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The Aesthechnics of Everyday Life: Suggestions for a Reconsideration of Aesthetics in the Age of Wearable Technologies

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ABSTRACT. This paper does not aim to provide definitive answers to the current debate around the recent line of aesthetic investigation known as Everyday Aesthetics. Neither does it seek to afford absolute methodological and categorial parameters to it. Its main purpose is to suggest a possible thematic approach that starts from a circumscription of the aesthetic inquiry in question to the world of design in its digitally connoted configurations, which today, more than ever, mediate and shape our everyday lives. It is hoped that this approach could contribute to clarify the dynamics through which the current state of the aesthetic is produced and perceived, and that it would encourage established aesthetic theories to reconsider the absoluteness of their traditional paradigms of investigation. But more importantly, this paper will be rooted in the growing significance that wearable technologies are potentially and progressively gaining nowadays.

I. Introduction

What is the aesthetic, *today*?

Until a few decades ago it was institutionally identified, justified and limited to the realm of art, which was its privileged field of production, manifestation and perception – indeed mainstream aesthetics *still* refers to the discipline as dealing with art, nature and beauty.

Nowadays, however, the traditional boundaries of aesthetics have been challenged by a set of phenomena and practices rooted in, and spread throughout, the everyday that are apparently extraneous to the discipline – that is, no longer exclusively art-centred – and are products of the current process of hybridation between “high” and “low” culture, or the intricate

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dialectics between depth and surface.¹ Yet, these phenomena and practices managed to gain ground among academic discussions, taking place within the fields of design, fashion, gastronomy, tourism, virtual modalities of leisure activity and socialization, human appearance, lifestyles and so forth... They all introduce a new experience of shapes, image circulation, creativity and consequent, compulsory responsiveness to such and several sensory *stimula* into the everyday itself. They generate often unforeseen shared and sharable taste tendencies, and unprecedented, or rather, previously unthinkable, aesthetic configurations.

Due to their polymorphous nature, the modes of manifestation and production of the aesthetic in the everyday, nowadays, might be addressed from several points of view, but within the framework of this paper, the focus will be on the relationship that exists today between digital technology and individuals, which we believe is already emblematic in the development of our quotidian system of interactions. These new experiential horizons are *literally* aesthetic – insofar as the term *aisthesis* refers to a perception by the senses – and, as such, philosophy should try to understand and get in touch with them. Indeed, the current set of practices linked to mobile electronic devices has made it a wide-spread phenomenon on different levels, in terms of shaping of taste preferences, sensory stimulation and perception (or receptivity), bringing back to the fore the term's etymological poignancy and often questioning the certainty of the natural character of perception itself (Matteucci 2015). All this not only in the framework of our daily activities, but also of our experiences of art and nature, “pillars” of classical aesthetic theories but, at present, realized through “untraditional” media.

In view of this peculiar situation, which is typical of our contemporaneity, aesthetics should, in fact, rethink the validity and absoluteness of its traditional investigation paradigms – art and nature – or, it should at least try to establish a fruitful dialectics between them and the elements that characterize, in an increasingly urgent way, the complex and multi-faceted aesthetic quality of contemporaneity itself.

¹ Wolfgang Iser addresses such dialectics in his *Aestheticization Processes. Phenomena, Distinctions and Prospects* (1996).

2. Everyday Aesthetics *versus* Everyday Aesthetics

In this redefinition process of the notion of the “aesthetic”, a central role is certainly played by the relatively new-born line of aesthetic research known as Everyday Aesthetics.² Its aim is to formalize a typology of investigation that transcends the boundaries of art (or nature), which have historically set the tones and defined the contents of traditional aesthetics. It is therefore focused on all those aspects of the everyday that have been neglected due to their too “mundane” or excessively “prosaic” as well as “superficial” nature. Everyday Aesthetics finally recognized the philosophical dignity of those features of everyday life that other fields (such as anthropology, sociology and semiotics, for instance), have made central in their research for decades. As a novel sub-discipline, it is still being drafted and, just like every ground-breaking element that interferes with a certain *continuum*, it generates some paradoxical issues, that if properly addressed could shed light – in this specific case – on the meaning of aesthetic experience more generally.

Everyday Aesthetics has several areas of interest: Kevin Melchionne (2013), for example, points out five of them, which he considers fundamental: they include our relationship with food, with our wardrobe, the ways we dwell, socialize, and “go out into the world for work or errands on a nearly daily basis” (Melchionne 2013). The list, though, could be extended to such topics as sports or weather (see Light, Smith 2005), economics, as well as the good practices of well-being and those of well-ness (see Matteucci 2015).

As far as it concerns the methodological approaches adopted by the various advocates of the movement, we can identify two of them in particular, which are classified, in relation to the position they assume towards the established aesthetic theory. On the one hand, some theorists still refer to an art-centred paradigm of investigation, by merely extending the range of objects fit for aesthetic attention, while maintaining traditional theoretical models and concepts (Forsey 2014). In the framework of this first approach, alternatively described as “The Weak Formulation” (Dowling 2010; Ratiu 2013), “Extraordinarist Stance” (Forsey 2014), or “Con-

² Noteworthy is the fact that the entry *Aesthetics of the Everyday* has been added to the Stanford Encyclopedia of Aesthetics *only* on September 30, 2015.

tinuistic Option” (Matteucci 2015) the aesthetic appraisal of the everyday takes place through a process of sublimation or elevation of everyday objects or activities to a level of *exceptionality*, which is comparable to the status of the artwork (the notion of “aura” as advocated by Thomas Leddy [2012], is emblematic of this specific philosophical path). On the other hand, some theorists approach the everyday as absolutely *ordinary*, by disentangling their parameters of aesthetic evaluation from every reference to the artistic realm. The latter is a methodology – symmetrically (as compared to the former) labelled as “The Strong Formulation” (Dowling 2010; Ratiu 2013), “Familiarity Stance” (Forsey 2014) or “Discontinuistic Option” (Matteucci 2015) – that generally stresses the importance of developing aesthetic attentiveness towards that, which provides comfort and security (Haapala 2005), or a sort of “sense of belonging”. As far as it concerns this second approach, the everyday is not *experienced as* “something else”, but its aesthetic relevance is rather meant to be identified within the *everyday per se*.

It is clear how this debate is extremely challenging, thought-provoking, and supplies material for further research, especially when the necessity to find a middle ground between the two, above-mentioned, “extremes” emerges, as proven by recent critical studies on the current “state” of everyday aesthetics. Nevertheless, such debate will not be further and exhaustively addressed in this context, although it surely provides a significant contribution to the development of the present essay.³

Let us consider again Everyday Aesthetics’ areas of interest: what emerges is an ample thematic inclusiveness which, if on the one hand is justified by the discipline being in the first phase of its development seems, on the other hand, to impede a punctual definition of it. Therefore, also in this case, two possible approaches can be identified: the first is the adoption of an “inclusivist” viewpoint, which is characterized by a broad thematic inclusivity (partly justified by the pervasiveness and consequent, frequent ineffability of aestheticization processes), such that it often seems to be too “fragile” and simplistic; the second, the adoption of an “exclusivist” viewpoint, which arises from the necessity to formalize a

³ For a more extensive analysis of such bifurcation, identifiable within the domain of Everyday Aesthetics, see: Dowling (2010), Ratiu (2013), Forsey (2014) and Matteucci (2015).

certain degree of strictness, or punctuality, that this recent branch of aesthetics sometimes seems to lose sight of. In other words, it advocates, due to the acknowledgement of both Everyday Aesthetics' "fragility" and "potential", *at least an initial* focus on a specific issue, in order to illuminate a more general question.⁴

3. Design as a Paradigm

The second theoretical option indicated coincides with the fruitful path followed by Jane Forsey in her recent publications. In these works she formulates a methodological proposal for the analysis of everyday aesthetic experience as genuinely ordinary, by narrowing her field of inquiry to *everyday designed objects*, rather than focusing on everyday activities, although she stresses the fundamental connection between the two of them.

The essential reciprocity between everyday designed objects – although with a focus on digital technologies – and our quotidian activities and interactions, as anticipated, is the core topic of this contribution.

Let's proceed gradually, though, and specifically from Forsey's identification of some properties that may contribute to find a middle ground between the two, previously addressed, and variously labelled, methodological-thematic "extremes". Such properties are: functional excellence, contextually specific knowledge, actual qualities of the thing in question, its quotidian use, and in-principle communicability of our judgements to others (Forsey 2013). Although Forsey's contribution would deserve to be properly addressed, in this context, we will limit our analysis to the recognition of its paradigmaticity, for it both affords a different angle in the framework of Everyday Aesthetics' questions, and also results as partly useful in the light of the understanding of the most recent developments in the field of ubiquitous, digital technologies from an aesthetic point of view, which is central for the present discussion. It, in fact, serves as an approach that could make emerge a series of current phenomena as sufficiently significant from a critical-aesthetic perspective (even if only as contrasting academically-taken-for-granted questions) and to which, a cer-

⁴ The same strategy is adopted, for instance, by Ossi Naukkarinen in his *Aesthetics of the Unavoidable. Variations in Human Appearance* (1998: 12).

tain degree of addressability should at least be recognized from the point of view of philosophical aesthetics' investigations, which, as we have seen, are no longer, necessarily limited to art-centred methodologies and topics.

To the properties enucleated by Forsey, I would add three further features – that partly overlap with them but which take into account multiple layers of design practices and activities that the Canadian philosopher does not consider, as they would probably not have been pertinent in the context of her inquiry – that in a previous research of mine (Iannilli 2014) I ascribed to design: a captivating appearance, usefulness (qualities which, if considered together, may be seen as a single property: hybridity), and ubiquity in everyday life.

The acknowledgement of these three further qualities arose from an interest in the phenomenon of an increasing popularization and spreading, within the everyday, of certain electronic devices – specifically of those featured with a touch screen technology and an Internet access – such as smartphones and tablets. As anticipated, in fact, they all introduce into the everyday, in a wide-spread and accessible manner, aesthetically significant configurations and dynamics. They have become crucially leading forces, which currently shape not only our taste, but the ways we perceive sensible forms and materials within the framework of our everyday lives, as well as the development of new creative and interactive, thus also often synesthetic, practices.

Furthermore, we are currently in the most acute and challenging phase of a process that started between the 19th and the 20th Century – the rise of *design culture* is clearly the protagonist of such process – and gradually determined, for the aesthetic experience, a shift from a *cultural* kind of paradigm (connoted by an aesthetics of gaze or contemplation) to a *cultural* kind of paradigm (connoted by an aesthetics of use, or rather, Usability, and more recently, User Experience, in which the importance of the *materiality* of design is progressively reduced, while the *possibility* of realizing a specific kind of experience becomes central). “Cultural” can be interpreted in two main manners: as the body of knowledge and skills evident in a given moment, or as the whole of (micro or macro) activities, which allow the development of an organism. In both cases – we must keep in mind the methodological perspective offered by design culture (that is to

say the enhancement of life quality, although nowadays, mainly, and inevitably intertwined with economic strategies, typical of consumer culture) – a relation based on an intrinsic manipulation and proximity with the object, although on different levels and in various modalities, is developed by both the designer and the user. On the one hand, the designer works so that the interaction with the object, designed for a specific function, becomes immediately accessible for the user. On the other hand, if the mentioned preconditions occur, the user can build a personal routine (which can, of course, be integrated with new elements and evolve) and a personal scheme of habits in various contexts (as in a sort of fidelity process realized thanks to the “quality”⁵ of the product), improving not only his or her system of competences, but also integrating (in a virtual or “actual” way) in the contemporary environment, which surrounds him or her. It is evident how all this could not even remotely happen in the context of a cultural conception of the object, connoted by an essential distance and inaccessibility of the latter, and by a consequent, specific kind of aesthetic experience that it might be able to afford. It is important to note, though, that this functional aspect of design is closely interweaved with the fictional aspect of our current economy, in which the pragmatic aspect of functionality itself is increasingly transcended by other kinds of values introduced by market trends. Such exchange between the *functional* and the *fictional* (Di Stefano 2015) aspect of design, certainly plays a central role in the framework of our everyday choices and aesthetically connoted activities.

However, in the specific context of the above mentioned research, the focus was on the role of touch screen interfaces in our current interaction with the world. It was observed how, in particular, services such as Google Maps, check-in through social media, social media itself, or any cartographically connoted and geolocate or social application, which usually contemplates a high level of image circulation, can shape – in different degrees and modalities of manifestation – our everyday, can make our relationship with the surrounding environment more efficient and “functional”, and let us see things that we would not have noticed, known or considered aesthetically valuable before. All this, thanks to the combination of the three

⁵ The term “quality” is bracketed here, for it must be understood in the context of the foresaid interplay between life quality’s enhancement and consumer culture, and not as belonging to mere traditional utilitarian criteria.

fundamental features cited before – a captivating aspect (as afforded by “surface” aestheticization processes), usefulness (not merely in a pragmatic fashion, but also meant as a sense of fulfilment, of gratification determined by the achievement of goals, which transcend the foresaid, nowadays often saturated, “mere pragmatic usefulness”) and everydayness (meant as constancy and ubiquity, both locally and globally). In that research, the notion of natural mapping (which is common, just like the foresaid properties, to both cartographic practices and to those of good design) was added to them, by expanding, in this way, the analysis on a semantic level. Natural mapping is a process that emphasizes the importance of resonance between form and function. Specifically, natural mapping “refers to a design methodology where the layout of the controls is intentionally arranged to resemble the spatial layout of the designed object or environment. [...] Natural mapping can be extended to the structural mapping of the physical human body” (van Tonder, Vishwanath 2015). Thanks to a combination of symbols and functions, it guarantees a high level of accessibility and usability of the object or experience, and also a high level of functionality, with a fundamental focus on the centrality of the human body (Norman 1998; van Tonder, Vishwanath 2015). This last observation about corporeality is particularly fruitful in terms of the suggestions that we would like to formulate in this contribution.

It must be noted, though, that further concepts were mentioned in that previous research: the concept of augmented reality and of immersivity (as well as that of *nowness*, as an extreme and immediate realization of the notion of everydayness). They were not thoroughly addressed, though – even if their complexity from an aesthetic-philosophical point of view was certainly recognized. The aim was, in fact, to make emerge the aesthetic relevance of a set of artefacts and experiences, which a large segment of consumers deal with on a daily basis, and therefore it seemed more coherent to focus on such devices as smartphones (Hand 2014) and tablets, which, as already pointed out, a considerable number of us own, use and interact with.

4. Developments

Although smartphones and tablets are the most popular mobile devices

available nowadays, at the same time, further aesthetic-technological horizons are rapidly arising and spreading, as well as the necessity to concretely constitute an aesthetics, which is both up-to-date, and that can make those phenomena, that have been gradually integrated into our everyday lives and experiences or that at least soon will be, intelligible. The phenomenon we are referring to is wearable technology, which, most likely, seems to be the “next step” to our current and extremely ubiquitous usage in the everyday of the foresaid touchscreen-interactive electronic devices.

What has been stressed so far, in this text, is the awareness of the crucial expansion in the everyday of fundamentally aesthetic phenomena, and the consequent necessity, in order to render them fathomable, to circumscribe the field of aesthetic inquiry to that which seems to be the most effective means to describe the peculiar relationship that exists today between us and our quotidianity, that is to say design. Nevertheless, at this point, two further circumscriptions have emerged as urgent: the first is the narrowing of design practices to those linked to touchscreen electronic devices with a mobile Internet access, and the second, to those referring to wearable technologies.

All this might seem quite “hazardous”, and probably experimental: wearable technologies, in fact, are still densely surrounded by uncertainty, as far as it concerns their long-term applicability in everyday human environments. Yet, they seem to be able to *embody* several features of the aestheticized (both on a superficial or deep-seated level), or ubiquitously aesthetic everyday, which, over recent years, part of philosophical, academic aesthetics, seems to have recognized as “addressable”.

Wearable technologies can, in fact, be seen as the current (but not final, and actually, partly still potential) stage of a path begun with the passage from analogue to digital in the field of design. A shift that started at the end of the 1980s, along with the development of Human Computer Interaction. All this determined the progressive re-modulation of the modernist couple “form/function” into the postmodernist couple “desire/technology” at the end of the 1990s. Such re-modulation was intensified by the advent of “New Economy” or “Economy of Desires”, when in Interaction Design, the priority shifts from Usability to User Experience (Marras, Mecacci 2015). Wearable technologies are an integral part of the recent turn towards “dematerialization”, “rapidity” (also due to a natural

tendency to obsolescence) and extreme “socialization” (although, mostly virtual), that digital technologies have been facing over the last few years and which is a specific feature of Ubiquitous Computing.

Now that the historical-material contextualization of “wearables” has been provided, it is important to focus on their fields of application: the virtual forms of leisure activity and socialization, war, fashion, health care and art, to name a few amongst the many.

The width and the heterogeneity of the just mentioned domains in which wearable technologies are currently active, or better, worn, is quite evident. All this denotes their intrinsic hybridity, which, after all, is also a specific feature of design in a broader sense. They are, in fact, characterized by a combination of artistic and scientific research, or rather, of a captivating aspect and usefulness, that is to say, a combination of desire and need, which is increasingly pervasive and evident in our everyday practices.

I believe that these few, basic concepts make emerge an extremely challenging and innovative set of aesthetic paradigms that connote our quotidianity, and that are, as already mentioned, no longer limited to the domain of art. What we have been witnessing in recent years, and are actually still witnessing, is, in fact, the shift from an art-centred to a progressively everyday practices-centred paradigm of aesthetics. From the aesthetics of gaze, which is often peddled as related to interactive or synesthetic experiences, but remains, at the end of the day, relegated to set up institutional places and moments characterized by a certain distance between subject and object, to the aesthetics of use, or rather, Usability, and more recently, User Experience, related to and rooted in a quotidian set of activities.

These experiences are based on proximity and immediacy; now the spectator becomes an actor (practices of code hacking and the development of DIY culture in the computer sciences, also thanks to the increasing availability and affordability of portable hardware and software are, in fact, quite common nowadays, in the age of native digitals), and the traditional idea of author shifts towards the broader and more inclusive concept of collective authoriality, where the single individual who “traditionally” creates a work of art, is replaced by a cooperation of skills owned by multiple individuals, from the designer, to the consumer who produces content (hence, the cross-disciplinary nature of this new paradigm of aesthet-

ics). By means of the process that I have just described, the fundamental principle of good Interaction Design is achieved: the minimization of the distance between the individual and the surrounding environment.

In this unprecedented horizon of aesthetics, or rather, *aesthechnics*, the combination of scientific and artistic research, or need and desire, often coincides with the dialectics between function and fiction (economy), which is a specific feature of our essentially commodified society. In this regard, it is no coincidence that wearable technologies represent the combination of two fundamental poles of our contemporaneity: digital technologies and fashion, which exemplify the inherent, already mentioned tendency towards obsolescence and towards the ceaseless image production and circulation, which are typical of our current experiential panorama. In other words, what we are facing in the present age, is the passage from a cultural to a spread, shared, or rather, cultural approach to aesthetics.

5. Interlude: Wearable Technologies *versus* Biodesign

The wordplay that the couple cultural/cultural determines once more seems to be useful in the description of a recent, yet successfully rising field of design, if we retain the notion that the term “cultural” can be interpreted both as the body of knowledge and skills evident in a given moment, or as the whole of (micro or macro) activities, which facilitate the development of an *organism*. This etymological point brings us to what can be described as opposing, although somehow sharing values and goals with wearable technologies: biodesign.

This recently born branch of design arose when a “new, more urgent, and arguably longer-term need” emerged in the first decade of the acutely industrialized and digitized 21st Century. It called for “a new revolution – the requirement for ecologically sound practices in design that guide scarce resource management, particularly in manufacturing and building” (Myers 2012: 12). Biodesign fields of application include fashion (bio-couture: bacteria-grown clothes), gastronomy, architecture (bio-tiles and bio-self-healing concrete), city planning, packaging, leisure activity, health care and art. Its main aim is to somehow go beyond mere nature or bio mimicry, which has so far characterized this research field. Nature or bio-mimicry,

in fact is essentially based on the imitation of natural or biological forms and functions, as shown, for instance, by Art Nouveau's phytomorphic decorations and structures or by Alvar Aalto's and Frank Lloyd Wright's, among the many, projects and works, which were designed to be integrated into the environment, although often in a purely metaphorical way. Biodesign aims at another kind of practice: a practice that would be active and effective on a more microscopic, or rather, genetic, level, while both generating bio-based material and using bio-based processes.⁶

Bio-design deals mainly with synthetic biology, but at the same time, given its main goal, that is to say, to enhance everyday life's and the environment's quality in a sustainable way, it also connotes a strong interdisciplinarity and cooperation of skills – from the scientific-academic field, to design, passing through art. But more importantly, due to its social issues-oriented engagement, this extremely innovative branch of design is not exclusively developed in University Departments frequented only by professionals such as the above mentioned biologists, designers, architects, engineers and artists but has also, over recent years, been opened to regular citizens, who want to learn the basics of the discipline and apply them within the framework of their everyday lives. This process is “facilitated by the availability of inexpensive equipment and emboldened by like-minded enthusiasts through instant communication over the web” (Myers 2012: 12). In these regards, non-profit organizations, or “community biolabs”⁷ are pursuing a DIY biology culture and making science more “captivating” for the average individual, working towards the establishment of a novel, environmentally conscious community that is directly involved in the development of biologically based materials, objects and processes which aim to make our everyday environments more sustainable.

Beyond the differences, what emerges is a number of similarities between wearable technologies and biodesign. Let's do a brief recap: cultur-

⁶ It must be noted, though, that due to the progressive miniaturization of its electronic components, it might be said that wearable technology precede the so called Organic Computing, in which the dissolution of the material aspect of design itself, corresponds to the possibility of modifying the human body, or more generally, any kind of living matter

⁷ Emblematical are, for instance, “The One Lab School for Urban Ecology” or “Gen-space” in New York.

ality, a social, collective dimension of production and usage, the so called DIY and “digital or genetic” code hacking practices, the combination of artistic and scientific research, of a captivating aspect, usefulness and ubiquity in the everyday, a strong interdisciplinarity and hybridity, and not least the possibility to use and modify living matter (as an extreme kind of articulation, as far as it concerns wearable technologies), with the consequent ethical implications, are peculiar aspects of both subjects of this “interlude”.

What is also note worthy, is the fact that the field of wearable technologies, that until just a few years ago was still considered “futuristic” or “utopic” is now even more real and realized, rather than theoretically “realizable”. On the other hand, the current literature (Myers 2012) shows that the categories that represent the state of progress of bio-design practices are labelled as “completed”, “in production”, “prototype”, “concepts” or “experimental fictions”. Among them, the last three categories, that is to say the more conceptual and hypothetical ones, are the most “prolific”, bringing bio-design, almost paradoxically, on a “futurability”, rather than on a contemporaneity dimension.

Nevertheless, as far as it concerns the “completed” or “in production” projects, these are fully emblematic of the above mentioned paradigms, and find a fruitful application in the fields of fashion and of those objects or devices whose dimensions allow their transportability. All this creates a conceptual and formal rhyme with the most basic feature of wearable technologies, that is to say their being wearable, but also the possibility they offer to create and share a specific identity, or image. The latter is nowadays often constantly changing, since it is also determined by market trends. Moreover, this process is typical of fashion and design, which now more than ever, are privileged articulations and socially and economically active statements about the individual’s aesthetic role in our contemporaneity.

6. Conclusions: A Workable Proposal and Three Possible Research Questions

It is exactly for all the previously addressed arguments, from the acknowledgment of a novel, current state of the aesthetic, to that of inadequate

responses to it from academic aesthetics, that we felt the urgency – although elaborated in the form of a workable proposal, since it is clear that we will have to wait for the developments in this field of technological research, before being able to proceed in concrete terms – to take the discussion to a different “level”. A level that is integrated to the user’s body, more than smartphones and tablets could actually do at this point in time, and that therefore greatly reduces the mediation (or friction) between the subject and the surrounding world (see, for example, Ryan 2014). In a way, then, that is spread and fruitfully liminal between the artificial and the natural, (and of course between artistic and scientific research, desire and need), a dialectics which is extremely topical nowadays and that we believe might positively contribute to the reconsideration of the validity and absoluteness of traditional paradigms of aesthetic investigation, or at least to establish a productive dialectics between old and new paradigms.

It is for these reasons that we suggest, in order to clarify the contents and methodologies for an aesthetics, or rather *aesthechnics*, rooted in the everyday and that can, then, make its significant instances emerge, to shift our attention to the phenomenon of wearable technologies. In fact, they do not just cover the broad range of activities that theorists of the movement of Everyday Aesthetics describe as the thematic pattern of their investigation (from our relationship with food, with our wardrobe, passing through the ways we dwell, socialize, to such topics as mobility, sports, weather, well-ness and well-being), with a specific and central focus on design, but they also seem promising for the establishment of further, contemporary, increasingly integrated, and almost paradoxically unperceivable, since they are ubiquitous, aesthetic experiential configurations.

In conclusion, three possible research questions, which may be answered, are:

1. Is it possible to define an authentic, contemporary aesthetics of the everyday, and that therefore is not uniquely bound to previous, art-centred criteria?
2. In the light of the significant spreading of technologies that mediate – and that basically facilitate – our relationship with reality (be it natural or virtual), how urgent is the redefinition of the notion of sensory perception

(traditionally meant as natural), which is essential to aesthetics, in terms of artificiality?

3. To what extent and how will wearable technologies effectively represent this eventual, unprecedented, aesthetic experiential horizon, which is progressively being embedded in our everyday activities and practices?

It is clear that these are only three questions from which, it is hoped, further, stimulating ones will arise. This essay, in fact, does not aim to answer them, but rather encourage a conversation and academic debate around them.

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