character (Nissen, 2008).

Other studies focus on the co-existence or fusion between virtual and physical features. The physical and material space of the city is augmented with layers of technology and media that impact social behaviours and interactions. Consequently, one can detect various types of presence depending on the interaction with mobile and web-based media experiences. Mobile communication technologies create hybrid forms of continuous connectivity in public spaces. The presence can be mediated and networked with another shared

space, and the person remains aware of the immediate space while communicating in a hybrid media space (Willis & Aurigi, 2011). This also creates various intensity levels of presence, which is event-based in character. In fact, these aspects became tools for architects to use in urban interventions and public space refurbishment projects. Willis and Aurigi (2011) argued that various types or uses of media in urban spaces could be defined into four types of places:

> The first type of place will be based on physical characteristics that create legitimacy for their hybrid presence either a physical prop for waiting (e.g., a step, or a bench), a secluded spot allowing privacy (a doorway). The second type of place will be a media 'zone' with certain technological characteristics (both positive and negative—either a network 'black hole' or a public Wi-Fi hotspot) create an intense focus either on the physical space or the media space. ... A third type of media locality will be certain physical spaces will be become preferred places to interact with media; the person choosing to switch away from the 'real' to the 'media' space, a practice which Ito has referred to as tele-cocooning (Ito 2005) ... A fourth type will be media stages, where a certain performative aspect of interaction with locative media will be played with in an appropriate location, with passers-by acting as audience. (p. 105)

Performative-related literature in urban design and interventions has mostly dealt with and referred to scenic and theatrical potentials, the participatory, the flexible, the openness for improvisation and changes, and the event character as we noticed in the various contributions and interpretations in the book *Performative Urbanism*, generating and designing urban space by Wolfrum and von Brandis (2015).

The literature review reveals that the characterisation of hybrid space seems to indicate a fusion of digital and physical environments, and the embedment and integration of media networks in urban public places. Communication features allow the creation of illusionary privacy islands within the public space. The users are connected with other virtual/digital spaces that become an extension of their networked presence. Internet hotspot points and connectedness to social media platforms related to a particular place are all tools that hybridise it. The performative/hybrid character is, therefore, in the capacity of this place to host and generate intensities of presence and activity.

Performative space indicates the lightness and reversibility of structures relating to the openness and the flexibility of its mechanisms. These provide openness and flexibility of function in the uses of the space. The participatory aspects that may occur during the design process in urban intervention projects also belong to the repertoire of hybridisation and performative. All those qualities combined will serve to provide a hybrid performative character.

Performative and Hybrid: Tools and Quasi-theories

This study undertook a literature review analysis and implicitly attempted to rehearse analytical tools that study space and spatial intervention through the lens of exhibition design. The analysis was based on a common repertoire of hybrid and performative spatial qualities that emphasise flexibility, openness, reversibility, communicative potential, transformative power, occasionality, and the event characterisation of spatial situations. This act contributes to shaping new academic tools to study spatial interventions and transformation in general, and interior and urban interventions in particular, while pushing toward a clearer differentiation between the discourse of intervention and the one that belongs to conservation and preservation theories.

The paper promotes a hybrid methodological approach by examining how conceptual, textual, and theoretical materials imported from other disciplines (performance, arts, and exhibitions) can contribute to the emerging theories of spatial interventions/transformation, while shaping new ones based on contemporary texts and literature. The long-term goal shall be to develop a clearer epistemological framework of spatial intervention practices to legitimise them as disciplines/practices with a hybrid but unique body of knowledge, a customised form of research, and a dedicated form of education. This study is a step toward rehearsing quasi-theories and conceptual tools that can be used in practice and education customised for interior interventions (including adaptive reuse and urban interventions). Through a 'research on design' framework, testing conceptual imports from exhibition design into architecture with a focus on phenomenological and atmospherically discourses allow the elaboration of dramaturgical and performative understanding of space design and spatial intervention to be used in education and practice.

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