**Designing the emphatic experience
Suggestions from art practices**

Alice Devecchi-Doctoral Dissertation

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MILANO 1863

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POLITECNICO DI MILANO, DIPARTIMENTO DI DESIGN

Abstract

In the light of the emerging collaborative approaches to design, this thesis aims at rethinking the traditional consideration of empathy as a designer's skill addressed at understanding the need and wishes of users. In managing collaborative processes, the designer's ability to step into the other's shoes is no longer enough. Empathy should be extended to participants who are asked to cooperate towards a common goal. On the basis of these premises, the thesis claims that a shift from considering empathy as a psychological ability of an individual to accounting for it as an experience that enhance dialogic and cooperative relations, could contribute to improving collaborative processes.

In order to achieve this change of perspective, the thesis refers to a theoretical framework built on a phenomenological account of empathy. The phenomenological reading of empathy – developed in particular by Edith Stein and recently rediscovered and reviewed by Laura Boella, amongst others – focuses on its nature as an interpersonal experience that introduces the other into one's own personal horizon making his/her irreducible otherness emerge. The capacity of acknowledgnig otherness is as a key for establishing dialogic exchanges and cultivating a cooperative attitude.

Empathy may unfold spontaneously within relational contexts, still requiring facilitation and support in addition to contextual circumstances which do not prevent it from occurring. Hence, this study aims to provide guidelines that assist in the design of particular conditions that enable the unfolding of empathic experiences. The guidelines serve a practical tool to help set up the context of collaborative processes in order to make them more effective.

The guidelines for designing the empathic experience have been drawn from the study of participatory and collaborative art practices. In the thesis, art is accounted for its potential of creating particular relational contexts in which empathic experiences are triggered. Six case studies of art practices – immersive, collaborative and/or participatory – are analysed to the aim of understanding how they can suggest strategies and provide models for design processes based on collaboration. The case studies are interpreted referring to the theoretical framework of empathy as an experience, in the attempt of circumscribing the elements which enable an empathic experience therein. Nine recurring elements called enablers came out of the research on the case studies, laying the groundwork for developing the guidelines.

The thesis is a cross-disciplinary work that waves philosophy and art into the current design discourse, and is intended as an attempt to translate theoretical reflections about empathy and our modes of experiencing the other into practical suggestions for facilitating collaborative processes and managing the relational dynamics at stake therein.

Alla luce dell'importanza crescente degli approcci collaborativi al design, la tesi mira a riconsiderare la validità del modo in cui l'empatia viene tradizionalmente intesa, cioè come capacità del progettista di cogliere i bisogni e i desideri dei suoi destinatari. All'interno dei processi collaborativi l'abilità del designer di mettersi nei panni dell'altro non è più sufficiente. L'empatia dovrebbe piuttosto estendersi a chi partecipa al processo, soprattutto considerando che il compito richiesto al suo interno è il raggiungimento di un obiettivo comune con modalità cooperative. Sulla scorta di queste premesse, la tesi propone di passare dal considerare l'empatia una competenza psicologica di un singolo individuo ad assegnarle invece il ruolo di esperienza fondante di relazioni dialogiche e cooperative, che contribuiscono alla riuscita dei processi collaborativi.

Per operare questo cambio di prospettiva, la ricerca viene inquadrata in un framework teorico costruito a partire dall'approccio fenomenologico alla questione dell'empatia. La lettura fenomenologica dell'empatia – sviluppata soprattutto da Edith Stein e recentemente riscoperta rivisitata da Laura Boella, tra gli altri – intende questo fenomeno come un esperienza interpersonale che introduce l'Altro nel nostro orizzonte di senso, facendo emergere il suo essere irriducibilmente altro da noi stessi. La capacità di riconoscere il valore della diversità dell'altro è un aspetto cruciale per sviluppare un'attitudine al dialogo e alla cooperazione.

L'esperienza empatica può dispiegarsi spontaneamente in contesti relazionali. Tuttavia essa può trarre beneficio da particolari condizioni che ne supportano il manifestarsi e circostanze che per lo meno non ne ostacolino l'emergere. Questo studio si concentra proprio su tali condizioni che attiverebbero l'esperienza empatica, allo scopo di predisporre delle linee guida per progettare una simile esperienza. Tali linee guida si costituiscono come strumento pratico per l'organizzazione di processi collaborativi, in modo che essi siano più efficaci soprattutto nei momenti incentrati sul dialogo e la cooperazione.

Le linee guida per progettare esperienze empatiche scaturiscono da una ricerca condotta su pratiche artistiche partecipative e collaborative. Nel contesto di questo studio, l'arte è presa in considerazione per la sua potenzialità di creare situazioni relazionali adatte a stimolare esperienze di tipo empatico. Sei pratiche artistiche – immersive, collaborative e/o partecipative – sono oggetto di altrettanti casi studio analizzati allo scopo di capire cosa e come possano suggerire in termini di strategie e modelli utili a processi di progettazione basati sull'approccio collaborativo. I casi studio sono inquadrati nella cornice teorica relativa all'empatia come esperienza

dell'altro, con l'obiettivo di circoscrivere gli elementi che contribuiscono al generarsi dell'esperienza empatica al loro interno. Nove elementi ricorrenti, chiamati enablers, vengono identificati tramite la ricerca sui casi, tracciando così il percorso verso lo sviluppo delle linee guida.

La tesi si può considerare un lavoro transdisciplinare che intreccia filosofia e arte nell'attuale dibattito relativo al design. Essa si deve intendere come un tentativo di trasferire le riflessioni teoriche sull'empatia e il nostro modo specifico di esperire l'alterità in suggerimenti pratici per preparare e supportare i processi collaborativi gestendo consapevolmente le dinamiche relazionali che questi implicano.

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

In 2008, Pixar Animation Studios released WALL.E, a movie about a cute little robot stranded alone on a desolate Planet Earth, at least how Andrew Stanton – co-writer and director – imagines Earth might be 700 years in the future. The acronym WALL.E stands for Waste Allocation Load Lifter Earth. His task is to collect waste and transform it into compressed cubes that he piles one onto the other, constructing skyscrapers of garbage. He tidies up each and every day a planet where he is the only one left, all humans having abandoned it to travel on a giant spaceship, the Axiom. After generations spent in the zero gravity environment of space, humans have transformed into near invertebrate beings, who live their lives resting on comfortable hovercrafts that run on pre-defined paths, chatting with the other 'guests' through mobile screens that float in front of them. In this horrifying scenario – unfortunately not so far from our current reality – the most human character seems to be WALL.E who, day after day, saves some 'treasures' from the junk: forks, spoons, a Rubik's Cube, Christmas lights, a bulb, a lighter, all traces of a lost humankind he knows only by its waste.

Despite his artificial nature, WALL.E proves to be capable of emotions and feelings when he meets EVE (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator), a smooth, white egg-shaped robot, sent to Earth by Buy-N-Large – the same corporation that provides the Axiom accommodation to human beings. EVE's mission is to find plant life on Earth, if any.

Needless to say, WALL.E falls in love with EVE and tries to win her heart by showing her all the marvellous and mysterious things he has collected. In Stanton's imaginary, WALL.E and EVE's encounter gives origin to all the other relationships that in the end will give the Earth back to human beings. Indeed, EVE's name is not a random choice.

Yet the key purpose of their encounter is their ability to recognize their similarities, though they are very different. They are both animated with very large and expressive eyes and a pair of hands, the only features they have in common as well as their only point of physical contact. Through their eyes they talk to and discover each other. Their encounter, their mutual acknowledgment, is embodied in their eyes and afterward through their hands.

Humans, of course, will re-gain the ability to relate to one another, but only when WALL.E follows EVE to outer space and reaches out to them on Axiom. On the spaceship, WALL.E finds commodified and automatised human beings, far from those he knows from *Hello, Dolly!*, the 1969 Gene Kelly film that he watches on an old VHS. These humans are more alienated than the worst prophecies of the effects of automatisation could have suggested. They are even unable to remember their names, their own identity. After all, why strive to remember something about you when you don't have to tell it to anyone else?

In the plot, humans have lost all physical contact with others, they just chitchat through screens while sitting on hovercrafts that follow parallel tracks preventing them from any physical encounter. They have become unable even to walk and cannot move independently. They all wear the same suit, blue for men, red for women. They eat prepacked food selected and administered by the Axiom organization. It's Buy-N-Large that provides access to this can't-miss service, otherwise you can return to the uninhabitable Planet Earth.

However, the big corporation didn't plan WALL.E's arrival on Axiom. In the attempt to find EVE, the little robot awkwardly crosses a street where hovercrafts run fluidly and he disrupts the flow. A man falls down, but he isn't able to get up by himself and no one else helps him back to his seat because no one notices him. WALL.E is the only one who stops, goes back and gives him a hand. After a moment of surprise and confusion, George remembers his name and with it his self-consciousness.

Something similar happens to Mary, who, forced to cut off her virtual conversation when WALL.E gets caught between her and the screen, strives to remember her name in response to WALL.E's breaching.

Once WALL.E breaks the tacit rules of Axiom, one by one the humans awaken from their condition, precisely in a state of deprivation of *aisthesis*, that is embodied perception. Deprived of the somaesthetic dimension, humans have lost the knowledge of the world around them and any sense of deep interpersonal relations.

Of course, this is not a movie review; rather, this detailed description of WALL.E serves as a starting point for introducing this research. Apart from its romantic aspects, the movie embeds several issues which are currently up for debate. It introduces the theme of climate change and its extreme consequences. It questions market monopolisation by a few big corporations along with the underpinning socio-technical system and calls a reflection upon the effect of robotization.

Among such crucial issues, for this research WALL.E stands as a metaphor of the present human condition of isolation and atomisation and, together, of a possible antidote for such a crisis of affectivity. WALL.E, as a thoughtful technological device – let us say a smart device since he's able to learn and improve his skills – is the one in charge of re-educating humans on their capacity to relate to one another. WALL.E is an enabler of interpersonal encounters, as he – albeit unwillingly – creates the conditions for humans to look again at each other beyond screens. It's also worth noting that the very first step towards

the humans' awakening involves a sudden interruption in the flow of their standardised lives, a break in the wall of their comforting habits.

WALL.E serves an antidote not merely because he is capable of love, but rather because he draws back humanity's attention to the importance of each one's own identity, and to what extent it is built on and influenced by relational experiences with others. WALL.E offers to humans the opportunity of re-discovering each other beyond the standardisation that made them all alike and erased their differences.

Metaphors aside, WALL.E's message is that we require time and space for embodied relational experiences in which different identities can unfold and emerge, preventing us from drowning in an undifferentiated mass. We need situations for testing the dynamics of similarities and differences that bind us as humans, exploring the border between private and collective life. We need 'practices of empathy' (Boella, 2018), real contexts of interaction that enable complexity rather than avoiding it. In short, we need empathic experiences, in tangible contexts and with real people.

This empathic experience is the object of the present investigation, addressed mainly to explore whether empathy is *designable* and how. Metaphorically speaking, how can we transfer WALL.E's effect to design processes?

The empathic experience – in the account drawn from phenomenology – consists of a particular dialectic between sameness and otherness by which the other is caught in his/her unique identity. The other is a subject of experience, autonomous and different from myself. As such, he/she emerges on my experiential horizon. Empathy enables such emergence, and by doing so opens up the opportunity to rehearse the relational dynamics involved in the construction of self (Boella, 2018).

This research investigates the conditions that facilitate this particular kind of meaningful, intense, interpersonal experience in order to make them designable. The ultimate goal is to define a set of guidelines for designing the empathic experience, i.e for setting up a context or scene that may enable the unfolding of empathy within relational situations.

A first step towards this goal has been the definition of the research context and the affected areas of design. The first chapter overviews the emergent approaches in design, particularly in service design, that deal with relational issues. The focus progressively narrows onto collaborative processes, in view of the fact that cooperation and dialogic skills (Sennet, 2013) could benefit the most from defined replicable strategies to facilitate the emergence of such skills.

Relational issues concerning the ability to be in dialogue with others, to share common resources with them and to work together towards solutions for more sustainable lifestyles have become increasingly diffused concerns for design theory and practice. Several scholars and studies, particularly in the area of service design (Cipolla, 2004, 2008, 2012; EMUDE, 2008; Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011; Menichinelli, 2016) are investigating the implications of dealing with communities and groups of different stakeholders in both spontaneous or planned collaborative processes. From a variety of viewpoints, they all stress the need of 'enabling solutions' (Manzini & Jegou, 2008) for organising, supporting, managing and scaling collaborative networks and activities.

In this line of investigation, the present research adds a small contribution, reflecting upon the contexts that may enable and facilitate collaboration.

Part of the thesis intends to shed light on the theoretical concepts involved in reasoning. The second chapter describes and clarifies the meaning given in this context to the expression 'empathic experience' and to what extent it differs from the well-known – and often misunderstood – concept of empathy.

Empathy in the last decades has become a *buzz word*, a popular concept that gained momentum in several scientific and non-scientific contexts. For instance, within the political scene, empathy's popularity grew as a follow up effect of Barack Obama (2006) speaking out on the need to tackle the 'empathy deficit' to overcome the crisis facing democratic systems. Whereas, in academia, neuroscientific studies have led to the discovery of mirror neurons at the end of the 1990's, drawing attention to the primary empathic mechanism we are wired with. As a matter of fact, there has been a growing interest in empathy over the past decades from independent thinkers and organizations around the world, to the point where a centuries-old concept with a philosophical origin has become an overused and misused word.

Empathy, as the ability to put yourself in another person's shoes, is often pointed to as a panacea for societal problems, a vessel of universal love supporting prosocial attitudes and behaviours. Nevertheless, empathy is a far more complicated concept with important philosophical implications that deserve to be highlighted.

Laura Boella – acknowledged scholar who studies the ethical implications of empathy – argues that empathy is a 'laboratory of different experiences', and as such it would be more correct to speak of *empathies*, a plural declination for a multifaceted phenomenon involving the discovery of the other (Boella, 2018).

A useful resource for surveying the different definitions and uses of empathy has been the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Stueber, 2017) that outlines the origin of the concept in aesthetics, its following heavy usage in the human sciences, psychology and neurology in particular. It was adopted by phenomenologists, who, in the 1920's, started to investigate empathy's specific role in acknowledging other minds.

The phenomenological perspective on empathy has been recently reconsidered and refined in the attempt to bring out its complexity. Some scholars – Dan Zahavi and the already mentioned Laura Boella, among others – refrain from the pretence of defining empathy and have instead begun work on defining what empathy is not. Their approach, clearly shaped by phenomenology, assumes that empathy is not merely a skill addressed to understanding and 'reading' another's inner state. Rather, it involves a face-to-face, embodied and lived encounter with the other, who is perceived for his/her uniqueness and otherness. Empathy is analysed as a phenomenon depending on the relation between two subjects, rather than as a cognitive or affective ability.

For this dissertation, the above mentioned phenomenological framework has been followed to draw out a perspective on empathy different from the one usually accounted in design culture. The third chapter reviews the literature pertaining to empathy in design. Out of the review, evidence emerged to support that empathy in design is mainly considered as the skill of reading and interpreting another's feelings, wishes, tacit needs and states of mind. It is considered as an ability the designer should possess and train in order to achieve knowledge of the hidden sides of users. An ability made of personal sensitivity, affective resonance and imagination which allows him/her to identify with the other taking his/her perspective.

Otherwise, empathy can be understood as an interpersonal experience, unfolding within human encounters, which enables the discovery of the other as other. The main inspiring author for this experiential account of empathy is Edith Stein, a phenomenologist who discussed her PhD in 1917 *On the problem of empathy*, supervised by Edmund Husserl. Stein's take can be particularly relevant to design issues dealing with interpersonal relations. In fact, it focuses on the possibility of knowing the other by experiencing him/her in his/her whole otherness. The experience of perceiving the other lays the groundwork for dialogic exchanges and cooperation (Sennet, 2013), which may prove useful for supporting and facilitating collaborative processes. Stein's propositions – filtered by recent exegesis, which make them easier to understand (Boella, 2006, 2018; Zahavi, 2008; Meneses & Larkin, 2014)– provide cues for an alternative model of empathy that brings out its multiple facets of an experiential act connected to intersubjectivity and to interpersonal understanding within face-to-face encounters. Back to the literature review, the need for strategies aimed at designing 'situations' for empathy to occur has been stressed in recent studies (Battarbee et al., 2014; Mattelmäki et al., 2014). These works highlight that the designer's empathic attitude alone is no more suitable for dealing with complex systems of stakeholders and/or with groups of participants who bear different social, cultural and economic identities.

The account of empathy adopted in the research could be relevant to the issues discussed above precisely because it shifts the role of empathy from just a way of acknowledging similarities to a way of highlighting and giving value to otherness within interpersonal encounters. The core assumption is that understanding differences is far more enriching than acknowledging similarities, because otherness extends one's own horizon. Emerging collaborative approaches to design, where 'dialogic cooperation' (Sennet, 2013) based on the exchange of different viewpoints and on 'agonism' (Mouffe, 2005) are crucial (Manzini, 2016), could take advantage of such a perspective.

From this assumption, a research question emerged: How can we introduce into design a model of empathy as an experience, rather than a skill?
From this point, a personal inclination for the arts came into play. I trained as an art historian, with particular interest in participatory and collaborative practices, often midway between art and design. Another research question then also emerged: Can the empathic experience be a common ground between two disciplines – art and design – that are increasingly engaged in developing collaborative approaches?
Indeed, this research addresses a critical issue about the opportunity to build bridges between contemporary art and design. I don't claim to reach a unified answer, rather a proposition of a possible role for the arts in suggesting strategies and providing models for design processes, on the basis of a common concern for empathy. In fact, going deep into the issue of participation, collaboration, relational goods, dialogic cooperation and their connections with the empathic experience, a research thread appeared. That thread is to study some art practices in which empathy can be acknowledged as a key to the participants' experience, exploring the strategies used to make the experience unfold in these particular cultural contexts.
The fourth chapter then focuses on a selection of such practices. Six cases of immersive, participatory and collaborative interventions have been studied and analysed, aimed at circumscribing the elements which enable an empathic experience within the activity or situation. *On Space Time Foam* (Tomás Saraceno, 2012), *Dialogue in the dark*, *Portals* (Shared Studios), *Eye Contact Experiment*, *Rede de élasticos* (Lygia Clark, 1973), *Green Light* (Olafur Eliasson, 2016-ongoing) have provided examples of 'empathy in practice' (Boella, 2018), though in different ways and with varying results. Cases were first studied by collecting and organising information from secondary sources, such as books, journals, reviews and narratives found online.

Out of the case studies came nine *enablers*, i.e. contextual and relational conditions that in each case can be recognised as triggers for the empathic

experience. In chapter 5, all the enablers are featured and their action outlined in each case. To further assess and foster the observations and hypothesis resulting from the preliminary study, primary sources were probed. By developing and disseminating (online and offline) a questionnaire addressed to the participants of the selected practices, I gained insights about their experience and the opinions about its connections with empathy. The research took advantage of such a survey as a further step towards the refinement of the enablers.

Chapter 6 presents the survey's results together with the report of another crucial test of the research's consistency, i.e. a workshop held at the University of Aveiro during a study abroad period. Five PhD students in Design, selected according to their research interests in the areas of service design, social innovation and user experience, participated in the workshop *Design for Empathy,* which addressed assessing the enablers and discussing their possible impact on design practice. Participants brought useful suggestions about a better definition of some enablers and – most important – developed a proposition that has determined the research outcome. In fact, as a result of an intense discussion in the last part of the workshop, we – I was involved in the debate as well – pointed out the next step, the final one, of the present research on empathic experience in design. We asked ourselves the question: What if we transform the enablers drawn from art practices into guidelines for designers, aimed at opening spaces for interconnection and 'oiling cooperation' (Sennet, 2013) among participants of collaborative processes?

Hence, the last chapter discusses the guidelines for designing the empathic experience, developed by weaving together evidence from the case studies, survey feedback and propositions from the workshop.

Seven guidelines took the shape of cards, with each one explaining what the suggestion deals with, how to put it into practice and towards what aim. The guidelines for designing the empathic experience are intended as meta-design tools for collaborative processes (Giaccardi, 2003, Menichinelli, 2016), addressed to the setting up of spatial and relational contexts that enable 'dialogic cooperation' (Sennet, 2013). The seven cards may be used to prepare and support design processes that rely on collaboration and people participation.

The research journey ends at this point, leaving room for a number of other research perspectives. First of all, the guidelines must be tested in real processes in order to assess their relevance and usefulness. Indeed, they could be refined and would benefit from further discussion within a design arena. The research followed a path from theory to practice.In particular, the first part is rooted in theoretical inquiry, the second in empirical observation, while the third develops a proposition for putting both into practice. Actually, I am more

confident with managing theoretical positions, from philosophy to art history, for I am trained in such disciplines. However, I endeavoured to transfer theory into practical proposals.

For this reason, the tangible outcomes – the guidelines for designing the empathic experience – indeed contain numerous shortcomings, and require revision from both design theorists and practitioners. However, the contribution brought by this doctoral dissertation coming from a researcher trained in art history, bears a specific perspective on design. Relying on this specificity, I attempted to shed a light onto the contemporary design discourse, in particular bringing to the current debate on collaborative approaches a point of view from another discipline. In so doing, I sought to balance the strengths and weaknesses of an outsider educational background. Without claiming to achieve solutions, I rather have aimed to lay down a first brick for building bridges between contemporary art practices and design issues.

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Chapter 1

Definition of the research context

This chapter outlines the research context that frames the overall argument of the dissertation. To make an analogy, it is like a big box in which I reach into and try to identify the object inside. This chapter introduces the main topic within the design discourse that relates to my research and for which it would be relevant.

To provide further context, I have been trained as an art historian, hence my cultural and theoretical horizon is much closer to the art world than to design. I am deeply convinced that art and design today are sharing more than it might seem. As mirrors and sensible receptors of transformations, both art and design may have a crucial role in finding strategies to tackle our current socio-cultural challenges. I am quite familiar with contemporary art practices. A large part of them have several touchpoints with emerging design approaches to social innovation. For this reason, a significant effort was spent to first focus my attention on an hitherto unexplored field of research for me, i.e design for social innovation. I then return to an area of focus more familiar – i.e. contemporary art practices – and finally attempt to bridge the two.

In order to map my position regarding design research, my focus progressively narrows from the broad field of design for social innovation to emerging practices that are becoming increasingly participative, collaborative and, most of all, relational. My interest was directed towards design processes where relational abilities play a central role in accomplishing a given outcome, whatever that final goal might be. Among these practices and processes, I identified fields of research those that are more dependent on human interactions, i.e. Service design and, more specifically, Relational Services (Cipolla & Manzini, 2009), for which human relations are a very important asset.

After this exploration of design related issues, the next step was to reflect upon how current art practices could contribute to this emerging design culture and to investigate which are the touchpoints between art and design today.

Therefore, this first chapter is dedicated to summarizing the subsequent phases in the definition of the research context, from emerging design practices to collaborative and relational services and finally the role of the arts within this frame.

1.1 Emerging design practices

This research mainly addresses the role of human relationships in design. While a broad topic, it involves a number of emerging design practices, especially service-oriented ones, as services are "permeated by human activity" (Manzini, 2011, p.1) and by the interconnection between people and things.

The world of design now finds itself changing its skin and rules, whether increasingly concerned about processes, rather than objects; it is growing similarly to a set of competencies for supporting the collaboration and sharing of resources that people is spontaneously taking at stake during this transition era, which is characterized by the crisis of our current model of economic growth.

'Emerging design' (Manzini, 2016a) is people-centred, rather than product-centred. It requires people coming into relation with one each other, because its outcomes rely on human interactions and the way they happen (Sanders, 2002; 2013). The call for spreading sustainability in many fields has affected design theory and practice as well, generating multiple answers that often have in common the key factor of sharing. Be it sharing spaces, properties, resources, ideas or anything else, the possibility of using something in common with others requires well-functioning relations between people. Unfortunately today, the natural sociability of human beings finds itself in a deep crisis as never before. The growing level of connectivity enabled by the development of communication technologies has paradoxically led to reduced relational abilities (Turkle, 2011, 2015; Bauman, 2017). Dealing with the complexity of social experiences and behaviours therefore presents a significant challenge for design today, at least if design is accounted for as a socially responsible agency of change.

In this context, design is adapting its methods and tools in order to support the transition to more sustainable ways of living, to facilitate innovative strategies of producing and consuming and to help 'creative communities' (Jégou & Manzini, 2008) in developing collaborative projects.

1.1.1 Service design

Service design can hardly be considered as an emerging field of study and practice, already with many scholars and practitioners.

However, we can say that the rising service-based economy since the 90's onward has drawn the focus of design disciplines to developing a specific area of study and practice devoted to the interface of services, i.e. "the area, ambit, and scene where the interactions between the service and the user take place"

(Pacenti, 1998, n.p.). Accordingly, service design has constantly moved forward in the effort to keep up with the societal, economic and technological changes of the last decades.

In the present research, I adopt Meroni and Sangiorgi's (2011) perspective on service design, whose strength is in its ability to operate a subtle, but meaningful shift from service design to design for services. This shift

> encapsulates the idea of the transformation in progress (a transformation that affects the entire design world, but the impact of which is most evident in service design). [...] What is in effect being designed is not the end result (the interaction between people) but an *action platform* [original italics]. This means a system that makes a multiplicity of interactions possible. It does so by fixing use modes, making certain kinds of behaviour more difficult and others more probable while leaving opportunities for action and interpretation open (Manzini, 2011, p. 3).

Such a perspective is crucial to the present study because it acknowledges the value of the human relational component in both the design process and its actualization. Design for services tasks design with creating "better conditions for possible behaviours to emerge" (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011, p. 21). Human behaviours are unpredictable and un-designable, thus requiring a high level of open-mindedness and flexibility of thought from all actors engaged in the process, including the designer. It is worth noting that the designer is the first one who must admit the impossibility to plan in advance and foresee all users' behaviour and instead develop his capacity to focus on the context surrounding a certain experience.

Within this framework, service design moves "from designing intangible experiences to designing the tangible elements that enable the desired experiences to occur in a coherent way" (Sangiorgi, 2009, p. 416). It is exactly this question that the present research investigates: How can we create the conditions that enable an experience of empathy to occur between people involved in collaborative processes?

When speaking of designing the context in which processes – and experiences – may unfold in a desired direction, it's hard not recalling meta-design.

Meta-design is a broad concept, used in different contexts and with slightly different meanings, especially dealing with ICTs and the user-centredness they enabled – not only in design. Here, I make specific reference to Giaccardi (2003), who provides an overview of the concept identifying different possibilities of understanding the prefix meta- when joint to design. Among them, I particularly account for the meaning between/among, resulting in "Designing the spaces of participation" / "Design of relational settings and affective bodies" (p. 334). In

fact, though developed as respect to computational environment, Giaccardi's approach is useful here to emphasise the shift from objects to processes and from contents to contexts, undergone by emerging design culture.

1.1.2 Collaborative Services and 'Creative Communities'

A considerable amount of studies have highlighted the connection between social innovation and collaborative activities enacted by 'creative communities' (Meroni, 2007).

'Creative communities' are groups of people that imagine and develop creative solutions because of a common need, managing them in a cooperative way. When the imagined solutions are actualized and start to work in a consolidate and organized way, it's appropriate to say that the creative community becomes a 'diffused social enterprise' (Meroni, 2008). This special kind of enterprise is interwoven in the group's everyday life providing its components with practical benefits and, at the same time, social quality. Therefore, "through actively seeking to resolve their problems, the activities of these groups of people have the side effect of reinforcing the social fabric and improving environmental quality. In short they produce sociality" (Meroni, 2008, p. 32).

The social services generated by these diffused social enterprises can be identified as 'collaborative services', i.e. "social services where final users are actively involved and assume the role of co-designers and co-producers" (Meroni, 2008, p. 32).

It's easy to note that collaborative activities for designing and producing these kind of services must rely on high quality interpersonal relationships. Co-designing and co-producing a service for the community requires those involved to establish a peer-to-peer relationship based on mutual trust and intimacy, built upon open-mindedness and readiness to engage. "Peer-to-peer collaboration calls for trust, and trust calls for relational qualities: no relational qualities means no trust and no collaboration, and consequently non practical results from collaborative services" (Meroni, 2008, p.33).

In short, for collaborative services to exist and perform at a high level, relational qualities must be enhanced through all the actors involved. For this reason, collaborative services are also accounted as Relational Services, and as such, they are often interpreted and analysed (Cipolla & Manzini, 2009; Cipolla, 2012; Cipolla & Bartholo, 2014).

1.2 Relational services and innovations

Part of the big wave of social innovations has been enabled by the 'social turn' of information and communication technology – on one hand – and people's

will to find more sustainable lifestyles – on the other (Manzini, 2015) Within the broad domain of social innovation " 'Relational innovations' are those specifically based on interpersonal encounters between two or more specific persons" (Cipolla, 2012, p. 151). They are a special kind of social innovations that require people to be truly engaged in a relationship in order to actually do something together with someone else.

Ezio Manzini uses the expression 'relational goods' to identify the fundamental elements at stake in a relational innovation process: trust, friendliness, empathy, mutual attention and care (Manzini, 2016b). These 'relational goods' are both the pre-condition for these specific kinds of innovations to emerge, since they are essentially based on collaboration and sharing, as well as the product of the innovations themselves, since they are increasingly amplified by the collaborative activities that allow them to operate. As John Restakis writes in *Humanizing the Economy* (2010, p. 101):

> Unlike conventional goods relational goods cannot be enjoyed by an individual alone but only jointly with others. [...] their nature requires that they be shared. As a consequence, participation in their consumption actually creates an additional benefit to others and increases the value of the good itself.

The type of services resulting in relational innovations and involving 'relational goods' can be identified as Relational Services (Cipolla & Manzini, 2009). The main difference to standard services resides in the fact that in Relational Services, the service performance is co-acted by the participants, who collaboratively produce the solutions enabled by the service and share the resulting benefits. In Relational Services, the standard roles of agents and clients are blurred and interchangeable. Consequently, service scripts are hardly applicable because the service 'co-performance' is highly affected by the personal engagement of the participants, their motivations and most of all their ability to relate to one another, in short by their 'cooperation skills', to use Richard Sennet's words (2003). For this reason, "a relational service requires a high level of interpersonal qualities like intimacy and trust, more than any other kind of service" (Cipolla, 2009, p.3). Participants need to be open to otherness and able to engage in a peer-to-peer dialogue; they are required to embrace alterity and to acknowledge it an asset. In short, sociability is at stake in Relational Services.

The concept of sociability is often used in the same way as conviviality, or is directly related. However, sociability – intended as the skill of interacting well with others – is far more important than conviviality in relational innovations, but also more difficult to cultivate. In my view, conviviality – i.e. the social

skill of being friendly – produces nothing more than a superficial relationship, albeit a promising start. To use Richard Sennet's words, "'social skills' suggests people good at cocktail party talk or adapt at selling you things you don't need" (p.6).

Manzini (2015) makes reference to Nicolas Bourriaud's theory of Relational Aesthetics when claiming the need of producing "moments of constructed conviviality" (Bourriaud, 2002, p.83). However, I argue that it is not a sufficient strategy to 'capitalise' on human relationships within collaborative processes. I will return extensively on Bourriaud and Relational Aesthetics later in the text; here it's enough to say that introducing people to one another and providing them with an opportunity to do something together and to then share that accomplishment for a lasting basis is a completely different process. If the spontaneous will to collaborate and share can rely on a high level of sociability in the development of a Relational Service, the same sociability is likely to reduce when the service is well established. Nevertheless, Relational Services require sociability both during the start-up phase and to be continued through their maturity.

"At this stage sociality [or sociability] is produced if the preconditions for sociality have been designed, meaning if the enabling solution allows for and cultivates opportunities for socially rich interactions" (Manzini, 2015, p. 170).

When speaking of socially rich interactions, it is worth questioning what 'socially rich interactions' would look like. What is the profound sense of sociality? What is the specific nature of human relations at stake in collaborative contexts? Indeed, it is a philosophical and anthropological issue, but designers as well have investigated these questions in relation to their practical application.

Amongst service design scholars, an effort to deepen this topic was made by Carla Cipolla in some interesting papers about Relational Services (Cipolla,2007; 2008; 2009; 2012; Cipolla & Manzini, 2009; Cipolla & Bartholo, 2014). Cipolla proposes an interpretative framework for Relational Services based on Martin Buber's concept of life as an 'encounter'. Buber accounts that we humans are immersed in a dense network of relationships of two different kinds, i.e. 'I-It' or 'I-Thou'. The encounter between 'I' and 'It' is an experience in which 'I' relates to 'It' by bringing about previous preconceptions and classifications. Otherwise, the 'I-Thou' relation happens in an immediate way without the intervention of any prior knowledge. In other words, 'I-It' defines the ambit of superficial or instrumental relationships with otherness, while 'I-Thou' is a profound dialogical dimension of authentic relations.

In this perspective, Cipolla analyses the emerging collaborative services in the effort to open up a debate about the possibilities and limitations of design in

enabling high quality interpersonal relationships that make Relational Services successful and effective.

The topic is relevant to the emerging service design discourse, since Relational Services can operate and flourish only when participants are able to relate to each other in an 'I-Thou' way, acknowledging each other as peers, being open to otherness without preconceptions and engaging in a fair and actually communicative dialogue.

Furthermore, considering that the emerging model of service is based on sharing, it requires that participants are – or become – able to share.

> The relational approach have potential to contribute in the promotion of sustainable lifestyles. Be able to share is one of the prior interpersonal requirement for sustainable solutions. Sharing is not only about "programming" a time schedule to use some objects, but the act of sharing requires the ability to be convivial, to be close to other people and relate (Cipolla, 2009. p.3).

The Relational Services model challenges designers by calling them to favour interpersonal relationships between participants and find strategies for cultivating them over the long-term. It's evident that human relationships cannot be designed, and so Relational Services cannot be programmed, but 'enabled'. As a matter of fact, "it is only possible to design meta-services oriented to stimulate and facilitate interpersonal encounters" (Cipolla, 2008, p.153).

1.2.1 Relational Services, Relational Aesthetics and the importance of otherness

When speaking of a relational approach in design, the theory of Relational Aesthetics by Nicolas Bourriaud has been often recalled. The French critic's renown theory, elaborated in the 90's with respect to the contemporary art practices of the time, has been borrowed by design theorists and practitioners in order to develop a relational approach to design processes. Among them, Eun Ji Cho wrote her doctoral dissertation (2013) based on his theories, pivoting her argument on the possibility of adopting the theory of Relational Aesthetics as a potential theoretical foundation for a service design approach. Cho claims that sociability as a goal of design for services could be achieved by adopting Bourriaud's perspective. It could be used as an operative model for design activities addressing 'ways of being together' and living in a shared word. Cho's observation of a collaborative service case study highlights the sociability produced by a series of design interventions aimed at facilitating social interactions and creating opportunities for convivial encounters, in short, prompting 'arenas of exchange' – to borrow Bourriaud's expression (2002, p.17) – among the service participants.

Cho's proposition would be noteworthy if Bourriaud's theory was not harshly criticised by several theorists, among which, Claire Bishop stands out with her paper Antagonism and *Relational Aesthetics* (2004). Bishop focuses on one important issue that Bourriaud avoids handling, i.e. the quality of social relationships produced by relational artworks. She argues that for Bourriaud:

> all relations that permit "dialogue" are automatically assumed to be democratic and therefore good. But what does "democracy" really mean in this context? If relational art produces human relations, then the next logical question to ask is what types of relations are being produced, for whom, and why? (Bishop, 2004, p. 65).

Bishop's observation is particularly relevant to this research because it reflects a similar concern regarding Relational Services and in general collaborative projects like the one studied by Cho. In my view, the shortcomings highlighted in Bourriaud's theory are likely to also be found in the strategies for sociability identified by Cho. Creating opportunities for convivial encounters and facilitating social interactions reminds the "moments of constructed conviviality" that Bourriaud pinpoints as the typical form of relational artworks.

If we account for the collaborative and relational approach as capable of generating a model of services giving a voice to bottom-up initiatives, managed by peers, so as to initiate more sustainable lifestyles, I am afraid that conviviality is not a sufficient condition to allow them to operate. As mentioned above, conviviality is often misinterpreted as sociability, when in fact the two words connote very different – even though related – concepts.

Going back to Bishop's argument, she advocates the concept of antagonism, borrowed from political theory, to figure out a possible answer to the issue of the quality of relationships at stake in relational artworks. She makes reference to the political theorists Ernest Laclau and Chantal Mouffe who argue that "a fully functioning democratic society is not one in which all antagonisms have disappeared [...] – a democratic society is one in which relations of conflict are sustained, not erased" (Bishop, 2004, p. 66). According to Bishop, the relational artists presented by Bourriaud provide opportunities for merely convivial encounters inside art institutions (e.g. galleries, museums, biennials, etc) and between gallery-goers and art-lovers, i.e. people who already have something in common. In short, she claims that relational artworks are not likely to trigger debates and discussions, nor sustain antagonistic relations, thus revealing their inadequacy in heralding an emancipatory and democratic model of socially

engaged art.

Conviviality allows no space for antagonism, and, consequently, no opportunity for effective dialogue. Conviviality as a strategy, reflects a water downed version of real social interactions. Therefore, adopting a theoretical framework for designing collaborative services centred on the convivial side of social interactions is likely to be misleading. It would be appropriate, instead, to reflect upon what takes sociability beyond convivial relations, which is the goal of the present research.

Mouffe returns to the issue of antagonism some years later (2005) and recognizes that the antagonistic dimension of conflict in democratic politics could be 'tamed', rather than erased, by shifting to 'agonism'. Her reasoning stems from Henry Staten's notion of the 'constitutive outside', according to which "every identity is relational and [...] the affirmation of a difference is a precondition for the existence of any identity, i.e. the perception of something 'other' that constitutes its 'exterior' " (Mouffe, 2005, p.155).

Are there possibilities to tackle this inevitable antagonism? According to Mouffe, supporting 'agonistic' relations might be a solution.

> While antagonism is a 'we/them' relation in which the two sides are enemies who do not share any common ground, agonism is a 'we/them' relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognise the legitimacy of their opponents (Mouffe, 2005, p.157).

To summarize, Bishop claims that the quality of the relations favoured by relational artworks is never considered. In her view, relational artworks create just the right conditions for human encounters, no matter how much they are potential change makers. According to the art critic, relational artworks lack the essential antagonism brought about by human diversity, because they are typically addressed towards art lovers and gallery-goers, i.e. people who already share common interests. The lack of antagonism generates superficial relationships that erase the possibility to actually think and act democratically through a constructive dialogic approach.

Bishop borrows the concept of antagonism from Chantal Mouffe and Ernest Laclau. In 2005, Mouffe reassesses her proposal using the term 'agonism' instead of 'antagonism'.

Agonism is intended as a healthy encounter of differences where the otherness of each party involved becomes an asset for a high quality relationship.

This theory assumes that otherness (or alterity) is a valuable element in human relationships, because it is crucial for identity and the intersubjective construction of self-consciousness in relation to what is 'exterior'.

By integrating Mouffe's and Sennet's viewpoint I may argue that agonism is at stake in dialogical exchanges, as opposed to dialectics.

> In dialectic the verbal play of opposites should gradually build up to synthesis; [...] the aim is to come eventually to a common understanding. Skill in practising dialectic lies in detecting what might establish that common ground. [...] 'Dialogic' is a word coined by the Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin to name a discussion which does not resolve itself by finding common ground. Though no shared agreements may be reached, through the process of exchange people may become more aware of their own views and expand their understanding of one another (Sennet, 2013, p. 19).

It might be important then to understand which strategies can be enacted in order to enhance otherness rather than minimise it, to keep agonism alive, rather than erasing it, and to rehearse dialogic skills instead of dialectics.

Following this line of reasoning, the present research contributes to the discussion about the kind of meta-services (Cipolla, 2008) that can be designed to enable high quality interpersonal relationships, in which otherness is accounted, agonism sustained and dialogue made possible going beyond conviviality. In this specific role, art practices – especially those engaged socially – can contribute while they are also concerned with providing neutral spaces for 'agonism' to unfold and flourish.

1.3 The role of the arts

> Culture is the medium through which we communicate who we are, what is important to us, what has formed us and what aspects of ourselves we uphold as we move into the future. Identity is often defined in cultural terms, just as otherness is. It is therefore necessary and natural to move into the sphere of culture and the arts when there is a need to get to know the other, with the aim of forming an inclusive society, which can learn how to benefit from diversity (European Union, 2017, p. 15).

This statement by the European Union provides a strong basis for my argument regarding the role of the arts in the above mentioned emergent design practices engaged in social change and innovation. The European document stresses the quality of the arts as the sphere in which self and otherness are experienced and shaped. For this reason, in the context of this document, the arts are given a prominent role in enabling and enhancing the intercultural dialogue needed to overcome the present migratory crisis on a cultural level. It's worth to report the following citation from the same document:

"Experience shows that the arts and cultural projects in particular can create a level playing field to allow persons of different cultural backgrounds to interact, learn and experience on a par with each other" (p.15).

Hence, the arts – especially participatory and collaborative art practices – are recognized for their ability to provide a neutral space for intercultural dialogue, thus empowering those who are usually excluded, giving them a voice and platform to be heard. Participatory and collaborative practices often provide opportunities for shared learning and working in a team by offering the chance of identifying and capitalizing each individual's abilities.

Participation in art has a long history, with its origins in the Futurist and Dada performances of the early 20th century, followed in the late 1950's by the first happenings. Umberto Eco's *Opera aperta* (1962) presents early participatory artworks, heralding art's openness between the 1960's and the 1970's, connected to the effort towards a democratic shift of the arts. Participation as interaction and collaboration flourished at the end of the 1990's as demonstrated in Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics* (2002) and the *Social turn* (2006) by Claire Bishop a few years later. If the Social Sculpture theorised and practised by Joseph Beuys in the 1970's, or the focus of Fluxus movement on participatory processes, were then innovative approaches, almost isolated from the mainstream artworld, in the 1990's relational artworks pushed participation to the edge of the Arts. Today, relational art extended to the point of involving society at large, the places in which daily life unfolds and the whole range of human relationships. Step by step, decade after decade, participation transformed the spectator's role from actor – at first, to 'interactor' – later – and ultimately to co-creator/co-producer. Simultaneously, the role of the artist herself has changed, moving from the privileged position of author to co-author and, more recently, facilitator or 'enabler'. The artwork, on its part, progressively 'dematerialized' (Lippard, 1972) shifting from object to 'situation', to process, increasingly merged into common life practices.

While a simplistic overview of a long-term transformation process of the arts begun with the Dadaist revolution, yet it is useful for drawing parallels to the change of the designer's role, of the user's engagement and of the design output, increasingly 'dematerialized' as well in the shift to a growing service-based economy.

In reading Bishop's T*he social turn: Collaboration and its discontents (2006) or Kester's Conversation pieces: The role of dialogue in socially engaged art* (2005) –to acknowledge the key critics of socially-engaged art – it is hard not to notice that there are some recurring keywords that represent a kind of smallest common denominator for art and design. Words and concepts like participation, collaboration, dialogue, social change, community-based

projects and relational approach are concerns shared by two disciplines that – each in its own specificity – aim at pioneering change in socio-economic terms. Both artists and designers today are willing to be "partisans of the real" and "autonomous agents of social processes" (Weibel, 2009). They often address the reconstruction of broken social bonds or the opening up of a dialogue with and within local communities. In short, they herald an ethical turn in the production of the material culture we are merged into.

It cannot be a coincidence that during nearly the same years of Bishop's and Kester's publications, the design community started to reflect upon social innovation (Mullgan, 2007) brought about by 'creative communities' (Meroni, 2007), self-organizing to find collaborative solutions for more sustainable ways of living. It's easy to observe the proximity between the dialogical art practices described by Grant Kester (2005) and the 'dialogic design framework' (Manzini, 2016a) underpinning the emerging design culture.

These are all signals of a common ground of social-relational engagement for artists and designers, which attempt to build bridges between present art and design practices.

The account of arts and culture drawn by the European Union recalls the brilliant definition of relational artworks as 'social interstice' coined by Nicolas Bourriaud (2002). According to this definition derived from a marxist concept, art is likely to provide a safe zone from which to elude the socio-cultural constraints and biases, a kind of training space for critical thinking where power relations are constantly renegotiated and people from different backgrounds work together and more closely. In this perspective, the role of the arts towards design – given the common ground outlined above – can be that of a 'context provider' (Kester, 2005) where experimenting and cultivating with human relationships is based on 'agonism' and the value of otherness.

Hence, the present research investigates how some art practices might stand as a kind of prototype for empathic experiences, enabled by means of recurring elements more or less 'designed' by the authors. Art practices can provide examples of how to make empathic experiences happen, how to nurture intersubjective processes of building mutual knowledge as well as offer room for experimentation and negotiation between the self and the other.

In this context, the research focuses on practices that in one way or another trigger empathy as an experience of the other as other, keeping otherness alive among the participants. Once developed, a theoretical framework of 'empathy as an experience' (See chapter 2) has been used in a two-fold manner: first, to select and interpret contemporary art practices, looking for the elements that enable an empathic experience; second, to transform the 'enablers' in a set of conceptual guidelines to adopt in design processes that require the participants to be open to otherness, ready to share and disposed to 'agonism'.

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Chapter 2

Theories of empathy

In the previous chapter a set of keywords for the present research were defined, the most relevant being *relational, otherness* – or *alterity – agonism, collaboration and dialogue*. Addressing solutions that enable high quality relational encounters, and which considers otherness as a crucial value for keeping agonism alive, requires a strong theoretical framework that binds all these issues together. For these reasons, focusing on philosophy, I selected the phenomenological approach to the experience of alterity as the most relevant to the arguments of this thesis, drawing specific attention to the concept of intersubjectivity. According to Edmund Husserl, the founder of phenomenology, intersubjectivity is the way of experiencing the other as other. This experience is also instrumental in shaping aspects of self-consciousness precisely as one begins to experience themselves as an other to someone else. Directly related to intersubjectivity is the notion of empathy. Phenomenological analyses can vary from taking empathy to disclose intersubjectivity or to establishing it, in all cases accounting for empathy as "a specific mode of consciousness [...] that allow us to experience and understand the feelings, desires, and beliefs of others in a more-or-less direct manner" (Zahavi, 2001, p.153).

Hence, the following sections review the notion of empathy, without claiming to cover the complexity of the concept, but rather clarify its meaning in relation to the main research topic. This clarification is important mostly because empathy is often pointed out as a universal remedy for societal problems and as crucial in promoting prosocial attitudes. This simplistic reduction of such a multifaceted phenomenon results in a wrong and only partial interpretation of empathy, taken as a way of erasing differences, allowing the acknowledgment of what makes us similar. From a phenomenological perspective, empathy is a crucial experience for recognizing the irreducible difference between the self and the other. As such, it could be accounted for as a means of nurturing agonism, laying the ground to dialogical exchanges resulting in enhanced cooperation and collaboration (Sennet, 2013).

2.1 Overview of the concept

Within common usage, empathy is an umbrella term for identifying a personal attitude of feeling what another person feels. It is used to denote an understanding of his or her behaviours and emotions, to take his or her perspective, to experience a fusion of self-other that allows a deep comprehension of the other's mental state. Empathy is often misinterpreted to be associated with compassion and sympathy or with inner imitation. This ductility of meaning is on one side the reason for empathy's success, while generating – on the other – its misuse.

Antonio Pinotti – one of the most committed scholars in the study of the idea of empathy – pinpoints 4 'seasons' in empathy's usage, the first being *Einfühlung*, referred to as *Empathy* from 1909 onward (Pinotti, 2011). The word *Einfühlung* – which joins the prefix *ein*, i.e. inside, with *fühlung*, i.e. feeling – is usually associated with the 19th century German philosophical investigations into Aesthetics. The first two 'seasons' concern the speculation inaugurated by Robert Vischer and developed by Theodor Lipps about perceptual issues. Both of the German philosophers' aim was to explain how we perceive and experience art objects, even though Lipps attempted to also give *Einfühlung* a psychological role in understanding of the other.

Stemming from the critiques of Lipps' account of *Einfühlung*, phenomenologists inherited the debate about the modes of intersubjectivity. The phenomenological investigations of *Einfühlung* then went through a series of ups and downs throughout the 20th century, until finally adopting the English form *Empathy*.

According to Pinotti, as Edward Titchner translated *Einfühlung* to *Empathy* in 1909, the third 'season' can be characterized by a growing interest in Psychology and Psychosociology, especially in the anglo-saxon world. By the mid-1990's, the discovery of the mirror neurons system brought about the fourth 'season', i.e. the neuroscientific one, which is continuously evolving as technological developments provide increasingly precise instruments to explore the brain's behaviours.

In the last decade, empathy has gone beyond the borders of philosophical, psychological and neuroscientific research and spread into the common debate, making headlines in various publications in very different ambits and at very different levels.

Empathy became a *buzz word* especially since Barack Obama started to speak about the often-quoted 'empathy deficit' (2006) and supported empathy related initiatives as President of the United States.

As Google Trends shows (Fig.1), a constant growth in the interest for the term empathy has excelled over the last 10 years, to such an extent that economist Jeremy Rifkin theorizes that we are living in an *Empathic Civilization* (2009), where the *homo empathicus* has replaced the *homo homini lupus* as a result of connectivity scaled up to the global level in the last decades.

The popularity of empathy has transformed a complex object of investigation into a kind of slogan. Being empathic has become considered a must for

psychical and mental wellness – at an individual and a collective level – for a harmonious societal development. While empathy might be a key to interpersonal relationships, this does not automatically imply that such relations correspond to universal love or acceptance.

Therefore, the following sections highlight the complexity of the concept of empathy. In order to not be exhaustive, it rather aims at summarizing the different theories of empathy. Leaving aside the neuroscientific discovery of mirror neurons, and the huge step forward that this discovery provided for understanding the biological basis of empathy, I will focus on two different perspectives, identified by reading transversely the various approaches to this issue, i.e. empathy as a skill – cognitive and emotional – on one side, and empathy as an experience, on the other. This distinction – skill vs experience – will serve the argumentation about the relationship between empathy and design, stemming from the observation that design has hitherto accounted for empathy mainly as a skill, and rarely as an experience.

2.2 Empathy as a skill

The discovery of the mirror neurons system in the mid-90's revealed that we are biologically wired with a base neural mechanism of empathy. "Mirror neurons are premotor neurons that fire both when an action is executed and when it is observed being performed by someone else" (Gallese, 2009, p. 520). The neuroscientific finding of this mimicry ability, embedded in our brain, has been understood as an empirical evidence of Lipps' take on empathy as 'inner imitation'. Lipps was the first to adopt the notion of *Einfühlung* to explain social understanding. In his *Ästhetik* (1903-1906), he extends the role of *Einfühlung* beyond the aesthetic appreciation of objects to the perception of another embodied person as a minded creature (Steuber, 2017), thus introducing a socio-psychological reading of *Einfühlung*. "Lipps conceives of empathy as a psychological resonance phenomenon that is triggered in our perceptual encounter with external objects" (Steuber, 2017). As such, empathy – coined in English by Edward Titchener in 1909 – has been accounted for in the psychological tradition as a way of responding to another's mental state.

On the basis of the acknowledgment of the innate disposition to such a mirroring, a multiplicity of programs flourished in the last decades, which have explored the possibilities of cultivating and training our empathic ability – for instance, the *Empathy Training Program* developed by Norma and Feymour Feshbach (1983) or Mary Gordon's *Roots of Empathy* founded in 1996. These programs aim to unveil and enhance the natural empathic attitude in children in the belief that bringing out an empathic sociability might be key to developing prosocial behaviours that can contribute in the long term to creating a more cohesive and harmonious society.

Fig. 1. The growing interest for empathy related researches online in the last ten years. Source: Google Trends [Accessed December 2017].
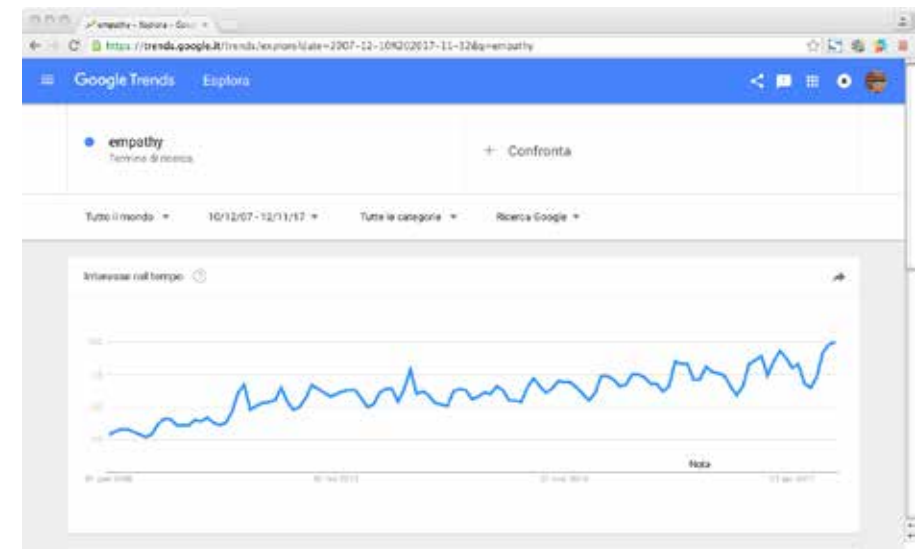
Psychological studies (Davis, 1983; Duan & Hill, 1996; Eisenberg & Eggum, 2009) attempted to distinguish the different ways of responding to another's mental state or external condition. Basically, they draw a binomial distinction between cognitive and affective empathy phenomena. *Cognitive empathy* is sometimes also called intellectual, simulative, cold and deliberate; *affective empathic* is often associated with sympathetic, emotional, hot or automatic reactions.

Another relevant addition to the present discussion is Mark Davis' individuation (1983) of subscale phenomena for the two formerly identified groups. Davis refers to *cognitive empathy* as Perspective Taking (assuming another's perspective) and Fantasy (projecting onto the experience of fictional characters). He distinguishes *affective empathy* as Empathic Concern (sympathy for someone) and Personal Distress (emotional reactive distress at the sight of another's distress).

It's evident that intellectual abilities are more likely to be taught on one side and improved on the other, because they result from deliberated acts and an active engagement; whereas emotions are not so controllable, even though in recent years, much has been said about the intelligence of emotions (Nussbaum, 2001; Bauman, 2003). In fact, the majority of the methods developed to bring out the empathic abilities – included those adopted in the ambit of design – are based on Perspective Taking exercises and Fantasy activation, such as role

playing sessions.

To summarize, in this perspective, empathy is accounted for as an individual skill that we all share at a mental level, but, as with other mental abilities, can be enhanced through specific exercises and training. It has become one of those 'soft skills' which should be embedded in common education (Boella, 2018). It's also worth noting that in this case, empathy involves a projection of the self onto another from a first person perspective, not necessarily implying an interpersonal relationship following the encounter, or even not implying an encounter. The self-projection, be it cognitive or affective, results in a moment of total identification of self and other rather than in a dialogic exchange. For this reason, the psychological interpretation of empathy has been criticized by phenomenologists, who instead consider empathy as an intersubjective act *sui generis* (Stein, 1921), that is to say, as an experience of connection between self and other in which each party remains well separated.

2.3 Empathy as an experience

In order to speak of empathy as an experience, opposed to the ability of being empathic, a phenomenological premise is required, which understands empathy as an object of investigation that involves an intersubjective way of knowing. A very short introduction of phenomenology will outline the main assumptions that form the basis of this different perspective on empathy.

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy provides the following definition of phenomenology:

> The discipline of phenomenology may be defined initially as the study of structures of experience, or consciousness. Literally, phenomenology is the study of "phenomena": appearances of things, or things as they appear in our experience, or the ways we experience things, thus the meanings things have in our experience. Phenomenology studies conscious experience as experienced from the subjective or first person point of view (Smith, 2016).

Phenomenology, as defined above, was launched by Edmund Husserl firstly in *Logical Investigations*(1900-1901) as a new theory of knowledge, and later developed in *Ideas I* (1913) as a structured discipline with a specific method to study conscious experiences of various types from the point of view of the subject living through or performing them. In other words, phenomenology "tries to describe precisely what happens when someone is conscious of something" (Horner & Westacott, 2000). The types of conscious experience that can be studied through a phenomenological reasoning range from perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, desire to bodily awareness, embodied action and social activity. Further forms of experience can involve spatial awareness, temporal awareness, self-awareness and awareness of other persons. In short, anything that has content is experienced through an intentional act, an act of consciousness directed toward or referenced to an object in the world.

One of the main themes of phenomenology is intersubjectivity, postulated as establishing the objectivity of things in the world. Intersubjectivity aids in the construction of a shared meaning of the outer world, as we acknowledge that the other is not only an object to be experienced, but rather another subject who also experiences. For phenomenologists, intersubjectivity is crucial also for recognizing ourselves as objectively existing subjects with self-awareness as well as the awareness of others. The phenomenological investigations on intersubjectivity closely relate to empathy. The fact that we attribute to another subject the same intentionality of conscious acts as our own, occurs if we undergo acts of empathy. Depending on the authors, the empathic experience establishes or discloses intersubjectivity (Zahavi, 2001). Empathy unfolds as an experiential act directed by a subject in acknowledging another subject. According to Husserl (1913; 1929-1935), the empathic act is itself the condition that makes intersubjectivity possible. For Edith Stein (Stein, 1917), as will be discussed in the following sections, empathy itself is an intersubjective experience, and as such it deserves a rigorous phenomenological inquiry to identify its distinctive quality. It's worth going deeper into Stein's account since it provides a clarification of empathy as a complex and multi-layered experience that occurs within an intersubjective relation, in straight opposition to the vision of empathy as a projective and simulative skill. Stein's fine phenomenological methodology dispels any doubt whatsoever about what empathy is not, ruling out from her account "those simulacra of empathy which without close examination might be mistaken for empathy itself" (Meneses & Larkin, 2014, p.153). For her clarity of thought and rigorous inquiry on the essence of empathy, this thesis takes Stein as an authority and relies heavily on her works in the challenging task of achieving a perspective on empathy useful for design theory and practice today.

2.3.1 The phenomenological perspective of Edith Stein

Wikipedia's entry about Edith Stein begins as follows:

> Edith Stein (religious name Teresa Benedicta a Cruce; also known as St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross; 12 October 1891 – 9 August 1942), was a German Jewish philosopher who converted to Roman Catholicism and became a Discalced Carmelite nun.
> She is canonized as a martyr and saint of the Catholic Church.

The fact that the most popular and consulted online encyclopedia begins as cited above means that Stein's conversion to Catholicism, her life ending at the hands of the Gestapo in Auschwitz and her later canonization have overshadowed her notable contributions to philosophy and psychology. Indeed, her conversion to Catholicism in the 1920s resulted from an increasingly theological focus within her late work; yet, her declaration of atheism in the period she was assistant to Husserl in Göttingen and wrote her doctoral thesis *On the Problem of Empathy* – discussed in 1917 – ring true considering her distance to any mysticism in applying the orthodox phenomenological method to the close analysis of the experience of empathy.

Indeed,

as a writer of her time, Stein was not alone in having to address, and reflect upon, the relationship between her ideas and the concept of God; the concept of God was central to the concerns of her readership and peers. This does not transform her early work into theology: in the work discussed here [*On the Problem of Empathy*], the concept of God, in itself, is never used to explain the essence of the phenomenon of empathy, or of human beings (Meneses, 2011, p.117).

Hence, even though a misunderstanding on this point exists (see Boulanger & Lançon, 2006, p.505), the present study takes Stein's work on empathy as a reference in its purely philosophical significance.

In outlining Edith Stein's perspective on empathy, some secondary sources will be taken into consideration that help unpack the dense philosophical text of her doctoral thesis, almost inaccessible to most. The key authors referenced in the present study are Laura Boella, Rita W. Meneses and Dan Zahavi. They are all committed to the study of empathy, intersubjectivity and the relation of self-other from slightly different viewpoints. Meneses is interested in the contribution of Stein's inquiry to phsychology. Whereas Boella and Zahavi share a common ground in phenomenology though they investigate different aspects of philosophy: the possibility of an ethical practice of empathy, on one hand and social cognition and self-consciousness, on the other. In any case, Boella, Meneses and Zahavi all draw attention to the crucial role played by Edith Stein in the debate about the empathic experience.

To introduce Stein's conception of empathy, it's useful to summarize the main assumptions of her reasoning that belongs to the phenomenological tradition founded by Husserl. Meneses effectively circumscribes 4 key points in her doctoral thesis on Stein:

The first of these is that people are embodied, minded and embedded in the world. Secondly, the world is objectively 'out there' to be perceived, in the sense that it is not merely a subjective representation inside the mind. Thirdly, people relate to the world by means of an intentional act of consciousness. This intentional act is what brings the world and its objects into consciousness, as phenomena. Consciousness is always intentional – it connects in consciousness a self to an object, wordly or other – and it is always relational – in the sense that it places a self and an object in relation to one another, by means of an intentional act. Fourthly, phenomena (objects as appearing in consciousness) bear in themselves essential qualities of the given object. Finally, through phenomenology, it is possible to inspect these phenomena and identify an object's essential qualities (2011, p. 118-119).

So, empathy for Stein is a phenomenon to inspect through phenomenological inquiry, in search of its essential qualities. This kind of inquiry would lead Stein to conclude that empathy is an intentional act *sui generis* (Stein, 1917, p. 21), meaning that the object it addresses is the experience of another taking place there-and-then. Empathy is an act of consciousness that allows the immediate experience of what another is experiencing, thus being a way of acknowledging otherness in its own right. In fact, according to Stein, the empathic experience involves always at least two perspectives, self and other. In that, empathy is an interpersonal experience by means of which personal and foreign experiences connect through an intentional act.

Self and other never overlap throughout the empathic process. Stein sharply criticised Lipp's claim of a unity between self and other at higher levels of empathizing, some kind of '*oneness*' (p.16) that abolishes the distinction between empathizer and empathee. It is worth recalling the example – used by Lipps and discussed by Stein – of the novice acrobat rehearsing wire-walking. According to Lipps, when I see the acrobat balancing on the wire I identify with him projecting myself into his experience. Otherwise, according to Stein I don't become him, rather being beside him on the wire. To be more precise "I am not with the acrobat, but only 'at' him" (p.16)(Fig. 2).

Stein's rejection of empathy as a fusion self-object is consistent with her phenomenological background. As Husserl wrote, "had one had the same access to the other's consciousness as to one's own, the other would have ceased being an other, and would instead have become a part of oneself" (Husserl, 1973, p.139). The otherness of the other, from a phenomenological perspective, is inaccessible and "it is exactly this inaccessibility, this limit, which I can experience" (Zahavi, 2001, p.153).

This is a key point in Stein's account of empathy and the reason why she has been considered for the present study. Stepping away from phenomenological reasoning for a moment and returning to the issue of otherness, agonism and dialogic exchanges, it's clear that a perspective on empathy which emphasizes its nature of interpersonal experience, enabled only by the irreducible difference between oneself and an other, is worth taking serious consideration.

Again on this topic Zahavi writes:

> To claim that I would only have a real experience of the other if I experienced her feelings or thoughts in the same way as she herself does, is nonsensical. [...] It would lead to an abolition of the difference between self and other, to a negation of the alterity of the other, of that which makes the other other (2001, p.153).

The central role given to the other throghout the intersubjective experience is stressed by Stein consistently with her main concern of rehabilitating empathy in its own right, removing the ambiguous meaning of an emotional response to the other's mental state and lending it a dignity equal to any other act of consciousness by means of which we come to know the world (Boella, 2010, p.9). Therefore, empathy, connecting the self and the other within a relationship, becomes a crucial access to reality, while strengthening the interdependence between people who live their life in a shared world and know it through their
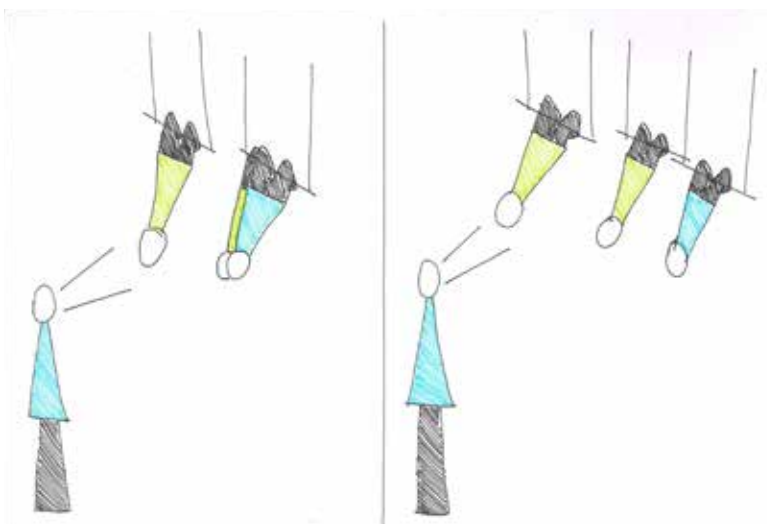
interpersonal relations.

According to Stein, empathy represents an asset to enhance the potentialities of sense making entrenched in human existence, basically disclosing the experience of discovering the other (Boella, 2018) and extending one's own horizon.

To understand what empathy is, Stein carefully discusses what empathy is not. One by one she rules out of her account the interpretations of empathy proposed until then. Empathy is not emotional contagion, inner imitation, nor sympathy, because it does not involve an emotional response and it cannot result in an identification of self-other, nor in that feeling of oneness identified by Lipps, which would remove any difference between self and other. It's not even an intellectual way of knowing, such as a projection, an inference from analogy, a deductive process about the other; nor does it consist of memory, fantasy, simulation or perspective-taking, being these all acts mediated by an intellectual activity and referenced to a past intentional object rather than to a there-and-then experience also experienced by another.

By means of this progressive exclusion, Stein concludes that empathy is an interpersonal experience lived as an immediate coming-to-know another's experience. "Empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience" (Meneses, 2011 p.146). The focus here is on the relation, on the transformative process triggered by the encounter with the other, in which empathy means first and foremost becoming aware of the other's embodied and minded existence (Boella, 2006) (Fig.3). Being the condition of the connection with the other, empathy discloses the possibility of significant relationships.

Fig. 2. The acrobat's example. On the left: Lipp's take on empathy, i.e. I become the acrobat as I see him. On the right: Stein's teke, i.e. I am beside the acrobat as I see him.
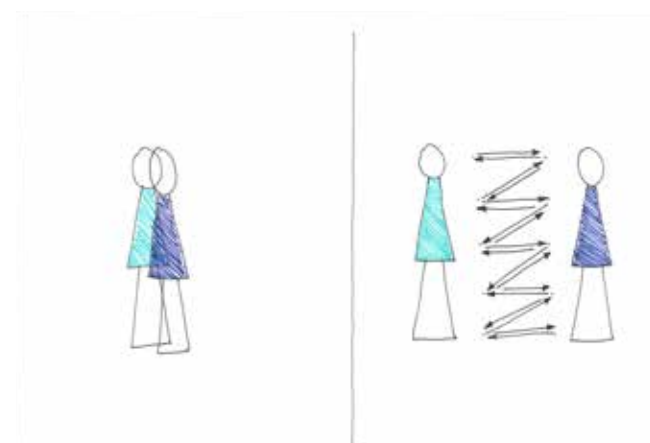
Fig. 3. On the left: empathy as identification self-other. On the right: empathy as an embodied connection self-other.

2.3.2 Empathy as a relational, embodied, process

Remaining in the phenomenological area of investigation, a notable position on empathy is that of Linda Finlay who combines different author's takes on empathy, including Merleau-Ponty, Thompson and Rogers, to understand empathy as "a kind of openness to a relational embodied intersubjectivity" (Finaly, 2005). Finlay's tenets are that empathy needs to be intended as a relational process, that involves the bodily intertwining between self and other. In this she explicitly refers to Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the human bodily commonalities as enablers of the possibility of real empathy, considering that "it is precisely my body which perceives the body of another person" (Merleau-Ponty, 1945, p. 354).

Another important reference for Finlay's proposition is Thompson as he stresses the dialogical face-to-face experience underpinning empathy "I experience myself as an inter- subjective being by empathetically grasping your empathetic experience of me. [...] As we communicate in language and gesture, we interpret and understand each other dialogically" (Thompson, 2005, p. 11).

The merit of Finlay's analysis is also due to its focus on empathy as a process rather than a 'state', which echoes Roger's absorbing take on empathy's multifaceted way of emerging within an encounter (Rogers, 1975). Importantly, Finlay also stresses the possibility that empathy arises to different degrees "we inevitably move in, out and through different intensities of empathy and distance during different moments of every relational encounter" (Finlay, 2006, p.8).

Similar to Finlay's, is Laura Boella's take on the role played by the bodily gestures and expressions in unveiling the other's world. She claims for empathy as the 'detonator' (Boella, 2018, p.124) of the other's actual embodied presence on one's own scene.

2.4 Discussion

As already mentioned above, the present study accounts as a theoretical reference the model of empathy as an experience, especially the one proposed by Edith Stein for its focus on the particular human relation established in the empathic process. Such a model allows us to postulate the interpersonal encounter as a constitutive experience in which otherness unfolds and plays a crucial role in both self-awareness and the acknowledgment of the other. Hence, it's important to bear in mind throughout the entire argumentation that

I consider empathy not as a skill, but as a 'laboratory of different experiences' (Boella, 2018) that take place at the scene of an interpersonal encounter.

Shifting from accounting of empathy as a skill, an ability to be developed and performed on the side of the designer, to conceiving instead of empathy as an experience to be enabled in order to enhance the potentiality of human encounters in collaborative processes, seems the first step in changing the traditional relationship between empathy and design, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

If we accept empathy as an experience, we must also accept that – as any other experience – it cannot be taught, nor designed, rather just enabled by certain designed conditions. According to Stein, the empathic 'happening' can be either facilitated or blocked. Boella (2006, p.XXX) states that a crucial issue today is making more tangible and concrete the intersubjective experience by raising awareness of what the otherness represents in relational terms. Making the empathic experience happen in a less occasional way, could be a strategy for re-engaging the complex sphere of experience involved in feeling, acknowledging, understanding and dealing with the other.

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Chapter 3

Empathy in design: a literature review

In the previous chapters I narrowed the research context to a specific design realm – the collaborative approach to service design. Meanwhile, I have argued for a perspective on empathy as an experience. The next step deepens the existing relationship between empathy and design. Therefore, this literature review focuses on empathy in design, by which I circumscribe a knowledge gap that the present research aims to address and fill.

The main results of this literature review can be summarized as follows:

Empathy has gained momentum in both research and practice as design has begun to aim for a more user-centred approach in the development of products and services. The growing focus on the user experience required an effective method to study and interpret experience. Empathy provides an answer to this new need (Koskinen, 2003, Mattelmäki, 2003).

The adjective 'empathic' was introduced to the design field in the late 1990's through business literature (Battarbee & Koskinen, 2005) when companies started to realise that customers' responses to market studies were not enough to develop successful products (Leonard & Rayport, 1997; Sanders and Dandavate, 1999). Empathic design has rapidly evolved in tandem as the popularity of designing for user experiences has grown (Postma *et al.*, 2012). In this context, empathy has been seen as the key for understanding others' feelings and emotions, the subjective aspects related to experience that data gathering, observation and traditional research methods failed to capture. Therefore, designers are invited to develop their empathic abilities in order to make interpretations of what people think, feel and dream while envisioning the experiences triggered by products or services. The HCD (Human Centred Design) toolkit developed by the re-known design consultancy IDEO (2009) provides procedures to empathise with communities' experiences in order to identify their unmet needs. Design Thinking tools and methods strongly rely on the designer's ability to empathise.

Empathy is considered a crucial ability also for Socially Responsible Design (Cipolla & Bartholo, 2014), which stresses the value of empathy between designers and users in order to gain insights into users' needs and thus meet these needs more effectively.

Methods and tools for building empathy with users are increasingly adopted in many design practices, including participatory design and co-design (Ho & Lee, 2013; Mattelmäki & Battarbee, 2002).

In this chapter, a review of the literature about empathy and design will start from empathic design, investigate the role assigned to empathy in design thinking, design for services as well as collaborative and participatory approaches. Without claiming to be exhaustive, the review rather aims at presenting an up to date review regarding the different accounts of empathy among design disciplines while also acknowledging the current multifaceted challenges to considering empathy an asset to design processes.

At the end of the review, I will discuss the results in light of the arguments developed in the previous chapters, bearing in mind the difference between empathy as a skill and empathy as an experience.

3.1 Empathic design

The very first scholars to discuss *empathic design* were Dorothy Leonard and Jeffrey Rayport in 1997. They published a paper in *Harvard Business Review* that focused on the shift to empathic techniques to develop new ideas for products. Leonard & Rayport argue that empathic design can stand alongside traditional market research methods to provide useful insights of the users' unarticulated needs and wishes, even those that they don't realize themselves that they have. Empathic techniques – they claim – should be applied in a five-step process focused on observation, as opposed to usual inquiry. The paper ends with a mention of role-playing techniques useful to simulate the user's behaviour.

On the wave of this seminal publication, *empathic design* became an important issue within design discourses, especially concerning user centred approaches to product and service development (Postma et al., 2012). As a result, the literature about empathic design has grown very rich, ranging from theoretical investigations to practical applications.

A basic text for *Empathic Design* is the self-titled book edited by Koskinen, Battarbee and Mattelmäki in 2003 that provides an overall reflection on this issue, including case studies and examples. The authors agree in using an empathic understanding as a method for designers to study and interpret user experiences. Among the articles collected in the book, I have highlighted those that give a role to empathy in the design process and discuss how to include it.

Koskinen & Battarbee define empathy as the "imaginative projection into another person's situation. It represents an attempt to capture its emotional and motivational qualities" (2003, p.45). The method suggested for gaining an empathic understanding of users' perspective is *role immersion*, which requires entering into the users' world as users rather than just as observers. It's worth noting that in Koskinen & Battarbee's placement of empathic design in the overall design process:

Empathic design has its place in the fuzzy front end of the design process even if empathy is ubiquitous because designers think about users at all stages of the design process. However the best place for these methods is the early, conceptual part of the product development process (p.47).

Meanwhile, Fulton Suri focuses on human centred design as an approach that creates more useful and enjoyable things for people. In this context, empathy is given a crucial role to inspire new 'things' by inferencing people's desires from observations of their behaviour. She defines empathy as "our ability to identify with other people's inner states based upon observation of their outward expressions" (Fulton Suri, 2003, p. 53). Empathic imagination fills in the gaps when grasping subjective phenomena – such as emotions and feelings related to experiencing objects – otherwise inaccessible.

Fulton Suri suggests a kind of recipe for empathy in designing "with real people [...] in real contexts" (p. 57). The fundamental ingredients of this recipe are perspective-taking exercises, props and role playing, shadowing, interviewing, storytelling and experience prototyping.

The need for tools and a specific method is stressed by several authors (Koskinen, 2003; Mattelmäki, 2003; McDonagh, 2008; Kouprie & Visser, 2009; McDonagh *et al.*, 2011), confirming that empathy in this context is viewed as a mixed cognitive and affective ability to be developed, supported if necessary, and applied to the design process to achieve a "holistic understanding of the users" (Mattelmäki, 2003, p.119).

Mattelmäki, Vaajakallio and Koskinen provide a useful viewpoint on the evolution of empathic design in the past few decades in their article "What happened to empathic design?" (2014). The authors stress a shift in empathic design from interpretative to situationist terms, thereby meaning that designers and researches began using empathy not only to understand users from a first-person perspective, but rather to engage other stakeholders in design 'situations'.

Research on empathic design started with the need to have a strong connection with product design practice in contextual, experience-driven user studies. [...] Later, however, the attention shifted from explorations of everyday life toward social questions and services. The practice and the mindset remained the same, but research was geared to finding ways to inspire and sensitize not only designers, but also other stakeholders. During the past few years, the researchers' interest has been in finding methods for envisioning increasingly radical design vistas (Mattelmäki *et al.*, p.76).

This "radical twist toward more imaginative research" (p.75) pushed the boundaries of empathic design towards experiments very close to the art world, borrowing "open-ended communication formats able to trigger empathic responses for inspiring design openings" (p. 74).

3.2 Empathy in Design Thinking

Empathise is the first stage in the Design Thinking process. Empathy's role is as important as starting the Human Centred Design (HCD) process. The HCD *toolkit* (IDEO, 2009) identifies three main phases in the design process: *Hear, Create and Deliver*. The first phase – hear – is essentially accomplished through empathic abilities. "Designing meaningful and innovative solutions that serve your constituents begins with understanding their needs, hopes and aspirations for the future" (IDEO, 2009, p.29). The toolkit's section on hearing suggests methodologies and tips to tackle the challenge of deeply observing, listening and interpreting those one is designing for.

In the *create* phase, empathic design is outlined as a method for the design team to keep in mind the people they are designing for, and "to not just understand the problem mentally, but also to start creating solutions from a connection to deep thoughts and feelings" (p. 89).

In the *Field Guide to Human Centered Design* (IDEO, 2015), empathy is one of the seven mindsets that human centred designers should embrace in order to keep focused on the people they are designing for. The three phases hear, create and deliver are converted to the three 'I's' of *Inspiration, Ideation,* and *Implementation*. As before, empathy is required at the early stages of the process, especially during the Inspiration phase where it introduces knowledge and understanding of other people's hopes and desires.

Empathy is the capacity to step into other people's shoes, to understand their lives, and start to solve problems from their perspectives. Human-centered design is premised on empathy, on the idea that the people you're designing for are your roadmap to innovative solutions. All you have to do is empathize, understand them, and bring them along with you in the design process (Kolawole, 2015, p.22).

The suggested method to empathise with the constituents is to immerse it into their lives, within the contexts where they work and socialize; in short, to tune into empathy within the complex sphere of their own experiences.

It's clear that from a profit-driven business perspective empathy is crucial to design successful products or services developed on the basis of their desirability. "By responding to real, but unexpressed and unmet needs, design empathy promised to bring financial reward" (Battarbee *et al.*, 2014, p. 2). In

the global marketplace, it has become increasingly difficult to grasp the desires and needs of a multiplicity of clients and users from different parts of the world with different cultures and identities. As businesses worldwide are becoming more and more complex and involve a growing number of stakeholders, Design Thinking companies could benefit from extending empathic approaches to "suppliers, buyers, and customers – the whole ecosystem of people and business involved" (p. 3). On the basis of this premises, Battarbee *et al*. in *Empathy on the Edge* (2014) argue that new challenges facing designers today are *scaling* and *sustaining* empathy inside and outside of companies.

To be most effective, empathy cannot remain the privilege of an individual, a design team, or even a tight group of highly involved stakeholders. Nor can it endure only for the course of a project. If design empathy is to sustain impact throughout an organization, it needs ongoing support from the overarching culture. An empathic attitude needs to be championed, nurtured, and practiced regularly (p. 6).

By *scaling empathy* – they claim – greater numbers of people, of a greater diversity, might be involved in 'out of ego' experiences. *Sustaining empathy* would require cultivating within organizations "habitual awareness of the people who are affected by our decisions, beyond the life span of a specific project" (p. 6).
To tackle these challenges, the researchers show some approaches that IDEO has experimented with in their projects. In this context, it's worth noting that to sustain empathy they propose a two-fold method. First, *empathic artifacts* should be designed "to deliver experiences that build empathy for what people are actually going through in the real world" (p.11). It is then crucial to foster an *empathic culture* to extend the awareness that empathy needs to be facilitated for others as well as for ourselves.

3.3 Empathy in service design

A similar concern of extending empathy's impact is acknowledged by Sustar & Mattelmäki in regards to designing complex systems of public services, that require systemic, context-oriented and holistic solutions. In "Whole in one: Designing for empathy in complex systems" (2017) they "reconsider the meaning of empathy and empathic design when dealing with complex systems" (p. 2) in which multidisciplinary actors and stakeholders share a stage.
Interestingly, they propose that

rather than dealing with emotions and mental states, the empathic design

approach aims to assist and scaffold people in a system, to understand how the system works from another perspective and to reflect their own viewpoints on a better whole (p. 2).

Furthermore, Sustar & Mattelmäki examine existing empathic design tools, arguing that they are too narrowly focused on emotions when dealing with service design and network systems that involve people of different cultural backgrounds. They propose in turn to shift from individual empathy to "*intercultural empathy* to better understand values, views and behaviours that are different from ours" (p. 2). Discussing the case study reported in the paper – a one-year joint project between a governmental organisation and Aalto University related to designing for governmental immigration services – the authors stress that "although the scaffolding of intercultural empathy was predominant for empathising in individual and service levels between end-users and service providers, it also enabled better understanding of end-users' needs and wishes at the governmental level" (p. 6).

Considering the research context outlined in the first chapter, it's worth reviewing the role of empathy specifically in the design of services. Empathic design and Design Thinking both provide methodologies that can be applied to design for services as well. As a matter of fact, in service design literature, the word *empathy* is quite recurring. It is usually noted for its potential to provide insights regarding users' needs and wishes. "Design for services starts at the service interface, applying methodologies that augment the capacity to deeply understand (empathise with) users and service participants' needs and evaluate existing or imagine future interactions" (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011, p. 19).
Nevertheless, as the quality of service interactions is a key issue for the design of services, creating the conditions for service participants to empathise with one another is acknowledged as a way of enabling positive and cooperative behaviours, and consequently effective and qualitative interactions. Therefore, empathic attitudes would involve not only the designer or the design team in the early stages of the design process, but would extend to other actors – as service participants –spreading to the phase of service actualization and even to the interpretation of human experiences and behaviours unfolding during the service interactions.

In *Design for Services*, Meroni & Sangiorgi (2011) report on different projects based on an empathic attitude. The chapter dedicated to "Designing Interactions, Relations and Experiences" stresses the role of empathy as a key factor to understand the experience of people involved in a service interaction, "facilitate the engagement of the users in the redesign of experiences (co-

design), and to generate service ideas consistent with existing behaviours" (p.27). Consequently, in designing services, there's an urgent need for methods and tools to build and support 'empathic conversations' with service participants. The reported projects are drawn by different approaches including Human Centered Design, Design for Experience and – particularly interesting – Co-experience (Forlizzi & Battarbee, 2004; Battarbee, 2005). Co-experience is intended as a "user experience in social contexts, where experiences are created together or shared with others" (Meroni & Sangiorgi, 2011, p. 39). In this perspective, building empathic relationships might be useful to foster and support collaboration and co-creation. For the present research, it's worth referencing the following observation by Meroni & Sangiorgi (2011, p. 41):

"As a first conclusion designing for services seems to move designers from user-centred to human-centred design, from designing for experience to designing for co-experience and from field study to enhancing empathy and co-creation."

3.3.1 Empathy in collaborative and participatory processes

Design processes became so user and human-centred that – as a logical consequence – they are increasingly changing in co-design processes. Co-creation, co-design, collaboration and participation all require the opening up of a fair and equal communicative space (Ho & Lee, 2012). In order to enable a truly qualitative communicative space, a respectful, open-minded and inclusive approach by the participants is required. "This raises the question of what circumstances render open communicative space possible" (Ho & Lee, 2012).

Ho & Lee's (2012) answer proposes the phenomenological lens of intersubjectivity to examine participatory design processes. They claim to follow Husserl in accounting for intersubjectivity as the possible means of knowledge of an existing outer world. Furthermore, their suggestion is to "make use of practicing empathy in participatory design as the way of advancing the individual's knowledge and experience through a reciprocal reflection between a person and the other" (p.74).

Ho & Lee's reflection on intersubjectivity and empathy is drawn from the experience of a design training laboratory – *Design.Lives Lab* – held in Hong Kong in 2009 in the form of a three-day workshop with 120 teenagers as part of their design introduction summer programme. In organizing and conducting the laboratory they:

incorporated the concept of "empathy" to enrich our understanding and practice of the inclusive design projects. This concept was drawn from our

original version of the concept of intersubjectivity, which was intended to help participant designers to understand the inner and social lives of the active design partners (p.75).

In the interactive session of the *Design.Lives Lab*, they stressed the importance of dialogue and of an equal starting point for designers and participants, so to support inclusiveness in the participation. In this context, they leveraged the concepts of intersubjectivity and empathy as key factors to foster a dialogical approach.

The issue of a dialogical approach is relevant also to Socially Responsible Design (SRD). In "*Empathy* or Inclusion: A dialogical approach to Socially Responsible Design" (2014) Cipolla & Bartholo take Martin Buber's philosophy of dialogue as a reference in order to distinguish empathy from inclusion, in favour of the latter. According to Buber, (1947/2006)

[Empathy is] the exclusion of one's own concreteness, the extinguishing of the actual situation in life, the absorption in the pure aestheticism of the reality in which one participates. Inclusion is the opposite of this. It is the extension of one's own concreteness, the fulfillment of the actual situation in life, the complete presence of the reality in which one participates. Its elements are, first, a relation, of no matter what kind, between two persons, second, an event experienced by them in common [...] A relation between persons that is characterized in more or less degree by the element of inclusion may be termed as a dialogical relation (Cipolla& Bartholo, 2014, p. 115).

To be in dialogue means, in the buberian framework, to be in relation, which is to be alive. This interweaving of dialogue, relation and actual life is transferred by Cipolla & Bartholo into SRD processes as an approach to designing inclusive interventions rooted in the surrounding context. In fact, by applying a dialogical approach to traditional participatory design techniques, SRD aims at involving users more than just as participants as well as designers in a greater role than just as facilitators. Inclusion should indeed concern users, but also designers themselves.

In terms of the design process it means that each designer needs to perform both roles: as a facilitator guiding the design process, and simultaneously as one who is *included*, who enters into relations with others to pursue a solution to a shared problem felt by all those concerned, including the designer himself (p. 92).

The reason to consider this overall reasoning is because, as above mentioned, the authors find inclusion in opposition to empathy, albeit acknowledged as a relevant approach to SRD. Empathy is considered an hostile act to actual dialogue, since – according to Buber – it would lead to a fusion of the self-other, a total identification, rather than supporting an authentic relation in which each one remains authentically himself, separate from the other.

A more traditional view on empathy is stressed by French & Teal in "Design for empathy within participatory design approaches" (2016). Their concern is to use empathic design tools to engage participants in order to become collaborators. Notably, the authors review Cipolla & Bartholo's (2014) position against empathy, arguing that:

> effective listening and dialogue requires empathy and inclusion: these concepts are not mutually exclusive. It is important to be inclusive of differing perspectives and empathy is required to understand and identify differences and synergies in participants' needs and experiences towards collectively designing an outcome that is inclusive (French & Teal, 2016, n. p.).

The role of the designer in participatory contexts is, according to the authors, to engender empathy in collaborative creativity so as to support a shift in the relationships between participants from 'them and us' to a collective 'we', which is required to build trust and develop more impactful ideas.

3.4 Discussion

Based on the overview of the literature of empathy in design, albeit not exhaustive, a general observation can be drawn. Empathy has been given a prominent role in design, both of products and services, as a means to access the most intangible aspects of human experience. As such, empathy has typically been considered as a skill, an ability to be applied when designing through specific methods, tools and techniques. In most cases, empathy is considered as a mix of cognitive and affective abilities, valuable precisely because it merges rational and emotional stances, thus including also the unspoken, the unseen and the invisible facets of human behaviour.

Considering the most recent literature on the issue, it's notable that there's a shared concern for developing new tools and methods for the empathic approach to design in order to deal with the new challenges posed by increasingly complex systems of services, relational services and in general by the changing role of the designer in collaborative contexts.

In this perspective we can argue that empathy is moving:

· from the user-designer relationship to a broader group of participants, whether including the designer himself or not;
· from a self-referential act of the designer understanding the end-users to a 'soft skill' to be scaled and sustained within organizations and companies;
· from an individual ability to use when designing to an experience aimed for by designed 'situations';
· from an approach adopted at the early stages of the design process to a process itself spreading along the entire design intervention.

As a direct consequence of these changes, great attention has been focused on empathy building strategies, especially in the design of services, since service encounters rely on human relations and empathy is often acknowledged for its potential to enable high quality human interactions. The recognized importance of enhancing empathy at different levels has resulted in the opening up of experiments more closely related to art practices and artistic formats of communication, such as performances and exhibitions (see IDEO's *empathic artifacts*). This broadening perspective represents the entry point of the present study, confirming the opportunity to build a bridge between art practices and the contemporary design discourse.

Stein's account of empathy does not appear in design literature, except in Kouprie & Visser's (2009) account, where they developed a framework for enhancing empathic design techniques by reinterpreting Stein's three steps of the empathic experience.

The phenomenological reading of empathy as a laboratory of different experiences, occurring in a relational frame between two different subjects who, by means of this experience, achieve an enriched knowledge both about the other and about themselves, has been quite neglected. Empathy is generally understood as its psychology-related meaning of cognitive/affective skill, i.e. as in the common phrase to 'walk in another's shoes', which entails a total identification with another person, a blurring of the self-other, even if transitory. This idea is also demonstrated by Cipolla & Bartholo's argument against empathy and in favour of inclusion – according to the meaning given by Buber. Actually, Stein's view on empathy – and generally speaking the phenomenological one – more closely resembles the buberian notion of 'I-Thou', i.e. the authentic dialogical relation. In fact, both the former and the latter stress the value of alterity and of the irreducible difference between self and other that enriches and shapes an authentic human relationship.

Given these premises, the present research aims at shedding light on such an account of empathy, investigating the possibilities to suitably apply it to design practices.

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Chapter 4

Enabling the empathic experience

This chapter introduces the second part of the research wich aims to join together the previous study on empathy, emerging design and the potential role of art practices.

The literature review highlighted on the one hand the increasing need for new and updated strategies to scale and sustain empathy in design processes (Battarbee *et al.*, 2014), while also detailing the nearly absent account of empathy as an experience of the other. Shifting from a perspective on empathy as a skill, to one encompassing its experiential, intersubjective, embodied features means drawing attention to empathy as a goal rather than as a tool. It also means that empathy is not a one-way affective/cognitive endeavour concerning solely the designer's individual sensitivity; rather it is an interpersonal experience occuring exclusively in the presence of at least two subjects. It is independent from each one's personal attitude, yet demanding and 'expensive' for those involved (Fig.4).

As an experience, empathy can be facilitated and supported by setting up some conditions for enabling such a particular kind of interpersonal relation. Given that the empathic experience occurs within human interactions, it should be recognised that not all possible encounters are equal. Some are more superficial and meaningless, others still are conditioned by social constraints, time or place restrictions. In short, some contextual circumstances may prevent empathic experiences from taking place. It is precisely these contextual circumstances that makes it possible to intervene, working towards the best situation to enable a desired experience. It is necessary to again stress that empathy cannot be designed other than through an indirect way. As it is basically a type of interpersonal relation, it is uncontrollable and unexpected. It can only be enabled by some conditions that are better than others, which could hinder it (Cipolla, 2004). Needless to say, it's almost impossible to control whether or not empathy occurs happens; therefore it is only possible to intervene on contextual elements that allow the possibility for the experience to take place.

In this respect the contribution of the arts may be crucial, as discussed in Chapter 1. The arts provide examples of constructed situations aimed at activating the complex empathic circuit at stake in relational encounters.

Artists enact different strategies for raising empathic responses, strategies that aim to circumscribe the conditions which enable empathic experiences.
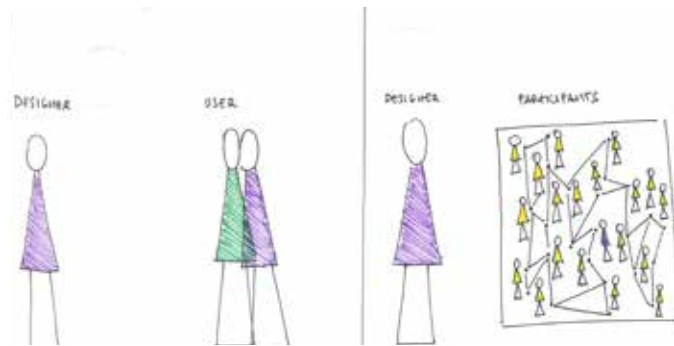
Fig. 4. The different role of the designer in empathic design (on the left) and in collaborative processes. In the former, the designer's task is to empathise with users who is designing for. Otherwise, when designing empathic experiences, designers seek strategies to enable dialogical exchanges among participants at collaborative processes.

4.1. Case studies: Notes on the methodology

4.1.1 Selection criteria

Six case studies have been selected among contemporary art practices and art-related initiatives that can be essentially characterised by a participatory approach. Their goal is to offer participants – althought in different ways – a kind of experience raising awareness of human interconnection and of otherness as an asset. They all set up 'situations' in which embodied encounters take place and participants are asked to do something together.

A general premise is that most of the case studies can be considered at art's edge – as often happens with contemporary art. In fact, they cover a cross-sectoral area between artistic, social, psychological and perceptual experiments, activists' initiatives and public events. Still, they are strongly related to traditional art formats (exhibitions, installations and performances) and/or have been conceived by artists. At the end of the 1990's artists already began to explore the possibilities of intertwining different disciplines in their works. In today art practices the experimentation of interdisciplinary formats is becoming a usual approach and the artistic research increasingly pertains to a crossover zone, where disciplines continuosly renegotiate their borders (Perelli, 2017).

The problem in isolating purely artistic practices reflects precisley this blurring of disciplinary borders in the contemporary artworld which increasingly borrows

tools, strategies and formats from other areas, just as other disciplines borrow from it. The big revolution of the arts, begun at the turn of the XXth Century with Duchamp's Fountain (1917) and the *transfiguration* of the *commonplace* (Danto, 1981), extends its effects to the present days. The problem of whether or not something can be recognised as art continues to challenge our judgment. Art practices which are merged with our life and the places in which it unfolds, 'immersive life practices' – as Daniel Tucker says (2014) – aiming at producing transformative experiences, are increasingly undistinguishable from life itself.

In such a *crossover zone* the selected practices cover mainstream artworks acknowledged by the art system, as well as interventions that are more slightly related to existing cultural and artistic formats. Hence, the choice of studying works of 'mainstream' artists along with emergent practices at the edge of contemporary art has been done to acknowledge the multifaceted panorama of the contemporary artistic discourse, precisely characterised by a radical pluralism of coexisting forms of expression (Perelli, 2017).

The selected case studies belong to the most recent years, except for *Dialogue in the dark*, whose original concept dates back to the late 1980s and is still continues, as well as *Rede de elásticos* by Lygia Clark, which goes back to 1973 and was selected as a pioneering work in participatory practices. Of course the list of selected case studies could be expanded; yet they provide a sufficient amount of information for building the main argument of the research.

4.1.2 Aim of the study

Among the case studies, some 'indicators' of empathic experiences have been sought out. The interpretative framework adopted to read and analyse case studies was drawn from the account on empathy outlined in chapter 2.

It could be useful to review here the key points of this interpretative framework:

· empathy is an embodied relational experience rather than an affective or cognitive – or both – ability;
· it requires an embodied encounter between at least two subjects;
· it is immediate, happening there-and-then through the means of a 'bracketing' of one's own personal judgment;
· it involves the body as a whole, i.e. the soma as a unity of body and mind;
· it entails a connection between self and other;
· however, it does not entail a total identification of self and other;
· it allows the acknowledgement of the other as irreducibly other, different, foreign;
· it enables the recognition of the basic interdependence binding human beings beyond any difference;

· it is a demanding and 'expensive' interpersonal relationship, in turn making it highly rewarding;

In reviewing the case studies, these points are used as a checklist to assess the case's consistency to the framework.

4.1.3 Organisation of the case studies

The miscellaneous selection of case studies has been organised by classifying the different actions they ask participants to perform. As a matter of fact, the selected case studies are all characterised by a call for action that puts them in the broad category of participatory practices, i.e. they require the direct engagement of people. The engagement at stake is of a somatic kind, meaning that participants need to participate in both a bodily and mental way, thus participating with the whole unity of body-mind.

The research stems from the assumption that participatory practices do not completely overlap with relational artworks, as typically thought of. Instead of creating opportunities of relations per se, they provide instances of agency that underpin relational exchanges. Relations and actions are intertwined. In this respect, I adopt a perspective close to Bishop's (2004), whose critiques of Relational Aesthetics have been outlined in Chapter 1.

In some cases the action to perform is that of walking through space, switching on the *somatosensory* apparatus for moving in challenging environments, whether darkened or floating. In the second group of cases, it is about sharing something personal with a stranger, something that uncovers one's own vulnerability, such as eye contact or a one-on-one conversation. In others still, the requested action requires collaboratively making something together with someone else, such as knotting a net or assembling a lamp.

According to this perspective the selected case studies have been organised two by two in three categories identified based on the action they request: **walking through, sharing** and **making together**, with an increasing degree of personal engagement in the participation.

4.1.4 Retrieval of the information

Most of the case studies are quite recent and have not yet been largely studied or considered worthy of historical analysis. For this reason the retrieval of reliable information has been a challenging task. To overcome this shortage of information, the study relied on some primary sources, such as interviews, surveys and informal dialogues with people involved at different levels in the

cases. Social networks and online tools have been exploited to reach otherwise unattainable actors, such as members of artists' studios, collaborators, as well as participants (See Appendix A).

Of course, secondary sources were probed as well, when they were available and considered reliable. Several of these secondary sources heve been websites, online magazines and blogs. For their particular nature, a selection was made on the basis of their supposed reliability and accuracy.

Indeed, the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark (1920-1988) is an exception in terms of the retrieval of both primary and secondary sources. She has been studied by several acknowledged art critics – Yves-Alain Bois (1999), Guy Brett (1994) and Claire Bishop (2012), among others – and recently she has been the focus of an important solo retrospective at Moma (2014). In addition, Clark herself wrote many notes and letters to friends and colleagues, amongst all to fellow artist Hélio Oiticica. Therefore, as regards Lygia Clark's works there were no obstacles to retrieving the necessary information.

Starting from this premise, it is worth clarifying that the research path about the case studies concerned firstly the sources' selection, and secondly the hermeneutic endeavour of weaving together the information drawn from different kind of them.

In the following sections, all the case studies will be introduced according to the structure presented above and highlighting how they can be read through the lens of empathy as an experience.

4.2 Action 1: Walking through

The act of walking through a space is a kinaesthetic experience allowing us to perceive and build our surrounding environment. An act as common as walking is crucial to our embodied outer and inner perception. Proprioception and the vestibular system work as partners to give us a sense of our position and movement in the space. Kinaesthetic awareness
– i.e. the sense of movement – drives our movements building our ability of exploring a space. While walking, the sense of movement is highly elicited, in particular when something unusual challenges the repetitive motor scheme of regular walking. The sudden interruption of a usual pattern of movements creates the potential for an enhanced proprioception, followed by an increased self-awareness. From a phenomenological perspective, moving into a space is also a means of progressively building knowledge of space itself. Merleau-Ponty accounts for the body's typical mode of existence as 'being-toward-the-world', meaning that the body is our primary source of perception (1945). Its kinaesthetic sense establishes perceptual relations with space.

"Bodily space is a multi-layered manner of relating to things, so that the body is not "in" space but lives or inhabits it" (Toadvine, 2016)

From this perspective the act of walking through space is an embodied experience bringing embodied knowledge. As such, it is considered a key concept binding together the following two case studies.

4.2.1 On Space Time Foam by Tomás Saraceno (2012)

On Space Time Foam is an installation by Tomás Saraceno (San Miguel de Tucumán, 1973) presented in 2012 at Hangar Bicocca in Milan. Saraceno is an Argentinian artist who operates along the boundary line between art, architecture and engineering, with incursions in the natural sciences and astrophysics. He is primarily interested in developing new sustainable ways of inhabiting the Planet by creating immersive installations and community projects that explore novel possibilities of moving in the world and sensing the environment. To present a picture of Saraceno's activity, two long-term research projects are recalled here. One is *Cloud Cities* which, in a series of exhibitions from 2008 onwards, "aims to develop a modular and transnational city in the clouds that upon realization, may be understood as a model for sustainable and emancipatory building practices" [Saraceno's Official Website, n.d.]. Each of Saraceno's installation invites the user to consider alternative forms of knowledge, feelings and the awareness of our interrelation with others. His aim is to suggest strategies for coping positively with the changes of the world we live in.

Another notable work is *Aerocene*, a project that matches artistic and scientific approaches to reach a new era of environmental global consciousness. Besides the Anthropocene, *Aerocene* aims at a collaboratively learning how to float and live in the air in a sustainable way. It is conceived of as an open platform which hosts diverse activities, such as exhibitions, discussions and publications. *Aerocene* involves also the distribution of the *Aerocene* Explorer open-source kit for testing emissions-free floating sculptures that re-use plastic bags. *Aerocene* is a way of moving that takes advantage of warm air heated by the sun and the infrared radiations from the heart, but it also aims to be a way of living and being together. In fact, Saraceno's works convey the opportunity of going back to a symbiotic relationship with the Earth by means of the exploration of human interconnection enabled by a do-it-together device which flies in the air crossing geo-political borders.

The reason it's worth mentioning these two projects is that they reflect the ongoing research activities carried out by Saraceno, which *On Space Time* Foam is one piece of. Each of Saraceno's work represents a milestone on a larger roadmap. His installations develop from the previous ones, like prototypes of an iterative process of investigation about space-time, sound, movement, social dynamics and life on Earth at large.

On Space Time Foam is particularly focused on making tangible the complex dynamic of interconnection binding together all the creatures living on Earth to raise awareness of the interdependence of people's actions. The installation is made up of three layers of transparent membranes floating from 14 to 20 metres above the ground of the Cubo exhibition space, a cubic barrel-vaulted building at the Hangar Bicocca in Milan. Each membrane is walkable and can hold up to 15 people. The membranes are inflated by a constant flow of air with amounts of pressure different one from the other. At their maximum inflation, the membranes take the shape of a dome. This takes place until someone opens the door of the Cubo and enters the exhibition space. In fact, as a consequence of the entering and exiting of people on the ground, the pressure and flow of air in the space changes. The membranes start to deflate and the dome shape collapses. People walking above in the airy bubble experience the soft floor bending under their feet and the space changing its shape as they cross it. In the words of Saraceno (2017):

> The structure allows you to be in one place or another until you come too close to someone else. I love this image of everyone collapsing in the same hole, because when you get too close, you make a mass, become heavier and heavier, and the side walls get steeper.

The steeper the side walls become, the more people are forced to co-operate to leave the structure. As the environment they are in is shaped by the spatial relationships between them, they must communicate with one another in order to balance the mechanism of action and reaction caused by their movements.

According to Claudia Melendez (personal communication, 2017, July 28) an architect who worked directly on the realization of *On Space Time* Foam as a member of the Studio Saraceno, it took 6 to 8 months to develop the installation, inspired by the unusual height of the Cubo exhibition space. It took numerous prototypes, mock-ups and models to define the number of layers – originally just 1, it ultimately became 3 – and the thickness of every membrane in order to achieve this cloud-like environment that continuously moves and changes.

Like a biosphere *On Space Time* Foam is an ecosystem, regulated by the network of interactions among people, as well as between people and the environment. Every action of the people involved in the system created a reaction, a change in the system itself. *On Space Time* Foam aims at making tangible this complex dynamic of interdependence – both physical and social – among humans, and between humankind and environment.

Saraceno is an activist and advocate for these atmospheric worlds, working to reveal them and to enhance our aesthetic awareness of their complexity because he knows that doing this is central to a renewal of ethical sensibilities across different spheres of life (McCormack, 2015).

4.2.1.2 How On Space Time Foam enables an empathic experience

On Space Time Foam contributes to this study by providing an empathic experience. Going back to the key features of the empathic experience outlined above, *On Space Time Foam*:

· is an embodied relational experience. Participants are immersed in a space together with strangers who they must reach out to and interact with;

· requires the presence of at least two people. One single person is not enough to trigger the transformation of the surrounding environment; it is essential to

have at least one person on the membranes and one down on the ground in order to activate the difference of pressure. The more people that enter the installation, the better it functions;

· is an immediate experience, happening there-and-then; it is a lived experience, related to the contact set up;

· involves the somatic perception. It calls perceptual certainties into question. By walking upon a floating floor our kinaesthetic dimension is highly stimulated and asked to intervene at first;

· makes tangible the interdependence of people's actions. Each individual movement corresponds to a reaction of the whole environment. One portion of the floor goes down and another goes up, according to people's movement;

· is a very demanding experience in terms of active personal engagement. Although it sounds like a playful game, participants need to be in the right disposition to collaborate in overcoming such a challenging situation.

4.2.2 Dialogue in the dark by Dialogue Social Enterprise

Dialogue in the dark is a concept exhibition that adopts an 'artistic format' to address the social inclusion of visually impaired people. The founder, Dr. Andreas Heinecke, developed the concept of *Dialogue in the dark* after having met a young journalist who had lost his sight in a car accident. Despite this unfortunate event, the journalist was very optimistic and was successfully coping with his condition. Heinecke began to think that blindness, against all current prejudices, contains an unexplored potential that unfortunately is not generally recognized, hence causing blind people to be discriminated against with unequal access to education and to the labour market.

With a mission in mind – to provide equal opportunities to the blind – Heinecke began to experiment with the *Dialogue in the dark* exhibition format. His strategy stemmed from a simple proposition: "Why not turn off the light, darken a room, and invite blind and sighted people to meet under reverse conditions?" [Dialogue in the dark Official Website, n.d.]

Heinecke began the experiment in Frankfurt (1989) with an exhibition format based on the use of ropes and sounds. It was conceived of as an immersive dark environment specially designed to trigger the senses left when sight unavailable. After the first experimental event the network of *Dialogue in the*

Fig. 5. 1-2. Tomás Saraceno, On Space Time Foam, 2012. Installation view at Hangar Bicocca, Milan. Source: http://tomassaraceno.com/projects/on-space-time-foam/ [Accessed January 2018].

dark exhibitions around the world grew steadily and Heinecke developed new formats such as *Dinner in the dark* and business workshops in the dark.

The successful initiatives of Andreas Heinecke have since evolved into a social business model, not just producing events in 41 countries around the world but also offering job positions for visually impaired people. Other related projects joined the exhibition concept of *Dialogue in the dark*, such as Dialogue in silence and *Dialogue with time* thus covering the issue of social inclusion from different perspectives. In 2008 Heinecke founded a holding for all Dialogue concepts, i.e. the Dialogue Social Enterprise which operates as a limited liability company in Hamburg. Its mission is to enact stategies to overcome discrimination and experiences to break communication barriers. As the official website reports:

Dialogue Social Enterprise empowers marginalized people and transforms the general public perception of disabled people from one of "helpless" to "able". We do create platforms, which break down the barriers between "us" and "them" through creative means. Three programs have been established which include exhibitions and business workshops:
• *Dialogue in the dark* invites visitors to explore the unseen in a pitch-dark exhibition. The public is led by blind people in a complete role reversal for both parties
• *Dialogue in silence*. Participants wear headphones which simulate the conditions of beign deaf. The immersion in a completely silent world forces participants to rely on their deaf guides to communicate using body language or other alternative methods without sound.
• *Dialogue with time* is an exhibition about the art of aging. Visitors learn to see aging from a new perspective and enter into a profound exchange with seniors form the age of 70 years and up [Dialogue Social Enterprise Official Website, n.d.].

Dialogue in the dark represents the empathic experience as explained above. In *Dialogue in the dark* (Fig. 6) blind guides lead small groups of people through a totally darkened exhibition, specially designed to convey the characteristics of urban indoor and outdoor environments, such as park, streets, squares or crowded interiors. Sounds, textures, scents and other sensorial stimuli drive participants in understanding the spaces.

Groups of eight people enters the exhibition every fifteen minutes, together with a blind guide. Exhibitions follow a standard structure which includes three different environments, a park, an urban environment, and a bar. The covered space is on average 200-300 m2 including the dark installation, a lobby, staff rooms, and rooms for educational activities. The standard modules can be adapted according to different locations and specific features of the hosting

locations. Several *Dialogue in the dark* exhibitions are designed to integrate the local character and culture into the scenario, for instance a ride on a tuk tuk in Bangkok.

Besides the fact that a *Dialogue in the dark* exhibition raises awareness on how one would experience the loss of sight, the main point is that the inevitable role reversal between seeing and non-seeing persons in walking through the space forces both parties to closely relate one another. Only the sightless guide knows how to move through space, thus taking a guiding role usually played by those who would assist him or her. Furthermore, people in the dark are asked to maintain physical contact – for instance placing a hand on another's shoulder – and to trust one another in order to get through the space.

The experience allows you to discover:

• How to find orientation and move in the dark;
• How to 'see' the world through the other senses;
• How to interact by relying on alternative strategies of communication;
• How to generate trust and cope with challenging situations.

Similarly, *Dialogue in silence* generates a role reversal and the use of communicative strategies beyond speech, by relying on body language and the physical contact with others. Participants enter an area of complete silence wearing noise-cancelling headsets, and plunge into an environment that facilitates an enhanced concentration. Facilitators – deaf or hearing impaired – show participants how to hear, listen and 'speak' in silence, helping them to change their mindset towards others. *Dialogue in Silence* enables a dialogue between hearing and non-hearing people while re-defining disability as ability [Dialogue in the dark Official Website, n.d.].

Dialogue in time underpins the same concept but is less interesting for this research because it more so triggers the ability to empathise with elderly people byexperimenting with what being old would mean, rather than enabling the experience of being with differently-abled people. The main difference resides in the human relationship resulting from the experience of being together, doing something together in a dark or silent context, i.e an unusual situation. It is a relational experience, alongside an individual path and it stems from a real encounter. It is more than 'walking in another person's shoes'; rather it is an experience that requires a disposition to welcoming the other in his/her otherness (blindness or deafness), and recognising that his/her different condition is valuable in some context, as our own is in other ones. As the website reports, "the world without sight is not poorer, just different" [Dialogue in the dark Official Website, n.d.].

4.2.2.1 How Dialogue in the dark enables an empathic experience

On the basis of the previously outlined interpretative framework, *Dialogue in the dark* is worthy of analysis, since it:

· is an embodied relational experience. Participants are immersed in a space together with someone else they do not know in advance and who they are required to be in physical contact with;

· requires the presence of at least two people, one sightless or visually impaired guide and one seeing individual, who meet and walk along together;

· is an immediate, first-hand experience, happening there-and-then in the moment;

· involves the somatic perception. In walking through a dark environment all the remaining somatic receptors should be active at most in order to compensate for the lack of sight;

· entails a deep connection between self and other to enable different strategies of communication beyond sight or speech;

· enhance the value of otherness in reversing the usual roles;

· is a very demanding experience in terms of active personal engagement. Participants need to accept that differently-abled people can help them in an unusual situation. That realizationrequires open-mindedness, trust and a spirit of collaboration.

4.2.3 Similarities and differences

Both the case studies set up situations that question perceptual habits by designing particular spatial devices. Both *On Space Time Foam* and *Dialogue in the dark* exhibitions are immersive environments that can be walked through and both elicit a kinaesthetic awareness, i.e. the sense of movement. However they enact different strategies: *On Space Time Foam* aims directly challenges the sense of movement by setting up a walkable surface that, in being almost un-walkable, forces participants to continuously renegotiate their balance.
Dialogue in the dark instead, stems from a transitory privation of one sense –

Fig. 6. 1-2. Dialogue in the Dark, exhibition view. Source: http://www.dialogue-in-the-dark.com/about/exhibition/ [Accessed January 2018].

sight – pushing the remaining senses – including the sense of movement – to activate more in order to deal with an unusual environement.

4.3 Action 2: Sharing

Sharing has become a very popular word today, immediately bringing to mind recent trends in economics or its use in social networks. Even the Oxford Dictionary under the entry for share features a meaning related to the act of posting or reposting a content on social media. Even if *sharing* on Facebook can be considered an instance of communication, sharing eye contact or a conversation face-to-face may communicate something far more in terms of personal stories, emotions, feelings, concerns, fears and experiences.

A short history of the term highlights that

during the nineteenth century the word *sharing* started to assume a communicative meaning, alongside its distributive sense. At first, the metaphor of sharing problems was rooted in the sense of sharing as distribution: *Sharing* the problem meant dividing it, and thus lightening the burden. It was only in the beginning of the twentieth century, however, that the talk itself came to be called sharing (John, 2017).

Sharing identifies one of the acts at the basis of interpersonal relationships. Cultivating meaningful relationships involves being open to the authentic communication of one's inner self with others. *Sharing* asks one to be vulnerable to otherness (Cipolla, 2009).

These two different case studies fall under the umbrella of sharing, as they both focus on exerting the ability to communicate with the other, to be close to him/her, even if he/she is a stranger, in short to relate with him/her.

4.3.1 Portals by Shared Studios

Launched in 2014 by Shared Studios, *Portals* are "gold-painted shipping containers, equipped with audio-visual technology which brings people from connecting locations face-to-face allowing them to converse with others in identical spaces around the world" [Shared Studios Official Website, n.d.].

A Portal is namely a gateway to a neutral, 'supranational', quasi-abstract place where people from distant countries can experience real-time, face-to-face, one-on-one encounters. Currently, *Portals* are in 23 sites all over the world covering critical places, such as Gaza, Kabul or the US-Mexico border, as well as universities, impact hubs, libraries and festivals' locations across the five continents. The main goal of *Portals* is to provide opportunities to encounter and dialogue with people that would likely not otherwise meet (Fig.7).

Portals is a project by Shared Studios, a multidisciplinary art, design and technology collective based in New York, founded by the artist Amar C. Bakshi. In 2014 he started with a "small art experiment between Teheran and New York that would have grown into a global public art initiative" (Bakshi, 2016).

Bakshi's starting point was to acknowledge the importance of having a conversation with a stranger for no particular purpose. He felt that current tools available online performed very well the function of allowing previously impossible connections; however, it was not yet facilitating casual encounters with strangers. The artist sought to create connections that let informal and purposeless conversations between people half a world apart take place, as if they were in the same room. He began to wonder what kind of device could allow such jumping to a distant place, meeting someone and starting to share personal stories just for the sake of doing it.

Bakshi and his first partner, the architect John Farrace, developed the idea deciding to use a standard shipping container as a *Portal*. They chose the containers considering that "they are relatively affordable, easily securable and uniform. They are also symbolically rich: etched in each old container are the markings of its movements across time through ports around the world" (Bakshi,2016).

It seemed the ideal setting for the first *Portal*. Afterwards they decided to paint the container with gold, another highly symbolic choice that made the *Portal* a sort of sacred space. The interior was covered entirely with grey carpet – including the walls and ceiling – and behind the walls was hidden the audio-visual technology enabling a life size, live stream with another *Portal*.

The first paired locations were New York and Tehran in December 2014. The very first visitors to the *Portals* were asked to hold an 8-minute conversation with a stranger in the paired location on the basis of a simple prompt "What would make today a good day for you?". Rapidly what had begun as an art experiment became a successful public event, hosting thousands of people in conversation, music and dance performances and debates. It escalated to the point that Bakshi began to receive requests from other countries to host *Portals* as well, like when a computer professor from the University of Herat, Afghanistan, stongly pushed to permanently install a *Portal* on campus.

In location after location, the project gained wide coverage and its management became an issue. Bakshi bulit a team of partners who started to work in Shared Studios and they transformed the *Portals* project into a worldwide public initiative, providing it with a capillary organization relying on local human resources.

At the present time, each *Portal* hub connects with every other. They are managed by local curators who organize the activity, engage the local

community and provide simultaneous translations and cultural mediation. At the end of each connection participants are asked to share their experience of the *Portal* in a gold book, leaving comments and stories which are usually quite enthusiastic.

Hence, in 23 different places across the world it's likely to find a gold painted shipping container where stepping in and immersing oneself in a smooth grey space watching a live image of another identical space where someone else in a distant location has stepped in and is also ready to start a dialogue. It's worth mentioning here Bakshi's viewpoint about the purpose of his project:

> Dialogues across distance and without pre-determined ends are important for a number of reasons. First, they "create room" and puncture hardened stereotypes of the other. The puncture might not yield harmony or understanding. It may exacerbate disagreement. But at least it adds the vast complexity of a human face. Second, these conversations help us better understand ourselves. It breaks us out of habituated ways of thinking, and enables us to see a greater range of possibility for ourselves. And third, these types of dialogue create the values and narratives of our broader community. When people speak to another without hope of gain or fear of judgment, but to convey their own truth, authentically, and to listen someone else do the same, they create their own, unique meaning together, laying the groundwork for our shared societies (Bakshi, 2016).

4.3.1.2 How Portals enable an empathic experience

Bakshi's words support an interpretation of *Portals* as devices that enable empathic experiences, or alternatively 'empathy infrastructures' (Anzillotti, 2017). Reviewing the elements identified for characterising the empathic experience, it's possible to point out that the *Portals* experience:

• is an embodied relational experience. Despite the encounters of Portals being online connections – not offline – and are in no way the same as a real face-to-face meeting, visitors nonetheless report the feeling of an embodied experience, very close to reality, maybe due to the human-scale screen that transmits a whole bodily presence, with all the gestures and body language;
• requires the presence of at least two people as it is based on conversation between paired Portals;
• is an immediate, first-hand experience, happening there-and-then in each paired Portal;
• involves the somatic perception, for the same reasons that make Portals' experience one of an embodied kind;

• entails a deep connection of self-other: two subjects who meet for the very first time and discover their similarities and differences exiting for a while from their usual rhythm of life;
• enhances the value of otherness in allowing it to emerge from a purposeless conversation among strangers in distant locations;
• is a very demanding experience in terms of active personal engagement. By entering into a Portal one has to be in the right disposition to communicate with a complete stranger, one with a very different identity, viewpoint and opinions. A strong openness is then required to welcome these differences and transform them into a value. In turn a conversation into a Portal heralds itself the value of otherness, as already mentioned above.

Fig. 7. Portals' view at Yale University Art Gallery (on the left), at Harsham Camp, Herbil, Iraq (top right), and in Washington DC (bottom right). Source: https://www.sharedstudios.com/portals/gallery/ [Accessed January 2018].

4.3.2 Eye Contact Experiment by Liberators International

On September 23, 2017, during the UN International Week of Peace almost every country of the world participated in a global initiative supported by Liberators International: the world's biggest *Eye Contact Experiment*. As in the case presented in the previous section, what was initially a small local experiment by a socially concerned artist has become a global public event. In 2017, several cities and towns across the world people shared one minute – or more – eye contact with a stranger.

Liberators International is a social movement founded by Peter Sharp, an Australian artist who is engaged in creating large-scale public events aimed at rediscovering the basic human connection by proposing collective experiences. Sharp developed an online platform – supported by social networks – in order to get people across the world to actively participate in the organization of these events. Sharp calls himself a social artist and he is based in Perth, Australia. From there, he develops projects together with other Liberators, who act as a huge family in which every member has a role in making the projects possible. Their mission is "to involve people in participatory acts of freedom that allow us to see that beyond our differences there is love and humanity" [The Liberators Official Website, n.d]

What sounds like just a playful entertainment for a group of 'hippies' who imagine a future of world peace, is actually a successful format for public events very quickly spreading across the world countries, at which point the Liberators established several local organizations to keep the network of events well connected. Each country's activity is supervised and managed by local coordinators.

What essentially takes place during an *Eye Contact Experiment* is that a group of people gather in a public space and display a signboard with the question: "Where has the human connection gone?" Passers-by are invited to find it sharing one minute of eye contact with a complete stranger. The duration is just a suggestion, as a fundamental part of the experiment is the lack of instructions; the events are let free to flow and develop. The local staff initiates the eye contact session by inviting people to participate in a park, in a square –or in any other public place – and, after a previously planned amount of time – usually 2 or 3 hours, depending on participantion – the event closes. During this time-span participants sit one in front of the other – or stand – trying to establish a connection looking in the eyes of a stranger (Fig.8).

The steps to follow within the experiment are, according to the organisers:

1. Engage: find someone to make eye contact with and introduce yourself;

2. Face: sit or stand in a comfortable position facing each other;
3. Connect: Share eye contact for as long as you are comfortable;
4. Share (optional): share what you felt and what you thought of the experience.

While looking at one another, participants are free to end the contact if they don't feel comfortable. Yet, most of them, getting over the initial moment of awkwardness, start smiling or chatting and sharing personal stories. Someone else, without saying a word begins tearing up, overwhelmed by emotions, or feels the need to hug the other person. In some cases, participants can hardly bear to maintain the eye contact for even one minute and end the session by just shaking the other's hand (See Appendix A). Whatever the individual reaction, the event can be considered successful when people accept to put themselves at risk, allowing their human vulnerability to emerge. In this collective sharing of our basic human condition through a plain and simple action – as eye contact is – resides at the very core of the *Eye Contact Experiment*.

Some local coordinators, members of the global network of *Eye Contact Experiment*, organise weekly eye contact meetings in private spaces with a small number of participants. In Munich, for instance, a group of eye contact 'old hands' meet on a weekly basis to train their ability in establishing deeper and deeper connections, as a kind of exercise for cultivating relational attitudes. Especially given that

> Eye contact is important and valuable precisely because it activates important emotional areas of the brain such as the amygdala and facilitates the release of the hormone oxytocin. When we share eye contact with another, greater levels of oxytocin circulate through our bodies. This hormone facilitates feelings of emotional closeness and connection with others (Lewis, 2017).

4.3.2.1 How Eye Contact Experiment enables an empathic experience

In light of the case presented above, it's possible to check the outlined features of the empathic experience and match them with the experience provided by the *Eye Contact Experiment*, as it:

• is an embodied relational experience;

• requires the presence of at least two people staring in each other's eyes, even though the more people that participates in the experiment the better more it works. According to the organisation, more people amplify the experience for each and everyone involved;

• is an immediate, first-hand experience, happening there-and-then, when you stand in front of another and discover his/her eyes;

• involves the somatic perception. Even if sight has a leading role in this case, actually the whole body is engaged in the arising of feelings, emotions and responses;

• entails a deep connection of self-other. Actually, connection is the experiment's main goal;

• enhances the value of otherness in facilitating a basic contact between strangers eventually resulting in the other's acknowledgement;

• is a very demanding experience in asking one to overcome shyness and embarrassment, and to put one's vulnerability at stake. Moreover it is a cognitive challenge since – as researches demonstrate – "engaging in eye contact increases cognitive load. That is, it consumes the same mental resources that our minds use when we are trying to solve complex tasks or engage in logical reasoning" (Lewis, 2017).

4.3.3 Similarities and differences

Both Portals and *Eye Contact Experiment* are based on a one-on-one relation that engages two complete strangers. They are both conceived to create room for special moments of sharing that are embodied and meaningful. However, Portals is more focused on providing participants with the opportunity of talking to each other. Conversation, dialogue and debate are crucial in Portals, where sharing means telling stories, discussing opinions and viewpoints, establishing a relation based on a verbal exchange. It's no coincidence that the early Portals participants were given a precise prompt to start the conversation inside the container to avoid an eventual embarrassing silence during the connection.

On the other hand, *Eye Contact Experiment* focuses on the very first spark of a relationship, i.e. the discovery of someone else's glance, aiming at transforming that basic exchange in a prolonged exposure to another's gaze. The goal is to make vulnerability emerge and changing it into a value for human connection.

Fig. 8.1-2-3 Images from Eye Contact Experiment events across the world. Source: https://inspiralight.wordpress.com

In *Eye Contact Experiment* sharing is silent, whereas in Portals it is full of voices.

4.4 Action 3: Making together

Indeed, *making* itself requires a very high level of participation, a kind of participation with a tangible output, in addition to engaging an embodied presence and agency. *Making together* goes a step further, as it asks participants not only to put their skills at stake but also to put them towards the service of a common goal. It requires finding ways of weaving together one's different competencies in order to organise the work in a logical manner. *Making together* relies on the abilities of listening and observing one another, within an attitude of respect and trust. *Making together* is itself an ability – Sennet would say a 'craft' (2013) – unfolding both along the process of collaboratively producing something and in the moment right after, when the output is there, in your hands, and you must admit that you could not have made it alone. Thus *making together* is a rehearsal of being together, "a category of experience which expands the capacity to communicate" (Sennet, 2013, p. 29).

Given these premises, the two cases featured in this section are instances of the eventual relationship of experiencing empathy while making something cooperatively.

4.4.1 Rede de elásticos by Lygia Clark (1973)

In 1973 the Brazilian artist Lygia Clark (1920-1988) wrote: "The only thing that matters is the act-in-progress" (Clark, 1998, p. 187) meaning that her artistic practice focused on the process enacted by the public, rather than on the object resulting from the process itself. Clark's artistic path pioneered contemporary participatory art practices and anticipated Relational Aesthetics (Foster, 2004; Bishop, 2012). She is also renown for having abandoned art [see the title of Clark's retrospective at Moma *The abandonment of Art* (2014)] to move to a sort of therapeutic journey held by means of participatory practices involving a collective body. It is worth recalling her view on participation since it emphasises a very particular kind of agency, one which is indeed relational, but mainly somatic and collective. In a letter to her dear friend and fellow artist Hélio Oiticica she states (October 26, 1968): "In all that I do, there really is the necessity of human body, so that it expresses itself or is revealed as in a first [primary]experience" (Figueiredo, 1996, p.61).

By the early 1970s, over Clark's artistic research can be characterised by the series *Corpo Coletivo* (1972-1976) which *Rede de elásticos* (1973) is part of, representing a point of arrival of her transformative journey from artist to proposer: "We are the Proposers: our proposition is the dialogue" (Clark, 1968). *Proposições* are intended literally as proposals offered to the participants

Fig. 9. 1-2-3. Lygia Clark, Rede de élasticos, 1973. Source: http://www.lygiaclark.org.br/associacaoING.asp [Accessed January 2018].

that actively, there and then, transform a proposition into a lived experience. Clark's role is just to provide some materials that participants, throughout a somatic engagement, manipulate together to build a collective propositional space (Schillig, 2015). The reason to discuss one of Clarks' work here is clearly expressed through the following sentiment: "Concerned with expanding the notion of collective production and gestural exchange, these propositions explored the intersections between embodiment, sensory knowledge, and intersubjective sociality" (Carter, 2017).

Before discussing *Rede de élasticos* it's useful to quickly overview the context in which it was born: on the one hand, the Brazilian art of the period – the exterior context; and Clark's artistic journey – interior context – on the other. Of course, exterior and interior context are intertwined and make sense only when considered together.

As already mentioned *Rede de élasticos* is part of a series of *Proposições* – namely the series *Corpo coletivo* – which she experimented with between 1972 and 1976 as part of her teaching activity at the Sorbonne, in Paris. There she had studied between 1950 to 1952 with Fernand Léger, among others, and there she returned in the early 1970s to hold the course *The gesture of communication*, that gave her the opportunity to share part of her research with some thirty students of the Sorbonne. In the time-span between her two Parisian periods – coming and going from France to Brazil, from Paris to Rio de Janeiro – she

moved from monochrome paintings, to neo constructivist sculptures, to the co-foundation of the Neo-Concrete Art Movement (1959). In the 1950s Brazil hosted the early São Paulo Biennials which brought about a renewal of the arts and was highly influenced by the pioneering generation of European abstract art, Bauhaus and some of the Concrete artists, such as Max Bill and Josef Albers. The Neo-Concrete group responded to these European influences by proposing a more human, sensual and organic approach to art, closer to the Brazilian sensibility. For Clark, this approach is achieved only when the viewer becomes a participant, engaging his/her whole body in the co-creative process. As Guy Brett writes "she moved from a visual language in the purest sense to a "language of the body", not performed or spectated but lived by the participant" (1994, p. 58).

With this goal in mind, and after having discovered a keen interest in psychoanalysis, Clark started to propose some *Objetos relacionais* in the 1960's, meant to serve as devices for the exploration of body and consciousness, self-perception and awareness of the other. *Corpo coletivo* followed, as a consequential stage in Clark's work, where the body to be explored and engaged became the one involved in social dynamics, just as a knot of a broader network of relations.

Rede de élasticos is a net, whose knots are woven collaboratively by a group of participants previously provided with basic instructions. The participants' lived experience concerns both the process of construction of the net and its usage. In fact, the rubber bands knotted together are elastic, so that once finished the

Fig. 9. 2

net itself becomes elastic (Fig.9). It moves and changes according to the bodies' movements, though keeping its geometric structure. In the dialectic between geometry (the structure) and random movement (caused by the participants) both the constructivist roots of Clark's art and the will to overcome them through opening the process to users can be identified.

The act of knotting elastic bands engages the group of participants in creating an interdepence between their actions, with the mesh taking on an unstable and never-ending shape. Furthermore, the act of moving collectively requires the network to maintain its knotsto reach the same result, making tangible the participants' interconnection as an individual's movement must correspond to the movement of the others.

Just to conclude with a note, it's no coincidence that the Brazilian Pavilion at EXPO Milan 2015 was built around a huge elastic net which thousands of visitors crossed, reviving the memory of Clark's pioneering participatory practices.

4.4.1.2 How Rede de élasticos enables an empathic experience

The kind of experience elicited by *Rede de élasticos* is in certain aspects very close to that generated by *On Space Time Foam* and can be interpreted as an empathic experience because it

• is an embodied relational experience. Participants are involved together in the making of a 'relational' device that calls for a somatic, collective use;

• requires the presence of at least two people. The original instructions actually suggested the simultaneous participation of at least five individuals. It's clear that *Corpo Coletivo* is itself a statement of a collective experience;

• is an immediate experience, happening there-and-then.;

• involves the somatic perception, mostly in moving the net and responding to its changes;

• entails a deep connection self-other emerging from the act of knotting the elastic bands together;

• enhances the interdependence of people's actions, both in the knotting phase and in the outcomes;

• is a very demanding experience in terms of active personal engagement, just

as *On Space Time Foam* experience, except for the difference that participants' engagement concerns the building process as well, in addition to the final output. Furthermore, Clark intended each of her *Proposições* as a stage in a 'healing' process of art therapy. In this respect the participation is meant to be

Fig. 9. 3

personally engaging.

4.4.2 Green Light by Olafur Eliasson

This last case study has been left till the end because of the particular way in which it bears a vision of art as a driver of social improvement, putting it into practice through a tangible and impactful agency. This does not mean that *Green Light* is more important than the other case studies, rather that, as a solution-oriented project enacting participation to the highest degree, it stands itself as a bridge between art and emerging design practices, at the border of product design (the workshop's task is the assemblage of a lamp to be sold) and service design (the *shared learning program* joined to the workshop is designed as a service for refugees and asylum seekers who have few alternatives of integrating in a community).

Actually, Eliasson's entire artistic production may itself be a case study for the research, since it has always been focused on the interconnection between humans and their perception of the surrounding environment. Eliasson has even developed an important collaboration with a social neuroscientists at the Max Planck Institute in Berlin, Dr. Tania Singer, for a project about empathy and compassion (*Raising compassion*, 2013). For every key concept outlined

above there would be a suitable case within Eliasson's production: for instance *Din Blinde Passager* (2010) for walking through or *Where mind and body swing back and forth* (2013) for sharing. Also well-known projects such as *Little Sun* (2012) or *Ice Watch* (2014) could be considered to address a global empathic experience of interdependence. It's also notable that Henry F. Mallgrave mentions Eliasson's *Weather Project* (2003) as an example of empathic space in his *Architecture and embodiment* (2013).

Nevertheless, in this study *Green Light* was selected over Eliasson's artworks on the basis of its highly participative approach, its social goals and its special way to raise awareness of the crucial role of otherness in human relationships. Eliasson's words themselves supported the selection:

> I am especially interested in models exploring our notions of self and other in relation to how we live in our societies and in the globalized world of today. [...] Art challenges notions of identity, of belonging, and estrangement, and questions borders and the distribution of privilege, to mention only some of the things it is capable of doing. To me, *Green light - An artistic workshop* is about all of the above (Eliasson, 2017, p 13).

The *Green Light* page on Eliasson's website lists many tags that, besides being useful to navigate through his projects according to the issues they concern, immediately draws immediately the focus to *Green Light*'s core concepts: Being with; *Community; Compassion; Democracy; Doing things together; encountering others*.

Eliasson describes his project as follows :

> *Green light* is an act of welcoming, addressed both to those who have fled hardship and instability in their home countries and to the residents of the cities receiving them. Working together in a playful creative process, participants build a modular light and construct a communal environment in which difference is not only accepted but embraced [Eliasson's website, n.d].

The project (Fig.10) results from a collaboration between Eliasson and Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (TBA21), an art foundation historically committed to supporting the arts, especially when they put at stake their transformational force. The pilot project took place from March to July 2016 at TBA21-Augarten (Vienna) developing a replicable structure that was then proposed in other locations and contexts worldwide, modified according to local needs and regulations. Again in 2016 the workshop was presented in the format of smaller seminars led by former participants in Basel, Salzburg and Prague. In spring 2017 *Green Light* moved to the Moody Center for the Arts in

Houston, Texas and finally arrived at the 57th Venice Biennale Viva Arte Viva.

Participants are recruited among refugees and asylum seekers who are living in refugee camps waiting for their application to be evaluated. In this particular circumstance the actualization of the project needs the support of local NGO's to manage the bureaucracy and to provide organisational help, since the migration policies can differ from country to country.

In general, participants number up to forty – in Venice they were eighty, divided in two groups of forty, each one involved in a three-month period during the Biennale. They are mostly from Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, Somalia, and Nigeria.

Green Light is actually two-fold: it is made of a full seven or eight-week workshop and a parallel *shared learning program*.

As Daniela Zyman (2017, p. 68) notes:

Green Light emits two interrelated frequencies. Once frequency, publicly visible, involves the production of *Green Light* lamps under the artistic guidance of Studio Olafur Eliasson. During set hours, *Green lights* were assembled from materials and components that were made available in an ongoing workshop. [...] The other, quieter, more introverted frequency of the project draws from and builds on critical pedagogic ideas, as developed by artists and engaged educators. This informal pedagogic production, called *Green Light – Shared learning*, embraces forms of learning that create multidirectional and collaborative processes of exchange. Engaging educators, artists, language teachers, and cultural practitioners as well as vocational training, shared learning activates the needs, talents, desires and imaginaries of its participants.

The workshop deals with producing the modular *Green Light* lamps, starting from the preparation of the materials to their assemblage. The components are mostly made from sustainable or recycled materials: wooden sticks, connecting pieces 3D printed using recycled plastic bags and LED lights. At the beginning participants are trained to preparing all the components, sanding and painting the sticks, assembling them together with the printed junctions, threading and adjusting the LEDs. All these operations were deemed best executed in pairs, thus facilitating conversation and communication. Considering that participants speak many different languages they need to find alternative ways to effectively communicate with each other, like gestures and body language, sketches and other visual strategies. Visitors, or locals interested in the workshop are invited to join, trained by former participants in an interesting role reversal.

Green Light lamps are not just symbolic objects that shine a light of hope for migrants. They are products destined for the market, designed combining stackable modules based on cube and the golden triangle, functioning on their own or put together to create complex structures. Lamps, produced in unlimited series, are sold both during the workshop and online, contributing to the fundraising campaign that sustains the workshop itself and the *shared learning program*. The proceeds of the sale go to the local NGOs supporting the project which ensure the basic services for participants refugees (food, shelter and public transports).

In conjunction with the workshop the *Shared Learning Program* provides an answear to the forced immobility refugees and asylum seekers experience as they wait for their application to be evaluated. In refugee camps they are denied the opportunity to work as well as access to education. In their countries they might hold a profession, which they they are prevented from practicing until the process of application and evaluation comes to an end. *Green Light – Shared Learning Program* provides the context for weekly theater gatherings, film screenings, seminars and workshops held by visiting artists, daily language classes, vocational training and other activities proposed by participants themselves. They are also offered counselling, legal advice and practical support for daily life.

Besides providing opportunities of working, learning and living together, *Green Light* results in "assembling communities" (Eliasson, 2017, p.13). Through the daily sharing of lunches, classes, activities, and hands-on construction, a sense of we-ness is co-created, beyond the differences of culture and identity. It may be useful to stress the opinion of Andreas Roepstorff about a we-ness built through instances of sharing towards a 'we-mode'. Roepstorff's observations are worth noting:

I was wondering whether this might be one of the metaphors of *Green Light*, as a construction. Is it exploring not so much the feeling of we-ness, of becoming one, but that feeling of modular assembly? Individual modules are being combined with one another to create something that transcends the individual. This motif of greenness, of modules that all look the same but somehow get recombined into something else, is what this afternoon has been about for me. And maybe that is better than being sucked into a we that dissolves each of us (Roepstorff, 2017, p. 28).

4.4.2.1 How Green Light enables an empathic experience

The broad description of *Green Light* highlights its multifaceted features. The work focuses is on the concrete space that the project offers to relate to one another without dissolving into one another. *Green Light* relies on differences

Fig. 10. 1-2-3-4. Olafur Eliasson, Green Light Workshop, 2016-2017. Source: http://greenlightworkshop.org/ [Accessed January 2018].

for a process of mutual learning and acknowledgment.

The "archipelagic" intertwining of individuals demonstrates the potentials of communal production that endorses the idea of the utopian experiment, creating a model situation of difference. Differences as pointers not toward irreconcilability but rather toward what relates us, making our being together both complex and creative (Zyman, 2017, p.69).

Hence, *Green Light* is accountable as an empathic experience, since it

• is an embodied relational experience. Participants are involved in the collaborative process of producing a tangible output. To achieve this goal they are asked to engage in embodied interpersonal interactions;

• requires the presence of at least two people. Actually the project hosts up to forty participants. In any case, in assembling the elements of the lamp participants are often paired together to work on a precise task;

• is an immediate experience, happening there-and-then, an hands-on experience;

• involves the somatic perception, or rather a somatic engagement, since the communication between people of different languages occurs mostly through gestures and body language;

• entails a deep connection of self-other that emerges from the act of assembling the lamp, sharing food, learning from the other and with others;

• enhances the interdependence of people's actions in activating the we-mode mentioned above, according to which we are – metaphorically speaking – modules that, despite looking all the same, once recombined give shape to something else;

• is a very demanding experience in terms of active personal engagement, mostly for refugees and asylum seekers, but also for locals who decide to get involved in the project. Beyond working together – that is already an engaging activity for complete strangers recently arrived in a foreign country after a difficult journey – the *Shared Learning Program* asks participants to actually put at stake their skills, their personal stories, their strenghts, but also their weaknesses.

4.4.3 Similarities and differences

Both *Rede de élasticos* and *Green Light* stem from a vision of art as a concrete space where to rehearse relations and instances of sharing. They are both inherently participatory, and in both cases participation unfolds through producing something tangible together. Nevertheless, the output of *Green Light* Workshop creates a product to be sold. Participants feel the responsibility to complete their task accurately, since their work determines whether the lamp will be sold or not. However, the product will be used and enjoyed outside of the workshop by people who did not take part in its production.

Otherwise, the elastic net of *Rede de élasticos* is made by and for the participants themselves. Process and fruition bind together and both remain in the art context, while *Green Light* aims at producing an object that will live outside of the art context. That changes the attitude participants have as respect to the output of the process and, consequently, toward the process itself.

Green Light involves also the *Shared Learning Program*, which is crucial as well in enabling empathic experiences, as it provides all the conditions for it to happen.

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Chapter 5

The enablers of the empathic experience

In the previous chapter six case studies were presented that draw the attention to situations consistent with the interpretative framework of empathy as an experience. Given that the practices described above enable an empathic experience, the next step of the research is to analyse how they enable such experiences, i.e what are the conditions that allow the experience to occur?

Theses conditions are here referred to as *enablers*, since their role is precisely to enable the experience to happen.

A short review of enabler's etymological origin will help explain the reason why this term fits in this context. Enabler is the corresponding noun of the verb 'to enable' composed by the prefix en- plus able. The prefix en- occurs in forming verbs with the general sense of "to cause (someone or something) to be in" a certain condition. Together with able, hence, it indicates someone or something that puts someone or something in the condition to be able to do something. Therefore, this study adopts the term enabler as it suitably identifies what aspects may elicit, facilitate and support empathy to unfold as an experience. Using a metaphor, an enabler is a sort of switch that may light up the experience. Of course, the enablers don't work as precisely as a switch, i.e. through an on/off mechanism. In fact, the effects they trigger may occur or not and if they do, are uncontrollable. Also, experiences are absolutely subjective. Nevertheless, an enabler can be set up in order to switch on the 'experiential circuit' involved in empathy. The final result depends on whether or not people flip that switch, thus the experience may or may not happen.

Even if empathy does not work in such a mechanic manner, the metaphor is useful to highlight the enablers' role as the one that lays the ground for the experience to unfold, as well as reduce constraints which may block it.

It's worth clarifying that in this context enabler never relates to an individual. In fact, when referred to a person, the word enabler usually takes on a negative connotation, meaning a subject that encourages someone else's dysfunctional behaviour. It is thus important to clarify any possible misunderstandings regarding the use of the term in this study. It is again stressed that the concept of enabler is here applied only to contextual or relational conditions, more or less designed to raise a certain response in the participants.

Enabler is here intended in a sense closer to the one used in business related language, where the term identifies resources and capabilities that contribute to the success of a project or a program [BusinessDictionaryOnline, n.d.].

The study of cases was addressed by detecting the elements responsible for the experience unfolding. Specifically, the main question was: which are the particular conditions that in each case allow the empathic experience to occur?

Therefore, each case was deeply studied towards this aim and the results have been combined in a list of enabling conditions, which afterward became the enablers of the empathic experience.

The first stage of the analysis was to define the enablers and match them to each case. Afterwards a survey was carried out among the cases' participants – where they were available and keen to answer the questionnaire (See Appendix A) – in order to get feedback on the previously established hypothesis. The survey provided some interesting inputs thus contributing to the ultimate definition of the enablers.

As a further assessing tool, a workshop was held in University of Aveiro – during a visiting period abroad (April - October 2017) – focussed on discussing the *enablers* together with other members of the design community and giving them a logical organisation in view of the present dissertation. The workshop's results were reported in a paper presented to the 4D Design Conference in Kaunas, Lithuania (27-30 September 2017) and will be featured in the next chapter in a dedicated section.

The enablers were then distinguished into two different typologies: contextual enablers – i.e. external conditions, and relational enablers – i.e. personal or interpersonal conditions – on the basis of the different elements accounted for as determining the experience.

In the following sections, all the enablers will be presented according to this two-fold organisation. Then, the case studies will be reviewed one by one marking the different enablers they are characterised by.

As will be observed as the research unfolds, only one enabler is never enough to spark the empathic experience. At least two enablers must be simultaneously present. One contextual and one relational enabler are likely to always occur in a pair.

5.1 Contextual enablers

Contextual enabler is intended as an external condition, independent from participants' attendance to the event, installation, workshop or activity. It relates to the general circumstances set up to characterise the space and the time for the event to happen.

Contextual enablers may be space-related, when involving the environment in which the experience takes place, or time-related, when they pertain to the experience's duration and the particular time in which it occurs (See Tab. 1).

Contextual enablers are specifically designed to elicit a determined response from the participants. Nevertheless, their effects on people's perception are unpredictable, depending on each one's individual sensitivity and attitude.

Enablers of the empathic experience	Typology
Art box (CE.1)	contextual
Tricky space (CE.2)	contextual
Bracketing place (CE.3)	contextual
Suspended time (CE.4)	contextual
Body to body (RE.1)	relational
In your shoes (RE.2)	relational
Common goal (RE.3)	relational
Foreign face (RE.4)	relational
In the same boat (RE.5)	relational

Tab. 1. Contextual enablers.

5.1.2 Art box (CE.1)

The awareness of being part of an artistic intervention may transform a common experience into something different. The artistic context is usually perceived as a neutral zone with particular rules exiting from socio-economic constraints. This special contextual condition may be considered itself an enabler of the empathic experience because it contributes to making the participants, more open in welcoming otherness beyond their biases. Outside of the prejudices affecting everyday activities, participants are keen to establish equal interactions.

The enabler 'Art box' indeed covers all the cases, in this sense being a higher-order condition.

5.1.3 Tricky space (CE.2)

The environment in which participants are immersed may be specifically designed to the aim of challenging their perceptual habits. Space may be set up with perceptual tricks that force participants to renegotiate their relation with the surrounding environment, thus enhancing the awareness of the basic connection body-space. In pushing participants to an active spatial perception, rather than passive and unaware, a 'Tricky space' may be accounted for as an experience enabler. Moreover, when a space is hard to walk through, people are likely to seek someone else's help as well as giving their support to the

other. That process contributes to conveying a context of togetherness based on mutual trust.

5.1.4 Bracketing place (CE.3)

Some of the artistic interventions presented by the case studies are set up in public spaces temporarily transformed to the specific aim of the project. These places, more or less designed, behave like parentheses in a written text. A portion of public space is 'put in brackets' to disrupt the ordinary urban landscape. Out of such disruption a spatial pause is determined, inside of which people live an extraordinary experience. A place 'put in brackets' is a neutral concrete space allowing particular ways of being together. It is a place where relations are not yet commodified. As such, it can be an enabler of the empathic experience, setting up rules of interaction outside the usual social constraints.

5.1.5 Suspended time (CE.4)

What has been said for space being 'put in brackets' can be said for time as well. Within the constant flow of commitments and activities of an ordinary day, the room for human relations is usually circumscribed to some more or less formal routines, such as dinner with the family, a coffee with a friend or a business meeting. By creating a fracture in the ordinary unfolding of a typical day, some artistic interventions ask participants to stop and focus on one simple activity at a time, suspending for a moment what they were doing before. This 'Suspended time' allows a moment for undivided attention, an attitude to listen and connect to the other, thus facilitating the empathic experience to happen.

5.2. Relational enablers

By Relational enabler is meant a condition determined by making people involved interact in a particular way. Relational enablers concern the rules of interaction set up in the context of each case (See Tab. 2).

Rules can be established, yet the individual response is absolutely unpredictable. Therefore, the desired interactions may happen or not, or may follow unexpected patterns.

Enablers of the empathic experience	Typology
Art box (CE.1)	contextual
Tricky space (CE.2)	contextual
Bracketing place (CE.3)	contextual
Suspended time (CE.4)	contextual
Body to body (RE.1)	relational
In your shoes (RE.2)	relational
Common goal (RE.3)	relational
Foreign face (RE.4)	relational
In the same boat (RE.5)	relational

Tab. 2. Relational enablers.

5.2.1 Body to body (RE.1)

As explained in Chapter 2, empathy is accounted for in this study as an interpersonal experience, involving always at least two subjects. That chapter also stresses the embodied nature of the empathic experience. Given these assumptions, a crucial enabler for this kind of experience is the embodied presence of – at least – two individuals. 'Body to body' enabler thereby indicates that a basic condition for empathy is the interpersonal encounter. To be more specific, 'Body to body' stands as a pre-condition among the other enablers. It is a *conditio sine qua non*.

5.2.2 In your shoes (RE.2)

The expression 'In your shoes' has been intentionally chosen in order to recall what is generally associated with the act of empathising, i.e. stepping in someon else's shoes. Nevertheless, in this context such an expression designates an enabling condition for empathy, instead of being empathy itself. The emotional response to another's physical or mental state and the intellectual effort to guess how it would be to walk in his/her shoes are here acknowledged as steps towards an authentic empathic experience. In Stein's phenomenological analysis of empathy, projecting yourself in the 'place' of another is precisely a phase of the overall empathic experience. It is a phase of identification between self and other, occurring right before the emerging awareness of being irreducibly different (Meneses, 2011; Boella, 2018).

The enabler 'In your shoes' identifies a situation in which participants are asked to shift their roles with someone else. The reversal of usual roles facilitates a change in one's own perspective, enabling the following steps toward the empathic experience.

5.2.3 Common goal (RE.3)

Some of the art practices selected as case studies are based on a particular activity, i.e the process of collaboratively producing a tangible output. The focus is more on the process, rather than on the product. However, using a concrete objective to achieve together, puts participants in the condition of establishing a dialogue with others, finding ways to communicate with each other and experimenting with horizontal relations based on trust, openness and mutual help. In this sense, a 'Common goal' is an enabler of the empathic experience: It raises the feeling of being all part of a community, made of very different people, in which everyone gives his/her different contribution towards a shared outcome.

5.2.4 Foreign face (RE.4)

Dealing with foreign persons may be very challenging for some people. Despite the increasing multiculturalism of our present society, the fear of strangers remains an important issue, particularly related to mass migrations.

A growing number of cultural initiatives today deal with this issue, many of them designed precisely to make strangers meet and collaborate, in the attempt to dispel prejudices and give migrants the opportunity to integrate in host countries. In this context, the different identity, socio-cultural background, and geographical provenance is considered an enabler of the empathic experience, instead of an hindrance. In fact, art practices based on the premise of pairing migrants and locals or providing the opportunity to connect people from different countries prove particularly successful in enhancing otherness and diversity as valuable assets.

5.2.5 In the same boat (RE.5)

Indeed, sharing a particular circumstance, be it negative or positive, enhances the feeling of togetherness. When we are 'all in the same boat' we are more keen to acknowledge the other as someone very similar to us, tuning with him/her. Some of the interventions featured in this study set this condition as a rule, putting participants in 'the same boat' explicitly, even if on a transitory basis. A shared condition enables the empathic experience in setting the same point of departure for everyone involved.

5.3 Matching enablers with case studies

Enablers	OSTF	DiD	PLS	ECE	RdE	GL
Art box	·	·	·	·	·	·
Tricky space	·	·				
Bracketing space			·	·		·
Suspended time			·	·		
Body to body	·	·	·	·	·	·
In your shoes		·				·
Common goal					·	·
Foreign face				·	·	·
In the same boat	·					·

Table 3: Synopsis of the enablers identified for each case study

With the list of enablers for empathic experience now defined, each case can be reviewed according to these types. The guiding question is: which are the enablers that in each case study contributes to unfolding of the empathic experience? unfolding?

Just a few warnings:

1. As mentioned above, the contextual enabler headed 'Art box' (CE.1) covers all the cases, as they generally belong to the artworld. Therefore, the enabler 'Art box' will not be repeated for each and every case. It shall be considered as the basic enabler that applies to all cases. Within Tables it is marked by ° to distinguish it from the other enablers, which vary from case to case.

2. As regards the enabler headed 'Body to body' (RE.1), it was already stressed that it applies to all cases as well. It has to be acknowledged as a sort of pre-condition for the empathic experience to unfold, since the latter happens only within an encounter between at least two subjects. So, 'Body to body' as well will not be outlined in each case's review, and will be marked with °.

3. Case studies' titles are shortened in brackets in order to fit in the synopsis (See Table 3).

5.3.1 On Space Time Foam (OSTF)

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
°	^			°				^

Tab. 4. The enablers in On Space Time Foam.

Table 4 highlights the enablers characterising the installation by Tomás Saraceno. OSTF is a very 'Tricky space': the transparent floating membranes, attached at 14-22 metres height above the ground, question people's perceptual certainties and force them to continuously renegotiate their equilibrium. At the same time, up on the airy bubbles the distance between self-other is blurred as the challenging environment conveys the same uncertain condition for everyone involved. It combines 'Tricky space' (CE.2) and 'In the same boat' (RE.5) as participants are pushed to find together an embodied strategy for exiting the membranes, playing with their movements and their body's weight. Up there, everyone gives his/her own contribution in a *we-mode* where 'I' and 'Thou' are bound together without ever dissolving into one another. The interrelation of bodies, movements and environment becomes tangible, facilitating an empathic experience which raises awareness of our basic interdependence.

5.3.2 Dialogue in the dark (DiD)

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
°	^			°	^			

Tab. 5. The enablers in Dialogue in the dark.

As in the previous case, DiD also sets up a 'Tricky space' (CE.2) to be navigated. In this particular case, the situation that most questions and challenges participants' habits is the totally darkened environment. Such a strategy inverses the usual roles of the seeing and unseeing for the duration of the journey through the dark exhibition. In fact, people who ordinarily are guided through urban space become guides to those who are temporarily deprived of

the ability to see and need help orientating themselves. A role reversal results in a change of perspective towards the visual impairment, from a dis-ability to a different ability. The right combination of enablers in DiD is 'Tricky space' (CE.2) with 'In your shoes' (RE.2), i.e. a contextual with a relational enabler, opening up the possibility for an empathic experience to unfold along the encounter with a specific kind of diversity.

It could be argued that RE.5 is not listed in DiD even if the dark environment puts all the people within it in the same condition of being unable to see. However, a visually impaired person is already adapted to this condition, while a sighted person is not. As a consequence, the same darkness is perceived as more dark by a seeing person than a blind one. Hence, seeing and unseeing cannot be considered 'in the same boat' in DiD.

5.3.3 Portals (PTS)

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
o		^	^	o			^	

Tab. 6. The enablers in Portals.

In the *Portals* experience the most characterising enabler is the act of stepping into a device for 'spatio-temporal journeys', which sounds like a paradoxical statement. However a *Portal* is in a certain sense a 'space-time capsule', a room separated from the surrounding context in which timezones and geographical distances are abolished. The gold containers, dropped into public spaces, disrupt the ordinary urban setting by raising curiosity and inviting passers-by to step through their doors. In 'putting a space into brackets' (CE.3) *Portals* create neutral zones where purposeless conversations happen. Inside *Portals* people are forced to take a break from their activities and focus only on the person they are (virtually) facing. This 'Suspended time' (CE.4) facilitates a pressure-less conversation and enhance a listening attitude towards the other (Boella, 2018).

Paired locations are very distant from one another, participants are necessarily strangers, living in the most varied socio-cultural circumstances and hold very different identities. In the particular context of *Portals*, encounters between strangers enable an empathic experience (RE.4) by raising a sense of similarity beyond difference and closeness beyond distance.

An annotation must be added in this case study, as regards the enabler 'Body to body' (RE.1). Inside *Portals* encounters are mediated by audio-visual technology. One could argue that a live streaming connection could in

no way provide an encounter equal to an embodied one. Nevertheless, the enabler RE.1 is marked as well. This is because the experience of the other that *Portals* provides is a somatic one, since it involves the whole body-mind during an embodied encounter. In this respect, it's worth mentioning the artist's statement about the difference with traditional online tools for live streaming (Skype for instance): "Instead of talking to a disembodied head in a computer screen, participants spoke to a full, standing human being – fidgeting and swaying – and made direct eye contact, unencumbered by goggles or headphones" (Bakshi, 2016).

5.3.4 Eye Contact Experiment (ECE)

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
o		^	^	o			^	

Tab. 7. The enablers in Eye Contact Experiment.

A typical Eye Contact Experiment (ECE) takes place as a flash mob. A group of people suddenly gathers in a public place, invite passers-by to stop for a while and choose a partner for sharing one minute of eye contact. As a flash mob, an ECE disrupts the normality of the situation by taking over a public space for a temporary suspension of the surrounding activities. ECE takes a public place and 'puts it in brackets' (CE.3); it takes 'public time' and suspends it for a while (CE.4). Participants are asked to focus on a simple yet demanding act: staring into a stranger's eyes (RE.4), silently – at least in the beginning – seeking a lost human connection. In this case participants are not necessarily very different in terms of socio-cultural background, yet they are strangers to each other. In fact, they are casual passers-by who share nothing but the same place in the very same moment. In other words, they are not members of an already existing community or social group, unless being in that particular venue at that particular time.

As in *Portals*, although in a less 'designed' way, the combination of three enablers (CE.3, CE.4, RE.4) contributes to the unfolding of an empathic experience among participants.

In a previous stage, the research also took into consideration another case study – *Looking refugees in the eyes* – very similar to ECE which was excluded precisely because of this existing similarity in its functioning. *Looking refugees in the eyes* is a video experiment by Amnesty International + Al Jazeera, launched in 2016, based as well on sharing a prolonged eye contact. The main difference with ECE is that the experiment was particularly addressed to pairing recently arrived refugees from Syria and Somalia with people from hosting European

countries, such as Belgium, Italy, Germany, Poland and the UK. In this case then, a rule specifically set determines an amplification of the empathic experience. In fact, the difference of participants in terms of geographical, cultural, social provenance was the main focus of the experiment, aimed at enhancing the emotional impact of two foreigner facing one another.

5.3.5 Rede de élasticos (RdE)

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
○				○		^		^

Tab. 8. The enablers in Rede de élasticos.

Participants to the *Rede de élasticos* are given a simple task, i.e. to knot an elastic band in order to braid a net. They sit in circle so to start knotting from different points and, knot after knot, they achieve together the expected outcome: a collaborative network. The elastic mesh is braided for the purpose of then being used together by participants themselves, co-creating a performance made of interconnected bodies moving according to the net's changes. The knotting process brings about the embodied experience of being 'In the same boat' (RE.5), each one pushed at moving by the others' movement.

Both the bulding process, which is focused on a 'Common goal' (RE.3), achieved by means of individual contributions, and the fruition of *Rede de élasticos*, which is co-experienced and co-performed by the same group, enable an empathic experience unfolding seamless along the two phases.

It is also important to stress that the output of the process – i.e. the net – conveys itself a metaphoric meaning of interconnected things or people, thus enhancing a sense of co-created interdependence in the act of knotting the bands.

5.3.6 Green Light (GL)

Like in *Rede de élasticos*, participants to Green Light are given a task, i.e. assembling some materials in order to produce a lamp. To be more specific, participants work in small groups, each one managing a stage of the assembling process, from sanding and painting the wooden sticks, to wiring the electric parts and putting together the connecting pieces. So, the process is actually collaborative, engaging manual skills and communicative abilities as well. Considering that participants speak very different languages – they are refugees and asylum seekers from various countries – they need to find alternative strategies for understanding each other. Participants' 'Common

CE.1	CE.2	CE.3	CE.4	RE.1	RE.2	RE.3	RE.4	RE.5
○		^		○	^	^	^	^

Tab. 9. The enablers in Green Light.

goal' (RE.3) in Green Light is to produce an object that will be brought to market. This circumstance contributes to raise a sense of responsibility toward each one's individual task, and with it the awareness of each action's interdependence.

Green Light 'puts a space in brackets' (CE.3) since it provides a neutral zone for refugees and asylum seekers, out of the refugee camps in which they are forced. Furthermore, *Green Light* is a concrete space where they can work, learn, practice their skills, relate to one another, leaving behind for a period the legal constraints fixed by bureaucracy related to migration policies.

Participants, local volunteers, visitors and teachers (RE.4), are given a particular opportunity to experience positive relationships, based on collaboration and mutual knowledge. In the workshop and mostly in the *Shared Learning Program* a reversal of traditional roles of teacher and student (RE.2) occurs. Embracing critical pedagogical methods, participants are invited to share their skills, propose activities according to their interests and discover their talents and desires. All of the above contributes to the unfolding of an empathic experience for everyone involved. Being all together 'in the same boat'(RE.5), brings an awareness that every single individual matters and the collective growth arises.

5.4 Discussion

By reading the synopsis vertically, the following highlights emerge (Table 10). A first consideration can be made regarding the recurrence of some enablers in each pair of case studies distinguished by the actions of walking through, sharing and *making together*. On Space Time Foam and Dialogue in the Dark belong to the Walk through category. They have in common the enabler 'Tricky space' which concerns a particular design of the environment where participants are immersed, in order to push them to relying on one another in order to overcome a challenging situation.

Portals and *Eye Contact Experiment* share three enablers: they both rely on space and time out of the ordinary ('Bracketing place'; 'Suspended time') and aim to provide opportunities of novel encounters between strangers ('Foreign face'). They belong to the category sharing.

Rede de élasticos and *Green Light* are clustered as *making together*. In fact they share the enabler 'Common goal', i.e. the focus on the actual production of

something tangible along the practice.

Therefore, the three pairs of case studies are characterised by different enablers moving from contextual to relational. In particular, walking through relies mostly on contextual enablers – specifically those concerning space; sharing requires both contextual and relational enablers; while *making together* is more centred on relational enablers. It seems that the more participatory and goal-oriented the practice, the more it is characterised by relational enablers. *Green Light* features all *relational enablers*. This circumstance confirms the above mentioned hypothesis.

Enablers	OSTF	DiD	PLS	ECE	RdE	GL
Art box	•	•	•	•	•	•
Tricky space	•	•				
Bracketing space			•	•		•
Suspended time			•	•		
Body to body	•	•	•	•	•	•
In your shoes		•				•
Common goal					•	•
Foreign face			•	•		•
In the same boat	•					•

Tab. 10. Synopsis of the enablers. Vertical reading. Case studies are clustered according to the three actions walking through, sharing, making together.

Enablers	OSTF	DiD	PLS	ECE	RdE	GL
Art box	•	•	•	•	•	•
Tricky space	•	•				
Bracketing space			•	•		•
Suspended time			•	•		
Body to body	•	•	•	•	•	•
In your shoes		•				•
Common goal					•	•
Foreign face			•	•		•
In the same boat	•					•

Tab. 11. Synopsis of the enablers. Horizontal reading. Most recurring enablers are highlighted.

Otherwise, by reading the table horizontally (Table 11), it can be observed that among contextual enablers – leaving aside 'Art box' and 'Body-to-body', already discussed – 'Bracketing space' is the most recurring (3 cases). Among relational enablers the same can be said for 'Foreign face' (3 cases). Furthermore, the two enablers are present together in the same case studies. All of the above would suggest that

1. providing a concrete space in which to relate to one another outside of social constraints, as in a kind of safe zone where horizontal relations can occur, could be a basic condition for the unfolding of an empathic experience;

2. the encounter between people from different socio-cultural backgrounds, when it takes place in the safe zone outlined above, enhance the opportunity for the empathic experience to happen. The more people are different the more otherness can emerge and may transform into value.

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Chapter 6

From enablers to guidelines for enabling the

empathic experience

From the analysis of the case studies comes an overview of different strategies for making the empathic experience happen. The list of *enablers* found by comparing the various practices featured in each of the case studies revealed the particular conditions which can be set up in order to obtain a specific effect. Following an empirical approach to the research, I used of two methods for assessing the enablers and envisioning their practical application in design contexts. I carried out a survey among participants at the art practices selected as case studies and held a workshop at the University of Aveiro during a six months visiting period. The survey aimed at gaining feedback from participants about their personal experience and verifying their consistency with the research framework. Meanwhile, the workshop facilitated a discussion about enablers and their transformation as a tool for designing empathic experiences. This scenario also provided the opportunity to test the impact and functioning of some enablers within a cooperative situation.

The results of the workshop helped contribute to the definition of a set of guidelines for designing empathic experiences. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the guidelines are intended as a flexible set of suggestions to be adopted in collaborative contexts when participants must further develop their cooperation, open-mindedness and dialogic skills.

The collaborative and dialogic approach emerging in design culture (Manzini, 2016a; Cipolla, 2012), could take advantage from the application of such guidelines as they may contribute to oil the cooperative processes (Sennet, 2013). Having an empathic experience means recognising the other in yourself and yourself in the other, without ever merging one into the other. This encounter of subjects who acknowledge their respective alterity, may lead to improved cooperative skills (Sennet, 2013). Empathic experiences may sustain fair, open and honest conversations. Moreover they may help in managing conflicts so as to transform them into positive and constructive 'agonism' (Mouffe, 2005) and help to account for each one's role in a collective achievement. As reported by the participants of case studies, the experience of empathy is transformative, as it raises awareness of the basic interdependence that binds together individuals and their actions. Being aware of such an interrelation means giving shape to our own identity in relation to the other and being capable of renegotiating our

'borders' according to the circumstances.

Being 'exposed' to empathic experiences means beign exposed to otherness and acknowledging its value. For these reasons, guidelines for designing empathic experiences could be quite relevant to practitioners, in particular when they need to operate collaborative processes.

Before going deep into a description of teh guidelines, the survey and the workshop will be presented as crucial steps in the assessment of the research findings and as a transition towards the development of the guidelines themselves.

6.1 A survey of the case studies' participants

The survey was carried out among participants of the artistic interventions selected as case studies. Through a short questionnaire about their own experience, the survey aimed at verifying its consistency with the author's reading of the case studies. While the selected practices take place in distant locations, the survey was disseminated through social networks and made use of the online tool *Google Forms*. Precisely because of the inclusion of several countries, language has been an issue, as well as internal regulations. In some cases, difficulties wereovercome thanks to local organisers interested in the research and keen to collaborate.

In the case of *Portals*, only that of Gaza responded to the invitation. Participants were barely able to speak and understand English. Despite the Portal curator translating, just four participants filled in the questionnaire before the central organisation suspended the survey. They prevented local curators from dispensing the questionnaire and proposed in turn to consult the visitors' reactions uploaded on the Shared Studio website. Thus, the results of the survey were integrated with the review of recorded reactions.

For *Green Light*, instead, the study took advantage of a direct contact with the TBA21 project manager, Nataša Venturi, who led the Venice Biennale edition. She helped participants fill out in the questionnaire, reduced and made easier based on the average understanding of English and Italian. Questions were then focused on the conditions enabling the empathic experience. For *Green Light* a significant amount of feedback from participants and volunteers was available.

In regards to Dialogue in the dark, just four participants from different exhibitions filled out the survey form and an attempt was made to get in touch with the organisation. They helped in spreading the call by posting and reposting it on their social media channels. This led to the feedback from four different hosting locations across the world, yet by just one visitor each.

The support of local organisers helped also in the case of *Eye Contact*

Experiment. A member of Liberators International operating in Munich, assisted in disseminating the survey among participants at weekly eye contact events and answered some questions within an informal interview. In total, ten participants replied.

On Space Time Foam and *Rede de élasticos* took place in the past, so their attendees are difficult to trace. However, regarding the former, visitors to the installation at Hangar Bicocca in 2012 answered the survey posted on my personal Facebook profile. Five individuals filled in the questionnaire. For further input, an informal interview was conducted with Claudia Melendez, the architect from Saraceno Studio who realized the project in Milan, though the conversation focused mostly on very technical aspects rather than on participants' feedback.

For *Rede de élasticos* an attempt was made to reach participants at Lygia Clark's retrospective held at MOMA (2014), but there were no responses. The case studied therefore was not part of the survey.

All the filled out forms have been included in the Appendix A. Here an overview of the results of the survey is featured in order to draw some useful considerations about the participants' experience.

The questionnaire dispensed to participants was structured in two parts. One concerns general information about participants' profile (age, education, profession, nationality, location of the visit). The other focuses on their experience during the visit/attendance, asking to what extent they considered it to be empathic and what, in their opinion, contributed to making it that way (Fig. 11).

Next Pages:
Fig.11 Fac-simile of the survey Form
distributed on Google Forms.

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1. **1.Where are you from?**
    _____

2. **2.Where are you currently living?**
    _____

3. **3.age**
    _____

4. **4.profession**
    _____

5. **5.educational background**
    _____

6. **6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)**
    _____

7. **7.Do you know what empathy is?**
    Contrassegna solo un ovale.

    ⬭ Yes

    ⬭ No

8. **8.How would you describe empathy**
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

9. **9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?**
Contrassegna solo un ovale.

⚪ fusion

⚪ connection

⚪ Altro: _____

10. **10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. **11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?**
Contrassegna solo un ovale.

⚪ Yes

⚪ No

12. **12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines**

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. **13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. **14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Powered by

Google Forms

The boxes below summarise some highlights from the survey, case by case.

What immediately stands out is that the most responders stated that they had an empathic experience during their participation with the artistic intervention, characterised by a deep connection with the others involved. A connection that allowed them to feel with others during the experience.

It is also worth noting that, even though coming from diverse countries and cultures, participants claimed to understand empathy explaining it in similar words, generally stressing its nature of a lived experience involving an interpersonal encounter.

Regarding the enabling conditions considered necessary by participants for the experience's unfolding, it is easy to notice that they almost overlap with the enablers, even when expressed with other words.

The collected information confirmed my reading of the case studies, strengthening the hypothesis that some conditions enable more than others the empathic experience, and that they are in one way or another 'designable'.

This validation, together with the assessment provided by the workshop, lays the groundwork for the development of the guidelines.

Box 1. Eye Contact Experiment
10 replies

– Most from Germany, all aged 20-30.

– General understanding of the concept of empathy.

– Most considered empathy as a connection rather than a fusion self-other.

– All declare to have had an empathic experience during the Eye Contact Experiment.

– Enabling conditions:
 silence
 time
 undivided attention

Box 2. Portals
4 replies

– All from Gaza, aged 19-34.

– General understanding of the concept of empathy.

– Uncertain answers about whether empathy is a connection or a fusion of self-other.

– 50% underwent an empathic experience during Portals, while 50% did not.

– Enabling conditions:
 encountering new people
 meet different cultures

Box 3. Green Light
23 replies. Modified questionnaire, focused only on enabling conditions.

– Migrants from North Africa and Middle East; volunteers from Italy.

– 100% declared having had an empathic experience during Green Light.

– Enabling conditions:
 friendly environment
 similar past experiences
 freedom in the work place
 sharing
 working, talking, having lunch, dancing all together
 feeling of equality
 telling and listening stories
 comparing oneself with others
 encounters with new faces
 climate of mutual respect
 acknowledging the other as valuable resource

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

Box 4. Dialogue in the Dark
4 replies

– From Lisbon, Delhi, Kuala Lumpur, Hyderabad; various ages.

– General understanding of the concept of empathy.

– Most think about empathy as a connection rather than a fusion self-other.

– All declared having had an empathic experience during Dialogue in the Dark.
   "It was an experience of being-near, the main reference was the other".

– Enabling conditions:
   being in the same conditions
   blackness

</div>

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Box 5. On Space Time Foam
5 replies

– All from Italy, aged 29-50.

– General understanding of the concept of empathy.

– 3 considered empathy as a connection of self-other; 2 as a blend of connection/fusion.

– 60% underwent an empathic experience during On Space Time Foam; 40% did not.

– Enabling conditions:
   individual and collective displacement
   transparency that allowed the reciprocal observation
   simultaneous presence of many people

</div>

6.2 Design for empathy. A workshop*

Once the first-hand information about participants' experiences was gathered, the next step was to share the research findings with other design researchers. A a visiting PhD researcher at Universidade de Aveiro in the ID+/DESIS Lab (from April to October 2017), I held the workshop *Design for Empathy* (4 July 2017) addressed at assessing and discussing the enablers – at the time still under development – and their possible application in design practice.

Besides providing context for debate my research methodology and its partial findings, the workshop also offered the opportunity for testing the impact of some strategies for enhancing participants' empathic attitude within a cooperative situation.

5 PhD candidates in Design participated in the workshop. They were selected considering their engagement in relevant research areas, such as collaborative practices, design for social innovation and experience design.

In preparing the workshop I considered Johnston's (2005) suggestion of dividing the workshop in three sequences, starting with a warm-up, moving to a main section and ending with feedback.

> The three parts give a basic frame to set the timeline for actions, moving from transforming participants' thoughts into the topic and towards an immersion in own experiences, followed by a creative setting, to insight gen- eration and end with reflection on what was learned (Holmild et al., 2015).

Hence, the workshop was run according to the following agenda:
· short presentation of the workshop and of the framing of the research;
· warm up with 2 minutes of eye contact between participants;
· introduction of the theoretical framework, main objectives and tasks assigned;
· presentation of the case studies and of the enablers;
· group work;
· discussion.
·

After a short introduction about my educational background and current research interests, an overview workshop was given to participants.

In order to introduce the issue of empathy and to enhance openness and self-disclosure among participants a session of direct eye contact was set up. The group sat in chairs facing other participants without talking, just staring in each

other's eyes for 2 minutes trying to make connections.

The eye contact session was proposed in order to test its effect on participants' closeness at the beginning of a collaborative process. It was an experiment drawn from one of the case studies, aiming at assessing whether *Eye Contact Experiment*'s strategy could be suitable as well within the context of a design workshop.

In fact, the eye contact session was too short and involved too few people. To some extent the experiment failed, also because the time and place were not right, although confirming better contextual conditions should have been staged. In this perspective, this test proved useful to further defining the enablers and, consequently, the guidelines.After the warm up phase I stressed the theoretical framework of the workshop and the key points to keep in mind during the workshop.

Given that participants were all designers by education my concern was to clearly differentiate the varying approaching to the issue of empathy in design.

To this aim, the meaning given to the expression 'empathic experience' was clarified and why it does not completely overlap with empathy. I then stated the intention to shift from design with empathy to design for empathy, i.e designing the conditions to allow empathic experiences to happen.

After these basic statements, tasks were assigned to the participants.

The first task was the assessment of the enablers I identified in the case studies. The group was asked to reflect upon the enablers, their relevance to the case studies and possible adjustments and/or improvements. To this aim, the case studies were presented in detail together with the related enablers. At that time, the research was still ongoing; hence, both the study of the cases and the defining of the enablers were under development (Fig. 12).

In general, the enablers were confirmed or slightly modified. Nevertheless, the discussion following the first task provided interesting suggestions about developing a kind of list of ingredients for designing the empathic experience. For a recipe to be successful ingredients should be measured and added in a particular combination. Similarly, participants suggested an amplification or reduction in the dosage of some enablers in order to reach a desired effect. This interesting observation specifically concerned the enablers involving context setting and duration. Workshop participants proposed to set up a −/+ scale for some enablers, according to the sought impact. For instance, as demonstrated by the eye contact session, the duration of an activity affects the resulting empathic experience, when combined with other enablers. The longer is the immersion in a determined situation the more intense the empathic experience may be – though this is not a fixed rule. Similarly, the more challenging the environment is to our senses, the more intense may be

Fig. 12. Images from Design for empathy. A workshop, 4 July 2017, ID+/Desis Lab, Universidade de Aveiro.

the resulting empathy. Of course, these are just probable effects and nearly unpredictable. Nevertheless, all the propositions collected along the discussion contributed to the guidelines' development.

After the first task the group shifted to the second where they considered two different perspectives about the empathic experience in design and reflect upon each one.

A. enabling the empathic experience as a *means* to achieve some particular outcome in the design process.

B. enabling the empathic experience as a *result* of the design process.

In respect to A, participants needed to make out some proposals about the particular phase of a design process that would eventually call upon the empathic experience, and to what aim.

In terms of B, they had to discuss how the empathic experience could materialise as an outcome of a design process and in what particular area of design.

Results:

A. The group proposed that enabling the empathic experience could be a preparatory phase of collaborative design processes, aimed at connecting participating subjects, involving stakeholders, establishing a positive, open and trusting attitude among them to facilitate dialogue and enhance cooperative skills.

Besides the preparatory phase – they argued – it could be useful to nurture and sustain the empathic experience during the process itself, to keep it at the right

Fig. 13. The place of empathy in empathic design (on the left): Discover phase of the Double Diamond model; and in collaborative processes (on the right): Discover and Develop phase).

level up till the end of the process. Participants worked on a *Double Diamond* model, marking the divergent phases of a process as the most appropriate for making participants experience empathy. Unlike in Empathic design, where empathy is placed at the fuzzy front end of the design process, they argued that in both the Discover and Develop phases empathy may help in conveying a fair and equal communication among participants, facilitating cooperation and sharing (Fig 13.).

B. The group agreed that the empathic experience can be as well a design intent. In this case the experience of empathy is accounted for by its potential to transform and improve social relations, collaborative skills and the ability to share. As such, designing empathic experiences could be relevant for design approaches related to social innovation and sustainability.

According to workshop participants, the actualisation of an empathic experience may be a designed 'situation'. As an example they proposed the *Bonding Buffet Christmas Table* (Fig.14) installed in 2016 by KLM at Amsterdam Airport Schipol with the support of the creative agency DDB & Tribal Amsterdam. Airports are impersonal places where people mind their own business, chatting on social networks or working on laptops. This sense of displacement may be felt especially at Christmas time, typically a time for being together and sharing. The *Bonding Buffet* is a table prepared for twenty, lifted up about 5 metres high so that it could not be reached. Around the table, twenty stools were equipped with a pressure sensor that lowers the table a little each time a traveller sits down on a stool. Only when all the twenty diners sat together could the Christmas dinner be enjoyed.

Of course, the *Bonding Buffet* is most of all a smart advertisement strategy, nevertheless it succeeds in drawing attention to the collaborative attitude required to achieve a goal, in this case sharing a dinner together with foreign travellers.

6.3 Observations

The survey and the workshop have been two valid empirical methods to collect data and assess the research hypothesis. They both provided feedback and different points of view on the main research questions, i.e. is it possible to design the empathic experience? How?

They represented a step forward towards the development of the guidelines. Nevertheless, both the survey and the workshop demonstrated their limits as research methods when investigating and reflecting upon experiences.

The main limit of the survey was the fact that questioning participants about their experience does not actually provide access to their specific individual
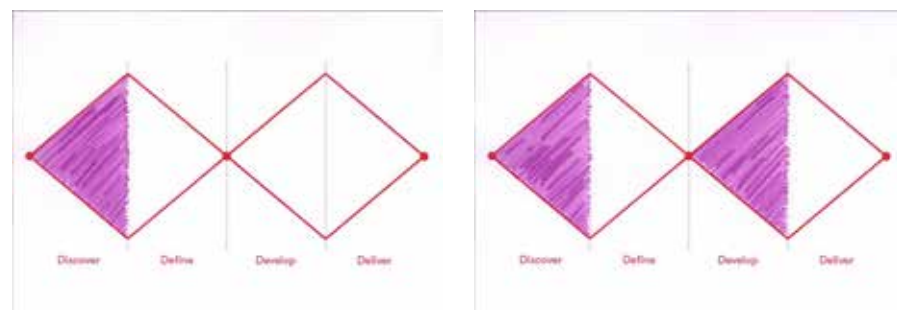
Fig. 14. Bonding Buffet Christmas Table installed at Amsterdam Airport Schipol on 25 December 2016. Project by KLM and DDB & Tribal, Amsterdam. Source: http://www.ddbgroup.nl/en/work/13/klm-royal-dutch-airlines/233/bonding-buffet [Accessed January 2018].

experience. What people can express through words is just a part of an experience, i.e. the explicit part (Sanders & Dandavate, 1999) of what people want us to hear. For this reason the survey's results can be considered only as supporting data to a broader argumenta, and not as evidence in and of itself.

Concerning the workshop, the main difficulty has been for participants to drift apart from the framework of traditional empathic design and its take on empathy as a skill. For the participants of the workshop a difficult step was shifting understanding empathy as an interpersonal experience involving subjects who encounter each other and not concerning only the designer him/herself alone in the studio. Additionally, the presentation of the case studies took a lot of time, leaving less room for discussion. This may have been overcome by providing participants with a slideshow about the case studies and the enablers prior to the workshop so that they could have had time to reflect upon them in more depth.

Despite these shortcomings, both the survey and the workshop offered insights and suggestions useful to the overall research and primarily to the guidelines' development.

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Chapter 7

Guidelines for designing the empathic experience

> Cooperation oils the machinery of getting things done, and sharing with others can make up for what we may individually lack. Cooperation is embedded in our genes, but cannot remain stuck in routine behaviour; it needs to be developed and deepened (Sennet, 2013, p. ix).

Richard Sennet's main thesis of *Together* posits that though we are naturally equipped with cooperation skills which allow us to be in relation with one another, cooperation may occur at different levels of engagement. Adult, developed, mature, cooperation can be incredibly demanding, especially when dealing with people unlike ourselves. This is particularly true in times that, according to Sennet, *de-skill* people at cooperation by weakening curiosity of others and instead emphasising anxiety of differences.

Sennet's proposal is to consider cooperation as a craft – a *techné*, to put it in Aristotelian terms – which requires skills earned and refined by rehearsing them over and over. Taking cooperation as a synonym of collaboration – or at least one of its derivations – Sennet's argument may be useful to introduce the proposed guidelines for designing the empathic experience, addressed to support collaborative processes.

An interesting insight into Sennet's take is the notion of 'dialogic skills' as the foundation of cooperation. 'Dialogic', unlike 'dialectic', concerns "a discussion which does not resolve itself by finding common ground. Though no shared agreements may be reached, through the process of exchange people may become aware of their own views and expand their understanding of one another" (p. 19). He argues that empathy relates to dialogic exchanges, since it – differently from sympathy in that conveys identification – opens up to differences and discloses curiosity about people for who they are, on their own terms, forcing us to focus beyond ourselves. Hence, empathy supports dialogic skills by bringing about mutual knowledge and enabling cooperation. This doesn't mean that experiencing empathy necessarily leads to a cooperative attitude, rather that it contributes to making the other break into one's own personal horizon by asking to reconsider what may be a way to share the world with him/her. The empathic experience transforms self-awareness in relation to the other's existence as another self, whom by dealing with makes sense of the context in which they are immersed together.

Sennet devotes many pages to sharing his personal experience as a musician and draws a brilliant analogy between rehearsing in performative arts and dialogical conversations as a way to lay the groundwork for cooperation. He observes that in rehearsing for professional performances, listening skills and responsiveness to others are required. He claims that "In the performing arts, the sheer need of others can often prove a shock!" (p.14). A 'played conversation' of a rehearsing ensemble is based on the musicians' capacity to listen to others' attitudes and negotiate their own, in the way in which they all sound well, individually and collectively all together at one time. In other words, each instrument, and the way it is played, should have its place within a larger whole, without ever submerging in it. There's a difference, Sennet notes, between practising and rehearsing: "the one is a solitary experience, the other is collective" (p.15). In a sense, the same distinction lies between the account of empathy as a skill and empathy as an experience. Empathy as a skill is a solitary practice; whereas the empathic experience is a relational one.

Given that the act of rehearsing is a model of cooperation, where sharpened interaction is required to exchange mutual benefits, I argue that designing empathic experiences provides opportunities for rehearsing our relational skills. Being exposed to others in situations specifically set up to make us aware of otherness and its value, means rehearsing our sociability. Once we have been exposed to otherness, we must admit that we need it.

In this perspective, given that some conditions – the *enablers* – facilitate more than others a kind of interpersonal encounter embedded within the empathic experience, there may be a step forward in transforming the results of the case studies' analysis in a set of guidelines for designing the empathic experience. In so doing, the study of cases drawn from the arts becomes relevant to design practices focused on collaborative processes.

Rehearsing involves rituals, gestures and routines for warming up: acts and movements which do not require particular attention because they have been earned. Still, in one way or another, they contribute to improvements, refinements and connections during their execution. Following up with the metaphor of rehearsing, the guidelines are intended to design the tacit ground rules that may support and sustain collaboration, i.e. contextual conditions that, once set up, provide the background to free interactions channeling them towards cooperative relationships, based on dialogic exchanges.

7.1 Overview of the guidelines

Seven guidelines result from the research of the case studies and concern different aspects of setting the context of collaborative processes and nurturing dialogic exchanges throughout its unfolding.

Figure 15 shows an overview of all the guidelines with a very short explanation.

Then, the guidelines are presented one by one, specifying *whic* aspects they affect, and *how* and *why* they contribute to enabling empathic experiences.

Fig.15. Overview of the guidelines for designing the empathic experience.

Safe zone
Select a location that conveys neutrality, safeness and freedom of thought

Never mind the clock
Plan a schedule that allows participants to comfortably focus on the proposed activity while leaving room to free and pressure-less conversation.

Challenging environment
Set up an environment that questions people's perceptual habits and engage them bodily.

Multisubjectivity
Carefully establish the number of people involved and their clustering. From *1:1* to *many : many* the resulting experience may change.

Embracing diversity
Select participants or organize groups according to their differences, instead of similarities. Differences of socio-cultural backgrounds may brin 'agonism' in the process.

Interdependence
Set a common goal that should be achieved together. Dealing with tasks connected one to the other raises awareness of the interdependence of actions.

Role change
Find strategies for embodied bidirectional reversal of roles. I take your rol and you take mine, the change involves both of us.

Safe zone

WHAT Selection of the venue and context setting therein.

HOW Select a location that conveys neutrality and safeness, a place where freedom of expression is granted and which ensures openness and protection from outside constraints.

WHY A 'Safe zone' facilitates dialogic exchanges and discussion free from socio-cultural constraints. An open context provides a concrete space for being together, with each one in his/her own individuality.

Never mind the clock

WHAT Time setting and scheduling

HOW Plan a schedule that allows participants to comfortably focus the attention on the proposed activity. Equally, let free and unpressured conversations to unfold. Convey the feeling that time rules are different from ordinary.

WHY Giving participants the opportunity of experimenting with a relational situation out of usual time constraints, may facilitate the empathic experience unfolding.

Challenging Environment

WHAT Warming up and/or nurturing a cooperative attitude

HOW Set up a special experiential environment that questions people's perceptual habits, pushing them to engage bodily and cooperatively to overcome an uncertain situation.

WHY 'Challenging environments' may enhance perception, raising awareness of the basic interconnection between body, movement and space, as well as between people immersed in it.

Multi-subjectivity

WHAT Rule of interaction: number of participants

HOW Establish the number of participants according to the goal you are addressing. Encounters may be on a one-on-one basis or many-to-many, changing the resulting experience from individual to collective.

WHY Empathy occurs along an encounter between at least two subjects, and it is always experienced by an individual. However, its impact can be amplified when it occurs to several people simultaneously.

Fig. 16.   Fig. 17.   Fig. 18.   Fig. 19.

7.1.1 'Safe zone'

'Safe zone' (Fig. 16) concerns the selection of the venue and the context set up therein. It could be adopted before starting a collaborative practice, for instance a co-design session, or a design workshop.

Selecting a location that conveys neutrality and safeness (e.g. a museum, or a cultural institution), a non-politicised place where freedom of expression is granted which ensures openness and protection from outside constraints.

The selection of place is crucial in providing the right space for relating to one another without dissolving into one another. An open context provides a concrete space for being together, with each one in his/her own individuality. A 'Safe zone' facilitates dialogic exchanges and discussions free from socio-cultural constraints.

Researches show that space can be empathic itself, when designed in a way that affects the experience of being immersed inside it (Mallgrave, 2013).

7.1.2 'Never mind the clock'

'Never mind the clock' (Fig. 17) concerns the time setting of a collaborative design activity, be it a co-design session or a workshop. A schedule should be set up before starting the activity in order for it to be well organised.

A scheduled should be planned that allows participants to comfortably focus their attention on the proposed activity, taking into consideration the physiological resistance to giving their undivided attention. On the other hand, it should also allow free and unpressured conversation to unfold. Even when limitations to disengaged conversations are necessary, there should be an attempt to convey the feeling that in that context time rules are different from the ordinary.

Conversations free from pressures are rare moments in ordinary schedules, still they lay the groundwork for interpersonal relationships. Fast connections and social relationships enabled by digital technologies may be obstacles to empathy (Boella, 2018). Giving participants the opportunity to experiment with

Embracing diversity

WHAT Selection and/or clustering of participants

HOW Select participants according to differences, instead of similarities. Cluster together people who previously did not know each other.

WHY The sense of belonging to a group may hinder the empathic experience conveying an inside or outside division. Commonalities should be uncovered along the process by means of dialogic exchanges, instead of being immediately visible.

Inter-dependence

WHAT Organisation of tasks and activities

HOW Set a common goal to be achieved together explaining the need of each one's contribution for its accomplishment. Participants should feel themselves as knots within the same net.

WHY Dealing with tasks that are connected and consistent to one another may raise awareness of the interdependence of each individidual action.

Fig. 20.

Fig. 21.

Role change

WHAT Rule of interaction within participants

HOW Find strategies for embodied bidirectional reversal of roles .The notion of role may be intended as concerning identity, personal life conditions, provenance, socio-cultural background, and others.

WHY 'Role change' contributes to rehearsing an open mindset. You take on my role, I take on yours, the change involves both of us . 'Role change' is the transformational experience itself, and its potential to disclose the other's world to you and vice versa.

Fig. 22.

a relational situation far removed from the usual time constraints may facilitate the unfolding of the empathic experience.

7.1.3 'Challenging environment'

Setting up a 'Challenging environment' (Fig. 18) could be a strategy to warm up participants to a collaborative activity as well as to nurture their cooperative attitude throughout the process itself.

Set up as a special experiential environment that questions people's perceptual habits, the 'challenging environment' pushes participants to engage bodily and cooperatively to overcome an uncertain situation. Examples can include displacing conditions that affect the equilibrium, or one of the senses, so that you have to rely on mutual help from someone else to compensate for your sensorial gap. Space can be challenging at various degrees. The more it provides a displacing experience the more it supports the empathic experience. In one sense, adopting this guideline requires adjusting it according to the desired impact. Indeed, a 'challenging environment' alone is not a sufficient

condition to enable empathy. Still, when this condition is lived collectively in an embodied way, it may strongly affect an empathic attitude.

'Challenging environments' may enhance perception raising awareness of the basic interconnection between body, movement and space as well as between people immersed in it. When you are engaged somatically – with your whole body and mind – it is almost impossible not to be affected by other bodies. In uncertain perceptive situations, a mutual exchange between the bodies involved is established creating a naturally occurring interdependence. The account of empathy drawn from phenomenology is based on the main assumption that we are living bodies and our way of inhabiting and acknowledging the world – along with the other subjects within it – is primarily embodied (Merleau-Ponty, 1945).

7.1.4 'Multisubjectivity'

'Multisubjectivity' (Fig. 19) concerns the number of people involved in a collaborative process. It concerns a rule of interaction that may affect both the

process and the outcome

It establishes the number of participants according to the kind of experience being addressed. The exchange may be a on a one-on-one basis or alternatively a large group interacting together. This may affect the resulting experience, from individual to collective. The number of participants must be adjusted the number according to the goal.

An individual empathic experience may differ from a collective one. Empathy occurs along an encounter between at least two subjects, and it is always experienced by an individual. However, it can be amplified when it occurs to several people simultaneously. Adjusting the number of participants bearing this in mind could help in fine-tuning the degree of the empathic experience.

7.1.5 'Embracing diversity'

This guideline (Fig. 20) addresses the selection phase of participants of collaborative practices and their clustering.

The selection of participants or organising working groups according to their differences, instead of similarities. Trying to make people work together who previously did not know each other and do not have much in common can be difficult. Commonalities should be uncovered during the process by means of dialogic exchanges, instead of being suddenly revealed. The sense of belonging to a group may hinder the empathic experience conveying an inside or outside division. Differences can be intended in terms of socio-cultural backgrounds, provenance or identity. The blending of participants' identities may be adjusted according to the aim being addressed,

Cooperating with someone unlike ourselves may be very demanding and challenging. Still, it is also rewarding, making the interaction meaningful and pushing us to put our dialogic skills at stake the most. The more diverse the people involved, the more 'agonism' can unfold and drive the experience toward a reciprocal acknowledgment. Inclusion is thus ensured and with it a rich landscape of humanity.

7.1.6 'Interdependence'

This guideline (Fig. 21) concerns the planning of tasks and activities in collaborative practices, and the uncovering of their mutual relations.

Setting a common goal to be achieved together explains the sheer need of each one's contribution in its accomplishment. It gives a different assignment to each participant, or group of participants, taking care to highlight the connections between the tasks and their roles in achieving the ultimate goal. Participants should feel themselves as knots within the same net.

Dealing with tasks that are connected and consistent to one another may raise awareness of the interdependence underpinning each individual action. Actually, empathic experiences are at one time both the cause and effect of this sense of interconnection.

7.1.7 'Role change'

During a collaborative process a phase may be devoted to reversing usual roles (Fig. 22) in order to nurture the opportunities for empathic experiences to happen.

Finding strategies for embodied bidirectional reversal of roles. In traditional role playing techniques, the change is unidirectional, in the sense that I pretend to be someone else, for instance a new mother, or an old man with mobility problems, and not viceversa. 'Role change' involves the relational dynamics between participants – not the designer/users – and concerns an actual reversal, for I take your role and you take mine. The notion of role may be intended as concerning identity, personal life conditions, provenance, socio-cultural background and others.

In Edith Stein's view, a first step of the empathic experience is to directly perceive the embodied, embedded experience of another (Meneses, 2011), 'lived' in its wholeness. Getting closer to the other's perspective is crucial for gaining awareness of his/her irreducible otherness, that emerges throughout the unfolding of the experience. Reversing usual roles may be a trigger of this first and important start of the whole empathic experience. Moreover a 'role change' contributes to rehearsing openness with others, since while you take on their role, they take yours, in an exchange that involves you both.

The main goal of 'role change' is the tranformational experience itself, and its potential to disclose the other's world to you and viceversa.

7.2 Discussion

The guidelines are meant to provide a flexible design tool, a set of suggestions about what may activate the kind of experience here named as empathic. The

empathic experience may be sought as a result per se or as a stepping stone for launching and supporting collaborative processes. When intended from this perspective, the guidelines for designing empathic experiences can be considered as a meta-design approach, addressed to setting up the context for collaborative practices and sustaining cooperation throughout the process (Menichinelli & Valsecchi, 2016). Returning to Giaccardi (2005. p. 343) "metadesign deals with the creation of context rather than content". Fischer and Sharff (2000) also state that "creating the technical and social conditions for broad participation in design activities is as important as creating the artifact itself". Hence, 'designing the design process' results an important aspect of the process's unfolding and attainment.

Empathy needs a stage, a designed place and a choreography, real and symbolic at the same time (Boella, 2018, p.125). The guidelines address the setting up of the scene and managing a possible choreography of the actors on stage.

Assuming that guidelines are just suggestions and could be adopted in full or in part, according to the desired effect and the actual need to trigger cooperation skills, a general indication is to combine them in order to achieve meaningful experiences. In fact, setting the context alone may not be enough to activate particular relational dynamics. The context is the stage on which the empathic experience may unfold, still it requires actors to perform an action as – going back to Sennet's metaphor – musicians to rehearse a piece of music. Therefore, it is crucial to also set some rules of interaction inside the prepared context. To use Andrew Roepstorff's words, "In setting up spaces, you also set up rules of interaction, ways of engaging one another" (2017, p. 28).

By definition a set of guidelines identifies a "recommended practice that allows some discretion or leeway in its interpretation, implementation, or use" [OnlineBusinessDictionary, n.d.].

Hence, following guidelines is never mandatory as they are "meant to *guide*, not to *restrict*" (Klionsky, 2016, p. 734). They instead draw a possible path, leaving room for individual interpretation. In this study, the choice to develop guidelines instead of a typical toolkit or a strict methodology has been determined by the admission that, dealing with such a delicate issue as human relationships requires respectful and 'light' interventions.

It is no coincidence that guidelines are particularly used in medical contexts. Healthcare workers have to deal with bodily and mental aspects of patients and their parents; they have to take into consideration hygiene issues, ethical codes and human comprehension. To do this, they need on one side a general guidance concerning ground rules and, on the other, adaptability to particular cases.

The set of guidelines prompted by this study are intended to operate within this perspective of flexibility. As a consequence of this flexibility and of the sensitive aspects the guidelines are addressed to – i.e. human experiences and relationships – making use of them requires the acceptance of the essential unpredictability of the effect they may arise. As already stressed, experiences and relationships cannot be designed, only enabled. They may occur in a desired manner, in another, or not occur at all, despite the effort to design the best possible enabling conditions.

While an unstable and uncertain tool, guidelines ensure the replicability of processes, giving them the opportunity to be improved and fine-tuned according to the need.

Further research indeed might expand the number of guidelines and refine them. This study has to be considered as a starting point in the exploration of 'practices of empathy' (Boella, 2018), and the guidelines are just one possible actualisation. Of course, they are questionable and may benefit from further discussion; still, they represent an endeavour to bring the complexity of the empathic experience to the field of design, in order to support meaningful and constructive relationships. The present research and its output – i.e the guidelines – feature an experimental approach to the issue of designing for and within collaborative contexts by exploring the contributions of cross-sectoral investigation between art and design.

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Conclusions

The core of this thesis argues that emerging collaborative approaches to design may benefit from a rethinking of the traditional consideration of empathy as a designer's skill aimed at understanding users' needs. In managing collaborative processes, the designer's ability to step into the other's shoes is no longer enough. Empathy should be introduced to participants who are asked to cooperate towards a common goal.

To attain this shift of focus from designer to participants, a different consideration of the nature of empathy is required. In fact, if we take empathy as an embodied experience that unfolds within interpersonal encounters, we can begin to consider how to enable such experiences not only for designers but also for participants. By setting up favourable contexts for relations to develop into empathic experiences, we also lay the basis for dialogic exchanges and cooperation, crucial to collaborative practices.

Empathy introduces the other into one's own personal horizon and the recognition of his/her irreducible diversity. Following this, enabling empathy means opening spaces for 'diversities' to be revealed and to come to terms with.

The aim of this study was to build a theoretical framework for introducing a different perspective of empathy into design practices, one more suitable to emerging collaborative approaches. Such a framework was drawn from a phenomenological account of empathy that focuses on its nature as an interpersonal experience. Empathy may unfold within relational contexts, requiring facilitation and support. It needs circumstances which do not prevent it from occurring when one faces another person.

The output of the study is a set of guidelines to assist in the design of the empathic experience, a practical tool to help set up the context of collaborative processes in order to foster them.

To develop these guidelines the research journey combined theoretical inquiry and an experimental approach. Methodologically, I first completed desk research before moving to field research and ultimately to action research. To be more specific, most of the study relied on secondary sources: the theoretical framework on empathic experiences built upon relevant existing studies by acknowledged scholars. My task was that of collecting and interpreting sources in an effort to elaborate a personal viewpoint. The same is valid for the literature about empathy in design. Much has been written about this issue and I selected papers, books and articles which might draw as complete a picture as possible of the relation between empathy and design. Then, I pinpointed some

areas that may be affected by this study, highlighting some studies currently questioning the traditional role of empathy in design.

The main framework of this study is the opportunity to rethink the role of the arts in design culture. I focused on empathy as one possible common ground between art and design and the thesis has bridged the two fields by systematising some suggestions drawn from art practices and translating them into design guidelines. To do this, I selected some case studies selecting from among participatory and collaborative practices, in the belief that they share touchpoints with the emerging design approaches. In choosing art practices that enable empathic experiences, of course I could have considered the performing arts as well. Dance and theatre are essentially experiential and immersive; often they trigger our 'empathy circuit', even unwillingly, relying on deep emotional responses. However, I preferred to draw attention to relational situations, where complex dynamics unfold as individuals encounter each other.

I then collected the information about them from different sources, including both secondary and primary. I conducted interviews with people involved at different levels within the organisations and implementation of the selected case studies.

Field research also involved a survey of participants of the case studies, in an effort to gain deeper insights about their attendance and the role they assigned to empathy within the overall experience.

I applied an empirical approach for experimenting and validating all of the knowledge built throughout the previous stages. By means of a workshop at Universidade de Aveiro, together with participants, I developed some suggestions for enabling the empathic experience. Hence, I processed the workshop's results in order to transform them into the practical outcome of this research, i.e. the guidelines for designing the empathic experience.

Despite the conclusion of this thesis, it continues to raise questions. Nevertheless, such open-endedness is not a downside, instead it leaves room for many future research perspectives, both at a theoretical and practical level. There are as many points that seek further insights and refinement as possible lines of research.

To draw a picture of these multiple research threads which are likely to be undertaken, I will focus on what this study has abstained from considering, while acknowledging what the dissertation is not about, future lines of investigation emerge.

Starting from the theoretical inquiry about the concept of empathy, I have already mentioned the choice of focusing on the phenomenological tradition, from which I drew indications for building the framework of empathy as an

experience. However, despite a consistency with 'phenomenological empathy', the neuroaesthetic researches following the discovery of mirror neurons has barely been mentioned. For instance, though very close to my topic, Vittorio Gallese's work about intersubjectivity and its neurological basis has not been scrutinized here. Nor has the study of the social neuroscience of empathy been raised, which bridges brain studies and social sciences to understand the relations between neural empathic circuits and our social behaviour.

Moreover, when speaking of empathy and art, it is natural to think about German art historians between XIX and XX Century, such as Heinrich Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer, along with philosophers like Friederich Theodor Vischer and Theodor Lipps. All of them investigated different declinations of a theory about how we perceive artworks by means of establishing an empathic relation with them, projecting ourselves and 'merging' into them. This crucial origin of the concept of empathy hase been recalled in this study, as it deals with understanding relations between subject and object, instead of between subject and subject.

I left aside the political implications of empathy. While acknowledging the importance of such an issue in the current debate (Ahmed, 2004; Pedwell, 2014) my aim was not the one of discussing how and why our natural empathic attitude has been identified as a key to overcoming the crisis of democratic systems.

Additionally, I did not mention the positions 'against empathy' (Bloom, 2013) and its failures (Cikara et al, 2011), which shed light upon the most critical sides of a concept usually taken for granted as being positive.

In short, amongst the multiple facets of empathy, this research focused on one in particular: empathy as the discovery of the other's existence and the acknowledgement of his/her otherness (Boella, 2018).

The shape of this study is that of a fabric, braided by intertwining different hypothesis repeatedly connected and assessed along the process. Each chapter is like a thread of a main texture, woven step by step in light of new findings and viewpoints unfolding along the research.

Each one of the subjects I did not handle within this study are likely to be future threads of investigation spreading from the present one, destined to thicken the research's texture. This may be considered only a piece of a broader exploration about new emerging relations between empathy and design, stemming from a perspective on empathy as a relational experience rather than an individual skill. A particular piece which ends with a specific proposition: the provision of guidelines for enabling empathic experiences, drawn from a study focused on art practices and the strategies they use to enable empathy.

Nevertheless, the guidelines themselves open future research paths about their use, evaluation, implementation and dissemination. A dissemination strategy focused on how these proposed guidelines translate into practice may include tests in real-life design research environments, for instance workshops, co-design sessions and contexts that require to 'oil cooperation' (Sennet, 2013). A research may focus on quantitative methods, such as Randomized Control Trials (RCTs) for verifying the guidelines' impact. By collecting data from different design processes in a predefined span of time and analysing participants' behaviour (from hundreds to thousands) within them, might provide feedbacks and insights on the guidelines' usage and how they affect social behaviour [Bridgeable, n.d.].

As regards the guidelines' evaluation and implementation, perhaps a first step would be to initiate a community discussion where design researchers and practitioners could bring their own contributions. A survey among them might gain insights and feedback about how, when and why to use the proposed guidelines. Seminars and workshops might touch upon different aspects, such as the most appropriate format for the guidelines, their area of application and impact on design processes. Given that "the guidelines are meant to be dynamic, reflecting a field of active research, which means that there will frequently be new findings, new methodologies, and new thoughts on data interpretation" (Klionsky, 2016). An additional issue may be to understand to what extent revisions should be carried out and how frequently they need updating.

In addition to the dissemination of the guidelines, also the theoretical reflection that frames the research may require a strategy for being properly understood, thus becoming useful for further studies. This thesis is a contribution to a broader debate that is lively present in the design discourse today, i.e. the redefinition of the relationship between design and other disciplines such as philosophy and the arts. This urgent issue is focused on the value that such disciplines may bring to design research and practices. In this context, this thesis takes the challenge of proposing new approaches to consolidated issues. To continue on this reflection, existing formats such as *DESIS* Philosophy Talks would represent the ideal arena for debating this new perspective of empathy in design. There I would find the opportunity of exchange with other scholars interested in the topic from a philosophical perspective and fresh contributions form related researches.

The main lesson learned from this study regards the value of uncertainty. Guidelines are not rules, and the results of their application is absolutely unpredictable. Their flexibility is their strength and limit at the same time. Dealing with interpersonal relationships and the sphere of experience requires the acceptance of unexpected outcomes and probable failures. Paradoxically,

experiences may be enabled, not designed. Also empathy can be just enabled, not designed, just as empathy can only be enabled, not designed. The experience of empathy can be designed only in ints enabling conditions, which lay the base for a co-generated experience between the people involved to develop. The ultimate benefit is for them, the people who encounter and interact with those that are different from themselves.

To return back to the start of the thesis: the humans in WALL.E are surrounded by products and services, designed to make their life easier and comfortable. Their needs are induced by the same company which provides them with everything they need. Everything is designed, even their commute along definite paths. WALL.E becomes the unexpected, unpredictable, 'undesigned' element in their lives which reintroduces humanity back to humans. Guidelines, tools, methods support designers' work; still, there's WALL.E.

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Glossary

This section is aimed at supporting readers mainly in understanding theoretical issues developed in the thesis's discussion. Since the research's framework focuses on phenomenology, most of the concepts in the glossary are explained according to this specific perspective.

aisthesis: Ancient Greek word meaning sensory perception.

alterity: The innate condition of otherness, which characterises the Other as opposed to the Self. Within the phenomenological tradition alterity is usually understood as the entity in contrast to which an identity is constructed.

antagonism/agonism: Words from the ancient Greek root agon = struggle. In this context they are used in their meaning related to political theory. According to some political theorists, the pluralistic nature of the social word entails conflicts which could never be solved. The we/them distinction embedded in any political identity make antagonism emerge. Antagonism characterises human societies and it can't be eradicated without negating pluralism.

Agonism is an alternative kind of we/them relation, in which the two parties are not enemies who should defend their own interests in opposition one to each other. Rather they are advesaries upon a common ground, a shared arena in which they 'struggle', although acknowledging that the pluralilty of identities at stake could never achieve a universal consensus.

anthropocene : Word coined in the 1980's to define the current geologic epoch in which the human impact on ecosystem is increasingly significant.

dialectic/dialogic process: A dialectic process unfolds between different positions – thesis and anthitesis – towards a compromise, an agreement – synthesis – that merges the two. Opposed to dialectic processes are dialogic processes, which instead are not aimed at a closure, a resolution, rather at the exchange itself. The point in dialogic processes is the connection established between the speakers, their ability to listen and tune with each other in an actual conversation.

embodied experience: Experience lived and acted throughout and from within the body as a whole. In a phenomenological perspective the lived body is a lived center of experience with its movement capability and distinctive register of sensations. According to M. Merleau-Ponty, as the body is 'exposed' to the world, it is primarily involved in perception, even more than our reflective capacities. Stressing the importance of embodied experiences in the perception and knowledge of the self, of the other and the world, is part of the philosophical concern of going beyond the traditional subordination of body's role within the mind-body dichotomy. In such an account, the perceiving mind is conceived as incarnated, embodied, inseparable from our situated, physical nature.

epoché: Essential core of the phenomenological method developed by E. Husserl in order to perform a description of a perceptual object exactly as it is experienced from a first-person point of view. Epoché is an ancient Greek word meaning suspension of judgment. In phenomenological terms epoché means refraining from establishing whether anything exists or not in the outer, extra-mental world. In other words, for the phenomenologist to be able to analyse the object of an act of consciousness, the object's existence itself out of his/her mind should be 'bracketed'.

immediate: As opposed to mediated, in philosophy immediate identifies a specific mode of objects' appearing to consciousness, occurring without any distortion, inference, prejudice or the involvement of any intermediate agency.

inner imitation: Often associated with empathy, inner imitation is the ability of our mind to mirror the mental activities or experiences of another person based on the observation of its gestures, expressions and bodily behaviour. Such mental ability – hypothesised by Theodor Lipps, among others, in order to explain our way to acknowledge others as minded creatures – has been confirmed on a biological level by the discovery of the 'mirror neurons system'.

intentionality: Philosopher's word deriving from Latin intentio, which in turn derives from the verb intendere, which means being directed towards some goal or thing. The notion of intentio, having its origin in the medieval Scholastic philosophy, was rehabilitated by Franz Brentano at the end of the XIX Century and then entered the contemporary philosophy as the hallmark of mental states. According to Brentano, all mental activities are characterised by intentionality, i.e. they are always referenced to something as an object. For instance, thinking about your son out with his friends, or remembering the great concert that changed your life, are all mental activitities directed towards a content. Husserl analyses intentionality in

terms of three central ideas: intentional act, intentional object and intentional content. The intentional act is the particular mental event, whether this be perceiving, remembering, evaluating, etc. Intentional object stands for the topic, thing or state of affairs that the act is about. To speak of the intentional content of a thought is to speak of the mode or way in which a thought is about an object. Different thoughts present objects in different ways (from different perspectives or under different descriptions), in short these thoughts have different intentional contents.

intersubjectivity: At large, intersubjectivity may be defined as the kind of relationship occuring between subjects, different from the relation subject-object. Intersubjectivity is a mutual relation underpinning our living in a community of persons, similar and dissimilar at the same time.

  In phenomenological terms, intersubjectivity characterises the lived experience of the other as a subject, rather than a mere physical object. The experience of the other is also instrumental in shaping self-awareness, as I begin to experience my self as an other for an other. Intersubjectivity helps also in the constitution of objectivity: acknowledging that we experience the world intersubjectively entails that objects' existence is available not only to me but also to others in the same way.

mirror neurons system: Group of specialised neurons that 'mirrors' the actions and behaviours of others. Discovered by Giacomo Rizzolatti and colleagues, the neural system of mirror neurons is a crucial finding for explaining how we perceive and relate to others on a neurobiological level. Rizzolatti's team found that the neural areas involved in our actions almost overlap with the neural areas of excitation underlying the observation of the very same actions performed by another person. They found also that a similar overlap between neural areas of excitation occurs in the recognition of another person's emotion based on his/her facial expressions. For this reason, the mirror neurons system has been referred to as a basic mechanism of empathy, enabling us to directly understand others' expressions, emotions and intentions, as well as their bodily movements as goal-directed actions.

phenomena: From the ancient Greek phainomenon = appearance, things as they appear in our experience. More specifically phenomena are whatever we can observe and seek to explain; in short, whatever we are conscious of, including objects, events, other people around us, ourselves and our own experiences. In the philosophical tradition phenomena are opposed to noumena, things in themselves beyond appearances.

phenomenological reduction: Particular methodological regimen theorized by E. Husserl and prescripted to attain a correct perspective on the world phenomenon. For attaining this particular perspective the phenomenologist should plunge in a sort of meditative state which requires a rigourous and persistent effort involving the whole body-mind unit. In short, the phenomenological reduction is a technique that enables an exact inquiry about phenomena.

proprioception and kinaesthesia: Proprioception is an unconscious perception of body movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body itself. Whereas, kinaesthesia strictly means movement sense derived from sensory organs in the muscles and joints.

  Both proprioception and kinaesthesia enable the awareness of body position, location, orientation and movement in space at any time.

sympathy: Often confused with empathy, sympathy rather identifies 'fellow-feeling'. The term is coined from the ancient Greek syn = together + pathein = to feel. Sympathy means sharing the feelings of another, and respond to them. Having sympathy involves being aware of someone's distress or need, and acting accordingly.

somaesthetics: Body-centered discipline developed by Richard Shusterman exploring the crucial and complex role of the body in aesthetic perception. The word somaesthetics derives from somaesthesia, which in turn is coined from the ancient Greek soma + aisthesis, the former meaning body, and sensory perception, the latter. Since the senses belong to and are conditioned by the soma, the exercise of somaesthetics should improve one's body perfomance in sensory perception. Concerned with the body's lived experience, somaesthetics involves the awareness of our bodily states and feelings and their relation to knowledge and self-knowledge.

Appendix A

Personal communication with Marco DiBree, local organizer of Eye Contact Experiement in Munich.

02/07/2017

Alice Devecchi: Hi Marco, can I ask you how an eye contact event takes place? How do you warm up? Is there something before the 4 minutes contact?

Marco DiBree: we start the event by first giving an introduction to everyone telling them about the basics

AD: such as?

MDB: like: how long do you do it; why do you do it; how do you stop a session; when do you take break; etc...

AD: ok, interesting is there some sort of instruction manual?

MDB: So basically at the beginning of every eye contact event we tell the people some general information. so imagine you would be new, I would tell you exactly this: Hi Alice welcome to the eye contact event, is it your first time? and you would say: yes it's my first time. Ok let me explain a little bit what happens: so basically you sit in front of a person and you simply look at the person in the eyes. You don't have to do anything, you are just looking. So you don't have to be serious, you don't have to smile, you don't have to cry, but if something happens let it be as it is, you know how you are. Basically what we are trying to do is to let people know that if there's any emotions and feelings, they should let it coming up and go as it is. That is a fundamental part of the exercise.

There's a similar background to meditation, because the more resistance you put the stronger something gets.

We tell: ok you can do the exercise as long as you like, can be 2 minutes, can be 20 minutes, can be 2 hours, as long as you feel comfortable with it. And people really do it.

People generally ask: how do I join somebody? And I say: well, either you can sit down in front of a person you decide or you can sit and wait that somebody comes to you. That's usually 50/50 whatever people do.

People usually ask: how do I indicate that I want to end the session? And we say: don't worry about it at all, just say to person in front of you that's enough for you. Then you can shake the person's hand or you can have a conversation with him and afterward take a break and then start again with another person if you like.

It is very nice for people when they can share their experiences, feelings and thoughts because there was silence before and afterward you can tell what was really going on.

And for the rest, what I would tell you is that the experience of an eye contact can involve the whole emotional scale that you can imagine, so we have people who ended up crying, people who ended up laughing hysterically, we have people who fell in love and even married afterwards.

I can't say what the experiment's outcome is and the reason is that the outcome is different for every person.

AD: what do you think are the most important conditions for something to take place between two persons looking in the eyes one each other?

MDB: Basically I can tell you that we do the exercise for two main reasons: one reason for this is to connect with another person, so this is something that we know it's not so much happening anymore in our society, so if you do the eye contact really, after some minutes the mask falls down, you know, you are really looking at the person and how the person is. This allows to feel a real connection because you are not pretending of being anyone else.And the second reason why we do it is: for self improvement. I told you a little bit of the similar background with meditation, we do it a little bit like meditation.

About the meditation, a similar background to meditation is that the longer you do it ... you are just looking at another person and when you are looking at the other person there's also a lot happening in your own mind, a lot of thoughts coming to your mind, something nice and something not so nice and stay there, to stay present, to keep on looking at someone, well sometimes you have to go through a hard passage. You know, this is a form of confronting something and you know many times when something not so nice happens in life we tend not to look at it. You can try to forget about it but the real thing is that you never really get over it until you until you've looked at it.

And by looking at it and at anything whatever comes it sets you free in a way that no matter what will come or what thought you have you will a very big certainty that you can handle it. and you will still live afterward and you will persist through that. That's a very big win that a person can have from an eye contact. people who have done it a lot of time, I'm talking about hours and hours, usual have a really really really big boost in confidence. I mean securities, a very deep knowing that anything that happens they can handle.

Well, there need to be a space, right. Space for it and time for it. so if you have a room in which to create this where to make these conditions normal, that it is

actually very beneficial for a person to make eye contact with somebody else, they will do it and I mean even in this case it was so awkward but you'll notice this thing that it's like a movement and you know there will always be some first people who follow and when you have some followers then you can reach the masses and I think it was the right condition.

What is really important is that we are there and we hold the space for these people. it has something to do with... imagine you have a room full of people and you know there is so much energy in this room and so many thoughts and so many feelings and so many different backgrounds and experiences, and my opinion is that you generally need experienced people to lead this kind of event so that people feel secure to kind of let themselves go; because if you don't trust the other side or the environment or the space, you will never be totally free and open and honest. You will always preserve.

So yeah this is also from my experience because the more people ther are the better events usually are. What are conditiond to really make eye contact? Well, I would say interest and attention. Because you have to be really interested in the person in front of you, really minding of him, not just of yourself.

AD: When you say "a place", do you mean a room set up in a certain way or just any soace available?

MDB: a room set up with chairs. But can also be outside.

AD: Light is important in your view?

MDB: yes, you must be able to see your partner, but we don't pay attention to the details of light.

AD: Just another question: when you say "interest" as a condition you mena that the participant should be motivated to do the experiment? Maybe he/she heard about it from a friend or other and is curious about it...

MDB: Well, most people who come to the event are "interested" just generally, otherwose they wouldn't have come. But is not a necessary condition. It is a necessary condition if you want to generate a connection with another person. But even if you are not interested and will do the eye contact for a longer time, the interest will come by itslef.

AD: I guess so. Is there a minimum time you have to look in the eyes of the other?

MDB: No the people do it as long as they like...but the longer you do it, the more you can get out of it.

Appendix B

Questionnaires of the survey

B.1 Questionnaire to On Space Time Foam participants

intervista ai partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, Tomas Saraceno

Mi chiamo Alice devecchi e sto facendo un dottorato in Design al Politecnico di Milano. Sto studiando la nozione di empatia da una prospettiva fenomenologica alla ricerca dei modi in cui l'esperienza empatica può essere attivata. In qualità di partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, l'installazione che Tomas Saraceno ha pensato per Hangar Bicocca, Milano nel 2012, vi chiedo di rispondere a qualche domanda sulla vostra esperienza e sulla relazione che essa può avere con il concetto di empatia.

1.Da dove vieni?

Rosciano (PE)

2.Dove vivi attualmente?

Legnano (MI)

3.età

29 anni

4.professione

Restauratrice

5.formazione

Laurea Magistrale

6.Sai cos'è l'empatia?

◉ Yes

◯ No

7.Come la descriveresti?

L'empatia è quella sensazione che si percepisce quando un individuo entra in connessione profonda con un un altro individuo, essere vivente o situazione.

8.Rappresenteresti l'empatia più come un'immedesimazione con l'Altro o più come una connessione?

Connessione.

9.Secondo la fenomenologia l'empatia è un'esperienza intersoggettiva nel senso che è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'Altro. In altre parole, l'empatia rende possibile il riconoscimento dell'Altro come simile a noi stessi ancorché diverso e ci mette in connessione sul piano conoscitivo. In questo senso l'esperienza empatica rende evidente l'interdipendenza che regola ogni azione umana. Sei d'accordo con questa interpretazione?

Penso che il processo di empatia non si verifichi ad ogni manifestarsi di un'azione umana in quanto essa parte da un interessamento emotivo di base verso l'Altro che non sempre viene a crearsi tra due individui o situazioni.

10.Nel prendere parte ad On Space Time Foam ritieni di aver avuto questo tipo di esperienza?

◉ Yes

○ No

11.Descrivi la tua esperienza di On Space Time Foam in poche righe

Ricordo di essermi sentita libera e fluida e in forte connessione con il mio corpo ma nello stesso tempo ho avuto la percezione di condividere quelle sensazioni con le altre compagne che erano con me in quel momento.

12.Ritieni che l'esperienza empatica fosse uno degli obiettivi dell'artista o soltanto un "effetto collaterale"?

Ritengo che tra gli obiettivi dell'artista ci fosse quello di mettere in evidenza le manifestazioni ludiche del nostro corpo quando inserite in un ambiente inaspettato e giocoso come l'opera da lui creata. Quindi credo che l'esperienza empatica fosse stata pensata dall'artista come mezzo per esplorare un ambiente così particolare.

13.(compila solo se hai risposto si alla domanda 10) Qual è secondo te la condizione che ha reso possibile l'esperienza empatica in On Space Time Foam?

I materiali plastici, morbidi e lisci da lui utilizzati, la trasparenza degli stessi e l'altezza hanno permesso alle persone di entrare in empatia inizialmente col proprio corpo e poi di condividere lo spazio e la sensazione con gli altri.

intervista ai partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, Tomas Saraceno

Mi chiamo Alice devecchi e sto facendo un dottorato in Design al Politecnico di Milano. Sto studiando la nozione di empatia da una prospettiva fenomenologica alla ricerca dei modi in cui l'esperienza empatica può essere attivata. In qualità di partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, l'installazione che Tomas Saraceno ha pensato per Hangar Bicocca, Milano nel 2012, vi chiedo di rispondere a qualche domanda sulla vostra esperienza e sulla relazione che essa può avere con il concetto di empatia.

1.Da dove vieni?

Milano

2.Dove vivi attualmente?

Milano

3.età

50

4.professione

grafica - libera professionista

5.formazione

formazione post diploma

6. Sai cos'è l'empatia?

◉ Yes

○ No

7. Come la descriveresti?

la capacità di riconoscere lo stato emotivo di un'altra persona e di vedere le cose dalla sua prospettiva

8. Rappresenteresti l'empatia più come un'immedesimazione con l'Altro o più come una connessione?

una via di mezzo: è più di una connessione ma non arriva alla piena identificazione con l'altro

9. Secondo la fenomenologia l'empatia è un'esperienza intersoggettiva nel senso che è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'Altro. In altre parole, l'empatia rende possibile il riconoscimento dell'Altro come simile a noi stessi ancorché diverso e ci mette in connessione sul piano conoscitivo. In questo senso l'esperienza empatica rende evidente l'interdipendenza che regola ogni azione umana. Sei d'accordo con questa interpretazione?

in linea di massima sì

10. Nel prendere parte ad On Space Time Foam ritieni di aver avuto questo tipo di esperienza?

◉ Yes

○ No

11. Descrivi la tua esperienza di On Space Time Foam in poche righe

personalmente ho vissuto una esperienza che metteva insieme spiazzamento e liberazione. ricordo anche distintamente di aver osservato molto gli altri partecipanti, in particolare quelli della mia età o più, con l'impressione che questa sensazione di libertà e gioco fosse presente anche in loro. era come se l'opera ci avesse "autorizzato" ad entrare in una dimensione ludica inconsueta

12. Ritieni che l'esperienza empatica fosse uno degli obiettivi dell'artista o soltanto un "effetto collaterale"?

non mi sono posta la domanda allora, ma ora che la guardo sotto questa luce l'empatia è stata presente nella mia esperienza. quindi potrei supporre che fosse stata prevista dall'artista - penso in particolare al fatto che una parte importante della fruizione era data dalla possibilità di osservare dal basso le persone che si muovevano in alto

13. (compila solo se hai risposto si alla domanda 10) Qual è secondo te la condizione che ha reso possibile l'esperienza empatica in On Space Time Foam?

la possibilità di condividere con altri una esperienza forte di spiazzamento e la possibilità di osservarli nel loro movimento

intervista ai partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, Tomas Saraceno

Mi chiamo Alice devecchi e sto facendo un dottorato in Design al Politecnico di Milano. Sto studiando la nozione di empatia da una prospettiva fenomenologica alla ricerca dei modi in cui l'esperienza empatica può essere attivata. In qualità di partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, l'installazione che Tomas Saraceno ha pensato per Hangar Bicocca, Milano nel 2012, vi chiedo di rispondere a qualche domanda sulla vostra esperienza e sulla relazione che essa può avere con il concetto di empatia.

1.Da dove vieni?

Ferrara

2.Dove vivi attualmente?

Milano

3.età

49

4.professione

Dirigente d'azienda

5.formazione

Liceo Classico - Ingegneria elettonica

6.Sai cos'è l'empatia?

◉ Yes

○ No

7.Come la descriveresti?

La capacità di entrare in sintonia con le emozioni di un'altra persona

8.Rappresenteresti l'empatia più come un'immedesimazione con l'Altro o più come una connessione?

Come una connessione.

9.Secondo la fenomenologia l'empatia è un'esperienza intersoggettiva nel senso che è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'Altro. In altre parole, l'empatia rende possibile il riconoscimento dell'Altro come simile a noi stessi ancorché diverso e ci mette in connessione sul piano conoscitivo. In questo senso l'esperienza empatica rende evidente l'interdipendenza che regola ogni azione umana. Sei d'accordo con questa interpretazione?

La trovo un po' contorta. Diciamo che sono d'accordo con l'affermazione "l'empatia è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'altro".

10.Nel prendere parte ad On Space Time Foam ritieni di aver avuto questo tipo di esperienza?

○ Yes

◉ No

11.Descrivi la tua esperienza di On Space Time Foam in poche righe

I miei sensi sono stati coinvolti a un tempo dall'altezza, dal materiale morbido e multiforme, dalla necessità di creare un equilibrio, dalla trasparenza del materiale.

12.Ritieni che l'esperienza empatica fosse uno degli obiettivi dell'artista o soltanto un "effetto collaterale"?

Probabilmente era un obiettivo. Per quanto mi riguarda però non ci sono stati momenti che definirei di empatia con le altre persone che si trovavano nella bolla.

13.(compila solo se hai risposto si alla domanda 10) Qual è secondo te la condizione che ha reso possibile l'esperienza empatica in On Space Time Foam?

intervista ai partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, Tomas Saraceno

Mi chiamo Alice devecchi e sto facendo un dottorato in Design al Politecnico di Milano. Sto studiando la nozione di empatia da una prospettiva fenomenologica alla ricerca dei modi in cui l'esperienza empatica può essere attivata. In qualità di partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, l'installazione che Tomas Saraceno ha pensato per Hangar Bicocca, Milano nel 2012, vi chiedo di rispondere a qualche domanda sulla vostra esperienza e sulla relazione che essa può avere con il concetto di empatia.

1.Da dove vieni?

Arezzo

2.Dove vivi attualmente?

Arezzo

3.età

30

4.professione

Restauratrice

5.formazione

Università deglibStudi di Urbino

6.Sai cos'è l'empatia?

◉ Yes

◯ No

7.Come la descriveresti?

È la capacità di immedesimarsi nell'altra persona e comprendere lo stato emotivo creando legame

8.Rappresenteresti l'empatia più come un'immedesimazione con l'Altro o più come una connessione?

Rappresenterei l'empatia con entrambi al 50%.

9.Secondo la fenomenologia l'empatia è un'esperienza intersoggettiva nel senso che è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'Altro. In altre parole, l'empatia rende possibile il riconoscimento dell'Altro come simile a noi stessi ancorché diverso e ci mette in connessione sul piano conoscitivo. In questo senso l'esperienza empatica rende evidente l'interdipendenza che regola ogni azione umana. Sei d'accordo con questa interpretazione?

Si sono in completo accordo

10.Nel prendere parte ad On Space Time Foam ritieni di aver avuto questo tipo di esperienza?

◯ Yes

◉ No

11.Descrivi la tua esperienza di On Space Time Foam in poche righe

L'esperienza é stata più caratterizzata dalla mia percezione in funZione dell'esperienza e non come avvicinamento e condivisione con l'artista

12.Ritieni che l'esperienza empatica fosse uno degli obiettivi dell'artista o soltanto un "effetto collaterale"?

Non sono riuscita a connettermi con l'artista, ma a vivere soltanto la sua installazione come esperienza sensoriale e di conoscenza della mia personalità

13.(compila solo se hai risposto si alla domanda 10) Qual è secondo te la condizione che ha reso possibile l'esperienza empatica in On Space Time Foam?

intervista ai partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, Tomas Saraceno

Mi chiamo Alice devecchi e sto facendo un dottorato in Design al Politecnico di Milano. Sto studiando la nozione di empatia da una prospettiva fenomenologica alla ricerca dei modi in cui l'esperienza empatica può essere attivata. In qualità di partecipanti a On Space Time Foam, l'installazione che Tomas Saraceno ha pensato per Hangar Bicocca, Milano nel 2012, vi chiedo di rispondere a qualche domanda sulla vostra esperienza e sulla relazione che essa può avere con il concetto di empatia.

1.Da dove vieni?

Verona

2.Dove vivi attualmente?

Verona

3.età

28

4.professione

Restauratrice

5.formazione

Laurea magistrale

6.Sai cos'è l'empatia?

◉ Yes

○ No

7.Come la descriveresti?

Empatia è comprensione verso qualcun altro senza che vi siano parole e spiegazioni, è un capire "di pancia"

8.Rappresenteresti l'empatia più come un'immedesimazione con l'Altro o più come una connessione?

Più come una connessione

9.Secondo la fenomenologia l'empatia è un'esperienza intersoggettiva nel senso che è un atto di conoscenza che non esiste in assenza dell'esperienza dell'Altro. In altre parole, l'empatia rende possibile il riconoscimento dell'Altro come simile a noi stessi ancorché diverso e ci mette in connessione sul piano conoscitivo. In questo senso l'esperienza empatica rende evidente l'interdipendenza che regola ogni azione umana. Sei d'accordo con questa interpretazione?

In parte, non sono pienamente d'accordo sul "riconoscimento dell'altro come simile a noi stessi". Io credo che l'empatia dipenda molto dal tipo di sensibilità che si ha verso le altre persone, e non per forza si vedono similitudini di sé.

10.Nel prendere parte ad On Space Time Foam ritieni di aver avuto questo tipo di esperienza?

◉ Yes

◯ No

11.Descrivi la tua esperienza di On Space Time Foam in poche righe

Bellissima, non ricordo bene il tempo a disposizione ma ricordo che è stata una delle "pecche" che avevo sentito riguardo l'esperienza in sé -anche se comprensibile per ovvie ragioni logistiche.

12.Ritieni che l'esperienza empatica fosse uno degli obiettivi dell'artista o soltanto un "effetto collaterale"?

Probabilmente sì, era un obiettivo. Che probabilmente si è verificato in più occasioni, ma tante altre volte no, perché mi viene da pensare che sia stato più facile per la gran parte del pubblico vedere l'installazione come semplice "gioco".

13.(compila solo se hai risposto si alla domanda 10) Qual è secondo te la condizione che ha reso possibile l'esperienza empatica in On Space Time Foam?

L'insieme delle persone che vi hanno partecipato contemporaneamente, ovvero la partecipazione dei tipi di sensibilità di ognuna di esse.

interview to Dialogue in the dark participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Dialogue in the dark I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Lisbon, Portugal

2.Where are you currently living?

Oeiras, Portugal

3.age

51

4.profession

History of Disability Researcher

5.educational background

Doctorate on History of Education

6.Dialogue in the dark you attended (where and when)

Milan, 2010

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

○ No

8.How would you describe empathy

To be very close to someone. To clearly understand someone.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

A connection.

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes

11.In participating at Dialogue in the dark did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

○ No

12.Describe your experience of Dialogue in the dark in a few lines

It was an experience of being-near. The main reference were the others, the close to me, the companions of experience.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of Dialogue in the dark creators, or just a side effect?

I hope it was a goal.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Dialogue in the dark?

The share of an experience in the same conditions, the creation of a close community during a short period of time. After seven years I still remember each and every one that was there with me during my experience.

interview to Dialogue in the dark participants

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As participants to Dialogue in the dark I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Delhi-India

2.Where are you currently living?

India

3.age

22

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

Engineering

6.Dialogue in the dark you attended (where and when)

Hyderabad

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

By understanding what other is going through and describing that.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

Yes, if i am kept that same situation(identical) as the other person which connects you and gives you same experience or new as that person.

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

yes.

11.In participating at Dialogue in the dark did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Dialogue in the dark in a few lines

I know what a Blind person undergoes in day to day life.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of Dialogue in the dark creators, or just a side effect?

Yes.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Dialogue in the dark?

Empathic Experience:- when everything goes BLACK.

interview to Dialogue in the dark participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Dialogue in the dark I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

2.Where are you currently living?

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

3.age

23

4.profession

Postgraduate student

5.educational background

Degree in Psychology with Honours

6.Dialogue in the dark you attended (where and when)

DID Malaysia, June 2015

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

The ability to see things and feel experiences from another person's perspective, to understand what these events mean for the other person.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

I don't understand what this question is trying to ask but I'll try my best to answer. I think it's a connection between the person relating the events and the person who is listening, so it would take place between the two parties, but it also takes place inside the person who is listening.

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes. One cannot experience empathy without another person. And with empathy we learn to acknowledge differences in how we perceive and experience the world around us, but at the same time realise that we sometimes feel the same emotions despite our differences.

11. In participating at Dialogue in the dark did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12. Describe your experience of Dialogue in the dark in a few lines

I got to experience and understand first hand what it was like for visually-impaired people who did not have the sense of sight to help them navigate their surroundings. I was initially frightened of the dark too because I was so used to seeing, but in the end I gained a new appreciation for sight. I also have a better idea of what it was like to be without sight, so now I can understand better when I read of the challenges visually-impaired people face in their daily life.

13. Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of Dialogue in the dark creators, or just a side effect?

I definitely think it is a main goal of the DID experience. Because people wouldn't understand what it was like to be without sight if they didn't experience it themselves. The awareness and empathy gained from the experience would go a long way in changing people's attitudes towards the visually-impaired.

14. (consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Dialogue in the dark?

The fact that sighted people are put into complete pitch darkness where their eyes are rendered useless. Only in complete darkness people cannot use their sense of sight which simulates what it is like for the visually-impaired. This is usually the key turning point where the visitors start to gain empathy as they have to depend on their guide.

interview to Dialogue in the dark participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Dialogue in the dark I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1. Where are you from?

Hyderabad, India

2. Where are you currently living?

Hyderabad, India

3. age

21

4. profession

Self Employee

5. educational background

Graduate

6.Dialogue in the dark you attended (where and when)

Hyderabad, India. April, 2011

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Ability to sense or understand others feelings and emotions

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

It's a connection. Empathy is kind of a bond which the 2 person share when they start connecting with each other.

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes

11.In participating at Dialogue in the dark did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Dialogue in the dark in a few lines

It was a great experience. It just simple showed us the other side (dark side) of our lives. One can celebrate their life for having the gift of vision and at the same time experience the life and struggle of a person who doesn't have or lost that gift.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of Dialogue in the dark creators, or just a side effect?

It's neither a goal nor a side effect. Empathic experience is just a part of the whole experience and it happens because we get very close to the life of the other person.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Dialogue in the dark?

The way we get close to their living condition and the difference we find in their lives when compared to ours makes us feel empathic. But this things are really necessary because being a human being we understand things better only after experiencing it in real life.

interview to Portals participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Portals I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

بخش بدون عنوان

بخش بدون عنوان

1.Where are you from?

Palestine

2.Where are you currently living?

Palestine- Gaza

3.age

19 years old

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

Engineering field

6.Portal you attended

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

○ No

8.How would you describe empathy

It's the ability to share someone else's feelings, and the feeling which you understand and share another person's experiences.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

○ connection

○ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Not exactly

11.In participating at Portals did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

○ No

12.Describe your experience of Portals in a few lines

It was a kind of epic portals, I liked the concept of Exchanging Cultures, and to know about new people and some of strange traditions, and learning different accents of English language.
I liked the quality of the interviews, and talking to open-minded people.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Portals' creators, or just a side effect?

I believe it was a side effect, because the basic goal is cultural and learning.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Portals?

Maybe Respect and staying away from intolerance.

interview to Portals participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Portals I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

بخش بدون عنوان

بخش بدون عنوان

1.Where are you from?

Gaza

2.Where are you currently living?

Gaza

3.age

20

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

6.Portal you attended

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Feeling others feelings like the feelings are your own, or you personally experiencing other's experience.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

○ connection

○ Altro: _____

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

yes

11.In participating at Portals did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

○ Yes

◉ No

12.Describe your experience of Portals in a few lines

Trying to correct some misunderstandings and wrong ideas about Gaza. We are peaceful people that have their own independent culture like other countries.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Portals' creators, or just a side effect?

Yes.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Portals?

_____

interview to Portals participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Portals I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

بخش بدون عنوان

بخش بدون عنوان

1.Where are you from?

I'm from Palestine, Gaza

2.Where are you currently living?

north of Gaza. Al-Saftawy block

3.age

19

4.profession

5.educational background

I graduated from Osama Bin Zaid for high scool

6.Portal you attended

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Empathy is when you participate or support something or someone and be with him in his hard situation. entering into the feelings of another, sympathy, vicarious emotion, understanding

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

○ connection

○ Altro: ....

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes, I totally agree

11.In participating at Portals did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

○ Yes

◉ No

12.Describe your experience of Portals in a few lines

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Portals' creators, or just a side effect?

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Portals?

interview to Portals participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to Portals I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

بخش بدون عنوان

بخش بدون عنوان

1.Where are you from?

Palestine

2.Where are you currently living?

KhanYounis

3.age

34

4.profession

Social Media Coordination

5.educational background

Physics Science

6.Portal you attended

Gaza

7.Do you know what empathy is?

○ Yes

● No

8.How would you describe empathy

Empathy is how to share feelings, care and understanding

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

◉ connection

○ Altro: _____

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

11.In participating at Portals did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

○ No

12.Describe your experience of Portals in a few lines

The best experience i've ever have

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Portals' creators, or just a side effect?

One of the goals definitely

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Portals?

Connecting with new people and learn about cultures

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

◉ connection

○ Altro: _____

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

11.In participating at Portals did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

○ No

12.Describe your experience of Portals in a few lines

The best experience i've ever have

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Portals' creators, or just a side effect?

One of the goals definitely

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What is in your view the condition that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Portals?

Connecting with new people and learn about cultures

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Germany

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin - Germany

3.age

22

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

-

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

○ No

8.How would you describe empathy

The ability to relate to and feel the emotions of others

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

○ connection

○ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

Eye Contact is an exchange on minimal basis - without words. Emotions are the only thing transferred. The good experiences I had with Eye Contact appeared once there was a constant flow of emotions between the both of us.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

A Side Effect

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

Silence and complete focus on the other person

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Bremen, Germany

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin

3.age

25

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Empathy is the social-emotional-intelligence and describes the possibility of feeling with/for other people than ourselves.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◯ fusion

◯ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes.

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

I felt the innerdeep connection between me and the human beeings I looked in the eyes. I also like how my vision changeg whilst looking more than 20 minutes.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

I guess it was one of the bigger goals, yes. We humans tend to forget about our connections.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

The possibility to take a seat in front of someone else, who's open to get in contact.

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

New Jersey, USA

2.Where are you currently living?

Munich

3.age

30

4.profession

5.educational background

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Understanding what someone else feels. Putting yourself in someone's shoes.

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◯ fusion

◯ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

No.

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Germany

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin

3.age

29

4.profession

Massage Therapist

5.educational background

High School decree

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

⦿ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

It is a side effect, but it depends on the other person and how you are at that moment. After each person you are different. It depends on the other's capacity to be a mirror of you which will determine the intensity of the experience. We experience ourselves via the mirror of the other person and to the degree they can best reflect ourselves and when this is to a high degree a side effect can be empathy because you experience yourself through them and they to you and therefore there is a sense of understanding, connection, and empathy.

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

Side effect.

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

We experience ourselves via the mirror of the other person and to the degree they can best reflect ourselves and when this is to a high degree a side effect can be empathy because you experience yourself through them and they to you and therefore there is a sense of understanding, connection, and empathy.

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

16

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

The result of realisation that we are one

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◉ fusion

◯ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

yes

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

Feel what the other personis feeling

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

I am a creator. It was a goal

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Afghanistan

2.Where are you currently living?

Munich

3.age

24

4.profession

Sales man

5.educational background

12th diploma

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

25 / 5 / 2017 milchestr 23 81667 münchen

7.Do you know what empathy is?

○ Yes

◉ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Auwsume

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

○ fusion

◉ connection

○ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

Impressive

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

A goal

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Leipzig

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin

3.age

25

4.profession

IT Administrater

5.educational background

Vocational School

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

The last 4

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Being able to feel the emotions of others

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◯ fusion

◉ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

Touching

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

Probably

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

Taking time to coonect consciously

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Germany

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin

3.age

26

4.profession

Office & Happiness Manager

5.educational background

Bachelor of Science

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

Feb and April

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

Putting myself in the shoes of others

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◯ fusion

◉ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

yop

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

It depends of course highly from person to person. I had people where I didn't feel anything, I had one where I felt like we are brothers, I had people where I felt they have sadness in them, or laugther

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

One of the goals

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

Undivided attention, a framing that it's ok to spend time with the person opposite of me

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Germany

2.Where are you currently living?

Berlin

3.age

23

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

Student of Social Work

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

Berlin 20.4.

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

You are able to understand How other people feel and think, you have compassion

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◉ fusion

◯ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

Yes

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

◉ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

Nice and interesting. I got connected in some how to people i had never seen before. It gave me a feeling of community Spirit. We are all humans and even we all seem very different in some how we are the same and can connect and be close for a few minutes

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

Yes

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

To be open, curious and concentrated and in some how also to be calme and not to nervous and in a positive vibe

interview to Eye Contact Experiment participants

Hi! My name is Alice Devecchi and I am a PhD candidate in Design at Politecnico di Milano. I am investigating the notion of empathy from a phenomenological perspective and how to enable the empathic experience to happen.
As participants to the more recent Eye Contact Experiment I kindly ask you to answear a few questions about your experience and the relations it had with empathy.

1.Where are you from?

Lebanon

2.Where are you currently living?

Munich

3.age

20

4.profession

Student

5.educational background

French baccalaureat / currently a student at a film school in munich

6.Eye Contact Experiment you attended (where and when)

don't remember

7.Do you know what empathy is?

◉ Yes

◯ No

8.How would you describe empathy

to feel with the other

9.Would you represent the empathic experience as a fusion, an identification Self-Other or a connection? Why?

◯ fusion

◉ connection

◯ Altro:

10.According to phenomenology empathy is an intersubjective experience in the sense that it is an act of consciousness that does not exist in the absence of foreign experience. In other words, empathy enables the acknowledgement of the Other as similar to us, yet different. Do you agree with this interpretation?

yes

11.In participating at Eye Contact Experiment did you undergo this kind of empathic experience?

⦿ Yes

◯ No

12.Describe your experience of Eye Contact Experiment in a few lines

I became all teary and emotional, i don't know why. I had the experiment with different people. It felt different each time. With some people it was difficult to look at and to keep looking at, and with others, time was passing by so fast!

13.Do you think that the empathic experience was one of the goals of the Eye Contact Experiment's creators, or just a side effect?

side effect

14.(consider only if you answeared YES to question 11) What are in your view the conditions that enabled the empathic experience to happen in Eye Contact Experiment?

1

2

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I am from AFGHANISTAN.

2. Where are you currently living?

I am living in Venezia, in Castello.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

It was such a great experience. I learnt a bit of art work. I have learnt a bit more Italian language. I found my self here again. I was almost giving up but the project helped me to be courageous to go ahead and to be hopeful about the future. Each day that I have came here, I came with interest & joy.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes I did.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

→ The friendly environment. almost most of us have had similar experiences in Past. There is mutual respect between the participants, volonteers & the whole team. and I think one of the important Condition is the freedom, in the working place. We do what ever we feel to do or like to do. So this way we have got to know more about the likes & dislikes, point of view, & personality of each other.

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

VENGO DALLA COSTA D'AVORIO

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Vivo A MIRA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

io COSTRUISCO LE LAMPADE PARLO CON GLI AMICI ACOLTO LA MUSICA INCONTRO TANTE PERSONE ! DIVERSE

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

AMICIZIA. CONDIVISIONE. RISPETTO.

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I'M FROM NIGERIA

2. Where are you currently living?

I'M LIVING IN MESTRE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I LIKED WORK ~~HARD~~ HERE AT THE GREENLIGHT, MAKING
LAMPS, THE ITALIAN CLASS WAS GOOD AND THE PEOPLE
I MEET HERE ARE GOOD

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

YES

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

WORKING TOGETHER, TALKING TO GETER,
TOGETHER
TAKING LUNCH ~~TOGETHER~~, PLAYING MUSIC AND
DANCE TOGHETER

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

AKAM

1. Where are you from?

KURDISTAN IRAQ

2. Where are you currently living?

MESTRE VIA PIAVE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

THIS EXPERIENCE AT THE GREENLIGHT WAS GOOD BECAUSE
I LEARN A LOTS OF ARTS, for example how to Bild a Green
light. I MEET A LOTS OF FRIENDS.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

YES

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

WE ARE FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRY AND DIFFERENT
COLOR BUT WE BECAME FRIEND AND WE BECAME
LIKE A FAMILY NOW BECAUSE EVERY DAY WE WORK
TOGHETER

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

GAMBIA

2. Where are you currently living?

VENICE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

Working together with other people, helps to identify and implement the neccesary activities with a goal to improve the project culture of the workshop.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

YES.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

With our expertise in project, our solutions and ways of working enable us to develop the right competence for all. our experience and flexibility help us to develop world class tailor-made solutions for the project.

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

IO VENGO DALLA NIGERIA

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

IO VIVO A PORTO MAGHERA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

GREEN LIGHT E' UN LAVORO DI ARTE VISIVA, COSTRUIAMO LAMPADE CON BASTOCINI DI LEGNIO, PLASTICA, FILO. IL PROGETTO CREA UN IMPATTO POSITIVO PER I RICHIEDENTI ASILO, RIFUGIATI E MIGRANTI

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

SI/YES

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

RISPETTO E COMPLY

RISPONDERE ALLE LORO DOMANDE E DARE LORO ATTENZIONE

ESSERE AMICHEVOLI CON CHIUNQUE CHE VUOLE LAVORARE CON TE

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

NIGERIA

2. Where are you currently living?

VENEZIA ITALY

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

My experience in Green Light is AMAZing onbdiveable really hupp to be here and Shrear This experience with those pepple

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

working as Teem
been friendly To people and people been friendly to me
hexpect and respond. ATTENTION

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

Io Sono dalla Migeriano

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Marghone

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

Ho esperienza buona Vata e Comprensione di Persone Provenienti da diversi Paesi

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

Preferisco lavorare Con le Persone Perche Se ho Commesso Un errore ho qualcuno Che mi Corregga e mi Piace Spiegare i miei Sentimenti Con Le persone Perché non So Se Sono Sbacgliato o giusto

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I am from NIGERIqn

2. Where are you currently living?

ITILAy MeSHRE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I am HAppy to be in Green Light and we make the Green Light and the video work sope and ITILAy class

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I AM fROM NIGERIA

2. Where are you currently living?

ITALiAN

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

My experience in Green light is un oppurtunity for my migrate to leunm more. and also to Help the migrate. We also bud the green ling. is also art work Shop

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

Green light profett is an Act work Shop were people all over the word Came To See How we bud the green light and also we Shere hour experience To one another?

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I'M From GAMBIA

2. Where are you currently living?

I San dona di PIAVE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I have lean many things in the Green Light its really important here and secondly its Bring peaples together

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

YES

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

We need to work as a team and beal with The Gree Ligth project

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

PADOVA, ITALIA

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

PADOVA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

QUESTO PROGETTO È STATO UNA CONTINUA SORPRESA, CI SONO STATI MOLTI ASPETTI, SOPRATTUTTO A LIVELLO EMOTIVO, CHE NON MI ASPETTAVO ALL'INIZIO; CIÒ CHE PIÙ APPREZZO DI GREEN LIGHT È IL CLIMA APERTO E DI CONDIVISIONE CHE SI È CREATO QUASI SPONTANEAMENTE

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

SI

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

IL CLIMA DI CONDIVISIONE, APERTURA VERSO L'ALTRO, AIUTO RECIPROCO COLLABORAZIONE, PARITÀ

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

MESSINA, SICILIA

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

VENEZIA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

Interessante, piena di energia e di esperienze positive.

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Sì

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

Parlando anche solo con chi ci sta accanto, ascoltando le loro storie o semplicemente confrontandosi

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I AM FROM NIGERIA

2. Where are you currently living?

TESSARA VIA PEZZANA No1

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I LANE ABART HOW TO BIUID LAMPADA It was a Great experience been working with Amazing people it mean alot To me for having the experience

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

LIKE THIS GIVIRAMEMT IS VERY UPON RESPECT WE SHER THE work Together it make it ESSY AND I LIKE TO work WITH THIS, I PLAY music and I EAT GOOD FOOD I SEE A LOT OF FACE ITALIA SUOLA I SEE GOOD FACEIS

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

EDo State uromi Nigeria

2. Where are you currently living?

Meste VIA Miranese 165 cap

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

get to know people and have experience OF how to make green Light The workshop is not only knowing how to make green light but making friend

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

have fun play music siting together chating playing musics Like young Thug YSL rich gang

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

I am from Ghana

2. Where are you currently living?

am living in Mira

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I construction the light Green Light am using Adhesive tape wire sticks paint Green coloore to completety the light.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

in this environment interaction to each other we shary. When When we murk When we touth to together and we also explain to the new people they don't no about the green light.

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

GAMBIA

2. Where are you currently living?

I living in ITAlly in VENIZE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I experience meani that lauk Penting

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

I have experience lauk Pinting I Green leukeny!

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

NIGERIA

2. Where are you currently living?

ITALY MESTRE

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

I experience a lot in green light and one of the most important part is the film workshop where I have been taught how to handle camera and how to present my speech whiel expecially in Public.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

YES

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

Encountering with new faces, talking with different people, eating together, having Funs, like Playing music at times e.t.c.

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

Italia

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Venezia

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

Un esperienza molto intensa, come un grande
quotono. alcune volte ti capita di essere fu ed altre ti ritrovi
qui. Ma qui lo fai in compagnia, never alone in this space.

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

assolutamente sì

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

partire dal presupposto che ho difronte a me
qualcuno che può insegnarmi qualcosa

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

ITALIA

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

VENEZIA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

L'ESPERIENZA DEL GREENLIGHT WORKSHOP E' STATA CONTEMPORA=
neamente CRITICA ED INTERESSANTE.
SICURAMENTE, IL (LENTO) PROCESSO DI INTEGRAZIONE CHE
SI E' ATTIVATO ALL'INTERNO DELLA COLLETTIVITA' E' STATO
FONTE DI UNA FORTE CRESCITA PERSONALE.

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Sì

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

LA DISPONIBILITA' D'ANIMO E L'UMILTA' NEL RICONOSCERE
L'ALTRO COME ELEMENTO INDISTINTAMENTE PREZIOSO

Questionnaire for Green Light participants

1. Where are you from?

UNGE DIINO

2. Where are you currently living?

TESS DE DA PAZZA LI

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines

IL LIGHT IN CM

I love this school. I can paint the green light. I am

happy I can talk to someone in Venice.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar tou us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light?

8A respct

Respect

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

1. Da dove vieni?

IRAQ

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Mestre

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

Buona Questo è una buona esperienza. Perchè gli attuali partecipanti sono piaceuddi. Perchè è come una famiglia anche in classe. Mi piace molto la classe di italiano e il lavoro che facciamo.

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Sì

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

Perchè parliamo tutte le persone sono disponibili, tutti insieme ci mescoliamo lavorare e il lavoro, insieme e mangiare.

Questionario per i partecipanti a Green Light

23

1. Da dove vieni?

AFGHANISTAN

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

TESSERA

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light

Ho imparato a fare le lampade, ho conosciuto tante persone ed ho studiando la lingua, quindi molto bene

4. L'esperienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Sì

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light

Perché ho conosciuto ed ho potuto parlare con tante ragazze e questo mi ho permesso di essere capito

---

Questionnaire for Green Light participants_

Transcription

Record 1 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am from Afghanistan.

2. Where are you currently living?

I am living in Venezia, in Castello.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

It was such a great experience. I learnt a bit of art work. I have learnt a bit more Italian language. I found my self here again. I was almost giving up but the project has helped me to be courageus, to go ahead and to be hopeful about the future. Each day that I have come here, I came with interest and joy.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes I did.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

The friendly environment. Almost most of us have had similar experiences in the past. There is mutual respect between the participants, volunteers and the whole team. And I thin one of the most importnat condition is the freedom in the working place. We do what ever we feel to do or like to do. So this way we have got to know more about the likes and dislikes, point of view and personality of each other.

Record 2 (Migrant)

1. Da dove vieni?

Vengo dalla Costa d'Avorio.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Vivo a Mira.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Io costruisco le lampade, parlo con gli amici, ascolto la musica, incontro tante persone diverse.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Amicizia, condivisione, rispetto.

Record 3 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am from Nigeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

I am living in Mestre.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I liked work here at the green light, making lamps. The italian class was good and the people I meet here is good.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Working together, talking together, taking lunch together, playing music and dance together.

Record 4 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Kurdistan, Iraq.

2. Where are you currently living?

Mestre via Piave.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

This experience at the Green Light was good because I learn a lots of arts, for example how to build a Green Light. I meet a lots of friends.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

We are from different countries and different color but we became friend and we became like a family now because every day we work together.

Record 5 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Gambia.

2. Where are you currently living?

Venice.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

Working together with other people, helps to identify and implement the necessary activities with a goal to improve the project culture of the workshop.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

With our expertise in project, our solutions and ways of working enable us to develop the right competence for all. Our experience and flexibility help us to develop [...] class tailor made solutions for the project.

Record 6 (Migrant)

1. Da dove vieni?

Io vengo dalla Nigeria.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Io vivo a Porto Marghera.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Green Light è un lavoro di arte visiva, costruiamo lampade con bastoncini di legno, plastica, filo. Il progetto crea un impatto positivo per i richiedenti asilo, rifugiati e mirganti.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si/Yes

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Rispetto e comply.
Rispondere alle loro domande e dare loro attenzione.
Essere amichevoli con chiunque che vuole lavorare con te.

Record 7 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

NIgeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

Venezia, Italy.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

My experience in Green Light is amazing unbelievable really happy to be here and share this experience with other people .

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Working as team.
Being friendly to people and people being friendly to me.
Respect and respond attention.

Record 8 (Migrant)

1. Da dove vieni?

Io sono dalla [Nigeria] Nigeriano.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

[Porto] Marghera.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Ho esperienza buona […] e comprensione di persone provenienti da diversi paesi.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Preferisco lavorare con le persone perché se ho commesso un errore ho qualcuno che mi corregge e mi piace spiegare i miei sentimenti con le persone perché non so se sono sbagliato o giusto.

Record 9 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am form Nigerian.

2. Where are you currently living?

Italy, Mestre.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I am happy to be in Green Light and we make the green light and the video workshop and Italy class.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

_____

Record 10 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am from Nigeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

Italian.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

My experience in Green Light is the opportunity for me migrant to learn more and also to help the migrants. We also build the green light. Is also act workshop.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Green Light project is an act workshop where people all over the world came to see how we build the green lights and also we share our experience to one another.

Record 11 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Gambia.

2. Where are you currently living?

San Donà di Piave.

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I have learnt many things in the Green Light, it's really importnat here and secondly bring people together.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

We need to work as a team and deal with the Green Light project.

Record 12 (Volunteer)

1. Da dove vieni?

Padova, Italia.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Padova.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Questo progetto è stato una continua sorpresa, ci sono stati molti aspetti, soprattutto a livello emotivo che non mi aspettavo all'inizio; ciò che più apprezzo di Green Light è il clima aperto di condivisione che si è creato quasi spontaneamente.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Il clima di condivisione, apertura verso l'altro, aiuto reciproco, collaborazione, parità.

Record 13 (Volunteer)

1. Da dove vieni?

Messina, Sicilia.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Venezia.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Interessante, piena di emergia e di esperienza positiva.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Parlando anche solo con chi ci sta accanto, ascoltando la loro storia o semplicemente confrontandosi.

Record 14 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am from Nigeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

Tessara, Via Pezzana n° 1

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I [learnt] how to build lampada. It was a great experience being working with amazing people. It meant a lot to me having this experience.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Like this environment, is very open, respect, we share the work together. It make it easy and I like to work with this. I play music and eat good food. I see a lot of "facce", Italia, Scuola. I see good faces.

Record 15 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Edo State, Nigeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

Mestre, Via Miranese 165 Cap

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

Get to know people and have experience of how to make green light. The workshop is not only knowing how to make green lights but making friends.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Have fun , play music, staying together making. [...] .

Record 16 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

I am from Ghana.

2. Where are you currently living?

Am living in Mira

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I construct the Green Light using adhesive tape, wire, stick green color to complete the light.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

LiIn this environment we share [...] to each other. Whe we work, when we talk [...] together and we also explain to the new people they don't [know] no about the Green Light.

Record 17 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Gambia.

2. Where are you currently living?

I [am] living in Italy in Venice

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I experience [...] that like painting.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

I have experience like painting green lights.

Record 18 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Nigeria.

2. Where are you currently living?

Italy, Mestre

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I experience a lot in Green Light and one of the most important part is the film workshop where I have been taught how to handle camera and how to present my speech [...] especially in public.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Encountering with new faces, talking with different people, eating together, havingfun, like playing music at times etc.

Record 19 (Volunteer)

1. Da dove vieni?

Italia.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Venezia.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Un'esperienza molto intensa, è come un grande girotondo. Alcune volte ti capita di essere su ed altre ti trovi giù. Ma qui lo fai in compagnia, never alone in this space.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Assolutamente si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Partire dal presupposto che ho di fronte a me qualcuno che può insegnarmi qualcosa.

Record 20 (Volunteer)

1. Da dove vieni?

Italia.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Venezia.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

IL'esperienza del Green Light Workshop è stata cintemporaneamente critica e interessante. Sicuramente il (lento) processo di integrazione che si è attivato

all'interno della collettività è stato fonte di una forte crescita personale.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

La disponibilità d'animo e l'umiltà nel riconoscere l'altro come elemento indistintamente prezioso.

Record 21 (Migrant)

1. Where are you from?

Nigeriano.

2. Where are you currently living?

Tessara […]

3. Describe your experience of Green Light in a few lines.

I love this scool. I can paint the green light. I am happy I can talk to someone in Venice.

4. An empathic experience is a moment of connection with the Other, allowing us to know him/her as similar to us yet different. In attending Green Light did you undergo an empathic experience?

Yes.

5. List the conditions that enables empathy in participating at Green Light.

Respect.

Record 22 (Migrant)

1. Da dove vieni?

Iraq.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Mestre.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Questa è una buona esperienza. Perché gli altri partecipanti sono piacevoli. Perché è come una famiglia anche in classe e mi piace molto la classe di italiano e il lavoro che facciamo.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Perché parliamo, tutte le persone sono disponibili, tutti insieme ci mescoliamo, insieme è il lavoro, insieme è il mangiare.

Record 23 (Migrant)

1. Da dove vieni?

Afghanistan.

2. Dove vivi attualmente?

Tessera.

3. Descrivi brevemente la tua esperienza di Green Light.

Ho imparato a fare le lampade, ho conosciuto tante persone e sto studiando la lingua, quindi molto bene.

4. L'epserienza empatica è un momento di connessione con l'Altro che ci permette di conoscerlo come simile a noi ancorché diverso. Partecipando a Green Light ritieni di aver avuto un'esperienza di questo tipo?

Si

5. Elenca le condizioni che a tuo parere rendono possibile l'esperienza empatica durante Green Light.

Perché ho conosciuto ed ho parlato con tante ragazze e questo mi ha permesso di essere capito.

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Web resources and videos related to case studies

Tomas Saraceno

http://tomassaraceno.com

http://aerocene.org

http://www.tanyabonakdargallery.com/

https://arts.mit.edu/cosmology/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_3luQuhTr0

Dialogue in the Dark

http://www.dialogue-in-the-dark.com

http://www.dialogue-se.com

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aE1nTfSzTwU

https://youtu.be/cSAkJ4VyPxo

Portals

https://www.sharedstudios.com

http://www.amarcbakshi.com

https://youtu.be/wC1VHgOuqcM

Eye contact experiment

https://www.theliberators.org

https://inspiralight.wordpress.com

Lygia Clark – Rede de elasticos

http://www.lygiaclark.org.br

https://youtu.be/eLBtgVDs3qs

Green Light

http://olafureliasson.net

http://greenlightworkshop.org/

https://youtu.be/qQICXB8_LSc
https://youtu.be/HdnSSF9_U_Q

https://youtu.be/GRLu56rqeys