Crafting tomorrow through the Design lens

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This volume aims to deal with systems of creativity and culture in their becoming and expression in the multiverse fields of design. In including theoretical and critical reflections, case studies, methodologies, technologies, tools and original practices, it aims to highlight the heterogeneous nature of such topics, considering creative and cultural industries as part of a broader design process fostering local growth and (re)activating audiences and communities while (co)creating cultural, economic and social values. It seeks to broaden the research approach, embracing a multi-disciplinary perspective and adopting a long-term and holistic approach (Battistoni, Giraldo Nohra, Barbero, 2019) to challenge and overcome the non-deferrable criticalities of the Anthropocene Age.

European calls support the importance of reinforcing *Audience Development* (AD) as a driver for stimulating people's interest in European cultural heritage as well as increasing access to it. AD aims to bring people close to culture; it is an incentive to find innovative models for cultural experiences; it diversifies and/or builds new audiences, boosts cultural diversity and reaches out to underrep-

resented groups. The AD strategy can target the development and diversification of the audiences or the intensification of the relationship with different audiences (see the Creative European Culture sub-programme: 2020 Cooperation Projects call). In 2016, the American artist and designer Neri Oxman proposed the *Krebs Cycle of Creativity* model, through which she described the current era of connection (2016): the link between art and design has a cultural impact on the behavioural dimension. The model consists of a conceptual map capable of describing knowledge transfers across the four modalities of human creativity (science, engineering, design and art).

Nowadays, we are witnessing a crucial transition: global society is facing a crisis, as are the productive cycles that have shaped it, which have also been condemned. The COVID-19 pandemic fostered this overall process, answering the call for change in several areas while prompting changes in stakeholders' individual and collective behaviour to connect while adhering to social distancing.
Furthermore, digital technologies have redefined the world of creative arts and media thanks to the integration of artificial intelligence (AI), which bridges the gap between designers and consumers, and unveils unprecedented possibilities in real and virtual domains to the benefit of a wide range of actors.

A *new era* is taking shape, with new forms of society, culture, economy and politics (Bonomi, Della Puppa and Masiero, 2016). A deep reflection on this crucial transformation will entail a re-vision of the concepts of *sustainable culture*, *inclusive sociality*, and *participation* in cultural heritage understood as a common good (Iaione, 2013). In 2018, the OECD's *Local Economic and Employment Development Programme* (LEED) entered into a partnership with the International Council of Museums (ICOM). Their aim was to develop a guide addressed to policymakers and the museum community, exploring areas with significant «potential for museums so that they could contribute to local growth, including economic development, urban regeneration and community development, education and creativity, and inclusion, health and well-being», building on a process that began in the 1970s.

The design approach will envision original models of sociality and new concepts of community (Sennet, 2020). Design, creativity,

culture, and creative industries are seen as drivers able to encourage this stage of experimentation, necessity of interaction, and continuous change (Vai, 2017). Indeed, design, creativityand creative and cultural industries are still essential motors capable of revamping the cultural system (cf. Creative Europe 2021–2027, Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe – REACT–EU, Future cohesion policy 2021–2027).

Therefore, the challenge consists in transforming creativity and culture into innovative processes, possiblydefining measurable impacts through systems and indicators.

In this context of constant transformation, cultural institutions change roles and responsibilities (in terms of both museums and cities). Over time, museums generate a complex network of relationships and a strong influence on civil society – between memory and future, starting from a new system of symbols and a new semantics. The first edition of the *European Report of Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor* (2017) was updated two years later (Montalto *et al*., 2019). This report envisages the monitoring of cultural and creative cities by analyzing a series of indicators measuring the *Cultural Vibrancy*, the *Creative Economy* and the *Enabling Environment* of a city.

Therefore, issues such as *accessibility*, *multiculturality* and *inclusion* redefine the social and political positioning of the current cultural system.

The book is divided into three parts: (1) Territories & Local Development, (2) Museums, Exhibitions & Cultural Experience, (3) Art, Design & Cultural Institutions. Each part touches on the main issues of the book, highlighting different contexts, processes and approaches to the topic.

First, the scale of the territory opens to different design attitudes able to empower the potentiality of the cultural offer, in terms of both valorizing the historical identity and envisioning new ways to enjoy places. In the tourism field, topics such as sustainability and accessibility are defining new models for designing experiences, which has implications for designing the whole chain of this sector: infrastructures, hospitality, museums and communication strategy starting from a renovated perspective focused on social values. The link with the past is important in order to re-read the relationship between cultural

heritage and environment; it opens access to new narratives of the Italian design heritage, going beyond the boundaries of the traditional definition of cultural heritage. At the same time, the complex transformation of cities, landscapes and relationships between people of many cultures implies design attitudes able to accommodate multidisciplinary approaches.

Secondly, in this context, inevitably, the cultural experience in museums and temporary exhibitions assumes a new role: one moves from the concept of visit to one of experience, where audience participation and inclusion is the crucial point. A broadened meaning of inclusivity and accessibility implies improved ways to design museums and exhibit systems based not only on physical ergonomics, but also on multisensory features and synaesthesia. Herein, a new definition of and a new role for museums are required: a museum must be able to embrace several communication registers and languages to engage different visitor profiles; able to envision participatory processes to stimulate multicultural dialogues; able to renew its proxemics according to the emerging circumstances. At the same time, the logics underlying the temporary exhibit system are changing: a sustainable approach is required in order to face the huge problem of ephemeral equipment which is destined to be discarded as waste.
This implies a complete change of mindset around this design field: different approaches, skills, and attitudes.

Finally, the relationship between art, design and cultural institutions, as well as the role of the latter, must be redefined according to new potential synergies. The social innovation approach – as a change process based on strategies to enable the social and economic development of a community – is the aim of several projects focused on new models of a sharing culture. This includes the advent of new technologies, some of which are directed towards new *functions* of the digital culture and digital humanities, in a context where multidisciplinarity and disciplinary dialogue are at the core of the issue.

References

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