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**MULTISENSORY
INTERIORS**

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PAD

via Francesco Soave 15 – 20135 Milano – Italy
info@padjournal.net – editors@padjournal.net

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via A. Ponchielli 3 – 20129 Milano – Italy

aiap@aiap.it – www.aiap.it

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**SPATIAL
PERCEPTION
AND THE
CONTRIBUTION OF
NEUROSCIENCE**

Multisensory Design Approaches in Contemporary Interiors

Anna Anzani

Politecnico di Milano

Orcid id 0000-0002-4265-1720

Emilio Lonardo

Politecnico di Milano

Orcid id 0000-0002-7521-8296

Barbara Di Prete

Politecnico di Milano

Orcid id 0000-0001-9334-7019

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Abstract

This paper examines the evolution of multisensory design methodologies in interior architecture and design, focusing on approaches that foreground sensory experience as a primary design driver rather than a secondary aesthetic concern. Building on architectural phenomenology and the seminal concept of *Design Primario* developed by Italian designer Clino Trini Castelli in the 1970s, the discussion traces how attention to immaterial and perceptual qualities – such as light, sound, texture, microclimate, and scent – has reshaped both design processes and representational tools. The paper then expands the notion of the sensorium beyond the traditional five senses, incorporating vestibular, proprioceptive, thermal, temporal, and social dimensions of spatial experience. Biophilic and inclusive sensory design are presented as two methodological frameworks that operationalize multisensory thinking in ethically and socially responsive ways.

Finally, the contribution of contemporary technologies, including virtual reality, multisensory simulation, and neurophysiological measurement, is examined alongside empirical evidence linking multisensory environments to psychological and physical well-being. Neurodiversity is introduced as a critical perspective through which to consider interior design, acknowledging that the heterogeneity of sensory, cognitive, and attentional profiles require adaptive, flexible environments rather than universal solutions.

Overall, the paper argues that multisensory design constitutes a paradigm shift in which interiors are conceived as dynamic sensory ecosystems with measurable effects on human behaviour, cognition, and health.

1. Introduction

Over the past decades, interior architecture and design have undergone a significant epistemological shift, moving away from a predominantly visual and formal understanding of space toward a more holistic conception of human experience. Traditional design methodologies have long privileged geometry, proportion, and visual composition, often treating other sensory dimensions as secondary or decorative. However, research in environmental psychology, neuroscience, and human-centred design increasingly demonstrates that spatial experience emerges from the integration of multiple sensory modalities, including sound, touch, smell, movement, and thermal perception.¹ Within this context, multisensory design has gained prominence as both a theoretical framework and a practical methodology aimed at shaping spaces that respond more closely to human perceptual and embodied needs. This paper situates contemporary multisensory design practices within a longer intellectual lineage, highlighting early theoretical contributions that anticipated current concerns. In particular, it revisits architectural phenomenology and the concept of Design Primario by Clino Trini Castelli, which foregrounded immaterial and atmospheric qualities as the true substance of spatial experience. Building on this foundation, the paper explores how expanded sensory parameters, biophilic principles, inclusive design strategies, and emerging technologies collectively redefine what counts as a design

¹ This research has been developed within the framework of PRIN - Call 2022 Prot. 2022HYSFNR *The Crossmodal Congruence Toolkit: a Behavioural Neuroscience Framework for Spatial Design* and has been funded by the European Union - Next Generation EU.

variable. By synthesizing theoretical perspectives with empirical findings, the paper seeks to demonstrate that multisensory design is not merely an aesthetic trend, but a rigorous and evidence-based approach with profound implications for well-being and social life.

1.1. Gap and Aim

Despite the growing attention to sensory experience in interior architecture and design research, contemporary interiors are still predominantly conceived through visual and functional paradigms. As a consequence, the emotional and multisensory dimensions of spatial experience often remain secondary within design methodologies.

This paper addresses this gap by examining how multisensory design approaches can reframe interior architecture as an experiential discipline. In particular, the study traces the theoretical lineage from early concepts such as architectural phenomenology and Design Primario to contemporary multisensory methodologies supported by immersive technologies and evidence-based research.

2. Multisensory Experience as a Conceptual Framework

By synthesizing phenomenological theory, multisensory design methodologies, and recent technological tools, the paper proposes an integrated framework for understanding how interior landscapes can be intentionally designed through sensory orchestration.

Multisensory design emerges from the recognition that spatial perception results from the integration of multiple sensory modalities rather than from vision alone. Research in envi-

ronmental psychology and neuroscience increasingly demonstrates that sound, temperature, smell, texture, and bodily movement contribute significantly to the experience of space (Spence, 2020; Pallasmaa, 1996).

From this perspective, interiors can be understood as multisensory systems in which perceptual stimuli interact to produce atmosphere. This shift from visual to sensory composition forms the conceptual basis for contemporary multisensory design methodologies.

3. The Emotional and Sensory Dimensions of Interior Space

Recent research in cognitive science and environmental cognition suggests that human understanding is deeply rooted in sensory-motor processes. Concepts - traditionally considered abstract and symbolic units of thought - are increasingly interpreted as emerging from neural structures associated with perception and bodily action. Studies drawing on neuroscience, neural computation, and cognitive linguistics indicate that the sensory-motor system plays a fundamental role not only in perception but also in the formation of abstract concepts (Gallese & Lakoff, 2005). In this view, cognition is shaped through embodied interaction with the physical world. Therefore, spatial experience contributes directly to the formation of meaning, rather than merely providing a neutral backdrop for cognitive processes (Ruzzon, 2026).

Language itself offers evidence of this embodied grounding. Everyday expressions frequently rely on sensorimotor metaphors - such as “taking a leap forward”, “diving into an adventure,” or “embracing an idea” - demonstrating how spatial and bodily experience’s structure conceptual thought.



Figure 1. Light, colour and materiality as atmospheric generators. Visual perception emerges through the interaction of luminous conditions and sensory qualities of surfaces (photo by Pierfrancesco Sarzi Braga).

These morphodynamic patterns of perception and action become the basis through which meanings are constructed and communicated. Architecture participates in this same cognitive process: from its earliest manifestations, it has translated rituals, habits, and patterns of social interaction into spatial form, shaping and expressing the essence of human experience (Ruzzon, 2026).

Interior spaces constituted experiential frameworks through which individuals constructed memory, identity, and a sense of belonging. Architectural phenomenology has long emphasized that spatial experience is fundamentally embodied, emerging from the interaction between the human body and the sensory conditions of interior architecture (Merleau-Ponty, 2011; Pallasmaa, 1996). Light filtering through openings, the resonance of sound across surfaces, the tactile qualities of materials, and the sequences of movement through space all contributed to shaping how interiors were perceived and inhabited (Fig. 1).

Several authors have argued that contemporary commercial and institutional interiors often privilege efficiency, standardisation, and visual communication over sensory richness and atmospheric complexity (Augé, 1995; Koolhaas, 2002; Pallasmaa, 2011).

The experiential implications of this shift are substantial. Environmental psychology research suggests that highly standardised environments, characterised by repetitive layouts and limited sensory variation, may reduce opportunities for emotional attachment and place identity (Ellard, 2015; Scannell & Gifford, 2010).

Therefore, reconsidering interior space as an emotional and sensory medium represents a critical task for contemporary design. Interiors are not merely visual compositions; they are environments perceived through the entire body and internalized through sensory experience. When design carefully plans atmosphere, perception, and multisensory stimuli, interior spaces can establish subtle dialogues between place and the human mind. These dialogues unfold experientially rather than discursively, shaping how contexts are felt before they are consciously interpreted.

From this perspective, emotion should not be understood as a decorative layer applied at the end of the design process. Rather, it emerges from the interplay of sensory conditions that structure spatial perception. Long before users interpret a setting intellectually, they respond to it physically and affectively. Light intensity, acoustic resonance, tactile textures, thermal conditions, spatial proportions, and patterns of movement all contribute to shaping immediate emotional responses. This interpretation aligns with theories of emotional design, which argue that affective responses emerge through the interaction between sensory qualities, cognitive appraisal, and embodied experience (Norman, 2004; Desmet & Hekkert, 2007).

Phenomenological research confirms that perception originates in embodied interaction with space rather than purely cognitive interpretation (Merleau-Ponty, 2011). A narrow passage may generate tension, a sudden spatial expansion may release it, and subtle shifts in light or materiality can alter emotional awareness without deliberate cognitive effort.

These insights resonate directly with the principles of multi-sensory design. By recognizing that spatial experience arises from the integration of multiple sensory modalities, multi-sensory design methodologies seek to consciously organize light, sound, texture, smell, and microclimate as primary design parameters. Rather than treating atmosphere as an accidental by-product of form, these approaches position sensory experience as the central driver of design decisions. In doing so, they reconnect interior architecture with its historical role as a discipline capable of shaping embodied perception and emotional engagement.

The relevance of this approach becomes particularly evident in cultural interiors such as museums, memorials, and exhibition settings. When spatial design relies exclusively on visual displays or textual explanations, visitors often remain passive observers. Conversely, interiors that activate multiple sensory channels enable visitors to participate physically and perceptually in the narrative of the space. Through carefully designed atmospheres and spatial sequences, such places transform visitors from spectators into embodied participants, producing experiences that remain present in memory long after the physical encounter has ended (Böhme & Thibaud, 2018; Pallasmaa, 2011).

Within this framework, multisensory design can be understood as an attempt to restore the experiential depth of interior spaces. By integrating sensory perception, emotional response, and spatial atmosphere into the design process, contemporary methodologies seek to overcome the limitations of visually dominant design paradigms.

The following sections examine how multisensory approaches - from the early concept of Design Primario to contemporary technological tools - provide concrete strategies for reactivating the emotional and perceptual potential of interior space.

3.1. Embodied Perception and Cultural Mediation

Contemporary theories of embodied and enactive cognition increasingly describe perception as an active process emerging from the continuous interaction between brain, body, and environment (Shapiro, 2019; Varela et al., 2017). Rather than passively receiving sensory information, individuals actively construct perceptual experience through their embodied engagement with the surrounding world.

Although embodied cognition suggests that perception is rooted in shared sensorimotor mechanisms, the meanings attributed to sensory experiences are not entirely universal. Cultural traditions, social practices, and personal memories shape the ways colours, smells, temperatures, and spatial atmospheres are interpreted and valued. Warm colours, for example, may evoke hospitality in some contexts and warning or danger in others, while olfactory and thermal cues often carry culturally embedded associations. Consequently, multisensory experience operates through the interplay between a common biological basis and culturally acquired systems of meaning.

From this perspective, perception can be understood as a culturally mediated process rather than the mere outcome of physiological responses. As Briata (2020) argues, the mul-

tisensory landscapes of contemporary multicultural cities demonstrate that sounds, smells, colours, languages, and patterns of bodily proximity acquire significance through socially and historically constructed frameworks. Environmental stimuli are therefore not neutral properties of space; they contribute to shaping what is experienced as familiar or unfamiliar, comfortable or unsettling, acceptable or inappropriate. Spatial perception thus emerges from the continuous interaction between embodied sensory inputs and culturally learned interpretative codes.

Briata further suggests that everyday coexistence in plural urban environments is itself a form of bodily practice, requiring individuals to develop a gradual habituation – or even an “indifference to difference” – towards heterogeneous sensory conditions and diverse understandings of proximity, distance, and social interaction. Such processes of adaptation play a crucial role in fostering coexistence, yet they also participate in the construction of symbolic boundaries and forms of exclusion, since sensory memories become embedded within collective narratives and cultural representations.

This perspective reinforces the view that environmental perception cannot be fully explained through biological mechanisms alone. For the design disciplines, it implies that spatial experience is co-produced by the material qualities of environments and by the socio-cultural frameworks through which individuals interpret them. Consequently, multisensory design should account not only for universal perceptual processes but also for the cultural diversity that shapes the experience and meaning of space.

4. Design Primario and the Primacy of Sensory Atmospheres

One of the earliest and most influential methodological approaches to multisensory design was articulated by Italian designer Clino Trini Castelli in the 1970s through the concept of Design Primario. Castelli challenged the dominance of form and function in modernist design by shifting attention toward what he described as the “immaterial aspects” of spaces, or soft components of the project. These include colour, texture, light, sound, microclimate, and scent - elements that, taken together, generate what Castelli defined as “the true experience of people in artificial environments” (Castelli & Mitchell, 2014, p. 305).

Unlike conventional interior design methodologies, which typically begin with spatial layout and volumetric definition, Design Primario inverts the design sequence. Rather than asking how a space should look, it asks how it should feel. Thus, the design process starts with the conceptualization of a desired atmosphere or sensory mood, such as calmness, intimacy, stimulation, or vitality. Formal, material, and technical decisions are subsequently derived from this initial sensory intention. For example, instead of first defining a room’s geometry and then selecting finishes, a Design Primario approach might begin with the intention to evoke a multisensory image such as “dawn in a forest,” characterized by diffuse bluish light, soft acoustic textures, subtle olfactory cues of earth and vegetation, and a cool, humid microclimate. Architectural elements, materials, and technologies are then arranged to produce this coherent sensory composition.

This methodological reversal has significant implications. It positions atmosphere not as an emergent by-product of design, but as its central organizing principle. In doing so, Design Primario anticipates later theoretical developments, such as the concept of atmosphere in phenomenological architecture and the growing emphasis on experience design. It also underscores the inherently multisensory nature of perception, recognizing that spatial meaning arises from the interaction of multiple sensory inputs rather than from vision alone.

4.1. Representational Tools and the Visualization of the Immaterial

A critical challenge posed by multisensory design methodologies concerns representation. Traditional architectural drawings - plans, sections, elevations - are well suited to describing geometry and spatial relationships, but they are poorly equipped to convey perceptual qualities such as warmth, quietness, or chromatic ambiance. Aware of this limitation, Castelli and his contemporaries developed experimental representational tools aimed at mapping sensory and experiential data.

One of the most notable examples is the *Diagramma dolce di Gretel* (*Gretel's soft diagram*), created by Castelli as an interpretative analysis of the Haus Stonborough in Wien, designed by Ludwig Wittgenstein for his sister Margaret "Gretl". Rather than depicting the house solely in terms of physical structure, the diagram superimposed layers of perceptual information onto the spatial layout, including heat gradients, zones of acoustic quietness, and chromatic atmospheres. Castelli described this diagram as "a tool to factor in or represent sub-

jective quality” (Castelli & Mitchell, 2014, p. 310), effectively proposing a new kind of perceptual perspective for contemporary design.

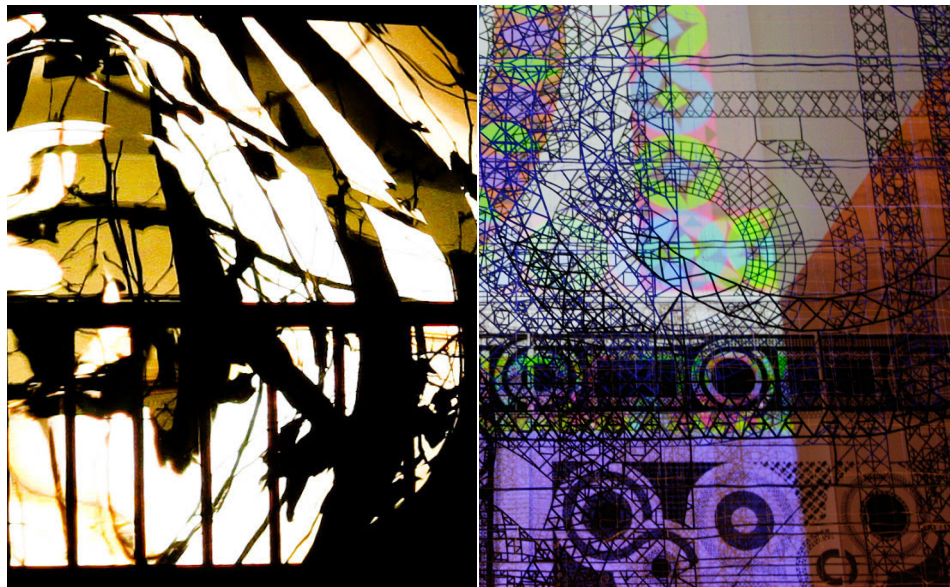


Figure 2. Experimental visualizations of perceptual and atmospheric qualities. Contemporary representations of sensory experience move beyond geometric description to communicate immaterial environmental conditions (photos by Pierfrancesco Sarzi Braga).

The conceptual legacy of these early experiments is clearly visible in current design practices. Today, mood boards, sensory matrices, and experiential narratives are commonly used to articulate intended atmospheres. Advanced simulation tools further extend this capacity: acoustic modelling software visualizes sound propagation and reverberation times, while lighting simulations predict glare, luminance distribution, and colour rendering. Virtual reality environments allow designers and clients to experience the combined effects of light, materiality, and spatial configuration before construc-

tion. Collectively, these tools reinforce the idea that design documentation must extend beyond geometry to include descriptions and simulations of sensory sequences - what users are expected to see, hear, feel, and even smell as they move through space.

5. Incorporating the Expanded Sensorium

Designing multisensory settings also requires a broader understanding of the human sensorium. Beyond the classic five senses, spatial experience is shaped by additional sensory modalities that are often overlooked in conventional design practice yet play a crucial role in how spaces are perceived and inhabited.

The vestibular sense, which governs balance and the perception of acceleration, is activated whenever people move through space. Architectural features such as ramps, staircases, and changes in floor inclination can generate sensations ranging from stability and groundedness to dynamism and mild disorientation. A gently winding ramp, for instance, may produce a flowing, continuous movement, while a straight, level corridor conveys steadiness and linear progression. By carefully modulating these elements, designers can influence how dynamic or calming a space feels.

Closely related is the proprioceptive sense, or the awareness of one's body position in space. Proprioception is strongly influenced by scale, enclosure, and spatial proportion. Places that offer a variety of spatial scales - ranging from intimate niches to expansive open areas - allow users to select spaces

that resonate with their emotional and psychological state. Small, enclosed corners may support introspection and retreat, while large, open spaces can foster a sense of freedom and social openness.

Thermal perception and humidity constitute another fundamental dimension of sensory experience. Architectural theorists have long argued that thermal delight constitutes an essential dimension of spatial experience, extending beyond engineering notions of comfort (Heschong, 1979). Experiential design methodologies increasingly treat thermal and tactile qualities as primary design variables rather than purely technical constraints. One common strategy involves dividing environments into thermal zones, allowing for gradients of temperature rather than uniform conditions. Material selection also plays a key role: stone floors that cool the feet, wooden surfaces that feel warm to the touch, or sunlit brick walls that radiate heat all contribute to embodied comfort. These thermal sensations often interact with visual cues, such as colour, producing cross-modal correspondences - for example, the use of warm hues in cooler areas to balance perceived temperature.

Temporal perception, or chronoception, further expands the sensory framework. Awareness of time is deeply influenced by spatial cues, particularly light. In healthcare and workplace settings, lighting systems that mimic natural circadian rhythms are increasingly employed to support temporal orientation, improve sleep-wake cycles, and enhance overall well-being (Blume et al., 2019). Research indicates

that strengthening temporal cues in the built spaces can yield measurable psychological and physiological benefits, underscoring the importance of time as a design parameter.

Finally, social senses - relating to the awareness of others' presence - are mediated through spatial and acoustic design. The arrangement of spaces can encourage or discourage social interaction, while acoustic conditions shape perceptions of intimacy, privacy, and crowding. Quiet, soundproofed areas support concentration and withdrawal, whereas larger, reverberant spaces facilitate collective activity and social engagement. As Bollo and Dal Pozzolo (2005) suggest, these acoustic and social dynamics frame buildings as relational systems in which perceptions of self and others are continuously negotiated.

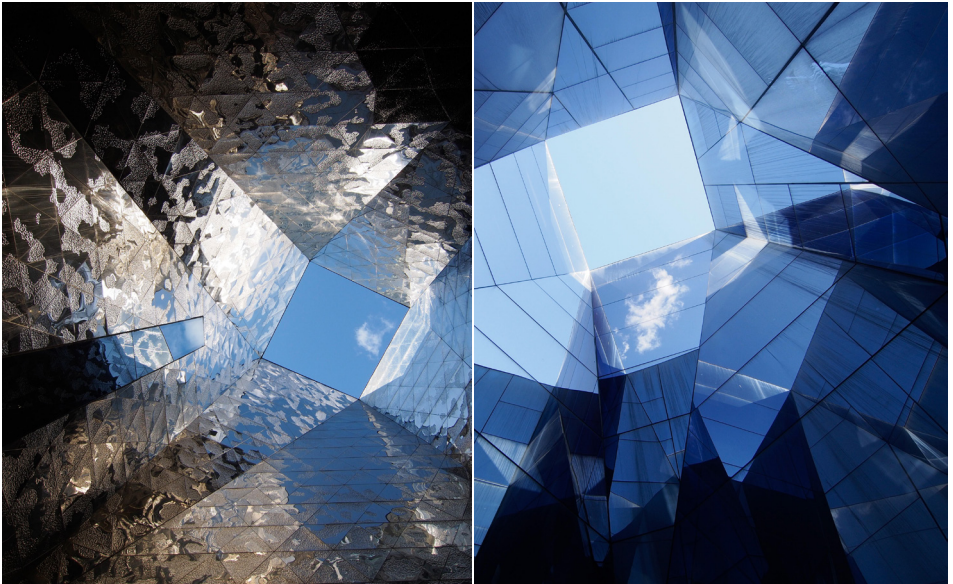


Figure 3. Spatial perception beyond vision. Reflections, depth, scale, and movement contribute to embodied experiences involving vestibular and proprioceptive dimensions (photos by Pierfrancesco Sarzi Braga).

Taken together, these considerations point to an understanding of designed places as complex multisensory ecosystems. Although not all interior spaces currently exploit this full range of sensory parameters, public and collective areas increasingly demand such an integrated approach.

6. Biophilic, Universal and Neuroinclusive Sensory Design

Two methodological approaches that align closely with expanded multisensory design are biophilic design and inclusive, or universal, sensory design. Both frameworks emphasize the ethical and experiential dimensions of design, seeking to enhance well-being while accommodating diversity.

Biophilic design aims to strengthen the connection between humans and nature within the architectural space. Grounded in the biophilia hypothesis – the idea that humans possess an innate tendency to affiliate with natural systems – this approach integrates natural light, vegetation, water features, natural materials, and views of nature into architectural and interior spaces (Kellert et al., 2008). Beyond aesthetic considerations, biophilic design draws on ecological philosophies such as Leopold’s land ethic, translating them into concrete design strategies that allow natural processes to “speak” within human-made environments. Empirical studies associate biophilic elements with reduced stress, improved cognitive performance, and enhanced emotional well-being, reinforcing their relevance within a multisensory framework.

Inclusive sensory design, by contrast, foregrounds human diversity, acknowledging that users differ widely in their sensory abilities, sensitivities, and preferences. In line with

the principles of Universal Design (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012), inclusive places must be engaging without being overwhelming and must offer adaptability for individuals with sensory disabilities or heightened sensitivities. Methodologically, this often involves sensory modulation, allowing users to control environmental parameters such as lighting intensity, sound levels, or thermal conditions.

A key strategy within inclusive design is the use of redundant cueing, whereby information is conveyed through multiple sensory channels simultaneously. For example, tactile floor patterns can support navigation for visually impaired users, while clear visual signage assists those with hearing impairments. By overlapping sensory signals, redundant cueing ensures that the failure or limitation of a single sensory channel does not result in disorientation (Steinfeld & Maisel, 2012, p. 118). This approach underscores the resilience and accessibility of multisensory contexts.

Although biophilic and inclusive design originate from different theoretical traditions, they converge in their recognition of human diversity and embodied experience. Natural elements provide multisensory variability, opportunities for restoration, and non-verbal environmental cues that can support users with different sensory profiles, including individuals with heightened sensory sensitivities (Browning et al., 2014; Joye, 2007).

7. The Contribution of Technology to Multisensory Design

More recently, inclusive sensory design has increasingly engaged with neurodiversity, particularly in relation to autism spectrum conditions and ADHD. Rather than treating neu-

rodivergence as an exception requiring specialised environments, contemporary approaches propose using neurodiverse experiences as a critical lens through which to improve environmental quality for all users. Moving beyond deficit-based interpretations, neurodivergence is understood as part of a wider spectrum of cognitive diversity arising from the reciprocal interactions between mind, body, and environment. Within this perspective, strategies such as sensory zoning, adjustable lighting systems, acoustic refuges, predictable spatial sequences, and opportunities for sensory self-regulation have demonstrated benefits that extend beyond specific diagnostic groups (Mostafa, 2007; BSI, 2022). In this sense, neurodiversity expands the understanding of human variability, strengthening the principles of universal design while encouraging the creation of interior environments that are inclusive, intelligible, adaptable, and cognitively accessible.

Recent technological advancements have significantly enhanced the operationalization of multisensory design methodologies. Immersive tools now allow designers to simulate, test, and refine cross-modal interactions within virtual environments before physical construction begins.

In lighting design, virtual reality is routinely employed for subjective appraisal, enabling users to experience glare, brightness distribution, and colour temperature in immersive simulations. VR is also increasingly used for behavioural and cognitive testing, with studies demonstrating systematic effects of illuminance levels and correlated colour temperature on attention, mood, and task performance (Mostafavi et al., 2024). In acoustics, head-tracked binaural auralization allows

designers to perceive room acoustics as if they were physically present, supporting more accurate assessments of spatial sound qualities. Recent research suggests that audiovisual VR environments can evoke levels of social presence comparable to those experienced in real rooms.

Beyond sight and sound, multisensory prototypes increasingly incorporate olfaction. Olfactory displays integrated into headsets, combined with controlled scent-delivery protocols, have been tested in experimental settings. Reviews indicate that adding smell to digital nature experiences enhances immersion and emotional engagement, highlighting the potential of olfaction as a design parameter.

Parallel to these developments, the field of neuroarchitecture provides tools to measure human responses to multisensory spaces. Techniques such as electroencephalography (EEG), heart-rate variability analysis, and skin conductance measurements are used in VR-based experiments to assess stress, engagement, and comfort. Findings suggest that variations in environmental variables produce measurable changes in physiological markers, which can in turn inform design decisions at early stages (Ghamari et al., 2021). Together, these technologies support an evidence-based design methodology in which multisensory congruence and well-being outcomes can be empirically calibrated.

8. Implications for Psychological and Physical Well-Being

The implications of multisensory design for human well-being are substantial and increasingly well documented. A robust body of evidence demonstrates that built landscape can mea-

surably influence health outcomes when they are designed to support, rather than overload, the senses. Visual access to nature, reduced noise levels, supportive lighting conditions, and balanced sensory stimulation are associated with lower stress, faster recovery rates, and reduced need for analgesic medication in healthcare settings (Ulrich et al., 2008).

Laboratory studies further indicate that natural soundscapes facilitate physiological stress recovery more effectively than urban noise (Alvarsson et al., 2010). In educational contexts, research shows that acoustic quality, daylight availability, and overall environmental comfort significantly affect attention, learning, and academic performance. Well-lit and acoustically treated classrooms, for example, are consistently linked to improved student outcomes (Wargocki et al., 2020).

These findings support a central proposition of multisensory design: sensory qualities are not merely cosmetic or decorative, but have tangible effects on cognition, emotion, and physical health. By treating sensory experience as a core design parameter, architects and designers can create settings that actively contribute to human flourishing rather than merely accommodating functional requirements.

9. Conclusion

The discussion presented in this paper suggests that multisensory design should no longer be considered a complementary aspect of interior architecture, but a central design paradigm. Multisensory design signifies a fundamental shift in how interiors are conceived, represented, and evaluated. From the early insights of architectural phenomenology and Design Primario to contemporary evidence-based and technologically support-

ed practices, this approach reframes interior architecture and design as disciplines concerned with the composition of sensory experiences. By expanding the range of design parameters, embracing inclusivity and biophilia, and leveraging immersive technologies, multisensory methodologies offer powerful tools for addressing the complex experiential demands of contemporary life. Ultimately, designing for the senses is not an optional enhancement, but a critical responsibility. Recognizing interiors as multisensory ecosystems expands the disciplinary scope of interior design, positioning it as a field capable of shaping not only spatial functionality but also emotional experience, human behaviour, and well-being.

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V

BIOGRAPHIES

Anna Anzani

Associate Professor in Interior Architecture and Exhibit Design at the Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano, where she has served on the teaching staff of the PhD Program in Design. Principal Investigator of the NextGenerationEU-funded project *The Crossmodal Congruence Toolkit: A Behavioural Neuroscience Framework for Spatial Design* (2023–25). Research topics: reuse of existing buildings, human-place relationships, spatial liveability, explored through interdisciplinary approaches integrating environmental psychology and neuroscience. Published more than 160 scientific papers; editor of some volumes, including *Cross-Modal Interior Architecture. A Behavioural Neuroscience Framework for Spatial Design* (with N. Bruno, Springer, 2026); *Memory, Beauty and Transdisciplinarity. Reflections on the Topicality of Roberto Pane* (with E. Guglielmi, Design8, 2024); *The City of Care. Strategies to Design Healthier Places* (with F. Scullica, Springer, 2023); *Mind and Places. A Multidisciplinary Approach to the Design of Contemporary City* (Springer, 2020).

anna.anzani@polimi.it

Ana Margarita Ávila Ochoa

Industrial Designer with a master's degree in urban art history. She is a lecturer and researcher at the Facultad de Hábitat of the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí, where she teaches courses in theory, history, visual expression, and design studios, and supervises undergraduate and graduate theses. She is a member of the academic group Design and Complex Thought and participates in the Design for Social Development Network. She is the author of *El diario de Anita Osio Cordero*, published in the Libros del Rincón collection for secondary education, and has contributed to journals such as *Legado*, *DOIA*, and *PAD* in Milan, as well as academic book collections on design and architecture in Ecuador. She serves as a peer evaluator for national design accreditation processes and is Treasurer of COMAPROD (2022–2026). She has acted as a juror in major design competitions and has contributed professionally to artisan textile development programs and exhibition curation in San Luis Potosí.

aavilaochoa@fh.uaslp.mx

Barbara Di Prete

Architect, PhD in Interior Architecture and Exhibit Design, and Associate Professor at the Department of Design, Politecnico di Milano, where she carries out research in urban and interior design and is President of the Student-Professor Joint Committee of the School of Design. In 2004 she founded Ghigos studio with Davide Crippa developing exhibitions, installations and various projects for international institutions (e.g. Maxxi, Expo2015, MoMA, Milan Triennale, Venice Biennale). In 2013 she founded an experimental design-oriented fablab, dedicated to investigating the technical, social, and aesthetic potential of new digital technologies. From 2015 to 2023 she coordinated the master in Urban Interior Design (MUID), and Design for Public Space (DPS), organized by Politecnico di Milano and POLIdesign. Her current work focuses on social innovation projects involving public administrations, cultural and creative enterprises, and third-sector organizations, exploring the role of interior spaces as a driver of urban regeneration, and the participatory dimension as a tool for engagement, care, and responsibility.

barbara.diprete@polimi.it

Elena Fatone

She holds a master's degree with honors in Interior and Spatial Design from Politecnico di Milano, where she currently works as Course Tutor in the Interior Design programme. Her thesis, *Allestimento di interni multisensoriali. Un approccio interdisciplinare per la rigenerazione di luoghi dismessi*, explored multisensory approaches to spatial regeneration through an interdisciplinary framework. She co-authored the contribution *Interior Regeneration Through Multisensory Atmospheres* (2026), published in *Cross-Modal Interior Architecture* (Springer), which further develops the outcomes of her thesis. Her research focuses on interior regeneration, multisensory atmospheres, and cross-modal design processes. She is currently working as an Interior Designer.

elena.fatone13@gmail.com

Marinella Ferrara

Associate Professor of Industrial Design at the Department of Design of the Politecnico di Milano, where she coordinates the MADEC – Materials Design Culture research group and serves on the PhD board in Design. Her research focuses on design culture, material design, sustainability, multisensory experience, and design-driven innovation.

marinella.ferrara@polimi.it

Laura Giraldi

Architect and Professor of Industrial Design at the Department of Architecture, University of Florence, Italy, where she serves as Head of the master's Program in Advanced Sustainable Design. In 2017, she founded KYDE – Kids and Youth Design Lab, the first university-based research laboratory in Italy dedicated to design for children and young people, which she currently directs. She has coordinated numerous national and international research projects focusing on product innovation, interior design, learning environments, and design for emergencies. Her research explores the relationship between design, perception, communication, and social innovation, with particular attention to multisensory experiences, design methodologies, human-centered design, and future-oriented approaches capable of fostering resilience, well-being, and positive societal transformation in rapidly changing environments.

laura.giraldi@unifi.it

José Luis González Cabrero

Industrial Designer and full-time research professor at the Facultad del Hábitat of the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí. He earned his bachelor's degree in industrial design at UASLP and completed his final year at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC). He holds a master's degree in Product Design from the Politecnico di Milano in Italy, where he also served as an adjunct professor. He has collaborated with interdisciplinary design studios across Mexico, the United States, and Italy. He currently leads the UniUpcycle Laboratory, focused on upcycling and sustainability applied to product design. He is a member of the academic group Design and Complex Thought, developing research and projects centered on territory, aesthetics, and how product-service systems can address complex social challenges. He also works as an independent designer through his studio, collaborating with local and international clients.

luis.cabrero@uaslp.mx

Norma Alejandra González Vega

Industrial Designer with a master's degree in economics and management of Technological Change from the Autonomous Metropolitan University, and a PhD in Complex Thought from Multiversidad Mundo Real Edgar Morin, as well as a Doctor of Philosophy from California University. She is a full-time research professor at the Autonomous University of San Luis Potosí, where she teaches in the Industrial Design undergraduate program and in graduate studies in Habitat Sciences. She is a member of the academic group Design and Complex Thought and of the Design Research Network (REDEID). She has organized eight editions of the International Seminar on New Product Development and coordinated the master's program in Habitat Sciences (2020–2022). She has edited five academic compilations, authored three methodological manuals, and published over fifty works. She has supervised more than thirty theses and specializes in qualitative research using Grounded Theory and Atlas.ti software.

alejandra.vega@uaslp.mx

Simone Greco

Master's degree with honors in Psicologia per il benessere: empowerment, riabilitazione e tecnologia positiva from Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano. Thesis *Il flow come mediatore psicologico per la progettazione di un museo rigenerativo: uno studio neuroscientifico*. Since 2024, teaching support in the Museology and Museography courses, in collaboration with Professor Alessandra Squizzato, at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore. In 2025, monographic lecture *Psico-Neuroarchitettura* in collaboration with Professor Anna Anzani, at Scuola di Design of Politecnico di Milano.

simone.greco047@gmail.com

Weihuan Hou

PhD student at the Department of Design of the Politecnico di Milano. She obtained a master's degree in design & engineering with a thesis on the semiotic interpretation of cultural heritage at the Politecnico di Milano. Her research is currently aimed at exploring the new possibilities and solutions of communication design in the context of museum accessibility through synaesthetic translation and multisensory experience.

weihuan.hou@polimi.it

Emilio Lonardo

Designer, researcher and educator based in Milan. He holds a PhD in Design and teaches at Politecnico di Milano, where his academic work focuses on the relationships between spatial experience, public space, emerging technologies and psychological well-being. His research investigates how design can contribute to more responsive, inclusive and meaningful environments, with particular attention to urban interiors, augmented reality, phygital interaction, gentle technologies and design-led cultural innovation. He has collaborated with universities, cultural institutions and international partners on research projects, workshops and educational programmes exploring the role of design in shaping contemporary forms of living, learning and participation. Alongside his academic activity, he is the founder of D.O.S. – Design Open Spaces s.r.l., a research-oriented design practice working across spatial interfaces, innovation processes and experimental cultural formats.

emilio.lonardo@polimi.it

Lesley Takunda Mashiri

He is an urban planner and researcher working at the intersection of urban regeneration, spatial governance, and lived experience in African cities. His work focuses on how everyday management practices, spatial design, and institutional arrangements shape perceptions of safety, comfort, and place attachment in inner-city and post-industrial environments. He has professional experience in precinct management, urban regeneration strategy, and development planning, with a particular emphasis on Global South contexts and incremental urban transformation. His research interests include multi-sensory urbanism, adaptive reuse, environmental perception, and the relationship between governance practices and spatial experience. His current work explores how non-visual and embodied dimensions of space influence regeneration outcomes, contributing to emerging debates on human-centred and regenerative approaches to urban design and management.

lesleymashiri@gmail.com

Sara Masoero

MA, is an Independent Artist teaching History of Arts in the High School “G. Peano” Cuneo (Italy).

lmagomerlino@gmail.com

Francesca Morelli

Adjunct Professor of Transmedia Design and a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Department of Architecture, University of Florence, Italy. In 2023, she earned a PhD in Sustainability and Innovation for the Design of the Built Environment and Product System. She is a member of KYDE – Kids and Youth Design Lab, where her research focuses on product systems, interior and communication design for children and young people. She has been involved in several national and international research projects addressing interior design, product innovation, and design for emergency contexts. Her research interests include multisensory design, sustainable design and human-centered approaches to the design of products, interiors, and learning environments

francesca.morelli@unifi.it

Hannah Moriarty

Interior designer and researcher who graduated from RMIT University with a Bachelor of Design (Interior) in 2013. She has since contributed to the RMIT Interior Design program as a sessional lecturer and researcher, specialising in ecological interiors, accessibility, exhibition design, and visual communication, while also contributing to neurodivergent design research. Hannah practises as an interior designer developing interior and architectural concepts informed by a background in wellness and community-led projects. Her work is shaped by a focus on accessibility, inclusive environments, and user-focused spatial outcomes, alongside leading diagrammatic and visual research methods for co-design processes and longitudinal studies.

hannah.moriarty@rmit.edu.au

Lucia Ratti

Designer and Ph.D. candidate at the Design Department of Politecnico di Milano, her research explores the environmental responsibility of design across multiple domains, including urban biodiversity, circular exhibition design, and design for the energy transition. Her doctoral research focuses on the phenomenon of plant blindness, investigating how design can counteract it and foster plant awareness through situated practices in urban public spaces. Since 2019, she has been an

assistant in didactic activities in the Interior Design Bachelor's Degree of Politecnico's School of Design, and in 2020 she started working with the association Repubblica del Design, where she has taken care of the design and implementation of participatory design-didactic workshops, with partners such as the Municipality of Milan, Milan Triennale, and SOUX school of architecture for children.

lucia.ratti@polimi.it

Alastair Reed

He holds a PhD in Forest Ecology and is a lecturer at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) and Melbourne Polytechnic. He brings over two decades of experience in higher education course design, working across interdisciplinary programs that connect environmental systems, design, and applied sciences.

His research spans forest genetics, viticulture, and data-informed analyses of environmental and socio-economic systems, including work on power imbalances within commercial structures. His current work focuses on multisensory design and more-than-human approaches, exploring how ecological systems thinking can inform spatial practice and support the development of responsive, relational environments.

alastair.reed@rmit.edu.au

Dina Riccò

Associate Professor at the Department of Design (Politecnico di Milano). A graduate of architecture and with a PhD in Industrial Design, her main subject of study is applied synaesthesia to design and multimedia, communicative accessibility in audio-video and museums. Amongst her key publications: books entitled *Sinestesie per il design* (Etas, Milan, 1999), *Sentire il design* (Carocci, Rome, 2008), the book *Synaesthesia: Theoretical, artistic and Scientific Foundation* (with M. J. de Córdoba, Sean A. Day et al., ArteCittà, Granada, 2014, Spanish ed. 2012). She is the author of over 130 publications in books, journals, and national and international conferences, including the recent curations of the books *Accessibilità museale* (FrancoAngeli, 2023, Selected ADI Index 2024) and *Accessibilità comunicativa* (with M.C. Andriello; Rai Libri, 2024).

dina.riccò@polimi.it

Massimo Schinco

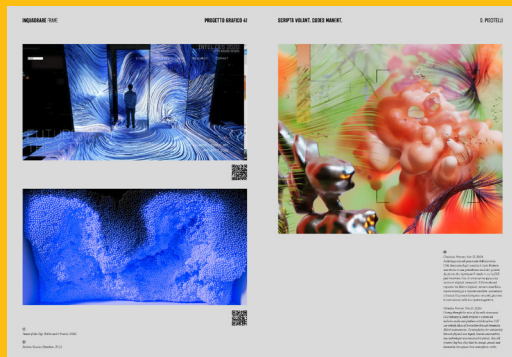
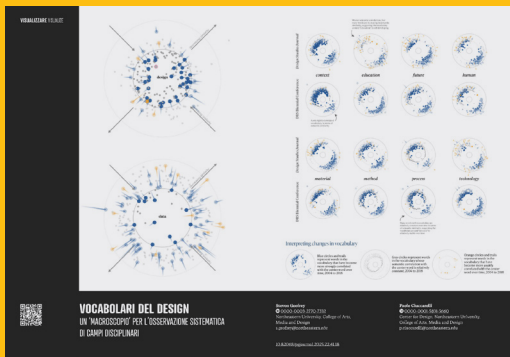
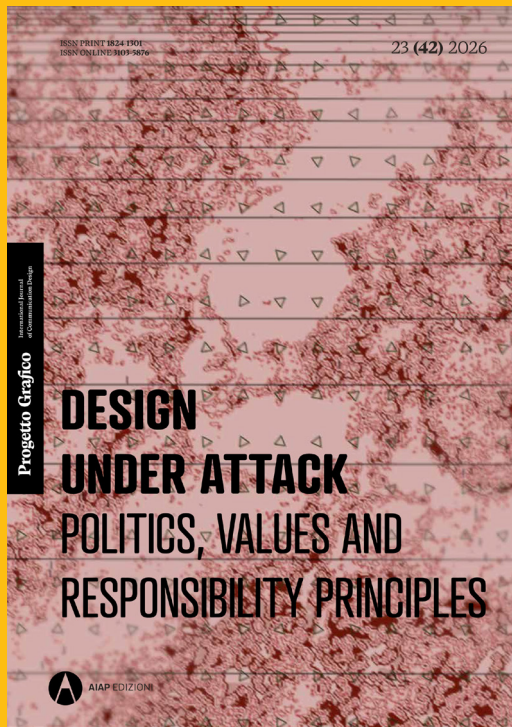
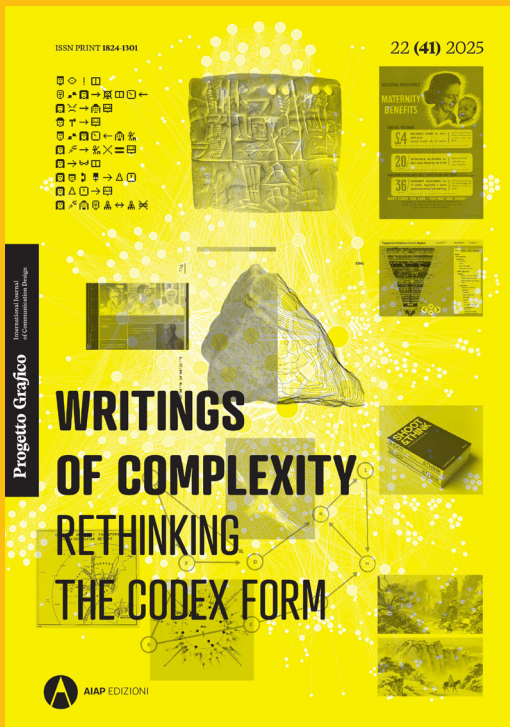
Psychologist and psychotherapist. He teaches Systemic Relational Psychotherapy in the Centro Studi Eteropoiesi, Turin, Italy. He is Adjunct Professor in the Department of Design, Milan Politecnico, Italy. His works focus on the bridge between oneiric thought and project creativity

studio@massimoschinco.it

Paulo Eduardo Tonin

He is an architect and PhD Candidate in Design at Santa Catarina State University (Universidade do Estado de Santa Catarina), and a visiting researcher at the Politecnico di Milano. His research focuses on experience design, with particular attention to multisensory and cross-modal experience, sensory branding, and material agency in interior, retail, and phygital environments.

paulotonin@gmail.com



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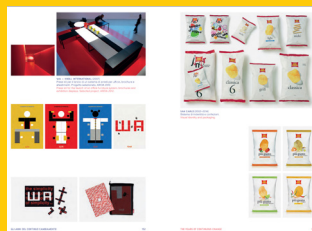
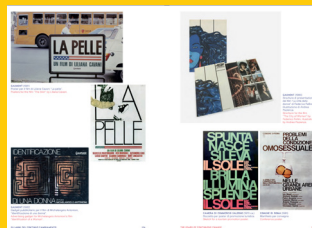
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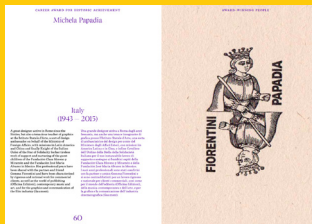
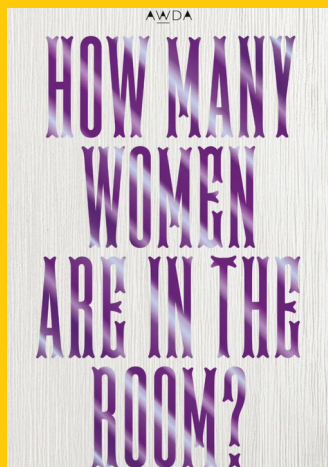
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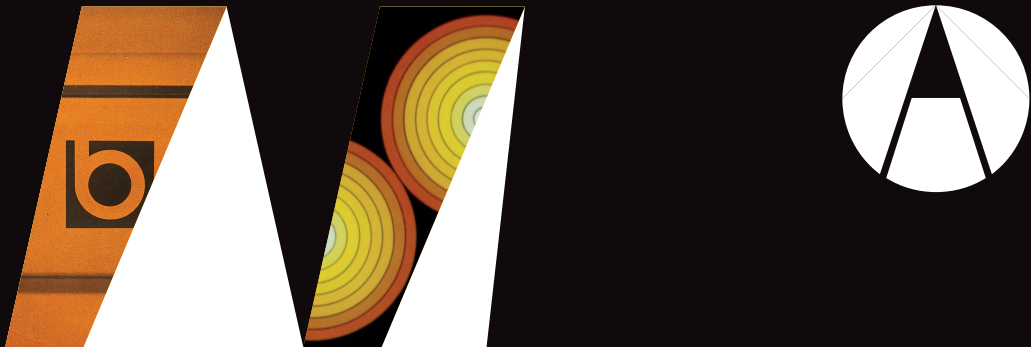
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