NORDES 2021

OBJECT/DISPLAY/ARCHITECTURE: INTEGRATING SCALES IN MUSEUM EXHIBITION DESIGN

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Even though it is widely recognized that museum objects, display design, and museum architecture greatly affect each other when it comes to museum exhibitions, their actual integration – during both the process of developing exhibitions and in the final result – is often lacking. This paper will explore an alternative approach to museum exhibition design, in which object scale, display scale, and architectural scale are integrated and worked with as a single malleable design material. Based on the analysis of a student project conducted at the MA program Spatial Design at the Royal Danish Academy and drawing on theoretical perspectives on fluidity and temporality within the fields of contemporary architecture and interior design, the paper will investigate the potential of an exhibition design practice that works in the object/display/architecture *nexus*.

INTRODUCTION

The physical makeup of museum exhibitions consists, roughly speaking, of three main elements: museum objects, exhibition display, and museum architecture. Most museum and exhibition design professionals will probably concur that exhibition makers must consider all three elements when producing exhibitions, since they necessarily affect one another. Likewise, within museum research, there is a shared understanding that exhibition design, of course, affects our perception of objects on display (for instance, Staniszewski, 1998; Klonk, 2009; Tzortzi, 2015), and that museum architecture – for instance, a museum building's grandeur (or the opposite), its institutional program, layout, and location – has a great impact on the museum experience as a whole, on the configuration and experience of the exhibition design, and on the singular object encounter (for instance, Giebelhausen, 2003, 2006; Forgan, 2005; MacLeod, 2005, 2013; Tzortzi, 2015). However, although the interconnection between museum objects, display design, and museum architecture is widely acknowledged and new co-curating practices are continuously emerging, museum exhibition making is still characterized by disciplinary divides (McLean, 2018). Thus, it is typically the curator who chooses and interprets the objects and develops exhibition content, while the exhibition designer gives form to this content and creates a spatial setup that frames the objects on display. The architecture, which is more permanent and, most often, does not have an architect to actually speak for it (although, it might be argued that many museum buildings are so prestigious and honored that their architectural masterminds are ever-present), is a very solid presence that can be quite difficult to confer with, especially if the museum building is listed. One apparent outcome of this, one might contend, is that museum architecture is conceived of as a simple container that envelopes the exhibition design, and that the exhibition design, again, envelopes the objects, sometimes with the use of vitrines, which can be seen to enforce the box-inside-box configuration. Of course, the different containers still affect what they contain and, indeed, most curators and exhibition designers will develop exhibitions – their content and form – based on the specific rooms in which they will be located, however focusing perhaps more on square meters and room layout than on architectural detailing, tectonics, and materiality. We do see examples of (permanent) display design that has been developed

https://doi.org/10.21606/nordes.2021.6

alongside the museum architecture, or architectural transformation, such as the Castelvecchio Museum in Verona, which was renovated by architect Carlo Scarpa between 1957 and 1975, and which is one of the most acclaimed examples of a museum design that integrates interior architecture and display design. Nonetheless, exhibition design that is developed *within* museum architecture, rather than *from* or in *correlation* with museum architecture, is still much more dominant, at least when it comes to temporary museum exhibitions.

According to architect Michael Brawne, who has written extensively on museum architecture in relation to display design principles, exhibition design functions as an "enclosure" in the same way that museum architecture does; an enclosure that "mediates in scale between the object and the space" (Brawne, 1982, p. 39). Thus, we might also consider this issue a matter of scale. We have the object scale, the exhibition design scale, which is somewhat similar to an interior design/furniture scale – of course, depending on museum typology and the size of museum objects on display – and then we have the architectural scale. But what if we start mixing the scales? What if we challenge the compartmentalizing practices in which museum architecture and display design are understood and developed as containers and enclosures? This paper will present an example of what such an approach to exhibition making could look like.

As studio tutor at the MA program Spatial Design at the Royal Danish Academy, I often supervise students who work with museum exhibition design. During spring 2020 two of my students, Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin (who will be referred to as L&E), did a collaborative project on museum exhibition design as their master's thesis, in which they mixed the scales of museum objects, display design, and museum architecture in very concrete ways. Their project, which entailed a proposal for a new (permanent) exhibition design at Møn's Museum – a small local historical museum at the island of Møn in the Region of Southern Denmark – will constitute the empirical case of this paper. The analysis will not focus on the design proposal as such, nor how it transforms the current museum experience, but will rather concern L&E's design methods and how these affected the final design proposal. The analysis will refer to L&E's own words about their design process, which were written down in a project report (a 15-pages document that they submitted together with their final design proposal), but will also add new perspectives which were not part of the initial thought process. Notions of scale were not a strong focal point within L&E's project formulation, but have, in hindsight, shown to be crucial to their approach. Thus, in the present paper, matters of scale will be used as a lens through which L&E's work is conceptualized and put into perspective in relation to a broader discussion on museum exhibition design.

The analysis will examine the different ways in which L&E have worked with the integration of scales. Firstly, it will look into the *adjoining* of object and architectural scales that some of L&E's initial concept models and analytical sketches demonstrate. Here the concept of display becomes the pivotal point by which objects and architecture meet and change positions. Secondly, the analysis will examine the way in which L&E have taken things *in and out of scale*; how, for instance, they have turned architecture into hand-sized objects (*out of* architectural scale) and, thereby, *into* the human scale. Thirdly, the analysis will explore how L&E have bridged between *interior and exterior scales*, and how they have included the aspect of temporality into their mixing of scales.

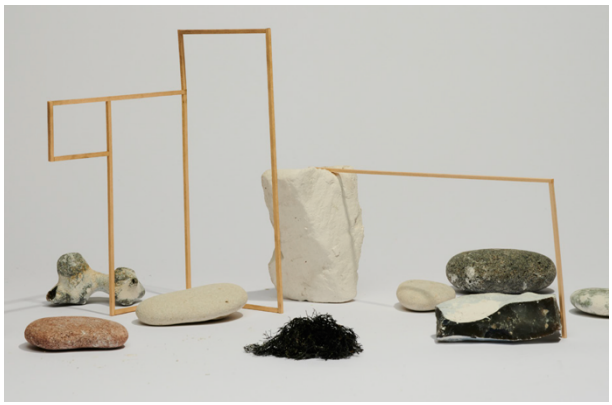
As mentioned above, these design methods can be seen as a parting from exhibition making practices, where museum buildings and display design function as mere containers for the objects on display. This movement away from 'container practices' and towards more fluid dealings with spaces, materials, and temporalities can also be witnessed in contemporary interior design practices more broadly. In order to reflect upon L&E's exhibition design practice in relation to these broader interior design tendencies, I will be drawing on philosopher Elizabeth Grosz, who has dealt with matters of temporality and fluidity in her writings on architecture, as well as interior design researcher Suzie Attiwill, who brings Grosz's thinking into the field of interior design. Finally, I will argue that working with exhibition design as a matter of temporal flow of spaces and materials, rather than sticking to the conventional 'boxing' and separation of scales, shows a great potential in terms of advancing exhibition making practices that are explorative, inventive and open-ended.

ADJOINING SCALES

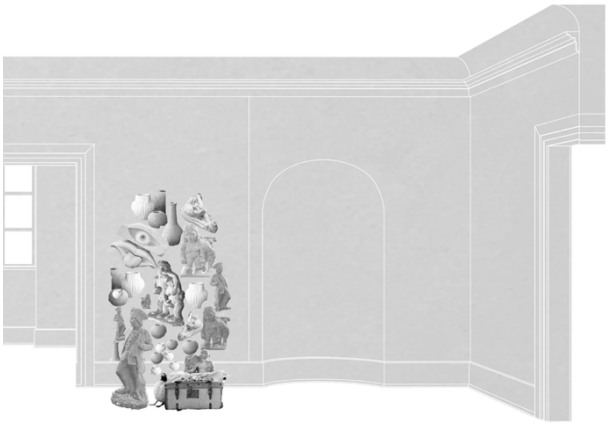
One of the first explorations that L&E made in their design process was a series of conceptual models in scale 1:20 that investigated different architectural elements of the museum building (an eighteenth century merchant's building in the small provincial town of Stege), such as arched niches, doorways, and paneling. At one point these cardboard and wood models were combined with various stones that L&E had collected from the surrounding landscape of Møn, and a series of tableaus were created and photographed. In their project report, L&E explain how the concept models at first represented the display, and how the collected stones represented the museum objects, but also that during the process of working with these tableaus the roles of the concept models versus the stones would interchange. Thus, in some instances, it looks as if the stones inhabit the architecture of the models (see Figure 1), and in other instances the models and the stones seem to be mingling and interacting on more equal terms (see

Figure 2). What L&E recognized during the process of working with these tableaus is that it was not just the architectural models that framed and structured the stones, but that the stones were also able to support and display the architecture; for instance by highlighting architectural formats (through similarity), but also fragility (through contrast) (see Figure 2) (Dannevang & Allin, 2020, p. 19).

Another example of this interchanging relation between objects and architecture – with display as the pivotal point – can be found in a series of collages, where L&E placed objects from the museum collection directly into the architecture of the museum building, for instance in a niche in one of the rooms (see Figure 3). In some ways, this resembles common display techniques like, for instance, in-built wall vitrines, but without the actual exhibition hardware such as vitrine glass and frames. They then moved the object group away from the niche and out onto the floor, but kept the arched shape of the display (see Figure 4). As L&E explains, the group of objects then become a "freestanding figure referring back to the niche behind it," thereby activating this particular architectural detail (ibid., p. 28). Again, it is a matter of an oscillation between 'architecture displaying objects' and 'objects displaying architecture'.



Figures 1–2: Concept models in scale 1:20 and stones. Photos: Emilie Kabel Allin.



Figures 3–4: Conceptual collages. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

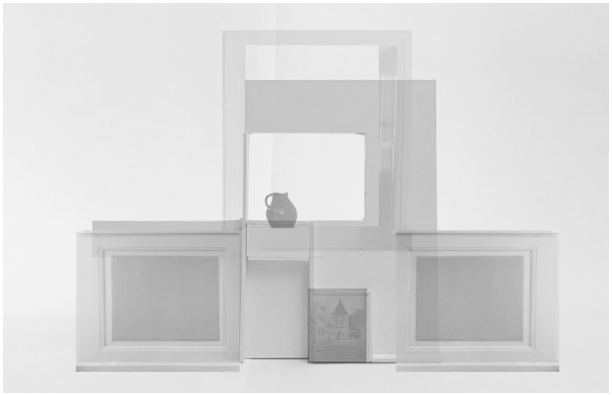


Figure 5: Analytical collage of current display at Møn's Museum. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

This interest in the 'co-existence' of objects and architecture can also be found in L&E's analyses of the current display design at the museum where, for instance, they notice how the specific placement of two objects – a jug placed on a windowsill and a painting leaning against the window niche panel – makes objects and architecture "frame one another equally" (see Figure 5). This, they explain, partly has to do with the fact that there is no distance between the two; that the objects are in "direct contact with the window niche"

(ibid., p. 27). However, it also has to do with the perspective from which we look at the display. L&E describe that if we focus on the jug and painting as the exhibited objects, the architecture is merely what is "holding" and "framing" them, but if we begin to look at the architecture as an object on display, then the jug and the painting become determining factors in the display due to what they "see" (and what they touch, one might add) of the architecture, namely the specific materiality and detailing of the window niche (ibid., p. 27).

What L&E did in this initial phase can, I believe, be understood as a *joining* of objects and architecture that collapses the divide between object and architectural scales. Thus, the scale of display design that, according to Brawne, would normally mediate between them – a perspective that somehow maintains their separation – has now been turned into a pivotal point: that by which they adjoin and change positions. Display, then, is not so much a matter of inserting a new material layer into the exhibition. It is not a matter of introducing a "middle scale enclosure," as Brawne puts it. Rather, it is about managing the relation between objects and architecture in a way in which they inform and support each other's material and spatial particularities.

Of course, such a strong focus on the architecture of the museum is not necessarily appropriate for all museum exhibition productions. For instance, a scenographic effect where the surfaces of the museum architecture are covered with different kinds of 'backdrops' and 'settings' might be sought for, or a 'black box' aesthetics where the architecture disappears in the dark periphery of the exhibition space. There might also be a wish to treat the architecture as a present but otherwise noninfluential enclosure, as demonstrated by the 'white cube' aesthetics of modern art museums. Finally, the exhibition might be intended to travel, which makes the display/architecture integration more difficult to pursue. Nonetheless, an approach like L&E's, which uses museum architecture as a productive asset rather than as a necessary, but otherwise unimportant enclosure, is still highly relevant. First and foremost, because it takes the predicament of museum exhibition design, namely that objects, display design, and architecture will necessarily affect each other, and turns it into the primary driver in the exhibition design process. In the following we shall dive further into L&E's ways of working with the museum architecture and its relation to the display of museum objects, focusing on the way in which objects and architectural elements are brought in and out of scale.

Figure 6: Fragment models in plaster and glass, scales 1:1, 1:5, 1:10, and 1:20. Photo: Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang.

Figure 7: Fragment model (copy of room paneling in glass, scale 1:20) placed in 1:20 cardboard model. Photo: Emilie Kabel Allin.

IN AND OUT OF SCALE

After the initial analyses and explorations of the relation between museum architecture and object display at Møn's Museum, L&E began an extensive modelling process where they copied and interpreted details in the museum architecture in plaster and glass (see Figure 6). With these *new* objects (L&E named them "fragment models") they could develop spatial and material compositions for their exhibition design. Some of the fragment models were created in scale 1:20 in order to fit the 1:20 cardboard model that L&E had made of the exhibition rooms (see Figure 7). Others were in scales 1:1, 1:5, and 1:10, meaning that they produced different mixings of scales when combined with the 1:20 cardboard model and when juxtaposed. For instance, a 1:1 model of a skirting board became an obtrusive yet evocative element within the cardboard model (see Figure 8). Some of the fragment models were direct copies of architectural details, while others demonstrated a more abstract interpretation of the architecture, for instance when the partial curve of a niche was used as the outset for producing a series of new shapes and compositions (see Figure 9).

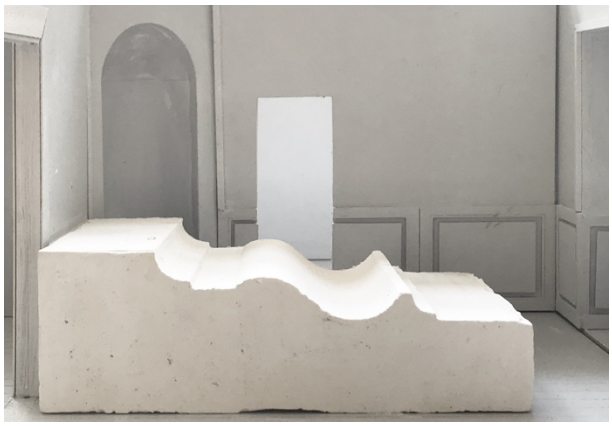


Figure 8: Fragment model (copy of skirting board in plaster, scale 1:1) placed in 1:20 cardboard model. Photo: Emilie Kabel Allin.

Figure 9: Fragment model composition. Photo: Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang.

Figure 10: Composition of fragment models and (Photoshopped) perfume bottles from the museum collection. Photo: Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang.

What I wish to highlight here, is how the architecture is fragmented and reassembled in ways that cut across object and architectural scales. Partly because architectural details and elements are turned into objects that can be handled within the human scale (all of these models are approximately 10x15 cm – that is, possible to handle with one hand), but also due to the way in which objects from the museum collection have been inserted (Photoshopped) into the model compositions; for instance, in ways in which the similarity between object shapes and architectural shapes, such as the similarity between perfume bottles and architectural profiles and a niche, are highlighted (see Figure 10). According to L&E, the main purpose of this mixing of scales was to explore possible encounters between objects and architecture in a manner where the spatial and material components of the museum were treated in a non-hierarchical manner (personal communication, August 7th, 2020). Architecture and museum objects became part of the same design material that could be manipulated and constructed without adherence to (proper) scale.

Drawing on Jane Bennett's (and through her, Deleuze and Guattari's) thoughts on "assemblage" (Bennett, 2010), L&E wished to make room for a joint venture between all sorts of material objects – human and non-human alike. They saw their experimental compositions (as well as their final design proposal) as assemblages in which objects and materials affected each other; in which they enhanced various aesthetic qualities in each other and, thereby, changed each other (Dannevang & Allin, 2020). Here, I believe, it also mattered that the architectural details and elements were reproduced in a scale that allowed them to create a group of similar sized objects and, furthermore, that these objects would fit the human hand. The fragment models could easily be handled and moved around in the process of trying out different compositions. In relation to L&E's work with Bennett's concept of assemblage, which, despite Bennett's emphasis on very quotidian aspects of materials and things, can still be difficult to grasp in relation to actual design practice, I believe that this process of interpreting and working with architectural details by turning them into hand-sized objects, was an important step to take. Elizabeth Grosz speaks about a similar matter in her writings on architecture, when she describes how:

> We stabilize masses, particles large and small, out of vibrations, waves, intensities, so we can act upon and within them, rendering the mobile and the multiple provisionally unified and singular, framing the real through things as objects for us. (2001, p. 173)

By working with the museum architecture as objects in their hands, it became possible for L&E to turn their more fluid and abstract ideas about how the architecture could enter into assemblage with museum objects and display design into something very solid and real (see Figure 11).

Through this method of taking things in and out of scale, L&E treated museum architecture not as a simple box providing a certain quantity of square meters and wall space, but as an object – or objects – with which

the exhibition designer can engage more fully. In the final design proposal, this has resulted in, for instance, display design detailing and exhibition furniture, such as stools and a table (see Figure 12), that repeat or are developed from the profiles, paneling, and niches which the fragment models explored. Some of these architectural details have been put back into their proper scale, while others, for instance the stools, which were designed with an outset in the abstract compositions with niche curves (see Figure 9), have settled in a new (furniture) scale.

INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR SCALES

Another way in which L&E have integrated scales in their approach to museum exhibition design can be seen in their attempts to connect the interior and exterior(s) of the museum. According to architectural theorist Albena Yaneva, who takes an actor-network theory approach to architectural production, museum interiors and exteriors are typically treated and cultivated as separate spaces within museological research. She explains how New Museology, with its focus on social and political aspects of museum institutions, along with material culture approaches to museum object collections and display, "share the assumption that the exterior is separated from interior (…), the museum is considered as a visual embodiment of external, past or present social reality" (Yaneva, 2003, p. 117). This tendency, I find, has a very concrete counterpart within museum practice, namely the numerous curtained and blocked windows that can be seen in many museums. Of course, there is a very practical reason for this, since museum objects often need to be protected from daylight due to preservation concerns. However, in some instances, this window blocking might also testify to a general disinterest in the immediate exterior and site-specificity of museums. Although the ways in which museums connect to and function as part of overall urban schemes has often been highlighted (for instance, Giebelhausen, 2003), and the architecture of some modern art museums, such as Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Denmark, strongly relate to the outdoor environment in which they are placed (Tzortzi, 2015), concern for the spatial and material particularities of museum sites is, I believe, still lacking. Museum exhibitions are generally considered and designed as (fictional) spatial entities that transport the museum visitor to someplace else – another time, another site.

In L&E's exhibition design proposal, however, looking out the windows is just as important as looking at the museum objects on display, and one of their designs points directly to this. Namely, the installation of pivoting, textured glass panels that they have proposed in the reception area and which emphasizes and

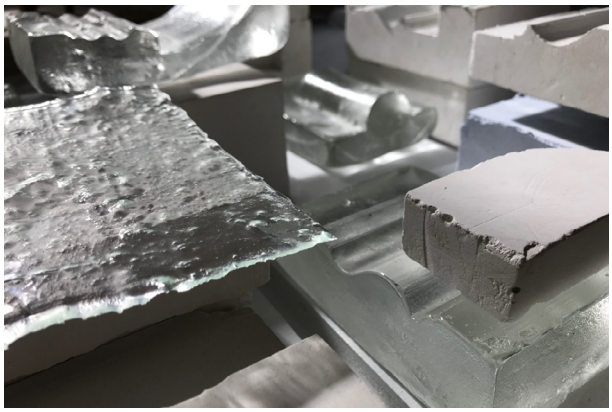


Figure 11: Material assemblage of fragment models and textured glass. Photo: Emilie Kabel Allin.

Figure 12: Design proposal visualization, exhibition room. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

Figure 13: Design proposal visualization, reception area. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

enchants the basic activity of looking out windows (see Figure 13). The same kind of textured glass is used all through the exhibition design and comes to function as the general 'filter' through which both the interior and the exterior of the museum are seen. Thus, the window installation in the reception area conveys the notion that exterior views are on display in a similar manner as the actual museum objects. Furthermore, the overall organization of the exhibition design has been done with close attention to particular exterior views within the

various rooms. Thus, the part of the exhibition that deals with the history and architecture of the town of Stege in which the museum is placed, is located in a room that has very clear views of the old town gate which is immediately adjacent to the museum building. This concern for the immediate exterior of the museum building can also be seen in the way in which L&E have included this exterior into their design proposal drawings (see Figure 14). Just as the museum objects are shown in the drawings, so are the adjacent exterior buildings.

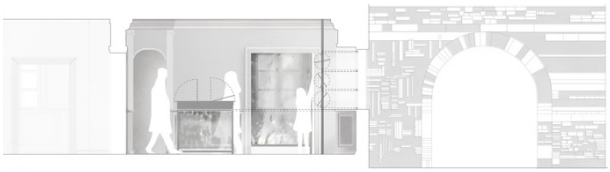


Figure 14: Design proposal section drawing. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

Figure 15: Glass experiments. Photo: Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang.

Figure 16: Analytical photo sketches of interior and exterior spatial sequences. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

Another way in which L&E have dealt with the site-specificity of the museum is in their work with textured glass, which they cast on materials found in the landscape of Møn, such as sand, gravel and stones (see Figure 15). By including the cast shapes of these materials in the exhibition design proposal, they reproduce the textures of the surrounding landscape within the museum exhibition space which, again, can be understood as an integration or superimposition of scales; scale understood not as a numeric feature, but rather as a matter of locality and domain. This superimposition of different domains can also be found in L&E's analyses of routes and spatial sequences. Based on Gordon Cullen's "serial vision" method (1961, pp. 17–20), they analyzed the characteristics of spatial sequences within the cityscape scale, the museum interior scale, and the local landscape scale (see Figure 16). Not only did these analyses give L&E an understanding of various spatial experiences in relation to movement, it also gave them insight into the similarities *between* these experiences when comparing the different scales. Variations between *exposed*, *enclosed*, and *sequenced* spaces were detected in the interior as well as exterior scales, and these characteristics became an important factor for developing the spatial layout of the final exhibition design proposal, which shows a particular concern for movement and tempi (Dannevang & Allin, 2020, pp. 22–24).

This way of approaching museum exhibition design as a temporary process – not only in relation to the design phase, but also when it comes to museum visitor experience – can be seen as another way in which L&E's project departs from common exhibition making practices. This is not to say that temporality is not a general concern when it comes to museum exhibition design. On the contrary, exhibitions are typically thought of and conceived as sequences of materials and meanings that gradually unfold as the museum visitor moves through the exhibition spaces (for instance, Bal, 1996; Duncan & McCauley, 2012; Kossmann, Mulder & den Oudsten, 2012; Tzortzi, 2015). However, in L&E's design process, spatial configurations, tempi, and intensities have not been developed within a self-contained exhibition space sphere, cut off from the exterior land- and cityscapes, as typically seems to be the case within museum practice. Rather, L&E have allowed the exterior scales to permeate and run through the museum architecture and display design. In this sense, L&E's approach links to contemporary tendencies within architecture and interior design, where spatial design is considered more a question of tapping into temporal flows than of creating or functioning within static containers.

STATIC CONTAINER VERSUS TEMPORAL FLOW

In her proposition for a renewed understanding – a new history – of interior design that emphasizes temporality rather than enclosure, interior design scholar Suzie Attiwill points to "the shared dominant structures of both history and interior design: containers and enclosures, be they boxes of categories or boxes of architecture" (2004, p. 2). Furthermore, she highlights museums as "three-dimensional histories" where this

"boxing" practice is particularly evident (ibid., p. 4), which resonates with this paper's critique of museum 'container practices'. What Attiwill proposes instead is the comprehension of interiors as temporal events that are not limited by the concept of enclosure and, therefore, are not separated from exteriors: "The interior as a concept of enclosure is *inter*vened and opened – becoming a dynamic spatial and temporal condition between things where interiors and exteriors are in constant production" (ibid., p. 6). With this (Deleuzian) approach, "the emphasis is not on finding and fixing meaning but on *making* sense, on producing and inventing" (ibid., p. 7); an approach that is also highly relevant when it comes to exhibition making (which can, of course, be understood as a type of interior design). The exhibition design *process*, I believe, can be a very important key to this, because designerly ways of working are all about experimenting, making, and inventing, rather than knowing and fixing, which, on the other hand, can be seen as essential attitudes within traditional curatorial work. However, it should be noted that the discipline of curating is, indeed, developing, and that new and less static formats and approaches are continuously emerging. Also, there is, of course, an element of 'fixing' within the design process too: at some point lines have to be put down on paper, and more or less static objects are produced. However, according to Grosz, this process of turning fluid material and ideas into solid things can also be understood as a "slowing down of the movements, the atomic and molecular vibrations, that frame, contextualize, and merge with and as the thing" (2001, p. 170). Attiwill continues this line of thought when she describes how interior design can be a matter of framing forces and flows:

> Interior design is re-posed as a process of framing situated in the flow of movement where selection and arrangement involve acts of separation as contraction that slow the fugacious exterior down and enable a temporary, provisional consistency – a "fabrication of space," an interiorization in the midst of movement. (…) This involves a shift from the current function of arranging materials and objects in relation to a given structure and space to one that addresses relations and forces situated in a fleeting, contingent exterior. (2018, p. 268)

I believe that L&E's exhibition design project is a good example of such a "framing in the flow of movement." It should, of course, be noted that the interior/exterior relation that Attiwill speaks about is quite different from the more literal museum interior/exterior that I have pointed to in the previous section. Attiwill's point is that interior and exterior are not defined by being inside or outside a given building, but rather that interiors are the result of interiorization in the midst of the exterior. Nonetheless, such an interiorization is precisely what I find in L&E's project. Due to their mixing and moving between scales they have renounced common exhibition making practices that simply arrange museum objects within an already given spatial frame, and according to their approach, any differentiation between museum interior and exterior is basically irrelevant. They have interiorized *across* scales.

Figure 17: Design proposal visualization, exhibition room. By Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin.

A further demonstration of the interiorization that Attiwill speaks of can be traced in L&E's description of their display design as "an instrument" that emphasizes and supports the "interwoven relationships between objects, architecture and site, and not least the visitor's engagement" (2020, p. 33). Their work with textured glass exemplifies this very clearly. In L&E's design proposal, glass is not simply used as a material for containing and protecting museum objects, as is the case with the typical museum vitrine. Rather, it is used as a design element that activates the architecture, the objects on display, and the museum visitors. It varies in transparency, from completely clear (non-textured) to almost opaque, which has a range of different effects. Firstly, it emphasizes and activates the temporal aspect of encountering objects on display, because in many places the museum visitor has to walk around or inside the display installations in order to see the objects more clearly (see Figure 17). Secondly, these objects are 'changed' due to the shifting textures and levels of transparency, which challenges the conception of glass in museums as something that is *simply there* due to preservation and security reasons, but which is otherwise unimportant. It often seems as if glass in museums is seen as a 'necessary evil'; as something that we cannot do without, but which should be as invisible and unobtrusive as possible. Contrary to this, in L&E's project, glass is worked with as an active material that affects object interpretation in very concrete ways. Thirdly, L&E's textured glass displays move beyond the simple containing principle that we know from typical museum vitrines and other kinds of museum glass enclosures. Rather than containing objects within museum architecture and functioning as a material layer between the object scale and the architectural scale, the

textured glass connects and changes both architecture and objects. Of course, some of the glass panes do contain what they display, since the objects, like most other museum objects, need to be protected from curious hands, dust, and climatic fluctuations. Nonetheless, these containing glass panes are still part of a larger, uncontained configuration of spatial and material mutations.

Thus, in coherence with Attiwill's thoughts about a *new* interior design, L&E have allowed a fugacious fluidity (what Attiwill conceptualizes as the exterior) to direct their design process, and when they separate spaces and objects, for instance by inserting textured glass panes, it is not a separation that leads to disinterest between the two parts. Rather, the separation – or the 'slowing down' – functions as a contraction that makes spaces and materials (objects, display, architecture, and site) affect and inform each other. Following on from such a perspective, it can also be relevant to consider L&E's exhibition design project in relation to a burgeoning (although not entirely new) attitude within exhibition making where the *experimental* potential of museum exhibitions is emphasized. Exhibitions are seen as experimental setups that develop new knowledge, not only prior to the exhibition opening (as the typical research-based exhibition will do), but also during the exhibition period, often based on interdisciplinary collaboration (for instance, Basu & Macdonald, 2007; Loeseke, 2018; McLean, 2018; Bjerregaard, 2020). The way in which L&E's exhibition design functions as a 'slowing down' of temporal, spatial, and material processes that integrate otherwise compartmentalized scales, might be a fruitful approach when it comes to advancing such interdisciplinary, experimental practices within exhibition making.

CONCLUSION

Within contemporary museum practice, exhibition design often functions as a separate material layer that is inserted between object and architecture scales. Museum architecture performs as a container that envelopes the exhibition, and the exhibition design performs as a container that envelopes the objects on display. However, as L&E's approach to exhibition design has demonstrated, alternative practices are, of course, possible – practices that integrate museum objects, display design, museum building, and site, and find new ways of utilizing the aesthetic potential of the object/display/architecture nexus. In the case of L&E's exhibition design proposal for Møn's Museum, a main driver in such an integrative practice has been the mixing of scales that took place during the design development phase. As this paper has shown, this mixing of scales has been carried out in three different ways: 1) by *adjoining* object and architecture scales through the use of 'display' as their pivotal point, meaning that objects and architecture display each other interchangeably; 2) by taking things *in and out of scale* and, for instance, turning architecture into objects that can be handled and worked with in the same way as museum objects, thereby allowing them to be part of the same material assemblage; and 3) by superimposing and connecting *interior and exterior scales*, based on the emphasis on views, movements, and the material textures that flow amidst them.

All of these design methods have, in some way or other, resulted in a parting from more rigid 'container practices' within the field of museum exhibition making. That said, it must, of course, be noted that L&E's work has been based on circumstances that are quite different from a typical museum exhibition production. First of all, they have had complete freedom in terms of object arrangement as well as budget and timeframe. Working within an academic study context is, naturally, very different from working within the limits of a 'real life' project. On the other hand, having more access to the building, object collection and, not least, being able to collaborate more closely with curators, as would have been the case with a 'real life' exhibition project, would undoubtedly have benefited their process. Even though there might be a great potential in breaking with strict disciplinary divides between designers and curators and in developing exhibition form and content hand in hand, or even better, not distinguishing between form and content at all, including curational knowledge in the exhibition development process, is, of course, paramount. Furthermore, having the opportunity to work directly with the actual, physical museum objects and being able to place them directly into the material assemblage of the design process would have been of great value. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 restrictions, such on-site collaboration and exploration was much more limited than L&E envisioned when they began the project in February 2020.

Nonetheless, L&E's project demonstrates that there is a great potential in integrating scales and domains when developing exhibitions. Their project proposes a way in which display design functions not as a material layer *between* objects and architecture, but rather as the place where architecture and objects *meet*; where they affect and change each other, and where objects and architecture affect and change the display design. This is done, first and foremost, by breaking existing boundaries between object scale, display scale, and architecture scale, and between museum interior and exterior. Rather than remaining within conventional confines, L&E's approach to museum exhibition design demonstrates a practice of exploration and inventive making – a practice where exhibition content and form are not set beforehand but evolve and manifest themselves in the midst of a fluid and uncontained object/display/architecture nexus.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I gratefully thank Liv Sofia Engelbrecht Dannevang and Emilie Kabel Allin for letting me use their master's thesis project as a case study for this paper. I believe that Liv and Emilie have made a very important contribution to the field of contemporary and future museum exhibition making, and I am very thankful to have been given the chance to develop my arguments based on their highly inventive work.

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