Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title:
From Object Making to Creating Experience: Odors and Sounds in Marketplaces in Colombia

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• Abstract (300 words):
The modernization of commercial practices, the introduction of big chain stores and the deterioration of infrastructure, amongst others, have made many marketplaces in Colombia less attractive than they used to be, in fact some of them are on the brink of closing. This situation has forced local authorities to include revitalization plans for marketplaces in their government agendas. However, new designs focus mainly on updating infrastructure, leaving behind intangible factors such as odors and sounds that could impact the overall renewal project. This research unveils the importance of factoring in features as the ones mentioned into design processes in such a way that architecture transcends the mere object making. Through participant observation and qualified listening methods, the study shows how odors and sounds might invite or deter the use of public spaces in Colombia. The study is conducted in two marketplaces in the
southeast region of the country. Results show that in the Delicias marketplace in the city of Palmira, the unpleasant odors coming from meat and poultry stands, intensified by high temperatures caused by design features such as a glass rooftop, discourages people from entering the marketplace. Moreover, the silence within the plaza creates a feeling of discomfort amongst visitors. On the contrary, at the Alameda marketplace in Cali the location of meats and poultry stands are barely felt, and the market is filled with a variety of sounds that range from birds in cages, bargaining of vendors, town criers to the occasional street musician that speaks to the vitality of the market. This study is an invitation to rethink how we can engage into object making, where space is not only defined by what is tangible but designed with what is intangible, in such a way as to incorporate into architecture a full vital experience of space.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Dr. Sabina Cardenas is an Associate Professor at the School of Art, Architecture & Design, at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, Colombia. She holds a Master’s Degree in Theory and Critic of Architecture from Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña, Barcelona, Spain and a PhD in Architecture from Universidad de Mendoza, Argentina. She was an Urban Fellow at the Johns Hopkins University Institute for Policy Studies, Maryland, USA. Dr. Cardenas has worked with the Colombian Institute for Science and Technology, Colciencias; and the Enterprise Foundation, in the United States among others. She was appointed the first director of Architecture at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, Colombia. Her research interests include urban design; placemaking; crime prevention; nonviolence applied to urban design and low-income housing in Latin America. Three of her projects have been included in Colombian Biennales of Architecture, one of which was awarded at the XXIII Inter-American Conference of Mayors and Local Authorities (Miami, FL., June 2017). Author of several books and articles, her latest contribution is co-authoring the book Urban Space: Experiences and Reflections from the Global South (2018). Along with her research projects, she has developed legal instruments regarding public space for the local authorities in Cali, Colombia.

Dr. Joaquin Llorca is an architect and musician. He is an Associate Professor and researcher at the School of Art, Architecture & Design, at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Cali, Colombia. Holds a DEA and a PhD in Theory and History of Architecture from Universidad Politécnica de Cataluña in Barcelona, Spain. His research revolves around the construction of a transdisciplinary approach between architecture, environments and society. Dr. Llorca has developed projects for the Colombian Institute for Science and Technology, Colciencias in soundscapes, which is his main focus. Author of books and articles, his latest contribution, is co-authoring the book Territories of conflict. Traversing Colombia through cultural studies (University of Rochester Press, 2017) his topic was the soundscape and the reshaping of territories in San Nicolas neighborhood in Cali,
Colombia. From 2013 to 2016 was appointed regional manager of the Annual Laboratory of Visual Arts on behalf of the Ministry of Culture. Currently he is working on a research project on the soundscape in marketplaces in Cali and Bogotá, Colombia.