Review Paper

ARCHITECTURE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PERFORMATIVE PRACTICE

UDC 72.01
7.05)

Sanja Simonović Alfirević[1], Đorđe Alfirević[2]

[1]Institute of architecture and urban & spatial planning of Serbia, sanjas@iaus.ac.rs
[2]Faculty of Contemporary Arts, Belgrade, djordje.alfirevic@gmail.com

Abstract. *Performance studies and performativity are relatively new concepts - constantly evolving with great creative and developmental potential, which are often applied and related to various artistic and theoretical practices. Given that the relational framework between architecture and performative practice has yet to be sufficiently explored, the main research problem in this paper is the systematization of a discursively based view of the performativity of architecture. The architecture performativity is considered from the Performance studies applied to architecture, so the subject of research is focused on the artistic practices in which architecture is a tool, stage or part of performative act. The research process includes the systematization of the significance and meaning of performance in the tangential field of performance practices and architecture. Architecture, considered as an instrument of performative practice, instead of mere objectivity, foregrounds the effect it produces on the user in their mutual interaction.*

Key words: *Performativity, architecture, performance studies, performative practice*

1. INTRODUCTION

Starting from the position that performativity in general includes the conceptual and operational reality, this paper considers the ways in which performance (as a behavioral-spatial-time event) influences the new aspect of understanding the spatial concepts of architecture, i.e. the interpretation of space in terms of relations instead of figuration. The identification of the architecture performativity in current scientific and professional theory indicates a broad and compound categorization that can be reduced to several key definitions. First of all, this includes architectural performance (kinetic changeability of facade elements and the introduction of light effects), and then performative architecture (interactive architecture of varying degrees of changeability). Unlike the previously

mentioned categories, the subject of research in this paper is focused on architecture in the context of spatio-temporal situations that can be observed and theorized "*as performance"[1]*. By instrumentalizing the phenomenon "as performance", a methodological procedure is created - an apparatus for the analysis of architectural concepts that indicates the shift from scenographic appearances to processes, events, and thus the effects of spatial situations. Performance as an instrument in relation to the associated architectural space, produces new and other meanings. The theoretical context of architecture performativity research is based on the analysis of recent theoretical approaches within the general discursive field of performativity and architecture.

The analysis of the relational discourse of performativity and architecture spans artistic movements from the 1960s through the end of the 20th century. Avant-garde and radical concepts that critically relate to the elements and aspects of the architectural space, include installations, environments, situations, and performances as instruments of critical reflection of established architectural principles.[2] Intensive exchange of ideas within the architectural discourse of the 60s enabled a more explicit connection between architecture and other disciplines. During the 1970s, there was a tendency towards the integration of architecture and conceptual art, starting from a common theoretical approach to concrete implementations. From his point of view, architecture is an empirical event that focuses on the senses and the experience of space. Developing a dialogue between conceptual art and architecture, RoseLee Goldberg explores the conception of space as an *arena* where installations and performances are instruments of action.[3] Her interpretation of conceptual art is different from Lucy Lippard's understanding of the dematerialization process and the weakening of visual traditions in art.[4] Theater theorist Peggy Phellan introduces the term *performativity* to describe a way of writing based on performance rather than the literal descriptions.[5] All these concepts are important for specifying the notion of performativity in architecture because the importance of the formal aspect has been replaced by performance. Based on Henri Lefebvre's Production of Space, architects and theoreticians Jonathan Hill and Iain Borden build a critical concept of causality of architectural spaces by emphasizing the act, action, movement, and perception.[6]

In accordance with the view that performativity is not an external attribute, but an implicit property of architecture, the paper is based on the hypothesis that the performativity of architecture shifts the focus from the architectural work as an object, to the architectural work as an architectural, artistic, social or existential *act*. An architectural work is

---

[1] Performance as an instrument, an active and transformative entity, in relation to the corresponding architectural space, results in new and different forms of meaning. Such an approach applied in this paper is based on the elaboration of Richard Schechner's thesis, according to which performance is not a genre or discipline but an instrument through which practice from various fields is viewed *as performance*. See: Richard Schechner, Performance Studies: An introduction (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), p. 3.

[2] Miško Šuvaković, *Diskurzivna analiza: Prestupi i/ili pristupi "diskurzivne analize" filozofiji, poetici, estetici, teoriji i studijama umetnosti i kulture* (Beograd: Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu, 2006), 474.

[3] RoseLee Goldberg, "Space as Praxis," Studio International (1975)

[4] For Lucy Lippard, the focus was on the live moment of performance and the immediate relationship between the performer and the audience. In this sense, through active participation of the audience, the specific architectural environment is interpreted through the gestures performed within it. Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973)

[5] Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London, New York: Routledge, 1996), 146-148.

[6] See: Hill, Jonathan. Occupying Architecture: Between the Architect and the User. London and New York: Routledge, 2005, and Borden, Iain. Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body. Berg: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001.

considered as a compound conceptual-formal phenomenon that is determined by the behavior of users in a specific cultural context. Accordingly, performativity is the process of transforming space into a place of events.

The primary objective of this research is to systematically explore and articulate the concept of architecture as an instrument of performative practice. This involves delving into the multifaceted realm of performativity within the architectural context, with a particular emphasis on how architecture contributes to and is affected by performative acts. To achieve this goal, the study will strive to:

1. Establish a comprehensive understanding of what constitutes performativity of architecture, encompassing both its conceptual and practical dimensions. This includes categorizing various forms of architectural performance and their impact on spatial perception and experience.

2. Investigate the significance and meaning of performance in the interplay between performance practices and architecture. The study will shed light on how performance transforms architectural spaces into dynamic, interactive environments.

3. Examine how performativity shifts the traditional focus from architecture as a static object to architecture as an active, dynamic, and responsive entity within its cultural and social context. This involves considering architectural work as a reflection of user behavior and cultural influences.

To address the research objectives outlined above, this study adopts a multidisciplinary and comprehensive methodological approach that integrates elements from performance studies, architectural theory, and critical analysis.

The research will commence with a review of recent theoretical approaches within the broader discourse of performativity and architecture. This review will serve as the foundation for the research, allowing for the identification of key concepts, movements, and acters who have shaped the relationship between architecture and performativity. Drawing upon insights from Performance studies, the establishment of a theoretical framework in this analysis will enable the investigation of the performative aspects inherent to architectural spaces and their associated consequences.

A crucial aspect of the methodology involves tracing the evolution of relation between performance and architecture. Pivotal moments in the 20th century, such as avant-garde movements and the integration of architecture and conceptual art, will be examined to understand how these developments have contributed to the contemporary discourse. In addition to theoretical analysis, the study will incorporate case studies of specific architectural projects and installations that exemplify relation between architecture and performance. These real-world examples will provide concrete illustrations of how architecture can function as a performative tool and offer insights into the transformative potential of performative practice within architectural design. Through these methodological approaches, the study aims to contribute to the discourse on performativity of architecture and provide a more nuanced understanding of how architecture operates as an instrument of performative practice, reshaping the way we conceive and interact with the built environment. In this sense, architecture is not considered as a material object, but as a situation and an event. From the relation of architecture and parallel discourses of art, spatial situations arise in which the primacy of the objectivity of architecture is questioned.

2. PERFORMATIVE STUDIES AND ARCHITECTURE

As an independent academic discipline within the discourse of the arts, Performance studies appeared in the field of art and culture in the 60s and 70s of the XX century, through the pioneering efforts of Richard Schechner, who unified and systematized theory related to a broad spectrum of performances.[7] Performance studies question the basic meaning of the term performative. As such they go beyond and expand it, in a practical-interventional, as well as discursive, intertextual sense. In the earliest period, Performance studies were based on sociological and anthropological practice, which was aimed at the study of cultural and social events *as performances*, i.e. to the study of social life by analogy with theatrical performances. The discursive definition of performance outside the framework of art includes various social performance practices and acquires a transdisciplinary character that can be recognized in almost all social activities.

One of the starting points of performance studies is the avant-garde and contemporary visual arts, which expand the definition of the process of artistic work. Performance studies constantly absorb different methods from a large number of disciplines, which enable the development of performance art that is not only theatrical, but which dematerializes the object of art and approaches the conditions of performance.

Performative practices entered the domain of visual arts in the late 60s as an instrument of criticism of the totalitarian imperatives of modernism. Their main goal was not directed towards the production of form, although the consequence could be a physical structure, but the production of new types of spatial relations. By studying architecture *as performance* from the position of Performance studies, the focus shifts from the completed (built) artefact to the effects resulting by different types of performance. Performance considered as a paradigm in architecture, expressed by the relationship between the user and the space, does not raise the question of the form but of the process from which the project emerged. Thus, architecture ceases to be an object and becomes a specific form of cultural artefact.

Starting from the Performative studies' principle that architecture is not a three-dimensional projection of an idea but rather an interaction between space and events, it is necessary to give an overview of performative practices in architecture from the position of ideas, concepts and progress conditions. Within the research, we look at architecture from two key aspects - 1) *perceptual performance*, connected to a series of artistic practices, and 2) relational context of performance and architecture, which includes - *performance in architecture*, *architecture as a place of performance* and *architecture as performance*. Perceptual performance refers to the theatricalization of an object, whereby objecthood is established within a spatial situation in which the relativization of the relationship between object, observer and space occurs. In the relational context of performance and architecture, the emphasis is on the primary conditions of creation of the work in terms of behavior that centers direct, first-degree, gestural and behavioral intervention.

---

[7] Richard Schechner was the first to systematize performance studies into a unified and comprehensive theory. See: Schechner, Richard. *Performance Studies: An Introduction.* London and New York: Routledge, 2003, and Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*, London and New York: Routledge, 2003.

3. ARCHITECTURE AS PERCEPTUAL PERFORMANCE

Artworks that are based on primary geometric shapes and their arrangements in space, create objects and installations of minimal art that draw attention from the aesthetic appearance of the work, space in which it is located. The observer who enters the space of the sculpture creates a spatial situation in which he is perceptually confronted with the work of art.

Modernist art critic and theorist Michael Fried in his critique *Art & Objecthood* uses the term theatricality[8] to explain the character of interactivity by which observers are provoked and invited to move around the work. The resulting spatio-temporal perception is a *perceptual performance* – a visual, spatial and temporal event that completes a work of minimal art.[9] Such a performance starts from the perception of the work and ends with the operative and instrumental action of the observer. According to Robert Morris, the moment in which the observer becomes aware that he is in the same space with the work of artproduces a situation that constitutes the work.[10] Morris' installation *Untitled - L beams*, which consists of three identical objects with different positions in space, calls for movement around them in order to directly experience their real form. In this sense, no form is constant, because it is the observer who continuously changes the form by relative positioning around the observed work.[11] [Fig. 1] Viewed from the perspective of Morris's abstract geometric sculptures, architecture is what its immediate presence produces, so instead of a formative imperative, the immediate interaction between the environment and its users is essential.

Perceptual performance establishes a relative connection between objects, observers and space. From that aspect, the entire architectural space becomes a unique situation that calls for participation, and the observer is an integral part of the work.
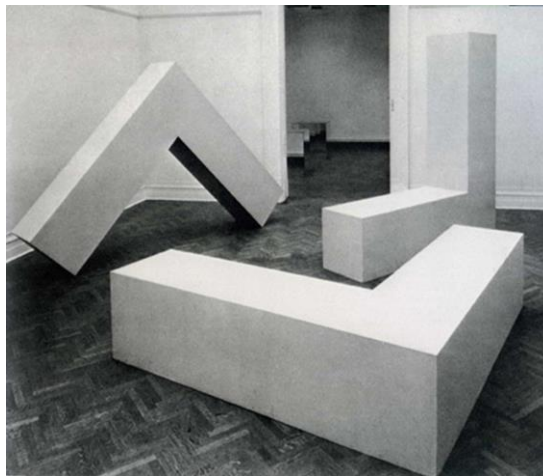
Fig. 1 Robert Morris, *Untitled (Three L-Beams),* 1969, refabrication of 1965 original. Source: Julie H. Reiss, *From Margin to Center : The Spaces of Installation Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts London: The MIT Press, 1999), 52.

---

[8] Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" in *Minimalism*, ed. James Meyer (London : Phaidon, 2000), 235.
[9] Šuvaković, *Pojmovnik moderne umetnosti,* 245, 255.
[10] Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture: Part II" in *Minimalism*, ed. James Meyer (London : Phaidon, 2000), 219.
[11] Morris, "Notes on Sculpture: Part II," 219.

4. ARCHITECTURE AS RELATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Performance in architecture is a conceptual paradigm related to a behavioral and existential act within specific spatial situations. Examples of action art practices such as happenings, dematerialization of art and fluxus, indicate a change in the perception of established interactions between space and behavior. "When the observer finds himself in the center of objects, art becomes architecture."[12]

Within the general tendency to liberate art from artificiality and mimeticity, Alain Kaprow founded *happening* - an event or performance in which the primary theater elements are abandoned. During the happening, the process is important, not the subject of the performance itself, so the associated architectural space is determined by the behavior of the user. Kaprow introduces the term *ambient* to describe a room-sized multimedia work that is treated as a situation.[13]

As part of the dematerialization of the art object in the 70s, the material, visual and aesthetic qualities of the work of art are called into question. For Lucy Lippard, the focus was on the live moment of the performance and the immediate relationship between the performer and the viewer.[14] In this regard, with the active participation of the audience, the architectural environment is experienced by the gestures performed in it.[15] Exhibitions like *Arte Povera - Im Spazio*[16] and *Ambiente, Partecipazione, Strutture Culturali*[17] showed works of art as a set of spatial conditions in which the presence of observers (participants) and their experience of the work became materials of art.[18]

Fluxus art, *as experimentalism, play and transience,*[19] refers to the process of engaging the audience in directing the outcome of the work. Fluxus performance is based on gestural intervention which, if it takes place in an architectural context, erases the boundaries between the artistic act and architecture through various actions and improvised intermediate events.

Starting from the premise that spatio-temporal situations can be considered *as performance* from the position of Performance studies, three crucial relationships can be distinguished between the performance and its architectural environment on which it simultaneously intervenes:

1) ***Performance*** as an artistic, behavioral act ***in architecture***, expressed within the artistic practice of the late 60s, explores new spatial situations within the associated architectural framework.

2) By observing and interpreting ***architecture as a place of performance***, inside/outside relations are re-examined, whereby the active involvement of the observer becomes a critique of many aspects of art. Unlike the previous case, architecture takes on a more active role, in the sense of 'architecture which acts,' not merely serving as a spatial container for an event or performative act.

---

[12] Vito Acconci and Heinz Schutz, *Vito Acconci: Courtyart in the Wind* (Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003), 16.

[13] Allan Kaprow, "Notes on the Creation of a Total Art," in *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. Jeff Kelley (London, England: University of California Press, 2003).

[14] Lucy Lippard ,"The Dematerialization of Art", *Conceptual Art:A Critical Anthology* (MIT press, Cambridge, 1999), 46-50

[15] Brian O'Doherty, *"The Gallery* as a *Gesture," Artforum* 20, no. 4 (1981): 27.

[16] Arte Povera - IM Spazio, September 27 to October 20, 1967 Genoa, Galleria La Bertesca.

[17] *Ambiente, Partecipazione, Strutture Culturali"* (Ambiente/Arte July 18 to October 10, 1976 XXXVIIe Venice Biennale, Italy), Germano Celant, "A visual machine: art installation and its modern archetypes," in *Thinking About Exhibitions,*ed. Bruce W Ferguson et al. (New York: Routledge, 1996), 260-270.

[18] Reiss, *From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art*, 101.

[19] Dick Higgins, "Fluxus: Theory and Reception", in *The Fluxus Reader,* ed. Ken Friedman (London: Academy Editions, 1998), 224.

3) Considering **architecture as a performance**, positioned at the intersection of art and the broader field of action within culture and society, points to an open architectural product that confronts the fictionality and literality of the receptive experience. Viewing architecture as performance, unifies conceptual and material aspects and does not set them as opposing goals. Formal categories of space (unambiguous and exact) are replaced by a process that is open, variable, and therefore evolutionary in its trajectories. In the context of considering architecture as one of the most artificial practices that transform everyday life situations into performances, architecture gains the status of a public artistic work.[20]

4.1. Performance in architecture

From his prominent position within Performance studies, Richard Shekner examines the issues of space and spatial relations primarily within the analytical procedures of *environmental theater*.[21] Performance in architecture abolishes the boundaries between the audience and the performer, and the resulting event is based on the interactivity between the creator, his work and the participants. The performative nature of architecture shifts the point from the aesthetic and object appearance to the experience of the environment from the position of participation in it. The space evolves together with the performance, so the architecture of the environment becomes a place of interaction and variability.[22]

Yves Klein, a French artist and one of the first protagonists of performance art, favors the idea of a pure relationship between the viewer and the work of art. Klein's performance *Le Vide* aims to constitute *artistic states* (pictorial sensibility) within the limits of an exhibition gallery space. Klein strives to completely dematerialize the object of art and achieve an experience of bodily presence in space *without effects, tricks, or deception*.[23] In the absence of exhibition facilities, the gallery space itself became the focus of the aesthetic experience. Art becomes everything that is inside the architectural framework or whatever happens during the presence of the viewer [Fig. 2].
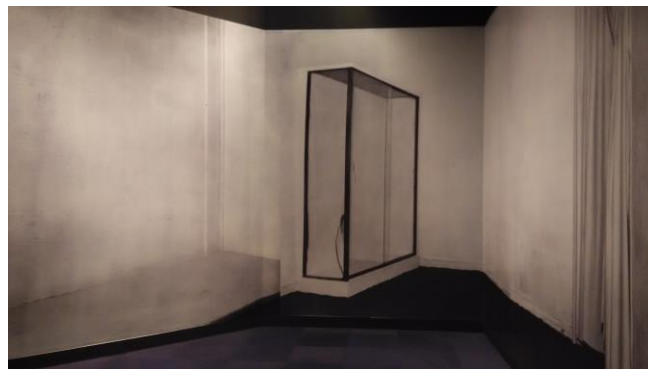
Fig. 2 Le Vide, Galerie Iris Clert, 1958., Source: Kaira M. Cabañas, "Yves Klein's Performative Realism," *Grey Room* 31 (2008): 19.

---

[20] See: Sanja Simonović Alfirević, *Performativnost arhitekture*, Doktorska disertacija, Univerzitet u Beogradu – Arhitektonski fakultet, 2016, and Višnja Žugić, *Performativnost arhitektonskog prostora: Arhitektonski subjekat u funkciji proizvodnje značenja*, Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Fakultet tehničkih nauka, 2017.
[21] Richard Schechner, "6 Axioms for Environmental Theatre," The Drama Review: TDR 12, No.3 (1968): 41-64.
[22] Richard Schechner, "Behavior, Performance, and Performance Space," 100-101.
[23] Ives Klein, "Preparation et presentation," 84

One of the most prominent artists of the conceptual *Site Specific* art practice, Gordon Matta-Clark based his artistic work on the research of the relationship between architecture, deconstruction and urban environments. Challenging the conventional reception of architecture as a complete form, Matta-Clark exploited abandoned buildings slated for demolition, as a material for his artistic intervention. He took out fragments of buildings with the aim of revealing their hidden constructive elements, to indicate new ways of perceiving space. Within the series of monumental architectural interventions towards their transformation into a sculptural object, the work called *Conical Intersect* particularly stands out. In this work-intervention *in situ*, he made a conical cut through two adjacent, old buildings from the 17th century, which were located in the commercial part of Paris known as *Les Halles*, instead of which the *Centre national d'art et de culture Georges-Pompidou* had to be built. It is a performative process of transforming a structure into an act of communication. [Fig. 3]

Fig. 3 Gordon Matta-Clark. Conical Intersect. 1975., Source: Bruce Jenkins, *Gordon Matta-Clark: Conical Intersect* (London: Afterall Books, 2011), 58.

From the above-mentioned examples, it follows that the participant of the performance, absorbed in the surrounding environment, becomes its creator by establishing relations with the associated elements and by changing their state and meaning.

4.2. Architecture as a place of performance

From the neo-avant-garde styles of art, various open, experimental and action artworks emerged, of which, those that took place in the public architectural environment, can be interpreted as an *event*.

In order to equate art and life, Situationists considered ways of producing situations, environments and *ensembles of impressions*.[24] The main question that arised is how to appropriate the architectural environment as a *mise-en-scene* of the situation that would transform art and life through *constructive play*.[25] Situationists sought to deny the stability of architecture through performance. In this sense, Guy Debord proposes a free movement - walking guided by the surrounding architectural impressions, with the primary goal of reaching a completely new and authentic experience. It is a form of experimental behavior that enables the relationship between the body and the environment, simultaneously on a conscious and unconscious level.[26] Such behavior is only possible outside of the usual motives of movement, because the signposts are actually immediate attractions and encounters. In this sense, walking is a performative act since there are no longer passive observers, but everyone becomes a constructor of their own environment.

Very close to situationists' ideas, the work of artist Vito Acconci goes beyond the scope of the optical perception of the architectural environment. It is about creating a situation that is predisposed to produce a bodily and haptic experience of the observer, as well as to produce emotions and associations. In his series of artistic works exploring the relationships between the body and space, Acconci tried to demonstrate that "Our body is not in space like other things, but quite the opposite, it inhabits and encounters space".[27] In this sense, spatial forms and distances are not objectively determined, but in relation to the central perspective of our body. Acconci's work is based on the active role of the observer who completes the work of art. The author states that the installation artwork is as successful as it manages to prove that architecture is never neutral, and that the effects it produces on the observer actually describe its performativity.

A paradigmatic example of the interactive relationship between architecture, body and movement is Trisha Brown's performance, *Man walking down the side of a building*, performed by an actor moving on the facade of the building, parallel to the ground. [Fig. 4] The vertical plane of the facade becomes a stage, while the body position and orientation of movement change the center of gravity of this performative event. It is important to emphasize that movement as a simple everyday step becomes a performative act in relation to the architectural space, and along with that, an ordinary segment of the city facade becomes a performance scene.

---

[24] Debor, Gi. *Društvo spektakla*. Beograd: Anarhija/blok 45, 2005. http://gerusija.com/downloads/Drustvo_spektakla.pdf

[25] Tom Levin, "Geopolitics of Hibernation: The Drift of Situationist Urbanism," in *Situationists: Art, Politics, Urbanism*, ed. Xavier Costa and Libero Andreotti (Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and ACTAR, 1996), 120.

[26] Debor, Gi. *Društvo spektakla*. Beograd: Anarhija/blok 45, 2005. http://gerusija.com/downloads/Drustvo_spektakla.pdf

[27] The observer, in addition to the physical presence of the work, becomes aware of the very act of perception, the space in which the work is located, and his own physical presence in relation to the work and the space during reception. Merleau-Ponty, *The Primacy of Perception*, 5.

Fig. 4 Trisha Brown, Man walking down the side of a building, 1970. Source: *Trisha Brown: Early Works 1966-1979*. Dir. Trisha Brown. ARTPIX Notebooks, 2004.

The *K9 Compassion project* is a photographic record of Zlatko Kopljar's performance, in which the artist kneels before architectural objects as a symbolic artifact of cultural, social and political power. The common denominators of all his performances are popular architectural realizations and the specific position of the artist's body, which redefines the existing meaning of an architectural object. [Fig. 5] With such a change in the status of architectural objects by the act of the performer, a new meaning emerges that directly refers to the performative aspect of architecture.


Fig. 5 Zlatko Kopljar, K9 Compassion series – Times Square, New York, Source: http://www.beyars.com/de_minoritenkulturgraz-gestures-of-infinity-zlatko-kopljar.html

Considering *architecture as a place of performance*, it is important to point out situations in which the status of architectural objects changes through their direct interaction with the performer, user or observer. In those situations, the formal, aesthetic and scenic properties of architecture become neglected, and instead, the architectural space becomes an actor of the event and simultaneously creates a performance.

4.3. Architecture as performance

In order to understand the conceptualization of *architecture as performance*, it is necessary to point out the difference between *architectural performative* and *architectural practice*.[28] If performance refers to different manners of behavior (the subject of Performance studies), then *architectural performative* is related to behavioral performance within a specific spatial situation. On the other hand, *architectural practice* is the socially institutionalized procedure of articulation and production of living space. The connection between performative and practice can be shown by the relation *space - movement - event*.

Starting from the view that there is no space without events and that bodies generate space by moving through it, architect Bernard Tschumi considered functional aspect as inseparable from the associated space. In the network project *Parc de la Villette* [Fig. 6], folies are abstract records, frozen frames in the process of constant transformation, and their appearance is real, material and performative in the final outcome. From the performative perspective, as this project shows, the movement of the body in space is as important as
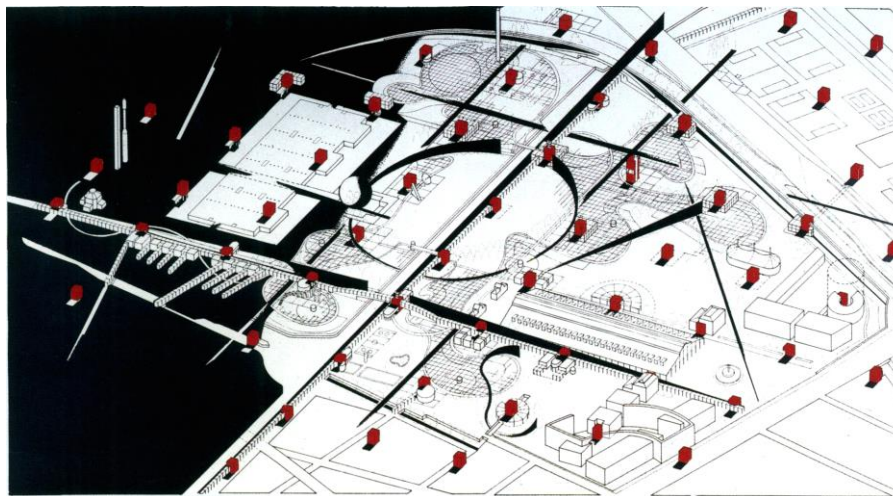
Fig. 6 Bernard Tschumi, Parc de la Villette, source: Bernard Tschumi, "Disjunctions", *Perspecta*, 1987, Vol. 23 (1987), p. 111

---

[28] Alongside this differentiation, it is also important to highlight the difference between the terms 'architectural performative' and 'performative architecture'. Architectural performative pertains to the behavioral performance or act within a specific social or spatial situation, leading to a change in its status, identity, or interpretation. In this sence, the primary considerations become the conditions of creation and the meaning of the work, i.e., the context and conventions of the performance act. The identification of performative architecture in current theoretical and professional discussions results in a broad and complex categorization that can be summarized by several key definitions. This includes, above all, interactive architecture of varying degrees and types of variability regarding to visual information and sensations or adaptability of architecture to environmental conditions.

the space itself. If experienced space, according to Tschumi, unites imagined and perceived space[29], then architecture ceases to be mere stage (background, frame) of activity, and becomes the activity itself.[30]

With the *Blur Building*[31], architects Diller and Scofidio have destabilized the conventional framework of architecture[32]. The characteristics of permanence and monumentality of the object have been replaced by the use of an ephemeral fog mechanism that can control the consistency of the form. The cloud provokes movement that is completely unregulated. On that occasion, architecture as performance was expressed through the process of dematerialization of architecture and materialization of technology. Diller and Scofidio refer to the instruments of the theater in terms of directing events and attention accordingly. Unlike architecture as a scene, architecture becomes a direct expression of existence and presence in space. The main aim was to create conditions in architecture so that liveness and mediated experience cannot be distinguished and defined as independent and different categories.[33] [Fig. 7]

Fig. 7 Diller + Scofidio, Blur Building, source: https://www.moma.org/collection/works/105183

Iain Borden explains the essence of architecture with the model of architectural performative, taking into account space, time and the body. He uses skateboarding as an apparatus for perceiving the environment, describing architecture as a set of flows, experiences and an iterative process of space production.[34] Observing in this way, the city is transformed into a series of ramps, surfaces and textures, instead of the conventional determinants of roads, walls and stairs. From this perspective, architecture has no predetermined or fixed meaning, instead, skateboarding introduces it where it did not exist before. Borden criticizes the formal and material aspect of the interpretation of an architectural work, stating that unlike a fixed form, space is essentially expressed by ideas and experience.

---

[29] Bernard Tschumi, "Questions of Space: The Pyramid and the Labyrinth (or the Architectural Paradox)," *Studio International* (1975): 136-42.
[30] Tschumi, *Questions of Space*, 95.
[31] Blur Building, Lake Neuchatel, 2002 Swiss exposition
[32] Aaron Betsky, "Diller + Scofidio: Under Surveillance," *Architecture* 89, no. 6 (2000): 133.
[33] Patricia C. Phillips, "A Parallax Practice: A Conversation with Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio," *Art Journal* 63, no. 3 (2004): 76.
[34] Iain Borden, *Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body* (Berg: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001), 5.

According to the analysis of previous examples of the relational context of performance and architecture, it can be concluded that *performance in architecture* is the initial moment of the overcoming static observation, towards interaction and theatricality. *Architecture as a place of performance* and *architecture as performance* are situations in which the status of an architectural object changes - in the first case by behavior, in the second by the process of dematerialization, to the concept and idea.

5. CONCLUSION

In the context of the interplay between architecture and performative practices, this study has identified distinctive situations, signifying a transition from mimetic approaches to conceiving architecture as a cultural artifact. The research aligns with the overarching goal of delineating the transformative potential of performance in the context of architecture. The proposed methodological approach, rooted in Performance Studies, expands the conceptualization of performance beyond its conventional boundaries within the performing arts, encompassing elements of presence, activity, and behavior across diverse human activities. Building upon this framework, the study has demonstrated the conceptualization of architecture through performance, wherein it assumes a multifaceted role as an instrument for enacting social and existential acts.

Through an in-depth analysis spanning the realms of art, performative practices, and architecture, the research has discerned two critical dimensions that forge a connection between architecture and performative practice—1) *perceptual performance*, linked to a range of artistic practices, and 2) the *relational context of performance and architecture*. Perceptual performance grounds objectivity within spatial situations, where the dynamic relationship between the object, the observer, and the space comes to the forefront. In the relational context of performance and architecture, the emphasis centers on the foundational conditions that shape a work in terms of behavior. Within this context, three relevant levels of observation have been identified— *performance in architecture*, *architecture as a place of performance*, and *architecture as performance*. Performance in architecture, a hallmark of late 60s artistic practice, marks the initial departure from static observation, ushering in interaction and theatricality. Viewing and interpreting architecture as a place of performance signifies a transformation in the status of an architectural object, contingent upon behavior or performance. The active participation of the observer serves as a critique not only of formal artistic aspects but also highlights the challenges of contemporary social conditions. It is essential to note that the consideration of architecture as performance transcends the character of the event occurring within it, necessitating an examination within the manifold layers of its reception.

The unique contribution of this paper lies in the exploration of diverse forms of performative practices within architecture and the identification of distinct models of performativity of architecture. These findings are contextualized within the methodological framework of Performance Studies and the various artistic disciplines it encompasses. The research illuminates the multifaceted nature of performativity, enhancing the understanding of its transformative potential within the built environment.

REFERENCES

1. Betsky, "Diller + Scofidio: Under Surveillance", Architecture 89, no. 6 (2000): 128-147.
2. Kaprow, Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life. Edited by Jeff Kelley, London, England: University of California Press, 2003.

3. O'Doherty, "The Gallery as a Gesture", In Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space, Brian O'Doherty, Berkeley: University of Califorina Press, 1999.
4. Tschumi, Questions of Space: Lectures on Architecture, London: Architectural Association, 1990.
5. Xavier and L. Andreotti ed. Situationists: Art, Politics, Urbanism, Barcelona: Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona and ACTAR, 1996.
6. Higgins, "Fluxus: Theory and Reception." In The Fluxus Reader, edited by Ken Friedman. London: Academy Editions, 1998.
7. Celant, "A visual machine: art installation and its modern archetypes',' In Thinking About Exhibitions,edited by Bruce W Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg, and Sandy Nairne, 260-270. New York, London: Routledge, 1996.
8. Debor, Društvo spektakla. Beograd: Anarhija/blok 45, 2005. http://gerusija.com/downloads/Drustvo_spektakla.pdf
9. Borden, Skateboarding, Space and the City: Architecture and the Body, Berg: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001.
10. H. Reiss, From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art, Cambridge, Massachusetts London: The MIT Press, 1999.
11. Hill, Occupying Architecture: Between the Architect and the User, London and New York: Routledge, 2005.
12. Lippard, "The Dematerialization of Art", Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology, Cambridge: MIT press, 1999.
13. Lippard, Six Years: The dematerialization of art object from 1966-1972, London: Studio Vista, 1973.
14. Fried, Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
15. Merleau-Ponty, The Primacy of Perception, edited by James M. Edie, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964.
16. M. Šuvaković, Diskurzivna analiza: Prestupi i/ili pristupi "diskurzivne analize" filozofiji, poetici, estetici, teoriji i studijama umetnosti i kulture, Beograd: Univerzitet umetnosti u Beogradu, 2006.
17. M. Šuvaković, Pojmovnik teorije umetnosti, Beograd: Orion Art, 2011
18. Phelan, Unmarked: The Politics of Performance, London, New York: Routledge, 1996, 146-148.
19. Phillips, "A Parallax Practice: A Conversation with Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio", Art Journal 63, no. 3 (2004): 62-79
20. Goldberg, "Space as Praxis", Studio International (1975)
21. Morris, "Notes on Sculpture: Part II" in Minimalism, Edited by James Meyer, London: Phaidon, 2000.
22. Schechner, "6 Axioms for Environmental Theatre", The Drama Review: TDR 12, No.3 (1968): 41-64.
23. R. Schechner, "Behavior, Performance, and Performance Space", Perspecta 26 (1990): 97-102.
24. R. Schechner, Performance Studies: An Introduction, London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
25. R. Schechner, Performance Theory, London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
26. Simonović Alfirević, Performativnost arhitekture, Doktorska disertacija, Univerzitet u Beogradu - Arhitektonski fakultet, 2016.
27. Acconci and H. Schutz, Vito Acconci: Courtyart in the Wind, Berlin: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2003.
28. Y. Klein, "Preparation et presentation", In Le Depassement de la problematique de l'art et autres ecrits, edited by Marie Anne Sichere and Didier Semin, Paris: Ecole Nationale Superieure des Beaux Arts, 2003.
29. Ž. Višnja, Performativnost arhitektonskog prostora: Arhitektonski subjekat u funkciji proizvodnje značenja, Doktorska disertacija, Univerzitet u Novom Sadu, Fakultet tehničkih nauka, 2017.

ARHITEKTURA KAO INSTRUMENT PERFORMATIVNE PRAKSE

Studije performansa i performativnost su relativno novi koncepti - konstantno evoluirajući sa velikim kreativnim i razvojnim potencijalom, koji se često primenjuju i povezuju sa različitim umetničkim i teorijskim praksama. S obzirom na to da relacionalni okvir između arhitekture i performativne prakse još uvek nije dovoljno istražen, glavni problem istraživanja u ovom radu je sistematično razmatranje performativnosti arhitekture na osnovu diskurzivnog pristupa. Performativnost arhitekture se posmatra kroz primenu studija performansa u arhitekturi, pa je predmet istraživanja usmeren na umetničke prakse u kojima arhitektura predstavlja alatku, scenu ili deo performativnog čina. Proces istraživanja obuhvata sistematično razmatranje značaja i značenja performansa u tangencijalnom polju performans praksi i arhitekture. Arhitektura, posmatrana kao instrument performativne prakse, umesto pukog objektiviteta, ističe efekat koji proizvodi na korisnika u njihovoj međusobnoj interakciji

Ključne reči: *performativnost, arhitektura, Studije performansa, performativna praksa*