# THE RISE OF THE CURATOR AND ARCHITECTURE ON DISPLAY

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**ABSTRACT**

This thesis constitutes a new approach to contemporary exhibition studies, a field of research that has until now dedicated little attention to connections between exhibitions of contemporary art and those of architecture. The late 1970s saw a 'historical turn' in the architectural discourse, which alluded to the rediscovery of history, after its abandonment by all the Modern masters, and developed in close alignment with architecture's project of autonomy. This thesis proposes a reading of this period in relation to the formative moment for contemporary curatorial practices that brought art and architecture together in unprecedented ways. It takes its starting point from the coexisting and often contradictory spatial representations of art and architecture that occur in exhibitions, which constitute the inherently paradoxical foundations – and legacy – of today's curatorial discourse.

The timeframe of the late 1970s, which is this study's primary focus, marks the beginning of the institutionalisation of the architecture exhibition: The opening of the Centre Pompidou in Paris (1977), the founding of ICAM in Helsinki (1979), and the first official International Architecture Biennale in Venice (1980), all of which promoted architecture within the museum. This period also saw the idealism of the social, political and artistic revolutions of 1968 finally dissipate, marking the emergence of a new conservatism. The concurrent postmodernisation of the cultural discourse, together with the post-industrial era's changing economic climate, prompted a need to redefine the purpose and position of the architectural profession. The resulting new architecture not only developed within the space of art, but also substantially reshaped it, provoking numerous artistic and curatorial responses, which continue to this day.

In order to explore and elucidate the connections between the fields of architecture, contemporary art and curatorial practices, the chapters consider the often-overlapping notions of architecture as object, concept, process, media and context through period case studies, including examples of the 'void shows' and artist museums, Ungers' building of the DAM, Friedman's *Street Museum,* Frankfurt's Museumsufer, Matta-Clark's and Kabakov's respective practices and Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima' at the first Venice Biennale of Architecture. Surveying the separate models of architectural displays, drawn from different institutional and disciplinary contexts of the late 1970s and early 1980s, this thesis questions how these different exhibition typologies have expanded the definition of architecture. It also investigates the ways in which contemporary curatorial and art practices have been informed and shaped by architecture, and, how these curatorial representations of architecture adhere to the wider cultural, political and economic contexts. Ultimately, the thesis reconsiders the past as a way to grasp the present, and, through the analysis of the socio-political and economic contexts of the case studies, it builds a critique of the globalised hyper-acceleration of contemporary curatorial production.

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**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

**PREFACE**

A paradox is a contradictory proposition, a statement that can be profoundly true and misleading at the same time. Writing this PhD has often felt like a paradox. If this thesis articulates a critique of today's hyper-accelerated curatorial production, it also contributes to its growing literature. However, as Carl Rogers wrote, 'The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I change.'[1] This thought and principle has accompanied and outlined my journey as both writer and practitioner, in which I have assumed multiple roles, within and outside the academy, as a scholar, independent curator and museum professional.

Moving between practice and theory constitutes a precarious proposition; yet, the schisms and discrepancies that link these disconnected worlds are the ones that set the most challenging and curious, and arguably the most vital, questions. Inhabiting this in-between space, at a time shaped by the divergence and conflict between various systems, produced a creative tension that provided the starting point for this work. It is interesting to note that when I started writing this thesis there was hardly any literature on this specific subject, while the last five years has seen the production of a daunting number of thematic publications dedicated to the exhibition of contemporary architecture, a number that seems to multiply exponentially. This thesis is intended to be neither a practical handbook nor an abstract theory of contemporary curating, but rather an expansive mapping and questioning of its fragmentary mode, as it is articulated and practised.

The fable of our fragmented contemporary world is in its allusion to interdisciplinarity. This became clear to me at an event at the RCA in 2009, when Nigel Coates – Professor of Architecture at the College at the time, and aspiring curator himself – had invited former directors of the Venice Architecture Biennale for a public symposium. When Aaron Betsky presented his proposition, an architecture beyond building, the divide within the audience was palpable. The opposing views of the students of fine art and those of architecture demonstrated the same territorial debate that in recent decades has been unfolding within – and often outside – the walls of the museum. As the authorial role of the curator supersedes all other means of cultural production, artists and architects alike compete as curators. The 1960s and 1970s, a formative moment for the contemporary independent curator, also saw the expansion of the fields of art and architecture, which, respectively, developed in each other's orbit. Yet, despite their apparent contract that largely determines both fields today, there seems to be little accord between artists and architects. Even if the museum alludes to the merging of these two fields, only a few visit both the art and the architecture biennales in Venice: artists and architects talk different talks, and they dance to different tunes.

My practice has always moved between these two fields and their distinct discourses, and has shaped my experience and thinking, as manifest in this thesis. Alina Payne notes that in the first half of the 20th century the fields of the history of art and that of architecture were at work on a common project, but, as a result of their growing emancipation, they are now in a suspended dialogue. Perhaps it was my first

[1] Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961), p. 17.

formative experience, as a student in the old-fashioned History of Art department in Budapest – that still relied heavily on the 19th-century art-historical tradition and the work of the founders of the discipline – that prepared me to assume a different, if sometimes seemingly impossible, perspective. In my independent curatorial work in London I have been engaged in staging a number of site-specific exhibitions that aimed to highlight artistic expression through the built environment. One of these was 'Anatomy of a Street', which took place in the context of the 2010 London Festival of Architecture, and was located around the private and public sites of Church Street in Paddington. If the exhibition attempted to map and give artistic expression to the cultural and political context of this highly complex site, inhabited by a multiplicity of well-defined cultural and social communities, the gestures of artistic interpretation eventually led to simplification, a limited reading of the architectural and political complexities of a site where everyday life unfolds in its often cruel realities. In its symbolic representational attempt, the construct of the exhibition became a political self-contradiction, an instructive, if ultimately unsuccessful, experience.

Later, as Curator of Contemporary Architecture at the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal, I encountered the other end of the spectrum. If built architecture – as a symbol of the establishment – often becomes a sounding board in the hands of the artist, architecture, in turn, employs the display strategies of art according to its own logic and agendas. When the gallery becomes the site of architectural production, as is often the case at the CCA, its display outcome is a collection of highly fetishised and carefully framed objects. In this discursive context, art can easily become a simple aside to architectural practice – as in Philip Ursprung's exhibition 'Herzog & de Meuron: Archaeology of the Mind' (2003), where works by conceptual artists provided an illustrative context – or, in contrast to art museum practice in which architects design the spatial constellation of art exhibitions, the artist is invited to provide a frame, such in the case of Martin Beck's exhibition design for 'Journeys' (2010). The interlocking frames of art and architecture, as reframed by the museum, therefore merely instil disciplinary difference rather than engaging in real dialogue. The expanding fields of art and architecture – the outcome of the 1970s project of autonomy – create a disjunction, a gap that is only functional in the self-validation of the respective fields.

The distinct discursive fields of the art and the architecture museum imply thus a radically different curatorial operation. And as the fields of art and architecture disconnect, so do their respective curatorial discourses and mediation, which is also applicable to the context of the academy. The thought-provoking lesson of Nigel Coates' public talk was reconfirmed during my teaching experience, which has mainly been in the context of contemporary art and visual culture, where my architectural examples and references found little, if any, resonance. As the literature grows, there is also a growing number of conferences on the exhibition of art and that of architecture, which, while they prevail crucial parallels and intriguing contrasts between the two fields (like the annually alternating editions of the Venice Biennale), fundamentally fail to *speak* to one another. It was this frustrating lack of dialogue – confining my position to a liminal space – that was the inspiration for this thesis, a work that aims to explore the boundaries of this 'void' within which I found myself operating.

I contend that this 'functional gap' between the two fields favours the contemporary museum, which, in turn, sustains and perpetuates it, by monumentalising and simplifying the art-architecture relationship, in which the museum's own boundaries eventually seem to dissolve. To consider this phenomenon, my thesis aims to map architectural representation not only in strict relation to dedicated architecture exhibitions, but also beyond this, as it is evidenced in contemporary art practices, or through the museum's actual fabric, its building. The museum's ideological implications, and the radical expansion that is embraced and furthered in today's curatorial field, eventually present a crisis of representation, resulting in the spectacularised de-politicization of everyday experience. Museums fulfil a crucial role in relation to the city: they are becoming the engine and producer of contemporary urbanity, a role that echoes and furthers the museum's original 19th-century function in relation to the modern city.

Thinking through practice, *Zoo-topia: Zoo architecture as taxonomies of national representation* (2012) was my exploratory project that accompanied the work of this thesis. This was an exhibition in book format that explored architectural representations and display systems as they developed in the sites of zoological gardens, in parallel with that of the museum – and its institutionalised (and overly self-referential) history. This publication, a collection of thematic and conceptual 'proposals' by artists, thinkers, designers and architects, in dialogue with this thesis, intended to map the ideological implications of the museum's representational regime as it unfolds in the context of the rising neo-conservative ideologies of contemporary Europe. It aimed to explore how these power structures are perpetuated by the museum's territorial expansion and contemporary de-materialisation, in which a crucial role is delegated to contemporary architecture. Today's museum expands across all surfaces and preserves itself. This paradox is revealed to be unresolvable, and therefore may set up for failure, but more importantly it points to the curious contemporary anomalies that are open to debate. In order to excavate some of the places of resistance, it is important to confront this inherent challenge, and this is the spirit that this work aims to adopt.

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**AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

During the period of registered study in which this thesis was prepared the author has not been registered for any other academic award or qualification. The material included in this thesis has not been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

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**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

Fig. 1. René Magritte*, Eloge de la Dialectique,* 1936.

## 1.1 THE CONTEMPORARY EXPANSION OF THE CURATORIAL FIELD

> *The Establishment is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.*
> – Robert Smithson[1]

Within the Contemporary Curatorial Baroque

What is in a word? *Curating* – only a few decades ago it was not part of the common vocabulary, now it has become a fashionable buzzword, with an ever broadening – and often conflicting – range of definitions. While a decade ago there were barely any publications available on the subject, in the new millennium the thematic literature and academic curating courses continue to grow with exponential speed, to such a degree that it has become an impossible task to review the whole field. As the meaning of the word steadily expands, the contemporary curatorial *baroque* is constituted. While its common dictionary definition refers to the professional work of selecting, organising and looking after objects within the context of the museum or art gallery,[2] the term *curating* has now infiltrated everyday life, describing the collection, selection and presentation of any kind of information or things. It can be applied to everything, from fashion shows to music libraries, and at its most extreme to fine dining or even the styling of hair. There is a growing affinity between the arts of packaging, branding and curating,[3] which, in a consumer society, has become a simplistic way of adding value to content.[4] As Michael Brenson notes, our age has become 'the curator's moment' [5]: so it would seem pertinent to consider why is it the time of curating? Can the notion be meaningfully reconstituted?

As the term *curating* has been adopted by the worlds of business and commerce, within the field of culture – the origin of its contemporary use – it also draws on a broad variety of specialised interpretations and unconventional functions: 'there is now a long list of metaphors that attempt to reconcile diverse modes of practice, ranging from curator as editor, DJ, technician, agent, manager, platform provider, promoter, and scout, to the more absurd diviner, fairy godmother, and even god.'[6] The contemporary curator acts like an artist at large, representing the world through a variety of media. Paula Marincola has summed up: 'The closest analogy to installing a museum exhibition is conducting a

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[1] Robert Smithson, *The Establishment*, in *The Collected Writings*, ed. by Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 97-99.
[2] See the definition in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example.
[3] Ralph Rugoff suggests the analogy between curating and consumer packaging, with reference to the consumer research industry, which according to Rugoff proves how our experience of an object is related to the context that frames our encounter. Ralph Rugoff, 'You Talking to Me? On Curating Group Shows that Give You a Chance to Join the Group', in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?* ed. by Paola Marincola (Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, Philadelphia Center for Arts and Heritage, 2006), p. 45.
[4] Balzer argues that today is a moment of curation (as opposed to creation) in which institutions and businesses rely on others to cultivate and organize things in an expression-cum-assurance of value and an attempt to make affiliations with, and to court, various audiences and consumers. David Balzer, *Curationism: How Curating Took Over the Art World and Everything Else* (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2014).
[5] Michael Brenson, 'The Curator's Moment: Trends in the Field of International Contemporary Art Exhibtions', *Art Journal*, 57, 4 (1998), 16-27 (p. 16).
[6] Paul O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012), p. 49.

symphony orchestra.'[7] Cuauhtémoc Medina has portrayed the figure of the curator itself as a kind of Frankenstein, merging its de-professionalised, specialised tasks in a veritable postmodern mélange, and has argued that curating is not a profession as such, but rather a function.[8] This definition resonates with the descriptions that assign the contemporary curator's task to make the work public,[9] to act as mediator, facilitator, and producer. Yet, besides these articulations of the curator's mediating function, other meanings emerge through the word's etymology: the caretaker,[10] the priest,[11] or – through the word's medical connotations[12] – a doctor or healer (curer).

As Boris Groys argues, curating – curing – is a contemporary iconophile function. While art has operated traditionally through form, contemporary art performs through its context, framework or a new theoretical interpretation: with the emergence of the critiques of the institution and the site of art, the myth of the artwork's autonomous meaning has been lost. Thus, in order to 'heal' (in other words re-connect and contextualize) the work of contemporary art, the appropriate 'medicine' is the exhibition:

> A work of art cannot in fact present itself by virtue of its own definition and force the viewer into contemplation; it lacks the necessary vitality, energy, and health. Artworks seem to be genuinely sick and helpless – the spectator has to be led to the artwork, as hospital workers might take a visitor to see a bedridden patient. It is in fact there is no coincidence that the word "curator" is etymologically related to cure. Curating is curing. The process of curating cures the image's powerlessness, its incapacity to present itself.[13]

What Groys describes as a 'medical' duty, Teresa Gleadowe – founding director of London's first academic curatorial department – sees as the new role and responsibility of the curator vis-à-vis the art work, both of which must follow the constant shifts and reorientations of contemporary art practice and professional institutions.[14] Accordingly, the main task of the curator is to connect art to its history.[15] For Terry Smith, to 'think contemporary' constitutes the *curatorial* that – as opposed to his definition of *curating* – is more than a methodology; it is the curator's conceptual task, a way of continually

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[7] Paola Marincola, 'Introduction: Practice Makes Perfect', in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?* ed. by Paola Marincola, p. 10.
[8] Cuauhtémoc Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', in *Raising Frankenstein: Curatorial Education and its Discontents*, ed. by Kitty Scott (Banff, Alberta: The Banff Center Press, 2011), p. 30.
[9] Terry Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating* (New York: Independent Curators International, 2012), p. 28.
[10] From the Latin word *curare*, meaning to take care, as referenced by Hans Ulrich Obrist: in the ancient Roman period, it meant to take care of the bathhouse. Stuart Jeffries and Nancy Groves, 'Hans Ulrich Obrist: The Art of Curation*', Guardian*, 23 March 2014 [http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2014/mar/23/hans-ulrich-obrist-art-curator] [accessed 5 January 2015].
[11] In the Hispanic world, the name for the priest in charge of the parochial church is *cura.* Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', p. 106.
[12] Timothy Long references the first recorded use of the word in *The Oxford English Dictionary*, according to which the curator is the keeper of an asylum for the insane. See: Timothy Long, 'Curatorial Education and Its Discontents', in *Raising Frankenstein*, ed. by Kitty Scott, pp. 105-106.
[13] Boris Groys, *Art Power*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008) p. 46.
[14] Teresa Gleadowe, 'What Does a Curator Need to Know?', in *Raising Frankenstein*, ed. by Kitty Scott, pp. 7-27.
[15] Jeffries and Groves, 'Hans Ulrich Obrist: The Art of Curation'.; see also Claire Bishop, 'Contemporizing History/ Historicizing Contemporary', panel discussion, *The Now Museum: Contemporary Art, Curating Histories, Alternative Models*, New York: New Museum, 2011.

challenging the status quo, as the contemporary artist does through place-making, world-picturing and connecting.[16]

The curator's mutual co-dependence with the artist – as Smith's insertion of the *curatorial* might also suggest – has contributed to the emergence of the figure of the curator as the artist's doppelganger.[17] From the 1980s onwards, synchronous with the period during which philosophers and artists began authoring exhibitions, such as Jean-Francois Lyotard's '*Les Immatériaux*' (1985) at the Centre Pompidou, the model of the curator-as-artist emerged, and the expanding authorial claim of curators (*cur-authors* as Medina playfully identified them)[18] started its steady progress. In an ultimate manifestation of this turn, Hans-Ulrich Obrist – the curator who epitomised contemporary hypervisibility – declared: 'Joseph Beuys talked about expanding the notion of art. I'm trying to expand the notion of curating.' [19]

The growth of the personal cult of the curator has brought about a broad expansion of curating. To be a curator it is no longer necessary to even originate an exhibition. As Medina observes, the curator is 'the child of sleight of hand of performative speech.'[20] If for Beuys everybody was an artist, then today everyone is a curator. The issue of the definition of the curator, as outlined in Balzer's *curationism*,[21] is no longer the quest of art but rather a question of sociology. Various – and often contradictory – curatorial voices and definitions have culminated in today's individualistic curatorial hegemony; the workings of curating have become both the evidence and a constitutional force for the contemporary order of the globalized neo-capitalist world.

This thesis is not a conventional chronological history or treatise on curating, but it will ask: what constitutes the contemporary curatorial status quo, and what were the specific social, political and cultural conditions that brought it about? How to better understand and contextualize the global emergence of today's cosmic moment of the curator? What does the present curatorial mode of our society mediate? And, finally, what future political and cultural implications might the contemporary curatorial expansion suggest? These timely concerns will be interrogated through period, practice and related contextual considerations, but before offering a detailed analysis of chapters it is pertinent to reflect on the origin, constitution and operation of contemporary curating.

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[16] Terry Smith asks, 'What is contemporary?' And answers, 'place making, world picturing and connectivity are the most common concerns today for artists, this is the substance of contemporary being.' Smith has also conceived a contemporary curatorial overview, but he is more successful in celebrating the network of contemporary curating's star system than in formulating a critique of the practice itself. Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, p. 28.
[17] Groys describes the figure of the curator as the doppelganger of the artist. Groys, *Art Power*, p. 45.
[18] Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', p. 36.
[19] Jeffries and Groves, 'Hans Ulrich Obrist: The Art of Curation'.
[20] Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', p. 37.
[21] Balzer's analysis of the expansion of curating to everyday life gives a journalistic and in some ways superficial reading of the field (in part it derives from the same phenomena that it describes and critiques); however, it fills in a gap and missing analysis in the field. Balzer, *Curationism: How curating took over the art world and everything else*.

The Spectacle of Origins: Projective Autonomy and the Rise of the Independent Curator

Contemporary curating is manifest today – within and outside the museum – as mainstream *modus operandi*, a canonic instrument central to the values of late capitalist society. Yet, curating in its contemporary sense, first emerged as an independent and counter-cultural practice that, through opposing dominant representations, set out to demystify the art system and the museum itself. This was part of the change in studio practice in the 1960s and the emerging critique of the autonomy of the work of art as an ideological construct, which, consequently, also engendered a more autonomous notion of the role of the curator.[22] As Seth Siegelaub – one of the pioneers of this new cultural practice, who played a comparable role to that of Harald Szeeman[23] or Lucy Lippard[24] in claiming the independence of curatorship – recalled, curating as an independent practice was an outcome of the 1960s political project: '[it was] a process in which [curators and artists] attempted to understand and be conscious of our actions; to make clear what we and others were doing…you have to deal with [curating] consciously as part of the exhibiting process, for good or bad.' [25] Paradoxically, this political project of demystification constitutes the very basis of today's mystified curatorial regime.

As the neo-avant-garde art practices deserted the museum and gallery, and it ceased to be the exclusive site for exhibitions, the curator of contemporary art also began to seek professional – and intellectual – independence. The new notion of art 'in-situ' practice,[26] in which the space of production and representation overlaps, has, however, not only changed the artist's – and by extension the curator's – relationship to the museum, it has also reconfigured the curator-artist relation. By the late 1960s the figure of the *independent curator* had emerged and marked an important shift from the role of the keeper of museum collections to that of the artist's collaborator and co-producer. As Paul O'Neill summarises: 'Through various adaptations of the exhibition as a form, the independent curator of the late 1960s began to take on the artist's creative mantle, whereby the traditional roles of artist, curator, and critic were being collapsed and deliberately conflated, with artists and curators working together in a cooperative manner.'[27] Curation, as an independent critical practice, became self-conscious and politicised participation in the production of art.

As narrated by O'Neill – a crucial protagonist in today's tendencies towards the historicisation of contemporary curatorial practice[28] – the emancipation of the curator enjoyed uninterrupted continuation

[22] The word 'curator' at the time was not in use, since it still had strong connotations with the traditional role of the museum keeper. It was during the 1980s and '90s that the word came into use in relation to contemporary and independent practice. O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s),* pp. 19-20.
[23] See: Florence Derieux, François Aubart and Harald Szeemann, *Harald Szeemann - Méthodologie Individuelle* (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2007).
[24] See: Cornelia Butler and others, *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows 1969–74* (London: Afterall Books, 2012).
[25] Seth Sieglaub quoted by O'Neill (as he, in turn, is quoted by Obrist), cited in: O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, pp. 19.
[26] Daniel Buren, 'The Function of the Studio', *October,* 10 (1979), 51-58.
[27] O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, p. 19.
[28] Paul O'Neill began researching the development of contemporary curatorial discourses from the 1980s as part of his PhD in 2003, resulting in a number of anthologies of edited essays, interviews and other publications (such as 'The Curatorial Turn; Curating and the Educational Turn; Curating Subjects;

throughout the following decades. During the 1970s – parallel to Brian O'Doherty's influential critique of the 'white cube'[29] and, importantly, the spatial turn in art practices – the art exhibition emerged as a 'curated space' that rendered visible and foregrounded the representational and operational systems of the artist's work. The 1980s saw an expansion in the number of art exhibitions, and this opened up a new market for independent curators. Consequently, the curated group exhibition gained autonomy. Curating was established as an autonomous entity of critical reflection, replacing the earlier, centralised critique of works. This was a period, curatorship having become a distinct mode of discourse, which centred on the sole author of the exhibition: the curator.

In O'Neill's historical account of curating it is the year 1989 that marks a second turn: the globalisation of the curator-centred discourse. O'Neill links this crucial date to the opening of 'Les Magiciens de la Terre' at the Centre Pompidou, the first contemporary art exhibition – curated by Jean-Hubert Martin and Mark Francis – that surveyed art on a global and transcultural level. While the latent colonialist narratives of this first global art exhibition were only finally corrected by Okwui Enwezor's 'documenta' in 2002, 'Les Magiciens' was surely among the very first representations[30] of a cultural pluralism in an age of the global proliferation and consolidation of international biennials. As argued by O'Neill, the establishing of curating in the globally booming new market of large-scale exhibitions[31] also brought about the emergence of globally mobile curators, and laid the foundations for today's overpopulated star-curator system.

A missing point in O'Neill's analysis is, however, the contextualization of 1989 as the historical turning point that dominated the Eastern Bloc (and by implication also the West). The political and economic reconfiguration of the global world order, only a few months after the opening of the Centre Pompidou exhibition, that rendered the emergence of the global curatorial discourse synchronous with the emergence of global market capitalism. The transcultural representations – seen in the global selection of work, with the inclusion of non-Western practices – became, in this way, hardly distinguishable from the representative consolidation of this emerging political and economic globalization, [32] in which the contemporary curator's role is paramount. As problematised by Carlos Basualdo in 2008, the

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etc., which research culminated in his book *The Culture of Curating and The Curating Cultures* (2012) that traces the chronological and conceptual development of contemporary art curation. Since 2013, O'Neill has been Director of the Graduate Program at Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies in New York.

[29] Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1986).

[30] The global turn in contemporary curating is often also associated with the Third Havana Biennial of the same year. See also: Rachel Weiss, *Making Art Global (Part I): The Third Havana Biennial 1989* (London: Afterall, 2010).

[31] On the global history of contemporary biennials see: *The Biennial Reader*, ed. by Marieke van Hal, Solveig Ovstebo and Elena Filipovic (Bergen, Norway: Bergen Kunsthall, 2010).

[32] 'Manifesta: The European Biennial', at its inception in 1996 was conceived as a radical tool of cultural exchange, a nomadic contemporary art biennale that reconnects the former West and Eastern territories of Europe through its cultural representations; taking place in a different city each time it would open new channels and connections of communication. It is sad to see the contemporary development of the biennial, as its exhibitions are increasingly perceived, turned into a city branding exercise.

contemporary curator has to negotiate both the role of interpreting historian (that of the critic) and the ideological pressures, on the other hand, that institutions apply.[33] Basualdo's remark echoes Martin Jay's observation on the de-politicisation (and a-historicisation) of the postmodernist discourse: 'the postmodernist temper finds *différance* more attractive than differentiation as a historical, or better put, a-historical, conceptual tool.'[34]

This controversial development of contemporary curating from its emergence as an independent critical practice to its consolidation as the canonic instrument of late-capitalist society is explained by many by the dormant conservatism of the 1960s neo-avant-garde and the limits of its institutional critique, the very basis of the existence of the contemporary curator; as opposed to the historical avant-garde's critique of institutions, the new institutional critique operated from within the institution. The neo-avant-garde's critical attitude, as Bürger has argued,[35] re-enacted the historical avant-garde's social critique as a formal style, and, instead of overthrowing the dominant regimes, it turned into a self-reflexive – and a self-perpetuating – inside investigation of the system. Pluralisation without differentiation – Jay has pointed out – not only became the *modus operandi* of new cultural practices, it also formed the internal logic of the late-capitalist market. The consequent development of the contemporary curator was therefore – even if perhaps unintentionally – already inherent in its vanguard practices. As Yves Aupetittalot has remarked,[36] Harald Szeeman, the progenitor of the genre, whose curatorial practice and 'Individual Methodology' was tightly intertwined with conceptual art and its framing and definition, not only contributed to the socialisation of the avant-garde but, by extension, to its spectacularisation.

Curating's spectacularisation – its final acceptance as a form of self-representation – was, however, most closely connected with its professionalisation.[37] As a new trend in the global art world, biennales grew in number throughout the 1990s, as did curatorial education. The first courses were set up in 1987, in both Europe and North America: at the Ecole du Magasin in Grenoble and at ISP (Independent Study Program) in New York;[38] however, the first-ever course in the university environment – with degree validation and academic evaluation – was initiated by Gleadowe and inaugurated at the Royal College of Art in London in 1992.[39] Bard College's Centre for Curatorial Studies was next, after the RCA, to set up curatorial education within a formal academic structure: it opened its validated MA in 1994, the same

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[33] Carlos Basualdo, 'The Unstable Institution', in *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, ed. by Paola Marincola, p. 61.
[34] Martin Jay, 'Habermas and Postmodernism'*,* in *The Divided Heritage: Themes and Problems in German Modernism*, ed. by Irit Rogoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 75-85 (p. 76).
[35] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, tr. by Michael Shaw (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 27-28.
[36] Derieux, *Harald Szeemann - Méthodologie Individuelle*, p. 5.
[37] *Trade Secrets: Swapping Curatorial Confidences,* Banff International Curatorial Institute Symposium,12 November 2008, Banff, Alberta: The Banff Centre.
[38] ISP first offered the course Art History and Museum Studies in 1968; this was initiated by the Whitney Museum of American Art. In 1987 it was reconfigured and renamed Curatorial and Critical Studies under Hal Foster. Scott Gutterman, 'A Brief History of the ISP', in *Independent Study Program: 25 Years (1968-1993): Whitney Museum of American Art,* ed. by Jane Philbrick (New York: Whitney Museum of American Art, 1993).
[39] The two-year MA course was titled 'Curating and Commissioning Contemporary Art'; it partnered in its initial years with Tate Modern and the Arts Council of England.

year that De Appel launched its one-year professional course in Amsterdam.[40] Whereas only a decade ago curatorial degrees were still relatively uncommon, in the last five years there has been unprecedented growth in the number of curating courses: 'an extraordinary pandemic of curatorial education,'[41] with further expansion expected over the next decade.[42]

The models of ISP and Magasin, which were prototypes for many subsequent curatorial courses, sought to foreground a close collaboration between artists, critical experimentation and innovation in curatorial practice.[43] If 1960s and '70s art practices questioned and destabilized the mainstream exhibition, from the late 1980s onwards curatorial courses aimed to do this for the role of the curator. According to Medina – who argues that curating not only refuses a general definition, but is also impossible to teach – the value of a curatorial course is that it can potentially set up new 'standards' that would not otherwise be incorporated into the museum.[44] However, since the theorisation and academic discourse associated with curating is still largely unresolved, the balance between its critical space of resistance and its utilitarian means remains rather fragile. As Gleadowe recalls, when observing the College Art Association's Guidelines for Curatorial Studies Programs: 'Seen from this perspective "professionalism" seems to involve political acquiescence and loss of creative autonomy. It suggests the performance of routine tasks, smoothly interacting with the economics of the market without critique or even critical reflection.'[45]

Curating, now an established academicised concern, has continued to expand its own educational market, but this growth has largely ignored Gleadowe's concerns. The widening of the curatorial turn – as echoed by the growth in curatorial studies and the still-growing number of international biennales – has also extended the curator's activity beyond exhibition making towards 'discourse production'.[46] The burgeoning literature on curatorial practice – the journals of curating,[47] exhibition catalogues and readers and oral histories,[48] as well as transcripts of curatorial conferences that accompany most of the

[40] This course is primarily designed for professionals who were already advanced in their practice, engaging them to redevelop and refocus.
[41] Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', p. 30.
[42] Mirko Zardini cites US News, in 2010, ranking curating among the 50 best professional careers, with 23% growth forecast by 2020. See: Mirko Zardini, 'Exhibiting and Collecting Ideas: A Montreal Perspective', *Log*, 20 (2010), 77.
[43] Terry Smith offered this list as 'good practice': historicise curating, innovate within exhibition practice, reimagine museums, turn curatorship, co-curate with artists, commit to outside the art world, participatory, activist curating, rethinking spectatorship - challenge contemporary curatorship itself. Smith, *Thinking Contemporary Curating*, p. 178.
[44] Medina, 'Raising Frankenstein', p. 99.
[45] As cited by Gleadowe, the most recent addition and ultimate manifestation of this utilitarian and didactic approach to curatorial education is the RCA alumnus Adrian George's *Curator's Handbook* (2015), a heavy volume of universal practical advice for the aspiring young curator, suggesting a rather grim foreclosure of the self-perpetuated professionalisation of the curator. Gleadowe, 'What Does a Curator Need to Know?', p. 23.
[46] O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, p. 85.
[47] Journals that specifically focus on these studies include: *Manifesta Journal of Contemporary Curatorship* (since 2003), *ONCURATING* (since 2008), *The Exhibitionist* (since 2010) and *Journal of Curatorial Studies* (2012).
[48] See the endless interview marathons and publications of the curator Hans Ulrich Obrist, whose influence is clearly manifest in the rising interest in oral histories of art and curating. Hans-Ulrich Obrist, *Interviews*, vol.1, (Milan: Charta, 2003).; Hans-Ulrich Obrist, *Interviews*, vol.2, (Milan: Charta, 2010).

major biennials[49] – have come to outnumber art-historical studies. As O'Neill has remarked, 'Curators and critics have articulated mega-exhibitions as history-making institutions in and of themselves.'[50]

While curating resists theorisation, it solicits historicisation. The curator-led discourse within the academy is thus itself manifest in the form of *exhibition histories*, an emerging field of studies that is recognized as an alternative and repressed cultural history that needs to be recovered and brought to the forefront of investigation.[51] Exhibition histories aims to reinvigorate the understanding of contemporary art by constituting an alternative history of art in the context of museums, exhibitions and curatorial networks as mediated and presented in the public realm: a social history of art and its curated contexts. As the statement of the editorial team[52] behind the Afterall *Exhibition Histories* series observes: 'every decision about the selection and installation of this work, the choice and use of the venue, the marketing strategy and the accompanying printed matter informs our understanding of the art on display.'[53] The central material of such curatorial research is thus constituted by the ephemeral histories of early curatorial practice itself.

This new chapter of contemporary curatorial studies – chiefly constituted through the archival material and oral histories of curating – is consonant with Claire Bishop's observations on a new genre of contemporary museum displays[54] that perform contemporaneity through a carefully curated past: looking for the origins of our present moment, sourcing and re-presenting the past, has become the means for defining the interests of the present.[55] As Bishop claims, this new research-based curatorial practice explores the present time in terms of its historical relativity, and produces a multi-temporal contemporaneity. This is a dialectic method of contemporising history and historicising the contemporary, which Bishop considers as the contemporary mode of temporality in the work of both the critic/curator and the artist. Contemporary curating thus defines itself increasingly through the re-enactment of its early histories,[56] an a-historical anachronism that – beyond its historic rehearsal –

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[49] Such as the *Rotterdam Dialogues: The Curators* (2009); *The Bergen Biennial Conference* (2009), etc.
[50] O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, p. 85.
[51] Mary Anne Staniszewski, *The Power of Display* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001), pp. xxi-xxviii.
[52] The Afterall editorial team includes: Sabeth Buchmann, Charles Esche, Teresa Gleadowe, Pablo Lafuente and Stephen Schmidt-Wulffen. The *Exhibition Histories* publications of Afterall at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, University of the Arts in London, are published in collaboration with the Academy of Fine Arts Vienna and the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven. Titles since 2009 include: *Cultural Anthropophagy: The 24th Bienal de São Paulo* (1998); *Exhibition as Social Intervention: 'Culture in Action'* (1993); *Making Art Global (Part 1): The Third Havana Biennial* (1989); *Exhibiting the New Art: 'Op Losse Schroeven' and 'When Attitudes Become Form' 1969; Making Art Global (Part 2): 'Magiciens de la Terre'* (1989); *From Conceptualism to Feminism: Lucy Lippard's Numbers Shows 1969–74* (2012).
[53] Rachel Weiss, 'Editorial Introduction', in *Making Art Global (Part I): The Third Havana Biennial 1989*, p. 3.
[54] Bishop's argument is built around the case studies of the collection displays of the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven, the Museo Nacional de Reina Sofía in Madrid and MSUM in Ljubljana. See: Claire Bishop, *Radical Museology: Or What's 'Contemporary' in Museums of Contemporary Art?* (London: Walther König, 2013).
[55] Note that Charles Esche, director of Van Abbemuseum (one of Bishop's examples) is also a founding member of the Exhibition Histories group led jointly by Afterall, which might explain some of this conceptual affinity.
[56] Besides exhibition histories there is a growing trend for the re-enactments of art events and reconstructions of exhibitions; see: Reesa Greenberg 'Remembering Exhibitions in Point to Line to Web', *Tate Papers,* 12 (2009) [http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/7264] [accessed 5 November

recalls precisely the neo-avant-garde's own nostalgia towards the tableaux as presented through the form of earlier historic avant-gardes; a symptomatic a-historical attitude of contemporary memory politics that will be further explored in this Introduction, especially in relation to the structure and time-frame of the thesis.

Bishop suggests, in 'Delirious Anthropology': 'Use the past as a way to grasp our own time, as if through binoculars held the wrong way.'[57] In accordance, this thesis aims to offer a critical insight into the present condition, which will be guided by an analysis of the originating moments of contemporary curating, especially the turning point of the 1970s. These questions, however, will also be reversed, to reveal the ways in which these histories are currently being recycled and reused. In *Architecture or Techno-Utopia*,[58] Felicity Dale Scott proposes to excavate and reconsider those fragments of time in history that – even if only momentarily – pertained to a progressively promising political and historical perspective. This thesis, sharing Scott's concerns with regard to the political acquiescence of the contemporary time, will ask how and why, once embraced and rehearsed by contemporary curatorial practices, these revolutionary moments tend to reverse their promise in the contemporary frame, becoming that which they once sought to challenge?

This thesis will thus problematise – as in Bürger's critique of the post-war avant-garde – whether these recycled pasts could ever be more than a stylistic perpetuation of the eulogized utopian schema? Can a social critique ever be exercised efficiently in a self-reflexive regime, where both medium and subject appear to be curating? Or even whether the professionalisation of the work of the curator might eventually strengthen her/his links to the disputed political structures from which curating itself critically emerged?

## The Exhibitionary Complex of Architecture

Medina remarked that curating – lacking any shared professional criteria – is a function rather than a profession. In the last decade, the curator-centred discourse saw further academic pluralisation. Besides the mushrooming of new courses on art curating, a multitude of new academic curatorial programmes focus on the study of architecture, design, film, photography or fashion, establishing new, highly specialized and narrowing fields of curating, which remain in complete separation. The function of curating is turning into its own fictionalisation, and this disciplinary isolation – an inherent contradiction of curatorial studies – only sustains the disciplinary autonomies and fragmentation.

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2011].; as well as Mari Lending on 'Circulation' in *Place and Displacement: Exhibiting Architecture*, ed. by Thordis Arrhenius, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, Jérémie Michael McGowan (Zürich: Lars Muller, 2014).

[57] Claire Bishop, 'Delirious Anthropology', *Fotomuseum Winterthur Blog,* 26 October 2013 [http://blog.fotomuseum.ch/2013/10/5-delirious-anthropology/] [accessed 12 November 2013].

[58] Felicity D. Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia: Politics after Modernism,* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010).

The paradox of this curatorial fragmentation can be best understood when contrasted with the complex spatial representations of an exhibition. As the rise and professionalisation of contemporary curating has developed in close connection to institutional critique and the questioning of art's social function, the neo-avant-garde has developed in a symbiotic relationship with the spatial construct of the exhibition. Space has become a central interest[59] and the medium for conceptually led artistic production, as well as its curatorial mediation. Following the crisis of functionalism and other utopias of the Modern Movement, its seemingly neutral but charged spatial concept was opposed and un-masked through site-conscious spatial and conceptual art practices.[60] The critique of abstract Cartesian space resulted in the recognition of the historical (temporal) and cultural specificity of architecture, the new basis for both architecture's claims for disciplinary autonomy, and a new context and material for contemporary curatorial and art practices.

With the dissolving of modernist medium-specificity,[61] as a shared medium for a set of distinct disciplines, the contemporary exhibition's main spatial conception was manifested in the provision of a site for complex interdisciplinary exchanges. But why, and how, did this fertile interdisciplinary exchange dissolve, as seen in the narrowing fields of curatorial studies as configured today? In a search for an answer to this conundrum, this thesis proposes to outline this contemporary fragmentation by examining the constellation of varying definitions of art and architecture as they appear within the frame of exhibitionary practices.

One of the first academic platforms and research projects specifically dedicated to the exhibiting of architecture, 'Curating Architecture' (2006-2008),[62] was convened by Andrea Philips and took place at Goldsmiths University in London. This unique research project set out to problematise the largely overlooked curatorial question of architecture in the context of the already-saturated field of art-curatorial studies. Philips, accordingly, recommended investigating the relations between art and architecture: 'talking about the discontinuities and problematic superficialities in their sometimes ambivalent, sometimes literal relation.'[63] To avoid the dangers of flattening and simplifying disciplinary difference, 'Curating Architecture' insisted on keen observation of the distinct motivations inherent to the two fields. The ontological and political objections between the two areas of practice became the basis of a critique 'of any easy art/architecture naturalization' as well as a critical re-examination of how architectural exhibitions might constitute a 'new form of communication that values reading, thinking,

[59] The language and theories of space became the central subject of historical and critical analysis as prevailing in the writing of a number of thinkers from the late 1960s on, such as Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault, Paul Virilio or Gilles Deleuze. See: Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, tr. by Donald Nichols-Smith (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1974).; Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1979).; Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, Spring (1986), 22-27.; Paul Virilio, *L'espace critique*, (Paris: Christian Bourgeois, 1984).; Gilles Deleuze, *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (Paris: Minuit, 1988).
[60] See: Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973).
[61] See: Rosalind Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded field', *October*, 8 (1979), 30-44.
[62] Andrea Philips, 'Curating Architecture', *Goldsmiths, University of London* [http://research.gold.ac.uk/2417/2/CuratingArchitectureBooklet.pdf] [accessed 12 December 2012].
[63] Andrea Philips, 'Introduction to the Second Curating Architecture Seminar', *Goldsmiths, University of London*, 2007 [http://www.art.gold.ac.uk/research/archive/curating-architecture/seminar_downloads/Introduction2.pdf] [accessed 12 December 2012].

contextualising and direct address, but does so without the monumentalising problem that has [predominantly] led architectural curating.'[64]

Philips' reference to the 'monumentalising problem' corresponds to the critique that is spelt out in Hal Foster's 'The Art-Architecture Complex,'[65] a reading of art and architecture as juxtaposed and combined in contemporary global practices. Foster sees the ultimate manifestation of this conjunction in the increased prominence and dominant representations of late-capitalist museums, and their iconicity:

> Over the last fifty years, many artists opened painting, sculpture, and film to the architectural space around them, and during the same period many architects became involved in visual art. Sometimes a collaboration, sometimes a competition, this encounter is now a primary site of image-making and space-shaping in our cultural economy.[66]

Revisiting Anthony Vidler's description of a third typology,[67] Foster proposed a fourth, contemporary type of 'global style', in which the art-architecture connection is explicit in new ways: *art* became the starting point for today's architectural practices.[68] As in the sculptural iconicity of the recent design of art museums, the main characteristic of global style is its 'imageability'; in other words, as Foster put it, the built form of architecture became 'so performative or sculptural that artists might feel late to the party.'[69] Foster argued that such monumentalising and de-politicised representations of architecture only assist the reconfiguration of cultural space demanded by consumer capitalism. In these simplifying, spectacular inscriptions of space, and the stylised spatial relations between art and architecture the critical potential of architecture (as well as that of art) gets irreversibly lost.

As architecture performs the spectacle through buildings designed as showcases in and of themselves, architectural themes are also prevalent within the walls of art museums. In recent years an increasing number of exhibitions have been dedicated to architecture in the art-curatorial context;[70] among these are the numerous monographic exhibitions[71] which often render the *starchitect* as a quasi-artist or

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[64] Philips, 'Introduction to the Second Curating Architecture Seminar'.
[65] See: Hal Foster, *The Art-Architecture Complex* (London: Verso, 2011).
[66] Foster, p. VII.
[67] Anthony Vidler 'The Third Typology', *Oppositions*, 7 (1976), 1-4.
[68] Foster's examples include Zaha Hadid, Diller Scofidio & Renfro and Herzog & de Meuron. His example of the contemporary artist is mainly enacted by Richard Serra; by ignoring other (more) contemporary practices and artistic strategies, this results in a somewhat reductive reading of the contemporary art field in his 'Art-Architecture Complex'. Foster, *The Art-Architecture Complex.*
[69] Foster, p. XI.
[70] With a few exceptions, such as MoMA, where the architectural department was established after Hitchcock and Johnson's 'Modern Architecture' exhibition in 1932, architectural departments and collections within art museums are a relatively new but gradually growing tendency, mainly from the 1990s onwards, such as the Centre Pompidou in Paris (1992), MOCA in Los Angeles (2001) or MAXXI in Rome (2010), etc.
[71] Looking at just the last decade in London, the list of such exhibitions appears to be endless. A number of monographic shows presented the figure of the architect or an architectural practice, of which recent examples are 'Alvar Aalto: Through the Eyes of Shigeru Ban' (2007); 'Le Corbusier: The Art of Architecture' (2009); 'OMA/Progress' (2011) at the Barbican Art Gallery. Beyond these monographic presentations, an array of thematic shows bought together art and architecture, such as a series of exhibitions in the Hayward and Barbican galleries: 'Cities on the Move' (1999, Hayward), 'Fantasy Architecture' (2004, Hayward), 'Psycho Buildings' (2008, Hayward), 'Radical Nature' (2009, Barbican) and 'The Surreal House' (2010, Barbican), to list just a few of the blockbusters of recent years.

'creative genius.' Bart Lootsma has lamented that[72] in the context of art museums, architectural objects and works of art are treated in identical ways, and undergo the same filtering and selection processes: the workman-like prints, drawings and models become falsely rendered as fixed and final outcomes of architecture. Aside from these orthodox curatorial practices in art museums, a renaissance in thematic 'architectural' exhibitions, in which architecture is a source of inspiration for a wide range of artistic media and experimental practices,[73] further perpetuate the problem of monumentalising architecture, as seen through the artists' eye. These representative images of the 'art of architecture' are, however, not only created by, but also reproduce this context: through the very design of the starchitect. The global style, the 'imaging' of the 'art of architecture', shapes and defines the very space of the late-capitalist museum within which it has been defined.

This inherent problem of the representation of the architectural object in the art context is often recognized as the 'paradox' of the architecture exhibition. Hubert Damisch[74] has observed, that architecture in museums is always dealing with displacement and lack, as architecture can never be present in its built form. Consonantly, Jean-Louis Cohen has distinguished between the built work (oeuvre) and the intellectual project of the architect ('*ouvrage*'), remarking that the most challenging task of the architecture exhibition is to relate and reconnect these two: to restore the aura of the original, as present in the actual work of the architect.[75]

If the actual work – such as in the case of built architecture – cannot be exhibited within museums, Gabriela Vaz-Pinherio[76] proposed the consideration of site-specific art as a practice that adopts a curatorial strategy in relation to its own site and surroundings outside the museum. Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara's *Curating Architecture, Curating the City* anthology[77] echoes and further elaborates this idea by expanding the notion of curating. They offer readings of a whole range of in-situ art (and even non-art) practices as means and different modalities of a 'reversed form' of curating the city.[78] However, these readings of architectural space outside the museum present similar problems to the one already outlined, in that they render architecture as represented through art practices. Curating the 'site'

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[72] Bart Lootsma, 'Forgotten World, Possible Worlds', in *The Art of Architecture Exhibitions*, ed. by Kristin Feireiss (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 2001), pp. 17.

[73] 'Psycho Buildings: Artists take on Architecture' (2008) at the Hayward Gallery brought together ten contemporary artists creating 'habitat-like structures and architectural environments', representing architecture as object, medium, experience and environment. Even though some of the projects exhibited site-specific links with the famous Brutalist architecture of the gallery building, the premise of the exhibition was to celebrate the Hayward Gallery's 40th anniversary 'as one of the world's most architecturally unique exhibition venues', most of the works in 'Psycho Buildings' retained a purely formal or phenomenological reading and interpretation of architecture.

[74] Hubert Damisch, 'A Very Special Museum', in *Skyline: The Narcissistic City* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001).

[75] See: Yve-Alain Bois, Dennis Hollier, Rosalnd Kraus and Jean-Louis Cohen, 'A Conversation with Jean Louis Cohen', *October*, 89 (1999), 3-18.

[76] *Curating the Local*, ed. by Gabriela Vaz-Pinheiro (Nurnberg: Verlag der Moderne Kunste, 2005).

[77] See: Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara, *Curating Architecture and the City* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[78] A similar proposal is that of Jane Rendell, who coined 'critical spatial practice', a term borrowed from Lefebvre, in order to apply it in reference to processes-based practices of art and architecture on the site of the city. Rendell's definition of critical practices, however, equally flattens the disciplinary relation of art-architecture by reading architecture through contemporary art practices. Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2006).

or curating architecture 'on site', as Bruce Ferguson and Sandy Nairne have pointed out, can easily result in the 'exoticisation' of the locale, a tendency noted in relation to large-scale scattered-site exhibitions (such as international biennials), which coincide with the recent boom in museum building, 'site-making' or other curatorial strategies in association with city branding practices.[79] The notion of the city as public gallery thus merely extends curatorship and museological practice into new spatial and interpretative territories, where built architecture – old and new – stands as a spectacularised form, a sounding-board of representations.

The changing role of architecture in museums is evident in relation to the expansion of museum building in recent decades and the consequent increase in media attention that architecture has received. As Foster has outlined, this is especially clear in relation to post-Bilbao regeneration projects, as well as other, related architectural strategies that have been adopted and employed by a growing number of cultural institutions that mediate and reproduce the architectural image as art. However, to return to Philips' point about the problem of the art-architecture relationship from an art-curatorial perspective (as manifested both within and outside the museum), this problem is clearly concerned with the understanding of the built form of architecture as *per definition* power and the Establishment. As Philips has pointed out:

> From an art perspective […] there seems to be a tendency to try and make architecture weak for all sorts of political reasons that are very clear (that are historically to do with identity politics, to do with gender politics, to do with monument politics, etc.). We could say that for a long time, there has been a necessity to make architecture weak, as a positivist understanding of a problematic within architecture itself.[80]

In addition, from the perspective of architecture there is an understanding of the exhibition as a site of critical potential. A parallel – but often intersecting – line of architectural curatorship has developed in the recently emerging specialised institutions of architecture,[81] which, since the 1980s, have largely contributed to architecture's mediatisation, opening a new market for both architecture and specialist curators. At the time when artists deserted the museum in search of their autonomy, architecture aimed to redefine itself within the walls of the museum. Exhibitions became a spatial tool for experimentation (in the laboratory-like conditions of museums), as well as for the promotion of architecture's understanding as a larger and less bounded *conceptual idea*, a cultural field that produces discourse

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[79] Bruce Ferguson and Sandy Nairne, 'Mapping International Exhibitions', *Art & Design*, 52 (1997), 30-37.

[80] Philips, 'Introduction to the Second Curating Architecture Seminar'.

[81] The turn of the 1970s marked an important moment in this history, when the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM) was founded, based on a newly emerging network of museums, centres, archives, collections and libraries dedicated to research on the history of architecture. The early examples include the CCA in Montreal, the DAM in Frankfurt, etc. The conditions and history of the emergence of these institutions will be the subject of further discussion in this thesis. A special issue of *Kunstforum* published in1980 reports on the first ICAM meeting, with a summary of the newly formed architectural centres and museums internationally (in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the Soviet Union and the United States). The issue also looks at the evolution of, and historical precedents for, architecture museums, as well as the formats, medium and challenges of exhibiting architecture. See: Walter Grasskamp and Jan Piper, 'Architekturmuseen / Architekturvermittlung', *Kunstforum*, 38 (1980), 138-202.

above and *beyond building*.[82] Thus, the paradox of the art-architecture relation lies in the dialectical spatial representations of the exhibition: art reaches for architecture when recognizing its own infrastructural or social limits; architecture – at times of revolutionary social change or its own disciplinary 'crisis' – retreats into the space of art, and finds its conceptual/aesthetic freedom within the museum's walls.

As we have seen, the ambiguous relationship between the artist and the independent curator has resulted in the dematerialisation of the artwork and the curated space of art exhibitions, which merges sites of production and representation; the simplistic combination of the roles of artist and architect produced the late-capitalist museum and its spatial expansion. Finally, closely linked to this conceptualisation of architecture, the merging roles of the architect and curator promote the site of the exhibition as one of architectural production; this presents, perhaps, a different riposte to Cohen's critique of the architecture exhibition, by blurring distinct notions of the oeuvre and the '*ouvrage*' and by regarding the work of architecture as *the* exhibition. As, in fact, Cohen might have already answered himself – his split-self that unites in exhibitions – when noting: 'curating exhibitions has, for me, become a practice parallel to historical research, […] allowing for a reconciliation, or at least the negotiation, between one part of myself – what I would call the defrocked architect – and the other – the historian operating within the field of architecture.' [83]

Curating as the work of architecture is a widely accepted notion today. As Philip Ursprung proposed, reflecting on his own curatorial work on Herzog & de Meuron's 'Archaeology of the Mind' (2012),[84] the process of *exhibiting* itself ('collecting and organizing materials') is an architectural process as important as that of building.[85] A similar idea of the architectural concept of exhibiting was developed by Eve Blau when describing Kazuyo Sejima's Venice Biennale as a piece of architecture, and the curator's conceptual and methodological process as 'curating architecture with architecture.'[86] One might argue that professional architects have taken a pivotal role in curating landmark exhibitions since the early emergence of contemporary curatorship, citing the work of Emilio Ambasz, Aldo Rossi and Vittorio Gregotti, among others. As Deyan Sudjic remarks,[87] while no living artists would ever curate the art biennale in Venice, the architecture edition has been mainly curated by architects.

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[82] See: Eve Blau, 'Reviewing Architectural Exhibitions, Exhibiting Ideas', *Journal of The Society of Architectural Historians,* 57 (1998), 256; Barry Bergdoll, 'At home in the Museum', *Log*, 15 (2009), 35-48.
[83] Cohen regards curatorial work as a tool of building history, a process and tool of storytelling, parallel to historical research. Jean-Louis Cohen, 'Mirror of Dreams', *Log*, 20 (2010), 52.
[84] Philip Ursprung, 'Archeology of the Mind', Canadian Centre for Architecture press release, (2012) [http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/exhibitions/19-herzog-de-meuron-archaeology-of-the-mind] [accessed 15 March 2012].
[85] Ursprung also noted in the context of the conference 'More Models? A Conversation about the Future of Architecture Exhibitions' (31 October 2014, ETH Zurich, gta exhibitions), that today recent graduates of architecture appear to show more interest in working on and with exhibitions than in building.
[86] Eve Blau, 'Curating Architecture with Architecture', *Log*, 20 (2010), 19-28.
[87] 'Interview with Deyan Sjudic', in *Architecture on Display: On the history of the Venice Biennale of Architecture*, ed. by Aaron Levy and William Menking (London: Architectural Association, 2010) p. 101.

The increasing contemporary professionalisation of the curator within the schools of architecture signals, however, a fundamental shift in the thinking about architectural production. *Log* magazine devoted a thematic issue in 2010 to this subject, in which Cynthia Davidson's editorial introduction announced that curating had become its own form of architecture, which needs a discourse of its own.[88] A number of important research initiatives were set up around this time that shared the propositions of Philips' earlier pilot project but with the main difference of emerging primarily from the disciplinary grounds of architecture. These academic initiatives promote an understanding of architectural practice and production as a diverse field that extends beyond the traditional modes of professional work (that of building), and unequivocally suggest the exhibition as a new site of architectural production. This curatorial discourse has become prevalent in leading schools of architecture, such as the Oslo Centre for Critical Architectural Studies (OCCAS). As Thordis Arrhenius notes, the OCCAS project 'Exhibiting Architecture' – not that differently from the Afterall Exhibition Histories programme in London – traces the reciprocity between exhibitions and architectural history,[89] contributing equally to the historic contextualization of curatorial practice and that of the landmark exhibitions of architecture.[90]

Set up in 2009, the MSc programme in CCCP (Critical, Curatorial, and Conceptual Practices in Architecture) at Columbia University's GSAPP (Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation) promotes a more activist idea of architectural curatorship, with the understanding that exhibitions can function as active agents for innovation and change within the discipline. Accordingly, instead of over-emphasising historic perspectives, the CCCP programme sees its role as critical and operational in relation to current architectural practice. Felicity Dale Scott, the programme's co-director, describes:

> The new program was created in recognition that architectural production is multifaceted and that careers in the field often extend beyond traditional modes of professional practice […] The CCCP program was thus set up to reflect this structural heterogeneity and the multiple sites and formats of exchange through which architecture operates. [91]

This complex notion of architectural production, as noted by Scott, expands the discipline as a research-based practice, in which curating and exhibiting are present as 'operating platforms,'[92] forming one

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[88] See Davidson's editorial in *Log,* 20 (2010), 'Curating Architecture'; this issue of *Log* was shortly followed by further special issues of journals on this theme, such as *OASE*, 88 (2012), 'Exhibitions Showing and Producing Architecture'. This issue was edited by Cynthia Davidson with consulting editor and curator Tina Di Carlo.

[89] Thordis Arrhenius, 'Foreword', in *Place and Displacement: Exhibiting Architecture*, ed. by Thordis Arrhenius, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, Jérémie Michael McGowan (Zürich: Lars Müller, 2014), pp.7-14.

[90] A historicisation of the exhibition, like that seen in contemporary art, is evident in the emerging curatorial field of architecture. A large oral history project on the history of the Venice Architecture Biennale by Aaron Levy and William Menking is illustrative of this new tendency, comparable to the Hans-Ulrich Obrist interview marathons, conceived as a way of offering an oral history of an institution in flux. See: Levy and Menking, *Architecture on Display.*

[91] Felicity D. Scott, 'Operating Platforms', *Log*, 20 (2010), 65-69 (p. 65).

[92] Scott defines 'operating platforms' thus: 'These many architectural modalities, as well as their institutional and mediatic interfaces, or forms of dissemination, have each, in distinct ways, played important roles in the conceptualization and transformation of the discipline.' See: 'Critical, Curatorial, and Conceptual Practices in Architecture', Columbia University

mode of operation alongside other conceptual and critical practices, such as criticism, publishing, writing and other modes of dissemination of the architect's work and ideas. This recognition of the enabling role of conceptual practices extends and complicates the critique of architecture's technical functionalism (as often associated with building), which echoes and returns us to Léon Krier's key statement on the existential paradox of the architect: 'I do not build because I am an architect.'[93]

The curatorial professionalisation of architecture – whether contextualising, activist or 'storytelling', as seen in the different propositions outlined above – points to its dematerialisation, in which discourse is posited as a possible form of practice. While this strategy might open up space for critical experiments and observations, as Mick Wilson's Foucauldian critique[94] of the discursive turn in 21st-century art-curatorial practice suggested, the ambivalent definition of *doing* and *saying* easily become synonymous forms of acting on the world and threaten to turn critique into a form of rhetoric. Such is the case in the final dematerialisation of some of today's art-curatorial practices, where even articulating something verbally becomes an act, as Wilson remarks:

> The Foucauldian moment in art of the last two decades, and the ubiquitous appeal of the term 'discourse' as a word to conjure and perform power. The literalised realisation of conversation has taken on a peculiarly significant role in the current moment in a way that both proceeds from and exceeds the precedents of Anglophone conceptualism of the late sixties and early seventies.[95]

The architectural discourse, in which tropes of art are linguistic instruments in the hands of architecture, finally rebounds to the (often simplified) representations of the art-architecture enigma. As Dalibor Vesely has written: 'Tension between the creative and productive reality of architecture reveals through examining the representation.' [96] This thesis, assuming Vesely's proposition, will take as its point of departure the investigation of ontological and political considerations at the intersection of the curatorial representations of art and architecture by asking: how does the autonomy of architecture, in the space of art, relate to the problem of the autonomy of art, which seeks its own 'solutions' in the architectural terrain?

Alina Payne has asserted that contemporary art and architecture are today in a 'suspended dialogue': while until the mid-20th century the history of art and architecture 'were at work on a common project',[97] the 1970s brought about the emancipation of architectural history that prompted the

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[http://www.arch.columbia.edu/programs/critical-curatorial-conceptual-practices] [accessed 10 November 2015]

[93] Ian Latham, 'Léon Krier. A Profile...', *Architectural Design*, 57 (1978), 37.

[94] Mick Wilson, 'Curatorial Moments and Discursive Turns', in *Curating Subjects, ed. by Paul O'Neill* (London: Open Editions, 2007), pp. 201-216.

[95] Wilson, 'Curatorial Moments and Discursive Turns', pp. 202-203.

[96] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation,* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), p. 4.

[97] Alois Riegl took architecture as his point of departure to establish the concept of *Kunstwollen*; conceptions of space have been used as historic ordering devices by Heinrich Wölfflin, Arnold Spengler, Dagobert Frei; the study of medieval architecture was translated into an art-historical methodology by Erwin Panofsky, Rudolf Wittkower and so on. See: Alina A. Payne, 'Architectural

foundation of a number of collecting institutions, research centres and museums. This banished architecture to the periphery of art history, and limited the dialogue between the two fields. Tendencies towards emancipation and autonomy, as Vesely suggests, counter representation's participatory function.[98] This thesis shares Payne's aspirational suggestion that the two fields might come together again in a renewed participatory dialogue, and offers space to open up new fields of thought through comparative analysis that – as an alternative to the fragmented landscape of *différance* – are revealed as more productive sites of substantive differentiation.

While Philips warned of the simplification of the art-architecture relationship, Scott proposed a disciplinary openness: 'the critical negotiation of disciplinary conventions with the forces revealed by these encounters […] forms one of the keys to the discipline's purchase both on contemporary life and on potentials for radical transformations.'[99] This thesis consonantly argues that, instead of flattening difference in a self-enclosed disciplinary discourse, the critical re-examination of an art-architecture encounter can result in positive effects.

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History and the History of Art: A Suspended Dialogue', *Journal of The Society of Architectural Historians,* 58 (1999), 292-299.
[98] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, 'Introduction', pp. 2-10.
[99] Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia,* p. 11.

## 1.2 BETWEEN NOW AND THEN: REFRAMING THE VOID

### The Origin of Spectacle

The 'void' (as in the title of this chapter) designates an empty space; it is a spatial metaphor for the ideological desolation of our cultural space.[100] As Hal Foster writes: 'The pretense that the cultural is separate from the economic is finished; one characteristic of contemporary capitalism is the commingling of the two, which underlies not only the prominence of museums but also the refashioning of such institutions to serve an 'experience economy'.'[101] As the self-centredness and self-referentiality of the neo-avant-garde has proceeded to a higher level of autonomy, the contemporary search for new sources of originality takes place in the domain of diverse private fantasies, in complete separation from everyday reality.[102] The resulting new economies of representation, as propagated by contemporary museums, turned the political function of utopia into a facade of utopian fiction.

Concluding his overview of the historical development of the museum, Walter Grasskamp warned: 'Beware of Museums!'[103] Consonantly, this thesis asks: if it is the museal frame that institutes today's representational regimes, what then constitutes the *frame* of a museum? How did this formulation become the *de facto* means of engagement? And why were the initiating principles *so* compromised and forsaken? To consider the implications of this *acquiescence* it is necessary to trace the development of economic forces and the resulting social implications and contemporaneous cultural expression; this occurrence, for the purposes of this study, is rooted in the advent of the postmodern turn and the concomitant emergence of neo-liberal political regimes. In the quest to contextualise the contemporary phenomenon of curating, this thesis will thus refocus on the period between the late 1970s and early 1980s and its ideas and institutions.

In *The Postmodern Condition,* Lyotard described the 1970s as the end of the age of the meta-narratives.[104] This period gave final closure to the social, political and artistic revolutions of 1968 and marked the emergence of a new ideological and cultural conservatism. Fredric Jameson, reiterating Debord's earlier critique of society's turn to *Spectacle*, in which 'All that once was directly lived has

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[100] The 'void' has been heavily theorised in contemporary philosophy as well as in architecture. This thesis is not alluding to any of these in particular, instead it uses the word as a descriptive metaphore of the ideological state of a post-Cold-War era and its post-political reordering.
[101] Hal Foster, *The Art-Architecture Complex* (London: Verso, 2011), p. ix.
[102] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*.
[103] Grasskamp differentiates a set of readings of the museum's various histories: '[The museum] has not only (l) the history of its origination and dissemination, but (2) the history of its survival. These are distinguished by (3) the history of the collected objects inside it. Were this not enough to make the task appear complicated, the true challenge lies in the fact that (4) the museum has become an influential medium in the representation of history whose forms, of course, have their own history – a meta-history, as it were, of the museum.' It is this last history outlined by Grasskamp that is of interest in this thesis. See: Walter Grasskamp, 'Reviewing the Museum - or: The Complexity of Things', *Nordisk Museologi*, 1 (1994), 65-74 (p. 72).
[104] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report On Knowledge,* tr. by Geoffrey Bennington and Brian Massumi (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979).

become mere representation',[105] perceives that postmodernity is imbued with an omnipresent and intrusive regime of images. He writes that 'the very sphere of culture itself has expanded', and is 'no longer limited to its earlier, traditional or experimental forms, but is consumed throughout daily life itself.'[106] The symptomatic rise of the museum industry played a crucial role in the spectacularisation and circulation of these commodity-images. The new museum building boom brought about by the post-Beaubourg age led to the construction of more museums – seen as the driving force of the contemporary urban economy – than ever since the 19th century formation of the museum's institution. This tendency was closely intertwined with the proliferating theorisation and critique of the notion of the museum,[107] which resulted in its fundamental restructuring and – as this thesis will argue – its radical expansion.

The postmodernisation of the wider cultural discourse, as theorised by Jameson, together with the post-industrial era's changing economic climate, prompted a need to redefine the purpose of the architectural profession. The resulting new discourse on architectural autonomy, emerging in opposition to notions of architectural functionalism of the orthodox Modern,[108] saw its emancipation within the space – and through the *architecture* – of postmodern museums. The critique of modernist functionalism (which figured as the recuperation of architectural semantics – an autonomous aesthetic form – and a reinvested interest in architectural history through the site of the city),[109] engendered the profession's search for a new autonomous position. In the consequent repositioning of architecture in relation to its own aesthetic value and history, the exhibition of architecture became the medium of transformation. Beatriz Colomina, in the late 1980s, considered the intertwined roles of the mediatisation and production of architecture in 'Architectureproduction', and remarked as follows:

> The history of architectural media is much more than a footnote to the history of architecture. The journals and now the galleries help to determine that history. They invent 'moments', create 'tendencies' and launch international figures, promoting architects from the limbo of the unknown, of building, to the rank of historical events, to the canon of history.[110]

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[105] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, (London: Rebel Press, 1987), thesis 1.
[106] Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern 1983-1998* (London/New York: Verso, 2009), p. 111.
[107] The number of theoretical texts and pragmatic handbooks suddenly doubled in the late 1970s, reaching a peak that had not been seen since the mid-19th century. See the statistics of the Google Ngram Viewer: [https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=museum&year_start=1800&year_end=2015&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cmuseum%3B%2Cc0] [accessed 10 November 2015].
[108] The critique of modernist functionalism united diverse schools of architectural thinking across Europe and North America. In regard to the recuperation of the semantic in architecture that was posted as a debate between 'Gray' and 'White' architecture, prompted by the writing of Brian Brace Taylor, Scott argues that it rather linked them in a dialogue and a shared critique of the orthodox Modern Movement's functionalism; it is the 'resemiticisation' debate that foreclosed alternative re-evaluations of modernism and resulted in the post-war avant-garde's oblivion toward the political potential of architectural experimentation. Scott notes that this phenomenon repeated in some of today's architectural experimentation that takes its direct inspiration from Deleuzian philosophy: 'Rather than forging a line of flight, it seems that we have come full circle.' see: Felicity D. Scott, 'Architecture or Techno-Utopia', *Grey Room*, 3 (2001), 112-126 (p.121).
[109] This turn in the architectural field was critically described by Manfredo Tafuri as the emergence of semiology and structuralism in architecture. Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and Histories of Architecture*, tr. by Giorgio Verrecchia (New York: Harper and Row, 1980) p. 5.
[110] *Architectureproduction*, ed. by Beatriz Colomina (New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988).

The timeframe of the late 1970s, which is the primary focus of this study, marks the first instances of the institutionalisation of architecture exhibitions, as seen in the opening of the Centre Pompidou in Paris in 1977, that reimagined the role of the museum in relation to the city and a new urban economy; the founding of International Confederation of Architecture Museums (ICAM) in Helsinki in 1979, both a result of, and a prompt for, the founding of a number of new museums, archives, collections and libraries, all dedicated to the collection and research into histories of architecture;[111] and the first official International Architecture Biennale in Venice in 1980 – all of which rendered architecture's position more central within the museum and exhibitions. While the late 1970s, as Payne has argued, saw the pluralisation and emancipation of architectural history as a distinct discipline within the academy,[112] this thesis proposes a reading of the same period as an evolutionary moment in the emergence of contemporary curatorial and exhibition practices, contending that these are essentially and fundamentally architectural constructs.

Foster writes: 'I believe modernism and postmodernism are constituted in an analogous way, in deferred action, as a continual process of anticipated futures and reconstructed pasts.' He goes on to say, 'Each epoch dreams the next, as Walter Benjamin once remarked, but in doing it revises the one before it.'[113] In a related way, this thesis aims to contextualise the contemporary phenomenon of the global rise of the 'independet'/ contemporary curator by locating and interrogating its origins, which – as the hypothesis of this thesis – are closely indebted to the turn of the 1970s. Thus, if the post-industrial turn figured in the expansion and explosion of the postmodern museum industry, as described above, this thesis, by drawing on the critique of concurrent neo-avant-garde practices, will question what the historicising of such originals – as implied by the professionalization of contemporary curatorial practices – might suggest.

French historiographer François Hartog has argued[114] that the fall of the Berlin Wall brought about a major change in the way we perceive history today: that in the past the dominant Western regime of 'historicity' was future-oriented, but this has now shifted to a focus on the present. He contends that our present-oriented regime abandoned the linear conception of temporality by abolishing the distance between present and past.[115] Thus, the past has lost its autonomy and derives its meaning from the present – as the present is primarily constructed through memory, the experience of historical pasts, which signals a crisis of our contemporary *time*:

> Our relations to time were suddenly and irreversibly shattered and confounded by certain events of the recent past: the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the collapse of the communist ideal as the future of the revolution, and the simultaneous rise of a number of fundamentalist movements. Everywhere the order of time ceased to be self-evident. Fundamentalisms, with their mixture of archaic and modern features, grapple in part with a crisis of the future. Since

[111] Grasskamp and Piper, 'Architekturmuseen / Architekturvermittlung', pp. 138-202.
[112] Payne, *Architectural History and the History of Art: A Suspended Dialogue*, pp. 292-299.
[113] Hal Foster, 'Whatever Happened to Postmodernism', in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-garde at the End of the Century*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), p.207.
[114] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
[115] Hartog sees this increasing tendency in relation to the 1980s rise of the museum – rendering heritage more visible and raising the issue of protecting, cataloguing, promoting and rethinking of histories. Hartog, p. 3.

> the traditions they turn to in order to remedy the ills of the present are incapable of opening onto a future, they are largely "invented."[116]

This phenomenon, described by Hartog as the 'presentism' of our time, was already at the core of the 1970s neo-avant-garde, which constructed its image according to an analogy with historic avant-gardes, but rejected modernist notions of progress. As Habermas noted, describing the 1980s Architecture Biennale in Venice, it formed an 'avant-garde of reversed fronts' 'that sacrificed the tradition of modernity in order to make room for a new historicism.'[117] This thesis contends that the 'presentism' of today's curatorial phenomenon, manifest through its nostalgic embrace of the neo-avant-garde as its authoritative precedent, only further perpetuates this 'crisis' of time.

As Habermas remarked, the final project of the neo-avant-garde – or 'post-avant-garde' as Peter Bürger has it[118] – was to prepare the way for the 'revolutions of recuperation' of 1989, which suspended the political revolution in order to usher in the global order of capitalism. Habermas' suggested alignment, between the apolitical attitude of the neo-avant-gardes and that of the global post-political re-ordering of 1989, at first appears to be out of time – especially when considering that the 1980s was a period when the Cold War was at its height. This disjuncture in historical time is described by Hartog as 'gaps in historicity', an 'odd in-between period […] in historical time, during which one becomes aware of an interval in time which is entirely determined by things that are no longer and by things that are not yet.'[119] Historical regimes and changes in social sciences, culture and politics are not always in alignment, but instead one prepares another, events taking on their own momentum, often seeming to be too *soon* or too *late*, only neatly falling into line in history's re-telling.

The 1980s was such an in-between period, in which the cultural legacy of the avant-garde lost its political agency while the neo-conservative political ideologies started their relentless rise – the neo-liberal turn in Western society brought about by Margaret Thatcher (1979), Ronald Reagan (1980) and Helmut Kohl (1982), a coming together of political ideologies paralleled by Mikhail Gorbachev's *glasnost* (1986) in the Soviet Union.[120] The fall of the Berlin Wall and the subsequent disintegration of the Soviet Union signalled the advent of the new global order that envelops contemporary civilization, in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's description the sovereign global power of the new 'Empire', that established the irreversible process of the economic and cultural regulation of exchange.[121] The rise of the global biennale, as described by Paul O'Neill,[122] is a symptom of this post-political reordering of the world. The leftist nostalgia in contemporary cultural practices, which articulate a critique of the

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[116] Hartog, p. 3.
[117] Jürgen Habermas, 'Modernity – An Incomplete Project', in *The Anti-Aesthetic,* ed. by Hal Foster (New York: New Press, 2002) p. 1.
[118] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.
[119] Hannah Arendt, cited in: Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, p. 5.
[120] The 1970s neoliberal economic theories are commonly interpreted as the root of the late-capitalist global financialisation. According to Kotz, the 2007-8 financial crisis, the structural crisis of the neo-liberal free-market capitalism, arose from the ideas and institutions that were put in place in the 1980s. See: David M. Kotz, *The Rise and Fall of Neoliberal Capitalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 2015).
[121] Antonio Negri and Michael Hardt, *Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000), pp. xi-xvii.
[122] O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)*, pp. 51-86.

economisation of the cultural field through the spectacularising re-enactment of the post-war avant-garde, is the product of the same. The political instrumentality of both is condemned to an irreversible impotence, the foundation of which this thesis investigates when probing the inherently paradoxical foundations – and legacy – of today's ideologically vacuous curatorial realm. This thesis will consider historical development pre- and post- 1989, a point that marked both a fall and a rise – the seemingly irrepressible ascendency of the totalizing claims of neo-liberal capitalism – and assess its often-coercive effect.

## Reframing the Void

'Reframing the Void' is both a metaphor for the coexisting and often contradictory spatial representations of art and architecture that occur in exhibitions, and a reference to the inherently paradoxical foundations (the spectacularised origins) of today's curatorial discourse. In this thesis the word 'framing' is considered in three different ways. The first is to designate a method of contextualizing, linking singular events, artifacts or individuals across space, time and disciplines in order to consider the complex relationships that relate these events. The second is a reference to the context of the museum: both the ways in which it frames objects and how museums are framed by the continually shifting meanings of culture – this thesis will contend that the frame of the museum, rather than having distinct parameters, is now in a mode of total expansion. Finally, the rhetoric of framing (and *reframing*), as a figure of speech, will be reflected in the structure of this text, which, like a *mise en abyme*, moves continually between the 1970s and the contemporary period (one framing another), looking for the origins of the present moment by sourcing and re-presenting events of the recent past.

Through a set of case studies drawn from different institutional and disciplinary contexts of the late 1970s and early 1980s, the following chapters will investigate representations of architecture in four separate scales, starting from the building (as museum), entering the street (as exhibition), and examining the object (as collection). The final chapter returns to the site of the contemporary city and investigates urban representations – the contemporary museification of architecture – through a range of art and architectural practices as a way to contextualize the contemporary turn through the prism of the 1970s – when the museum reclaimed the city as its site and newly expanded field, a seminal period of curatorial development that continues to influence the contemporary frame. To contextualize and theorise the conceptual concerns of the thesis, it is divided into four chapters, each has its own thematic, but related, chronological trajectory and recurring exemplars, and, framed by the 'Introduction' and 'Conclusion' of this thesis, they move from the contemporary to the historical, and finally back again.

The central figure of the thesis is Oswald Matthias Ungers. His exhibitions – testing grounds for his theoretical work – became an analogical device for his physical architecture, while his architecture was often rendered as exhibition. Ungers' building of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt, his exhibitions – the *Kubus* installation in Cologne, *City Metaphors* at the Cooper Hewitt, and his facade on Paolo Portoghesi's *Strada Novissima* – as well as his prolific theoretical work and urban studies for the 'Green Archipelago' are recurring and key references throughout this thesis. Beyond his architectural

merits, however, Ungers is primarily rendered as an intellectual, a collector and collaborator, whose abstract body of ideas, for the purposes of this thesis, become the most interesting when revealed in its adjacencies and dialogues.

Such an accompaniment is his close collaboration with Heinrich Klotz in Frankfurt, which resulted in the building of the DAM –its mise-en-abyme structure is mirrored in the blueprint of this thesis. Frankfurt's urban transformation at the early years of the 1980s, within the frame of its new museums, illuminates the exhibitionary expansion of contemporary architecture from a novel, urban perspective; the DAM's larger cultural and geographical context, the Museumsufer is an essential case study. Klotz's role – as historian, curator, museum founder and pioneer of urban regeneration practices – offers a pivotal example in interpreting the shifting dichotomies of the city-museum relationship, which is explored on different scales in the singular chapters of the thesis.

A counterpart of the Museumsufer was Paolo Portoghesi's iconic *Strada Novissima* exhibit which employed a form of urban architecture in the gallery space as curatorial device, which is another vital case study. The triangulation of the ideas proposed by Ungers, Klotz and Portoghesi render a moment in history, the central focus of my research, which saw the exhibitionary emancipation of contemporary architecture and the concurrent emergence of global curatorial practices as they moved in and out of the gallery. To better contextualise and complement this constellation, questions of architectural representation and the urban expansion of museums are discussed in relation to examples of contemporary art, including works by Robert Smithson, Sol Le Witt, Michael Asher and Samuel Beckett.

Besides examining architectural display within and beyond the physical walls of the museum, the notion of 'architectural collection' is addressed and analyzed through the different chapters from multiple perspectives: as figured in Ungers' Collection and his Kubus House in Cologne; as rendered through art practices, such as Matta Clark's interventions and Kabakov's 'total installations'; by contrasting the institutional models and collecting policies of Klotz's DAM with that of the Canadian Centre for Architecture and the ideas of its founding director, Phyllis Lambert; and, finally, in relation to the 'collection' of buildings in Frankfurt's Museumufer, and the Postmodern architectural model of the 'Museum without Walls' that – as Krauss argued – was finally reinterpreted as a 'collection of spaces'.

Other important – and constantly recurring – examples are Malraux's idea of the *Musée Imaginaire* as well as the Centre Pompidou in Paris, which (respectively, a concept and a building) became originating agents of the post-Beaubourg age of museums, and thus serve as fundamental reference and anchor points when navigating the highly elliptical narratives of this text.

The thesis employs a curatorial method, in that pairing, comparing and superimposing– as in Malraux's imaginary museum – play a crucial role. The repeated review of the case studies in the differing context of the chapters acquires an important rhetorical and organising function. The curatorial arrangement of this mise-en-abyme sequence alludes to an architectural sense of circulation in space. As in René Magritte's painting *La Clairvoyance* in that the painter paints his perceiving self, the diagramme of the

thesis– as Ungers' building of the DAM – unfolds as ideas-within-ideas, and aims to map the future potentialities of the present within the past.

Fig. 2. Photograph of René Magritte painting his 1936 painting *La Clairvoyance*.

**CHAPTER 2**

**THE CONTAINER UNDONE: MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE AS DISPLAY**

*Everything is architecture!*
Hans Hollein[1]

Fig. 3. Yves Klein in the Void Room (Raum der Leere), Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, January 1961.

[1] Hans Hollein, ed., 'Alles ist Architektur' [Special edition]. *Bau: Magazine for Architecture and Urban Planning*, 1/2 (1968).

The second chapter, ‘The Container Undone: Museum Architecture as Display’, takes as its point of departure the complex accord between the institutional critique of 1960s and ’70s art practices and the concurrent disciplinary changes that defined contemporary architecture. It moves from Brian O’Doherty’s critique of the ‘white cube’ to investigations of the changing concept of the museum, exposing how, as a result of the spatial turn of the 1970s, the architectural space of the museum ceased to be understood as a pure container of art.

The post-studio art practice that emerged from the critique of the space of art, and the disciplinary emancipation of architecture that evolved within that space, implied the conceptual and physical restructuring of the architecture of the museum. The constantly competing self-representations of contemporary art and architecture – moving between function and its fiction – cancel each other out just as much as they validate one another. This oppositional binary, the shared space of art and architecture where one representation mirrors another, actually enabled the ambivalent site of the late-capitalist museum to emerge.

From Bernard Tschumi and RoseLee Goldberg’s ‘A Space: A Thousand Words’ exhibition (1975) to Oswald Matthias Ungers’ Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt (1979-84), the chapter traces through the art-architecture comparison how the dematerialised museum turned into the total work of architecture: a site for sights and a *sight* in and of itself; an ultimate transition from dematerialisation to depoliticisation.

## 2.1 EXHIBITING THE VOID

> *I saw the Aleph from every point and angle, and in the Aleph I saw the earth and in the earth the Aleph and in the Aleph the earth.*
> – Jorge Luis Borges[2]

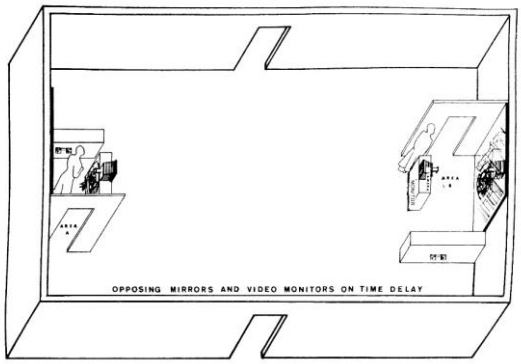


Fig. 4. Dan Graham, *Present Time Observed*, 1974, submitted for 'A Space: A Thousand Words' exhibition.

Space as Praxis

In 1974 Bernard Tschumi and RoseLee Goldberg wrote to an international group of artists and architects to enquire about their conceptual and physical understanding of space,[3] a pivotal interest at the time for both Goldberg and Tschumi. The responses were later compiled and included in the exhibition 'A Space: A Thousand Words', at the Royal College of Art in London.[4] This, unlike a traditional group show, consisted exclusively of a collection of manifesto-like short statements accompanied by photographic reproductions of works. According to the organisers, the exhibition set out to reveal contemporary attitudes and to demonstrate the most recent changes in the language and theories of space. As Goldberg later rephrased it in an article in *Studio International*, the exhibition considered 'space as praxis'.[5] The 27 practitioners included Braco Dimitrievich, Dan Graham, Daniel Buren, John Stezaker, Nigel Coates, Gianni Pettena, Will Alsop and Christian de Portzamparc, and while their contributions differed in their approach and their definition of space, they shared 'the expression of a

[2] Jorge Luis Borges, *The Aleph* (London: Penguin, 2000).
[3] See invitation letters by Goldberg and Tschumi, in: *A Space: A Thousand Words*, ed. by Bernard Tschumi, Roselee Goldberg *(*London: Dieci Libri, 1975), pp. 4-5.
[4] The exhibition and a related performance programme were shown from 7 February to 13 March 1975 in the RCA Gallery, and these were accompanied by a one-day conference held at the Architectural Association (AA). Both the exhibition and the conference were closely related to Tschumi's Diploma Unit at the AA (1974-45): many of the contributors were Unit tutors or former students of Tschumi (such as Will Alsop, Nigel Coates, Jenny Lowe, Brian Muller, Dereck Revington, Leon van Schaik, Paul Shepheard and Peter Wilson), while other participants were invited to engage with the Unit through Goldberg's events.
[5] RoseLee Goldberg, 'Space as Praxis', *Studio International,* 190 (1975), 130-35.

particular attitude toward space.'[6] For Tschumi this conception implied a collective rediscovery of space as *medium*, as a physical condition and discursive context at the same time.

A historical and critical analysis of space also prevailed in the writing of a number of thinkers, including Henri Lefebvre, Michael Foucault, Paul Virilio and Gilles Deleuze, from the late 1960s onwards.[7] Their collective interest in the history of spatial thought in modernity corresponded to a thematic interest in spatial theories that surfaced in the wider field of the humanities and sciences, which adopted spatial models for new analytical tools and methods. Foucault described this era as an epoch of spatial hegemony, which followed the temporal supremacy of 19th-century historicism.[8] This spatial turn, which was generally recognized in the 1970s, can be traced back to the late 19th century, in the accelerated urbanization and the complex spatial realities of the metropolis, which was accompanied by the rapidly developing sciences of optical perception and psychology. [9]

Anthony Vidler has argued that the history of the 20th century adds up to a history of competing ideas of space.[10] By the late 19th century, the historical specificity of architectural space had been acknowledged, and thus a history of spaces replaced the history of styles, which by the early 20th century was widely recognised by the artistic avant-garde as synonymous with the historicist paradigm – a derogatory term referring to the tendency to overemphasise history and recycle the themes and styles of the past instead of envisioning the future. The invention of a new, abstract conception of space was therefore at the core of the Modern Movement itself, and this was later canonised by Sigfried Gideon's *Space, Time, Architecture* in 1941. Following the crisis of functionalism and other totalising utopian notions of the Modern Movement, this seemingly neutral, but ideologically highly charged, spatial concept was challenged and unmasked, resulting in a new context-consciousness that still prevails today.

The exhibition 'A Space: A Thousand Words' at the RCA was among the very first attempts to trace and theorise this new spatial turn in artistic practices which emerged around the beginning of the 1960s. It anticipated Brian O'Doherty's iconic essays on the 'white cube',[11] which were published in the

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[6] Bernard Tschumi 'A Space is Worth a Thousand Words', in *A Space: A Thousand Words*, ed. by Bernard Tschumi, Roselee Goldberg (London: Dieci Libri, 1975), p. 3.
[7] Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace* (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1974); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage/Random House, 1979); Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, Spring (1986), 22-27; Paul Virilio, *L'espace critique*, (Paris: Christian Bourgeois, 1984); Gilles Deleuze, *Le pli: Leibniz et le baroque* (Paris: Minuit, 1988).
[8] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces'.
[9] Mitchell W Schwarzer, basing his thinking on the developing sciences of perception and psychology, links the central role of the spatial dimension to the late 19th-century emergence of a 'perceptual empiricism', which then led to a change in the evaluation of *space*. See: Mitchell W. Schwarzer, 'The Emergence of Architectural Space: August Schmarsow's Theory of "Raumgestaltung"', *Assemblage*, 15 (1991), 48-61.
[10] Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space. Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000). His references include theories and writings by Alois Riegl, Mitchell W Schwarzer, Hubert Damish, Erwin Panofsky, Wilhelm Worringer, Adolf Hildebrand, August Schmarsow, etc.
[11] Following a lecture entitled 'Inside the White Cube', given at LACMA in January 1975, Brian O'Doherty's first three related essays appeared in *Artforum* in 1976 and a fourth, 'The Gallery as

following year in *Artforum* and soon became the most important documents of the 1970s post-studio art scene. In four consecutive essays, O'Doherty considered the rediscovery of the spatial context of art. In his essay 'The Gallery as Gesture' he used a number of examples from Conceptualism, Land Art, American Post-Minimalism, and Italian Arte Povera to examine a tendency for spatial analysis that focused on art 's own site and the gallery space. By problematising the gallery's presiding position, O'Doherty gave a pertinent summary of the ideas that occupied many of his contemporaries.

Goldberg, at that time curator of the RCA Gallery, was interested in space in correlation with her investigations of contemporary performance art and the concurrent phenomenon of the dematerialisation of the art object.[12] Tschumi pursued a similar enquiry linked to his work at the Architectural Association in London between 1974 and 1975, when he initiated new thematic research on the spatial dimensions of architecture and invited Goldberg to organise a related seminar and programme of events.[13] This invigorating interdisciplinary collaboration, that bridged the AA and the RCA, culminated in their exhibition at the RCA Gallery later that academic year, which aimed to 'lower the traditional barriers' and emphasise bisecting tendencies between art and architecture, by engaging practitioners from both fields.[14]

As Goldberg wrote in her preface to the catalogue: 'Our aim has thus been to inform a public in England of these subsequent developments […] Far from creating artificial relationships between the two [art and architecture], we intended to act as a central meeting point for a series of proposals, holding one idea up to the other, as from a distance.'[15] In this regard, 'A Space: A Thousand Words' exemplified a unique endeavour in the investigation of new spatial practices as it emerged in the work of a new generation of practitioners across a set of different disciplinary fields, ultimately emphasising difference and the inherent ambiguities of the discussion of space through the recognition of the shared – and often conflicting – spatial concerns of the two fields.

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Gesture', in the same journal in 1986. These were later collected and republished as *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1986)

[12] See Lucy R. Lippard *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (New York: Praeger, 1973).

[13] Tschumi worked closely with Goldberg on his 1974-75 Diploma Unit. Her involvement in the Unit contributed to major changes from the activity of previous years and redirected Tschumi's interest towards the notion of space 'as architecture's oldest constant of all'. Goldberg organized a seminar and events programme with the participation of a number of conceptual and performance artists (some of whom were included in the RCA show), while other contributors to the RCA exhibition, such as Nigel Coates, Jenny Lowe, and Brian Muller, were also directly involved in teaching on Tschumi's Diploma Unit.

[14] RoseLee Goldberg, 'Preface', in *A Space: A Thousand Words*, ed. by Bernard Tschumi, Roselee Goldberg (London: Dieci Libri, 1975), p. 2.

[15] Goldberg, 'Preface'.

O'Doherty's awareness of the physical and conceptual territorialisation of the work of art was not that different from Tschumi's and Goldberg's observations on space as praxis or medium. O'Doherty recognised the gallery space – the architectural frame of art – as an aesthetic and ideological object that is inseparable from the art object exhibited inside of it. He identified Yves Klein's 1958 show 'The Specialization of Sensibility in the Raw Material State into Stabilized Pictorial Sensibility', at Galerie Iris Clert, Paris, as one of the first examples of changing conceptual attitudes. For his show Klein painted all the walls of the gallery white and then left it entirely empty. Klein's 'void' became notorious as a scandalous and spectacular event; in 1962 he revisited this idea when he removed all the paintings in one of the galleries of the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris.[16] In these exhibitions, Klein has anticipated a new typology of artistic intervention: since the early 1960s there have been numerous shows that have staged the 'empty' space of the gallery.

Fig. 5. (left) Daniel Buren, 'Work in Situ', 1968; (right) taking down of the paintings exhibited at the Purple show, Paris, Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris, January 26, 1962 from left to right: François Dufrene and Yves Klein.

The Art & Language exhibition 'Air Conditioning Show' in 1967 claimed to exhibit air and the bare architecture of the gallery as a means of questioning the relation of art to its institutional and discursive context. Daniel Buren's first solo show at Galleria Apollinare, Milan, in 1968 also emphasized the actual gallery space by sealing the door to the gallery with green and white stripes. In the same year Robert Barry presented exhibitions in three galleries in Amsterdam, Turin and Los Angeles, during which the galleries where closed, the exhibition invitations stating: 'During the exhibition the gallery will stay closed'. In another piece from the same year, 'Some places to which we can come and for a while "be free to think about what we are going to do"', Barry left the gallery open but empty, considering the space of the gallery as a social space. A year later, Robert Irwin opened his 'Experimental Situation' at ACE Gallery in Westwood, California; he visited the gallery on a daily basis and filled the empty space with 'artistic contemplation'. Les Levine suggested the bodily experience of space in his *White Sight*, a piece exhibited in 1969 at the Fischbach Gallery, New York, where he placed

[16] 'Salon Comparaisons: Peinture Sculpture', Paris, France: Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, 12 March – 2 April 1962.

high-intensity monochromatic sodium vapour lights in the otherwise empty gallery and animated the space with the shadows created by the show's audience. A different kind of participation was involved in Graciela Carnevale's 1968 event held in Rosario, Argentina. The artist locked her audience in the gallery, which forced them to react and forcibly break out of their 'prison'. Carnevale intended her work to evoke the repressive military activity of the Argentinian government, and the gallery to be a metaphor for physical and conceptual confinement. Finally, an example of an even more explicit architectural intervention is Michael Asher's well-known work staged in the Clare Copley Gallery, Los Angeles in 1974, where he removed the wall that separated the showroom from the dealer's office. In this way Asher was merging two conceptually different spaces and representations of the gallery and the art world at large (the otherwise concealed business of art).

The inspirations and intentions behind this specific exhibition typology – retrospectively named 'void shows'[17] – were manifold, and varied radically. They ranged from physical, phenomenological interests to conceptual, political or institutional concerns, but their formal and methodological approach was strikingly similar. This evident similarity, however, was more than an overt formalist coincidence. As O'Doherty put it, the gallery itself became an artistic gesture, an instinctive form of artistic expression; or, as Goldberg acknowledged, space became a new medium in which concepts and discourse materialised. Exhibiting the void – staging architectural space as the ideological object in itself – brought about the recognition of context as the signifier. These aligned artistic gestures, in their attempt to critique and unmask the ideologically charged space of the gallery, the context of art, therefore highlighted and reinforced a newly emerging context-consciousness. They collectively challenged the perception of the gallery as a neutral container through the recontextualisation of the role of architecture within the gallery.

O'Doherty's interpretation of the 'white cube' as an ideologically charged space coincided with a period in architecture that Tschumi described as 'the moment of the loss of innocence', implying that the modernist project had 'failed', that its utopias could not be realized and that architecture was never ideologically neutral.[18] By the 1960s the use of the architectural metaphor of space (i.e. the architecture of the gallery in the case of the 'void shows') became central for a wide range of artistic practices, both within and outside the gallery. However, this development presented a new set of challenges for architectural representation itself. When Allan Kaprow in 1967, in conversation with Robert Smithson,[19] jokingly proposed to empty the building of the Guggenheim Museum in New York and exhibit it as a sculpture, an autonomous work of art in itself, he clearly referred to this crisis of representation, which by the subsequent decade has eventually developed into a territorial debate between art and architecture.

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[17] John Armleder, Mai-Thu Perret, Mathieu Copeland, Gustav Metzger, Clive Phillpot, Laurent Le Bon, Philippe Pirotte, 'VIDES, Une Rétrospective', Paris: Centre Pompidou, 25 February – 23 March 2009.
[18] Bernard Tschumi, 'Spaces and Events', in *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 139-149 (p. 141).
[19] Robert Smithson, 'What is a Museum? A Dialogue between Allan Kaprow and Robert Smithson', in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. by Jack Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 43-51.

The subtle differences between Goldberg and Tschumi's RCA exhibition and O'Doherty's consideration of the white cube expressed this complex contradiction – Goldberg and Tschumi highlighted the conceptual and theoretical intersections between art and architecture, while O'Doherty took their physical juncture as his point of departure; 'A Space: A Thousand Words' concentrated on space as a discourse that occurred around the same time in different disciplinary fields, while *Inside The White Cube* focused on the specific problem of the white cube gallery from the perspective of the display and exhibitionary concerns of art. O'Doherty framed the question of art's contextual dialectics and its physical/institutional site (the architecture of the gallery), a space in which content and context were interchangeable: the site of art became the content and the context at the same time. Overall, O'Doherty's argument was consonant with Goldberg and Tschumi's observations in that they also regarded the physical and discursive contexts of space as inseparable, except that their understanding of space differed in one important detail: for them, *space as medium* implied a self-contained entity which also is a symbol for something else, be that art, architecture or any related discourse, whereas O'Doherty reduced space to an architectural metaphor.

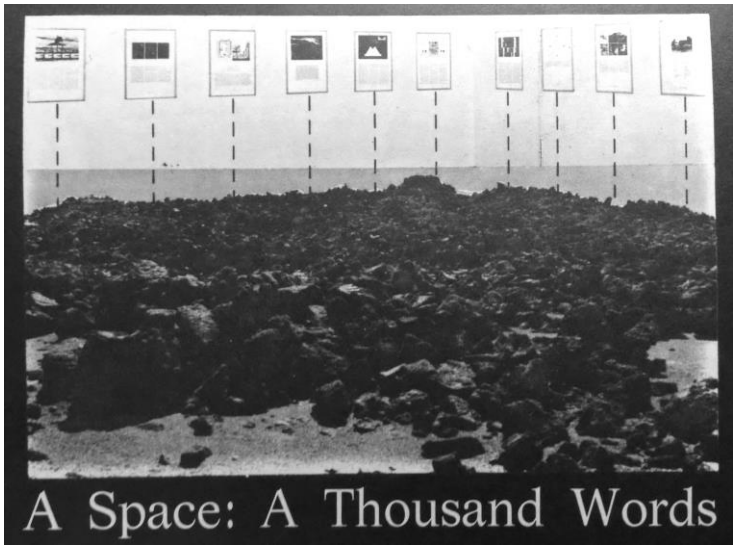

Fig. 6. Cover page of the exhibition catalogue 'A Space: A Thousand Words', 1975.

Tschumi differentiated the *programme* of architecture from pure function and called attention to the importance of the close relation between sign and space, as revealed historically.[20] He emphasised that space is defined by discourse, and that the discussion of space and the creation of space had become indistinguishable: 'the words of architecture became the works of architecture.'[21] Correspondingly, the exhibition at the RCA comprised mainly text-based material. The exhibition panels were exact replicas of the catalogue pages, the only difference being in their size and scale. Even if this exhibition format recalled other contemporaneous practices, such as Seth Siegelaub's 1969 'Xerox Book' that introduced

[20] Tschumi is writing about 'Space vs. Programme' and the role of literary narrative that sheds light on the organization of events in buildings, 'whether called "use", "functions", "activities", or programs'. He argues that architectural structure – regardless of its form – can accommodate a wide range of different activities in the space, and that ultimately 'the relation between program and building could be either highly sympathetic or contrived and artificial.' – which, as Tschumi suggests, might remove the simplistic functionalist associations of architectural structure. See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp.146-147.
[21] Tschumi & Goldberg, *A Space: A Thousand Words*, p.3.

the idea of the book-as-exhibition, Tschumi and Goldberg were interested in a new kind of experiment: their exhibition presented space-as-publication[22] – materialising the concept of *space as discourse* in its most literal sense. Tschumi later asserted that 'architecture cease[d] to be the backdrop for actions, becoming the action itself.'[23] Tschumi's observations clearly confront O'Doherty's reading of space, and outline the often-overlooked opposition between art and architecture, a paradox that is most clearly revealed within the space of the gallery, which remains at the core of the art-architecture exchange of the contemporary period.

In his account of the modernist history of the idea of space, Vidler described the contemporary experience of space as 'warped space', a new genre – space in the collision of architecture and art practices, which upset the Cartesian and Kantian paradigms of space and representational techniques. As he explained, 'spatial warping' is created in the forced intersection of the disciplines of film, photography, art and architecture, and it is a result of the merging of the optical tradition of classical perspective paradigm with psychophysical space.[24] Vidler's understanding of representational space, which I return to in subsequent chapters, enables the highly symbolic space of museums – sites where the spatial dimensions of artistic and architectural media converge and overlap – to be elucidated.[25] The space of the museum is neither a void nor a container. In order to explore the emancipation of architecture within museums, this chapter will investigate how the museum reverses the logic of the 'void shows' – as suggested by Kaprow and Smithson in relation to the Guggenheim Museum in New York – and explore museum architecture as the *display* of architecture in and of itself.

[22] See: Elena Crippa & Tom Vandeputte, 'Space as Praxis', *Log,* 21 (2011), 31-37.
[23] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 149.
[24] Vidler, *Warped Space: Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture*.
[25] However, my focus does not coincide with Vidler's concentration on spatial phobias and a psychoanalytic reading of the metropolis, nor with his analysis of the virtual space of the highly computer- and screen-oriented reality of the late 20th century. Instead, I concentrate here on the highly symbolic space of the museum, a site where the spatial dimensions of artistic and architectural media converge and overlap.

## 2.2 BUILDING SYMBOLIC CAPITAL

### The Museum as Total Work of Art: From Diachrony to Synchrony

In 1985, at the peak of a museum building boom in West Germany, art historian Heinrich Klotz organized a travelling exhibition that surveyed the burgeoning landscape of newly built museums.[26] While Klotz's exhibition aimed to document this contemporary phenomenon, it was also symptomatic in itself of a related tendency, that of the staging of architecture as material, theme and subject within museums. The exhibition focused on the architectural dimension of the museum, and displayed architectural plans, photographs and models of the contemporary buildings of Germany's new museum scene. But most importantly, beyond the staging of a panoramic survey, the exhibition sought to redefine the museum as a work of architecture.

To capture this new concept, in his introduction to the exhibition catalogue Klotz quoted Johannes Cladders on Hans Hollein's new museum building in Mönchengladbach,[27] which was at the time still under construction:

> Art is basically, always, and in every way of a space-defining nature. After having separated itself from architecture, art became an autonomous claim that had to be put forward in a separate way. Architecture detached from art claims to be an autonomous work of art. This conflict culminates in the museum. The museum can only come to terms with this conflict – and thus also with itself – to the extent in which it declares itself to be a work of art. (…) The museum is the potential of a total work of art at the 20th century. It becomes such to the extent in which it succeeds in uniting the spatial claims of architecture with those of art.[28]

Klotz's recommendation for this new concept of the museum reaffirms the same conceptual conflict that connects the writings of O'Doherty and Tschumi. The conflict between the architectural programme and the architectural metaphor of space rendered the museum a place that simultaneously pertains to multiple, often-contradictory spatial representations. A decade after Kaprow's deliberately absurd Guggenheim proposition (a wacky thought-experiment), as Cladders suggested, the idea of the museum as a *total work of art* became a very real expectation: a requirement by the commissioner.

Cladders' idea emphasized the architectural dimension of the museum, which also entailed a revision of its taxonomic display system. Instead of the traditional temporal span, it implied a new spatial arrangement in which objects were interpreted in relation to each other and to their spatial and architectural context. This suggested a new understanding of the museum space as universal or 'hyper-space', which reinterpreted and translated Malraux's concept of the '*musée imaginaire*' ('museum

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[26] See: Heinrich Klotz, Waltraude Klase, *New Museum Buildings in the Federal Republic of Germany,* (New York: Rizzoli, 1985).
[27] Cladders was director of the Abteiberg Municipal Museum for Contemporary Art (Städtisches Museum Abteiberg) in Mönchengladbach from 1967 to 1985. He commissioned Hollein to design the new building for the museum.
[28] Johannes Cladders, in an exhibition catalogue from Galerie Ulysses, Vienna, 1979, in: Klotz & Krase, *New Museum Buildings in the Federal Republic of Germany*, p. 19.

without walls') as an architectural configuration.[29] Hollein's museum in Mönchengladbach followed this idea in the spatial organization of its interior. In order to allow for new vistas and connections across the museum's rooms, Hollein designed a complex variety of routes and openings through the walls, where comparative, or ensemble, looking replaced the individualized experience of focused contemplation. The myth of the singular artwork was therefore exchanged for a 'pastiche' of the total work of art, marking a transition from diachrony to the predominantly spatial experience of synchrony.[30]

Fig. 7. (left) André Malraux's office; (right) Interior of the Städtisches Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach.

A spatialized cultural discourse has informed art practices and exhibitions since the 1960s, but it took longer for this tendency to fully manifest itself in mainstream building practices, a delay that was most likely to have been due to the complex economic and political exigencies of the building industry. What Foucault summed upin 1969 as 'an epoch of space', [31] echoing the dominance of architectural representation and the spatial articulation of ideas, that was only fully absorbed and embraced a decade later by mainstream urban and cultural policies. One of the first examples of buildings truly rooted in these new spatial theories was the Centre Pompidou, erected on the Plateau Beaubourg in Paris. Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano's museum opened in 1977 in order to house multiple forms of artistic expression in a building that aimed to communicate through its form and create content in its own right instead of merely displaying it.[32]

The new typology of the postmodern museum – what Charles Jencks described as 'spectacular contradiction'[33] – was, however, not received with universal enthusiasm. Rosalind Krauss has argued

[29] While Malraux's museum described a purely conceptual space of the human imagination, his concept was appropriated to describe the postmodern museum. (The concept of the 'museum without walls' will be a recurring reference and it will be further explored in the fifth chapter of this thesis.) see: Rosalind Krauss, 'Postmodernism's Museum Without Walls', in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg, Sandy Nairne (London: Psychology Press, 1986), pp.341-8.
[30] Krauss, 'Postmodernism's Museum Without Walls'.
[31] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', pp. 22-27.
[32] The thesis will return to the further analysis of the Pompidou Centre in subsequent chapters.
[33] Jencks typified the postmodern museum in James Stirling's 1984 Neue Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart (as well as in the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, built more than a decade later, which initiated a new trend in museum building that, as he argues, still survives today. As Jencks writes in regard to the spatial synchronicity and plurality of representations inherent in this new type: it carefully mixes and confronts opposite codes. 'Stirling creates an art and ornament out of the predicament'. See: Charles Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modernism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002) p. 110.

that while the late-capitalist reshaping of the museum originated in Minimalism, and in the ways it has changed our experience and perception of the spatial context of art, the hyper-space of the late-capitalist museum is only a 'revisionary construction' and a highly exploited reinterpretation of the spatial claims of Minimalism.[34] Krauss criticised the rapid expansion of the museum in the 1980s as a market-driven operation, and recognised its formal and conceptual transition as the necessary outcome of the contemporary free market spirit and the late-capitalist project of industrialising culture. [35] Minimalism appropriated the technology of industrial production in order to challenge the concept of the original. However, being absorbed and 'normalised' by the art market, the Minimalist object only further reinforced and extended those very principles that it had originally intended to negate. This paradox describes the transition from an era of industrial production to that of commodity production, and the total extension of capital into all aspects of social life, including the museum. According to Krauss's analysis, Minimalism therefore unintentionally prepared the way for a fragmentation that is characteristic of postmodern culture and its museum industry.

For its many contemporary critics, from Krauss to Baudrillard, the late-capitalist museum manifested as a unique symptom of post-industrial society, in which culture caters to mass interests and the museum becomes a *factory* for cultural production, which adopts models of other industrialised areas of leisure. This era was also strongly associated with urban regeneration strategies, which led to museums being recognized as symbolic capital, not only to invigorate cultural life but also as a means to boost tourism and other local industries. In this context the museum was no longer perceived as being static or a mausoleum, as Kaprow and Smithson had suggested, but as a dynamic place of cultural production, and this found its ultimate expression in the architectural form of museums. The emergence of the late-capitalist 'museum industry' opened a new and significant market for architecture: its spatial representational evolution from diachrony to synchrony – as discussed by Klotz and Cladders, a total work of art – has also translated as the architectural articulation and representation of the emerging markets of the post-industrial urban economy. This formulation, with its attendant associations, found particular expression in the urban regeneration of the city of Frankfurt, and its subsequent emergence as a cultural hub came to be seen by many as the exemplary urban plan. Frankfurt's re-invention and its effect, theory writ large in practice, offer an elucidatory model, one that requires a close reading.

## From Bankfurt to Eldorado

In this early post-Beaubourg climate, Frankfurt was one of the prime examples of the way that cities eagerly employed museum architecture to serve urban regeneration. Frankfurt, often referred to as 'Bankfurt', was one of continental Europe's most important financial centres, but this influence, the monoculture of commerce and inadequate post-war reconstruction had resulted in a lack of urban identity. Like many other West German cities at this time, hardly any of its historic areas had withstood the 1944 Allied bombing of the city. This sense was further exacerbated by the functionalist

[34] Krauss, 'Postmodernism's Museum Without Walls'.
[35] CIMAM 1990 Annual Conference, 'Perspectives on the State of Culture at the end of the 20th Century', Los Angeles, California, 8–15 September; see: Rosalind Krauss, 'The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum', *October*, 54 (1990), 3-17.

reconstruction of the city centre and the development of corporate high-rise buildings in the financial district, which stretched along the banks of the river Main. However, this radical – and covertly ideological – cleansing of the city from its ruins and ghosts had not been a success. Frankfurt, where once emperors had been elected and crowned, the location of the first democratically elected German parliament, the site of the Frankfurter Messe, the first book trade fairs and many other significant events since the mid-15th century, had lost its identity, and its pre-eminent cultural position was slipping.

In 1949 Bonn had been chosen, rather than Frankfurt, as the provisional capital of West Germany, and by the 1970s, in order to attract new businesses and investments, the city desperately needed to recreate and diversify its urban reality. Frankfurt's liberal-conservative mayor from 1977 to 1986, Walter Wallmann recognised that the museum industry, combined with the historical reconstruction of the city centre, was Frankfurt's last chance to re-energise its culture. This turn toward history did not merely aim to recuperate a glorious past, but also to project and legitimise a present (through the recycling of earlier images) in which the city could be re-imagined as one of West Germany's leading cultural centres.

Fig. 8. Map of Frankfurt's Museumsufer.

Between 1979 and 1985, over the course of only six years, eight new museums opened along the banks of the river Main; by the end of the 1980s this number was augmented by an additional five, making 13 museums altogether, a striking number in a city with a population of just over 650,000. The 'Gesamtsplan Museumsufer', a riverside museum promenade, started out originally as a conservationist idea to save historic buildings from property speculation and demolition. The majority of these museums occupied renovated or expanded mansions, churches and other historic architectural sites, and a minority of them found their home in entirely new buildings. Frankfurt's Museumsufer, with its scattered and decentralised urban interventions, was a specific response to the German post-war urban context. This large-scale preservation project, together with the pedestrianisation of the inner city, aimed

to repair the urban fabric, while the introduction of a rich variety of cultural activities through the 'democratic institution' of museums was intended to offer 'a new sense of urban living'. As Michaela Giebelhausen summarised: 'Frankfurt's museum landscape formed part of the city's endeavour to remodel itself.'[36]

Frankfurt's Museumsufer was Heinrich Klotz's brainchild. Klotz, at the time professor of art history at the Marburg University and director of the Foto Marburg archive, had only recently relocated to Germany from the United States, where he spent three formative years between 1969-72 as visiting lecturer at Yale and at the Washington University in St Louis. Klotz's international experience opened his eyes to the 'tardiness' of the German architectural discourse and became a fierce advocate of a renewed international dialogue and exchange. His influential book of interviews with the American Masters of architecture was translated and published in German in 1974, and consecutively, in search for a new attitude in architectural culture, Klotz published a series of conversations with a new generation of German architects whom he referred to as the 'New Wilds'.[37] In this same spirit, he started to develop and test his first ideas of urban preservation and potential new commissions for the regeneration of the abandoned historic parts of the city since his arrival to Marburg. This was the time when he first developed his proposal for a dedicated museum of contemporary architecture. While his promotion of *form* in architecture – as a way of critique of the social analysis and functionalism of the orthodox Modern – was widely disputed within the German intellectual context, Klotz's visionary ideas resulted in the founding of a number of key institutions,[38] which significantly shaped the cultural landscape of the 1980s Germany. His proposal for Frankfurt, as a much as Klotz's own figure, is a recurring reference of this thesis, which will be discussed in relation to a wide array of curatorial practices, within and outside museums.

Klotz first presented his idea of the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt to Walter Wallmann in 1978, with city councillor Hilmar Hoffmann's additional support and mediation. Wallmann, who had been installed as Frankfurt's mayor only a few months earlier, immediately recognised the logic of Klotz's proposal and reacted with unanticipated speed to implement his scheme. In the same year, an international architectural competition was announced for each individual museum, under the general coordination of Klotz. Among the chosen entries were Oswald Matthias Ungers' plan for the Deutsches Architekturmuseum (DAM), of which Klotz became the first director himself, as well as Richard Meier's proposal for the Museum für Angewandte Kunst (MAK), Ante Josip von Kostelac's redevelopment of the Rothschild Palais to house the Jewish Museum, Josef Paul Kleihues' restoration plans for the former Carmelite monastery to accommodate the Archäologisches Museum, Gustav Peichl's extension of the Städel Museum, Hans Hollein's monolithic triangular building for the Museum

[36] Michaela Giebelhausen, 'Symbolic capital: The Frankfurt Museum Boom of the 1980s', in *The architecture of the museum – Symbolic structures, urban contexts*, ed. by Michaela Giebelhausen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 75-107 (p. 82).
[37] *Architektur in wiederspruch. Bauen in den USA von Mies van der Rohe bis Andy Warhol*, ed. by John W. Cook and Heinrich Klotz (Zuich, 1974); Heinrich Klotz, *Architektur in der Bundesrepublik* (Frankfurt an Main, 1977); Heinrich Klotz, *Die Neuen Widen in Berlin* (Stuttgart, 1984)
[38] After the DAM (German Architecture Museum) in Frankfurt of which Klotz was founding director between 1984-89, Klotz moved on to create ZKM (Center for Art and Media) in Karlsruhe as well as the Hochschule fur Gestaltung, which holds to this days Klotz's archive of photographs and documentation.

für Moderne Kunst (MMK) and the Frankfurt-based architects Marie-Theres Deutsch and Klaus Dreissigacker's renovation of the ruined Neoclassical building of the former city library to host Portikus, a venue for temporary exhibitions of contemporary art until 2004.[39]

The resulting new architectural landscape presented a heterogeneous contemporary architectural scene – often called 'the Eldorado of Postmodernism'[40] – which was a city-scale endeavour to oppose and correct Frankfurt's austerity-style post-war reconstruction, aligning with Klotz's other curatorial ambitions to rethink and revise the project of the Modern Movement. Frankfurt's new museums, contemporary architectural set pieces scattered around and juxtaposed with the historic sites of the city,[41] can be thought of as Klotz's curatorial legacy.[42] And one could argue – without underestimating the complex social and institutional function of these museum buildings and their respective curatorial programme – that Frankfurt's 13 new museums created a permanent 'mega-exhibition' of postmodern architecture.

The project's main significance was the underlying cohesive urban strategy that held together the 13 new commissions. As the example of Frankfurt's Museumsufer demonstrates, the hyper-space of the late-capitalist model of the museum not only determined its display strategies but expanded these spatial relations to the scale of the city. It reshaped the relation between the museum and the city, as it did between art and its architectural context within the museum. In fact, when Klotz's second retrospective of museum architecture showcased Frankfurt's new museum scene,[43] the show had the same relation to the Museumsufer project as the architectural models had to their original. This was an exhibition within an exhibition. The architecture of the museums had thus turned into a symbolic curatorial gesture, and the city became the curatorial object itself.[44]

Both of Klotz's exhibitions about museum architecture took place in the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, which itself was among the very first museums to open in 1984, as part of the Museumsufer's monumental programme. As founding director of the DAM, Klotz determined the institution's mission

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[39] When it was renovated and reopened as the city library again, Portikus moved to a new building on a small island in the river Main, designed in 2006 by Christoph Mäckler.
[40] Frank Olaf Brauerhoch 'Das Prinzip Museum: Wechselwirkungen zwischen Institution und Kulturpolitik', in *Frankfurt am Main: Stadt, Sozilogie und Kultur*, ed. by Frank Olaf Brauerhoch (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert Verlag, 1991), pp. 107-122 (p. 107).
[41] An interesting analogy can be observed here with the contemporary 'scattered-site' exhibition, which showcases contemporary art works in the urban outdoor spaces and historic sites. As Walter Grasskamp asserted in discussing the 1962 Spoleto 'Festival dei Due Mondi' which showcased a hundred modern sculptures throughout the outdoor spaces of the historic city centre – exemplifying a curatorial strategy that has been widely embraced from the 1970s onward in 'site-specific' works and outdoor exhibitions (as in the case of the Münster Sculpture Projects) – this can be seen as an attempt and exercise to 'date territory', in other words to place signals of the present against a historic background, as Frankfurt's new museum buildings did in relation to (and through) the fragments of the historic city. (See: Walter Grasskamp, 'Art in The City – An Italian-German Tale', in *Public art: A Reader*, ed. by Florian Matzner (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2004), pp. 324-341 (p. 340).
[42] Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, 'The Historical City: Complication, Reinterpretation, Maintenance', in *Museum Architecture in Frankfurt, 1980-1990*, ed. by Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (Munich: Prestel, 1990) pp. 9-12.
[43] The exhibition's title was 'Museum Architecture in Frankfurt 1980-1990': see Lampugnani, *Museum Architecture in Frankfurt, 1980-1990.*
[44] The museum's expansion to the city will be the subject of the fifth chapter of this thesis.

in a way that mirrored the architectural programme and aspirations of the Museumsufer itself. This was not only reflected in its exhibition programme, including the retrospectives on local and national museums, but also in its collecting policies, and, not least, the architecture of its own building, as the first museum dedicated specifically to the medium of architecture in Germany. The opening of the DAM signified the conspicuous 'museumisation' of architecture, in terms of both form and content, and its position, in all respects, was to prove hugely influential. The opening of Frankfurt's new museums was not only a culturally significant event; the museum also became the site of enthronement of the cultural hegemony of Frankfurt's new political leaders, museum directors and architects, signalling a new era of optimism and confidence in the mechanism of the capitalist system, which was established in full force as Helmut Kohl came to power in 1982.

## The Work of Architecture

The exponential growth in new museum buildings, and the consequent increase in media attention that architecture received, stimulated a new interest in monographic and thematic exhibitions about architecture which was not unique to Frankfurt, or Germany. This interest saw the founding of the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM) in Helsinki, in the same year that the DAM was founded, in 1979. The structural institution of ICAM was based on a network of about two dozen international museums, archives and libraries[45] which were dedicated to research on the history of architecture. Following its formulation, a number of new institutions were initiated: among the first of these were the DAM and the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montreal, both founded in the same year, soon followed by the Architekturmuseum in Basel in 1984 and the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAi) in Rotterdam in 1988. Since then ICAM has grown to include over 100 international members to date,[46] the further implications and influence of which will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Amongst the multiple types of institutions embraced by ICAM, the architectural museum emerged as a hybrid institution that was defined by the specific museological needs of architectural media (predominantly drawings, models, photography, plans and other documents),[47] reasserting an ambiguity

[45] Including institutions in Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Hungary, Italy, Yugoslavia, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the Soviet Union and the United States. See: Walter Grasskamp and Jan Piper, 'Architekturmuseen / Architekturvermittlung', *Kunstforum*, 38 (1980), 138-202.

[46] While in the period between 1980 and 1990 there has been an exponential growth in the number of new architectural museums and centres, this process has slowed since the 2000s. This, however, doesn't indicate a decrease in architecture exhibitions: on the contrary, there has been an uninterrupted growth in these. The autonomous architectural museums seem to have been absorbed in mega-institutions as separate departments.

[47] Phyllis Lambert, founder of the CCA, described a new emerging typology of the architectural museum as a hybrid institution that sits somewhere in between the museum and the study centre. The model of the architectural museum and research centre outlined by Lambert was principally conceived as a research-oriented institution, and therefore typified a somewhat different model to Klotz's architectural museum and collection. See: Phyllis Lambert, 'The Architectural Museum: A Founder's Perspective', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 58 (1999), 308-315. The similarities that bridged the two institutions were, however, key in their mission to reinstitute architecture as an

surrounding the differences between the physical and discursive contexts of architectural space. In the case of the DAM (as well as eventually in the CCA's subsequent building),[48] the 'artistic autonomy' of the building – which one might observe as counterproductive for practical museological considerations – became pivotal to the institution's programme to overcome this discrepancy. Founded with the aspiration to reinstitute and exhibit a cultural history of architecture, the DAM employed the representative possibilities offered by its own building that consequently became in itself an instructive element for the museum, and literally the centrepiece of the collection; Oswald Matthias Ungers' building presented a built symbol of architecture, or, in Klotz's words, an example of 'what architecture can be'.[49]

In this way, the rise of the museum and its changing concept – engendered by the political and economic shifts of the late 1970s – has paralleled and intertwined with the disciplinary re-definition of contemporary architecture. In his credo, Ungers declared that the theme and content of architecture could only be architecture itself: 'An architecture that does not derive its themes from itself is like a painting that tries to be nothing more than a photographic reproduction.'[50] Echoing some of Tschumi's contemporaneous ideas, he also claimed that architecture can only be authentic if it has a 'theme': he believed that architecture has to be more than a functional backdrop or pure container; it has to return to being an experience, a conceptual and artistic expression. The result of a new school of thinking in architecture, one that questioned its own disciplinary foundations and its expression in the aftermath of the Modern Movement and the crisis of its orthodox functionalism, Ungers' museum – an idea conceptualized by Cladders and Klotz as a total work of art – became *the work of architecture*. This development found expression in the reciprocity of urban need, the desire to become a *destination*, and a generation of architects wanting to make manifest their ideas in this most public fashion.

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autonomous form of culture and discourse. The fourth chapter will return to the further exploration of these institutions and the ideological implications of the collection of architecture.

[48] The CCA was founded in 1979, while its building in Montreal was only inaugurated a decade later, in 1989, based on the plans of Canadian architect Peter Rose.

[49] See: Barry Bergdoll, 'Prototypes and Archetypes: Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany', *Architectural Record*, August (1984), 104-117 (p. 108).

[50] Oswald Matthias Ungers, *Architecture as Theme*, (Milan: Electa, 1982).

## 2.3 ART OF ARCHITECTURE: THE DEUTSCHES ARCHITEKTURMUSEUM IN FRANKFURT

> *Architecture is architecture, and everything else is everything else!*
> – Oswald Matthias Ungers[51]

Ungers' early years

The building of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum marks a turning point in Oswald Matthias Ungers' career as well as in the development of the contemporary architectural museum, its cultural hinterland, and its relationship with the discipline. The DAM was his first built work in Germany since his departure in 1968 for the United States, an important commission that allowed him to re-establish himself in Germany, where his prolific architectural practice continued uninterrupted until his death in 2007. In contrast to this later period, in which most of his architecture was built, in the 1960s and early '70s Ungers was mainly preoccupied with his theoretical work and teaching. In 1963, following a decade in Cologne where he worked on his first housing projects, Ungers was invited to teach at the Technische Universität (TU) in Berlin, where he later became dean for a brief period. The divided city of Berlin provided for Ungers a starting point to develop his theoretical thinking, yet many of his students saw his morphological research into the city as unfashionable and elitist formalism.

During the 1968 student revolts his teaching was sabotaged, and shortly afterwards Ungers moved to the United States, accepting Colin Rowe's invitation to continue his research on town planning and morphology as chairman of the Architecture department at Cornell University. It didn't take long, however, for Rowe and Ungers to realise the fundamental ideological differences between their views, and their conflict dominated Ungers' lonely exile. Even in his American years, the city of Berlin remained central to Ungers' research, and from the early 1970s onwards he started to organise his famous Berlin summer schools. During this period Ungers wrote the 'Green Archipelago' manifesto, with Rem Koolhaas, and this became an important foundational document for both in their thinking about architecture and the city.[52]

Ungers' early years were dominated by a rigorous search for, and elaboration of, a critical theory for architecture which could provide a solid basis for practice. Yet, from the 1980s onwards, his built work gradually lost the experimental agency that had characterised the earlier years. While in the 1960s his work was dismissed by his students in Berlin for its formalist qualities, the changed political and economic climate of 1980s Germany demanded a more marketable architectural form, a spectacular signature style that could be branded and consumed. Equally, the built form of Ungers' architecture could not escape what Krauss described in the context of the post-industrial society as 'the capitalization of culture'. By the time that Ungers received most of his large-scale commissions, his radical,

[51] Oswald Matthias Ungers, 'We are at the Beginning' in *Post-modernism revisited*, ed. by Romana Schneider, Ingeborg Flagge (Berlin: Junius Verlag, 2004), p. 111.
[52] *The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago,* ed. by Florian Hertweck and Sébastien Marot, (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2013).

experimental approach had been replaced by a cubic mannerism, which reduced his theoretical work to a simplified and emblematic 'Ungersianism'.

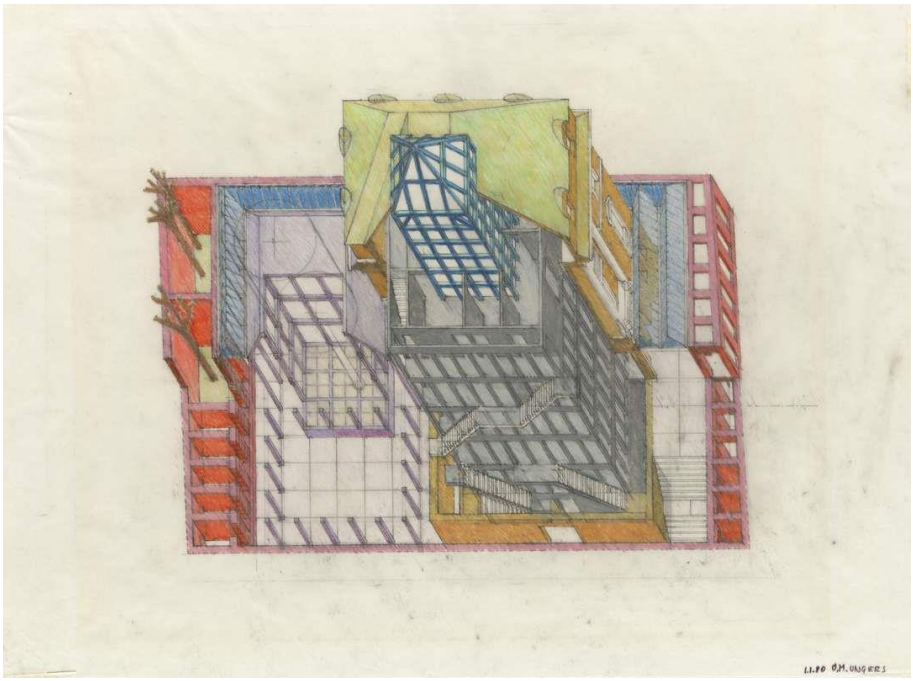

Fig. 9. O. M. Ungers, Axonometric drawing of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, 1980.

Klotz's Programme

The building of the DAM was a pivotal moment in Ungers' architectural practice. His ascendency also brought his works to a broader audience, concerns that were given form in his tripartite practice – architectural theory, built structures and the exploratory domain of the exhibition. The DAM was the first monumental expression of his architectural ideas, and it represented more authentically the theoretical implications of his early thinking than most of the later examples of his built works. The building's programme, however, was also a result of a fortunate meeting and close collaboration with Heinrich Klotz. Klotz regarded Ungers' building itself as a major contribution to the museum's collection, and the DAM was a manifestation of their conception of architecture – described by some critics as the ultimate 'manifesto of triumphant postmodernism'.[53] Klotz's version of the Postmodern was, however, specific to the German context: his understanding and articulation of the term was different from the Italian or American schools. This was expressed in the DAM's 1984 inaugural exhibition, 'The Revision of the Modern', that outlined Klotz's vision for the museum's mission: the research and contextualisation of late 20th-century architecture from a 'revisionist' perspective, the reinterpretation of the values of Modernism in the light of the latest architectural and cultural changes of the century, implying a critical historical approach that highlights the continuity of Modernism – a 'Second Modern'[54] – rather than negating it. [55]

[53] See Bergdoll, 'Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany', p. 106.
[54] Heinrich Klotz, *Kunst im 20. Jahrhundert: Moderne, Postmoderne, Zweite Moderne* (Munich: CH Beck, 1994).

Most contemporaneous attempts to capture and exhibit postmodern architectural tendencies were generally accused of offering reductive and limiting interpretations of the term.[56] In contrast, Klotz's 'Revision of the Modern' was mainly criticized for its imprecise and loose approach to this new architectural movement. The *Architectural Review*'s editor, Peter Davey, criticised the inclusion of neo-rationalist tendencies and described Frankfurt's new museums as the ultimate manifesto of the failure of this architectural school.[57] Others also criticized Klotz for lacking a clear-cut curatorial vision in his selection of architects. An early review by Pierre-Alain Croset, in an article in *Casabella Continuità*,[58] described the DAM's collecting policy and the programme as a mirror image of the general confusion regarding 'current' discourse. Jencks argued that, like many others in the DAM's newly formed Collection, Ungers is a 'late modernist' rather than an agent of the Postmodern, due to his use of language and his thematic interest in typology and autonomy.[59]

These reviews, however, say more about the contemporary confusion around the terms of architectural postmodernism than about Klotz's understanding of it. While his widely inclusive and somewhat incoherent selection of architects within the DAM's collection was often determined by his personal networks and other geographical limitations,[60] Klotz's main focus was to secure the international outlook of the museum's programme and collection, as opposed to other regionally or nationally determined collections in Germany. In retrospect, many have come to recognize the importance of Klotz's and Ungers' joint venture and how their initiative put Germany on the international map of contemporary architecture.[61]

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[55] On the German context of the Postmodernism debate see: Martin Jay 'Habermas and Postmodernism', in *The Divided Heritage: Themes and Problems in German Modernism*, ed. by Irit Rogoff (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Uni. Press, 1991), pp. 75-85.
[56] See for example Portoghesi's 'The Presence of the Past', which had divided scholars already before its first Venice edition (see Kenneth Frampton's withdrawal from the selection committee, or even Charles Jencks's retrospective cynicism regarding Portoghesi's radical historicist approach) and which has received especially harsh criticism in its Parisian edition, etc.
[57] See: Peter Davey, 'Rationalism is not enough', *Architectural Review*, 10 (1987), 70-75. in which he critiques the newly opened Schirn Kunsthalle (Bangert, Jansen, Scholtz, Schultes) as a formalist, dysfunctional building.
[58] Pierre Alain Croset, 'L'architettura in vetrina: il Museo tedesco di architettura', *Casabella*, 494 (1983), 14-23.
[59] Charles Jencks, 'In the steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks interviews Heinrich Klotz', *Architectural Design*, 55 (1985), 9-16, (p. 13).
[60] Besides the prevailing European and North American focus (Asian architecture wasn't featured in the collection at all), there were also other gaps in the collection: for example, James Stirling's work was not represented, as Klotz – despite his multiple attempts – could not secure any of these.
[61] Klotz particularly emphasised the international focus of the museum as opposed to other regionally or nationally determined collections – Jencks noted that Klotz and Ungers really put Germany on the international map of contemporary architecture through their joint venture that was most clearly manifest in DAM. See: Jencks, 'In the steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks interviews Heinrich Klotz'.

Ungers and Klotz

The DAM occupies a narrow site on the south bank of the river Main that was previously occupied by a late 19th-century urban villa. As Klotz remarked, the neoclassical villa is not of special architectural merit; however, it obtained symbolic value as a site of collective memory for the historic city and it was therefore seen to be worthy of preservation.[62] Thus the villa became a key element in the museum's spatial composition. It was surrounded by a new external wall, and incorporated the ruin as an internal shell of Ungers' building, like a house inside a house – an architectural *mise en abyme*.

This symbolic gesture to preserve and at the same time exhibit the historic fabric of the villa was a way for Ungers to directly reflect on the tradition of architecture. The theme of 'a house within a house' was further continued in the spatial organisation of the building by the creation of an internal hub at its geometrical centre. This central structure, a triangular roof resting on four columns, was a clear reference to Marc-Antoine Laugier's primitive hut, a symbol which has been interpreted since Vitruvius as the origin and basic 'disciplinary truth' of architecture. Another reference to the natural origins of architectural form was the grid-like horizontal and vertical tectonic articulation of the building, which at the same time is also often interpreted as homage to Schinkel. Finally, the three shells, one inside another, linked by the layout of a grid, echoed the basic structural organisation of an ancient Greek temple. Ungers' figural and structural references to the history and origins of architecture was not only representative of Klotz's programme for the DAM but also precisely expressed Ungers' own architectural credo: 'architecture as architecture'.

Fig. 10. (left) Interior of the DAM, Frankfurt, 1984.; (right) Marc-Antoine Laugier's *Essai sur l'architecture* and the 'Primitive Hut', 1755.

Klotz described Ungers' architecture as 'fictitious' – in that it created a world that was not identical to the function of the building, but possessed its own aesthetic and thematic autonomy. It narrated its own story of architecture which unfolded through the morphological mutations of the building: shell within shell, level upon level:

> Ungers shows how the house evolves from the primordial symbol of the baldachin, and by showing the stages of this evolution from one storey to the next he makes his theme

[62] Heinrich Klotz, 'City Wall and Adam's House', in *Museum Architecture in Frankfurt, 1980-1990*, ed. by Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (Munich: Prestel, 1990), pp. 150-52.

> comprehensible and the aesthetic fiction visible. In building this museum Ungers has for the first time realized his architectural theory of the unfolding of a theme, a transformatory morphology. It was not his intention to organize immobile, static space or simply to provide an abstract shell as a protective enclosure, above and beyond its utilitarian function, the architecture has taken on an illustrative character, and it has become the semantic vehicle of a representable fiction. It has assumed a poetic dimension, without the aesthetic aspect being limited to applied ornament. The building is in its entire structure an artistic device, "narrating" the poetic idea of the transformation of the four-pillar room into a house through vertical stages, and at the same time revealing the protective function of multiple enclosure in the horizontal sequence of the shells.[63]

The metaphor of the Russian doll described by Klotz as the unfolding fictitious element of Ungers' architecture was taken even further at the inaugural exhibition, where curators made it the centre of the symbolic hut, the model of the DAM itself. 'Ungers out-Ungered' as Bergdoll playfully put it.[64] This motif, however, returned not only in Klotz's exhibitions (that placed the Museumsufer within the frame of its museums) but determined Ungers' overall thinking about architecture and the city: the sublime in architecture, for Ungers, had to be contained within each and every detail. This is also how he envisioned the relationship between his museum and the city of Frankfurt.

Fig. 11. 'Das Architekturmodell – Werkzeug, Fetisch, kleine Utopie' exhibition with a section on O. M. Ungers' models of the DAM, 2012.

The two key aspects that Klotz identified in relation to the DAM building were the fiction, which was rooted in Ungers' idea of the autonomy of architecture, and also a compositional method, a 'transformatory morphology', which related to Ungers' interest in the study of form and Gestalt theory. Bergdoll described the structure of the building – which was seen by Klotz as 'an artistic device' – as a

[63] Klotz, 'City Wall and Adam's House', p. 151.
[64] Bergdoll, 'Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany'.

monument devoted to the representation of the prototype and the archetype of architecture.[65] Ungers claimed that architecture's basic concepts should be traced through morphological research, and regarded the Parthenon and the Pantheon as the two basic typological modules that together define the quintessence of architecture:[66]

> Architecture's message swings as an intellectual concept between these two poles – Parthenon and Pantheon – ark and covenant, cave and tent, frame and mass. One is created through induction, the other through deduction. The process of adding things and assembling them – the component-based thinking behind the Parthenon – is in contrast to the process of dismantling and eroding – the deductive and integrative thinking behind the Pantheon.[67]

Ungers' building for the DAM is an example of the inductive method, as described in relation to the Parthenon, which at the same time encloses the eroding ruin of a 19th-century villa on its site. The spatial structure of the house-within-a-house contrasts and assembles the different formal configurations of the archetypical house. The rhythmically alternating spatial model of the DAM has therefore achieved total ambiguity in terms of the interior and exterior spaces of architecture, as it contrasts and interweaves differing architectural languages of the old and the new. This assemblage of polarities that contradict and complement each other, is described by Ungers as the 'dialectic principle', which he first defined in relation to his theory of urban planning and the dialectic city.[68]

What ultimately brings together Klotz and Ungers is their thinking about architecture and the museum that both derives from, and returns to, the city. While for Klotz the museum became the doorway to the reimagined city of Frankfurt, Ungers' *architecture as architecture* – as his building of the DAM – is constructed and reimagined in close dialogue with the architecture of the city. Klotz wrote: 'architecture should be a means of representation and not only an instrument of use.'[69] And, as André Bideau has argued,[70] the reframing of the urban object was a way for Ungers to find an identity for a profession in 'crisis', as well as a way of gaining entry into high culture. This is what the building and the institutional programme of the DAM in Frankfurt represented. Ungers' search for a new definition and autonomous language for architecture was pertinent to a particular moment in history. His self-referential representation of architecture through the building of the DAM was like Klotz's revisionist curatorial approach that recycled historic images of the city in order to construct a new urban identity.

## The Palimpsest: *Varieta in Unitas*

In order to oppose functionalist uniformity, Ungers aimed to introduce diversity into his large-scale urban proposals. His idea for the city as assemblage was inspired by Alberti's famous dictum, '*varieta*

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[65] Bergdoll, 'Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany'.
[66] Based on his studies of building types, he also concluded that the rationale of architecture has not changed since the very beginnings of the discipline.
[67] Ungers, 'We are at the Beginning', p. 112.
[68] Oswald Mathias Ungers, 'Planning Criteria', *Lotus International,* 11 (1976), 13.
[69] Klotz, 'City Wall and Adam's House', pp. 150-52.
[70] André Bideau, 'Elusive Ungers', *AA Files*, 64 (2012), 3-14.

*in unitas'*.[71] Ungers' urban plans equally alluded to the monumental urban forms advocated by the Russian avant-garde tradition, as well as a fragmentary Piranesian poetics, which was appropriate for the devastated landscape of Berlin, where Ungers was living while he devised his theory.[72] He described the city as an archipelago, where the defining architectural artefacts float like islands on a sea, a palimpsest of individual cities (urban islands) within the city.

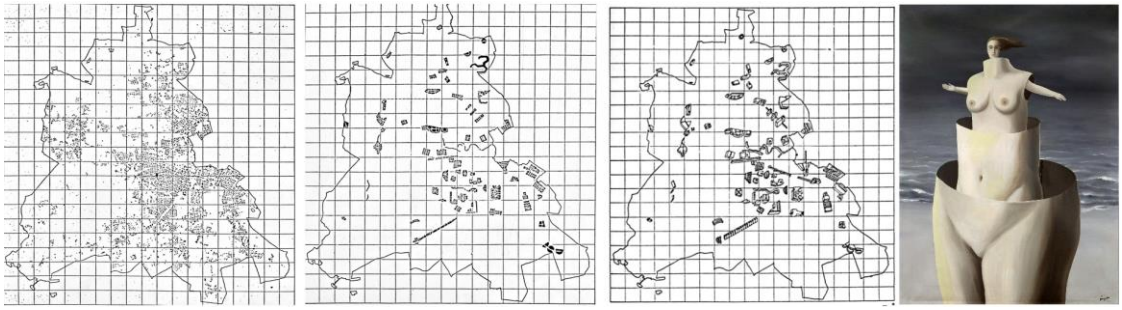


Fig. 12. (left) O. M. Ungers, 'Berlin as a Green Archipelago', 1977; (right) René Magritte, *The Importance of Marvels*, 1927.

In order to capture the quintessence of 'citiness' in its diverse complexity, Ungers used the method of dialectical opposition. He argued that the city has to be understood as an assemblage of differing urban forms and realities. In his theory he considered the city to be a palimpsest, where 'patchwork lies on top of patchwork' and completeness is achieved through the 'coincidence of opposites'.[73] This same dialectical principle can also be found in the structural organization of the DAM: as Frampton remarked, 'the overall architectonic concept is also a paradigm for the city. Thus, it should be understood as a spatial microcosm within the macrocosmic urban structure.'[74]

Another key element in Ungers' design method was the use of metaphor as a figurative expression of an abstract notion. This was described by Klotz in relation to the DAM as a 'semantic vehicle of representable fiction', where the basic principle of architecture was metaphorically figured through the baldachin resting on four columns. Thinking and designing in images, metaphors, symbols and analogies presented for Ungers a creative mode of thinking, as opposed to purely pragmatic approaches: synthesising rather than analysing.[75] Analogy played a key role for him not only as a way of expression, but also as a form of research to reveal new connections about the inner logic of the design process.

This morphological design method is illustrated well in his 1982 *City Metaphors*, in which he compiled a selection of formal analogies between the city and natural organisms. These pairs of images were accompanied by one-word descriptions, naming the formal and structural analogy between the chosen images, such as duplication, accumulation, focus, regularity, repetition, articulation, uniformity, alternation, confusion, expansion and reduction – the last referring to the spatial motif of the Russian

[71] Ungers, 'Planning Criteria'.
[72] Kenneth Frampton, 'O. M. Ungers and the Architecture of Coincidence', in *Ungers, O.M., Work in Progress, 1976-80*, ed. by Kenneth Frampton and Silvia Kolbowski (New York: Rizzoli, 1981), pp. 1-5 (p. 1).
[73] Oswald Mathias Ungers, Stefan Vieths, *Ungers: The Dialectic City* (Milano: Skira, 1997).
[74] Description of the DAM building, in: Frampton, and Kolbovski, *O.M. Ungers: Work in Progress, 1976-80*, pp. 36.
[75] Oswald Mathias Ungers, *Morphologie City Metaphors* (Köln: Walther König, 2011).

doll that Ungers applied not only to the DAM but also to many of his other projects, such as the 1976 plan for Roosevelt Island in New York, a miniaturized and idealized version of Manhattan.[76]

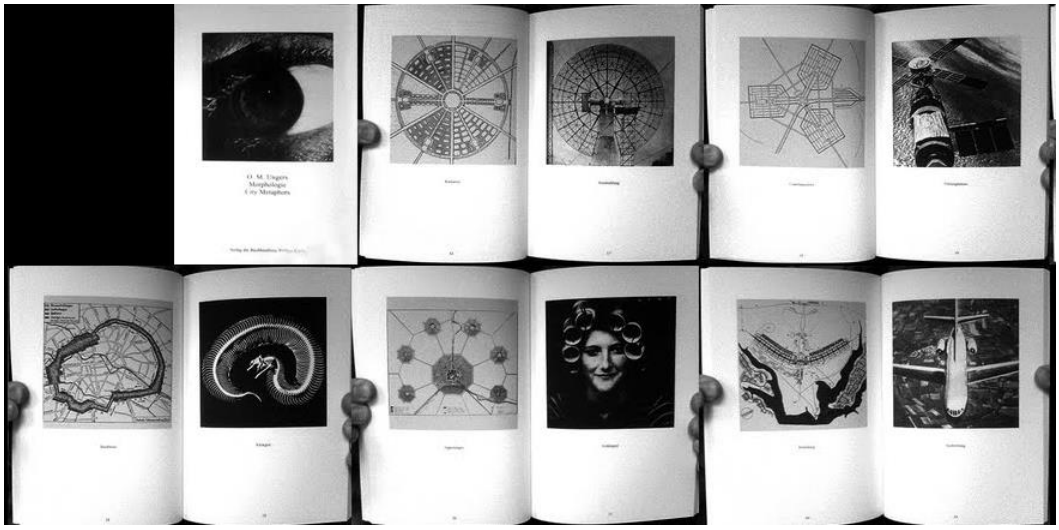


Fig. 13. O. M. Ungers, *City Metaphors*, 1982.

This apparent parallel in Ungers' early thinking between architecture and the city was evident in his design methods for both buildings and the city: he applied these equally in his proposals for large-scale urban plans and his building projects, as well as in his basic understanding of their symbiotic relationship. Ungers studied the architectural form as 'the point of entry toward the project of the city,'[77] a fundamental correlation that informed his concept of architectural autonomy. His credo of 'architecture as architecture' – an architecture per se – meant for him a disciplinary reframing of architecture within its own historical traditions. In contrast to the Modernist idea of functionalism, Ungers believed that the rationale and the innate laws of architecture were firmly rooted in its own history which, layer upon layer, could be studied on the site of the city, and this understanding may suggest the questions: what was the function of Ungers' self-referential architectural fiction of the city? What was the syntax that gave meaning to his autonomous language of architecture in which the relationship between the sign and the signified remained in ambiguity?

## The Dysfunction of Fiction

This revived interest in the historic city was not unique to Ungers' practice. The vacuum in *memory politics* across European cities following the Second World War, partly arising from functionalist reconstructions and Modernist town planning, eventually resulted in a crisis of urban identities which was especially traumatic in post-war Germany. While Pevsner had already identified a 'turn to

[76] The 'cities within cities' concept clearly also influenced Koolhaas' 'Delirious NY' in the 1970s as some kind of archipelago of city blocks divided by the grid, as well as his Welfare Island project from 1975, in which he depicted his architectural proposal as a 'life raft' floating on top of the decaying city.
[77] Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2011), p. 227.

Historicism'[78] in the 1960s, this phenomenon reached its apex by the mid-1970s. To raise awareness of the long-term cultural and economic effects caused by the fragmented or ideologically determined post-war reconstruction of cities, the Council of Europe named 1975 'European Architectural Heritage Year'.[79]

Beyond Germany's revisionist urban regenerations, another iconic example of this trope was the Italian 'Roma Interrotta', an influential exhibition of 12 contemporary reinterpretations of Nolli's 18th-century map of Rome, which toured internationally after its 1978 inauguration. While 'Roma Interrotta' presented diverse approaches, and included projects by a variety of architects,[80] the exhibition suggested unity beyond plurality – a developing interest in history being architecture's theme and material – and it also claimed to emphasise an urgent need to rethink architecture in relation to the city.

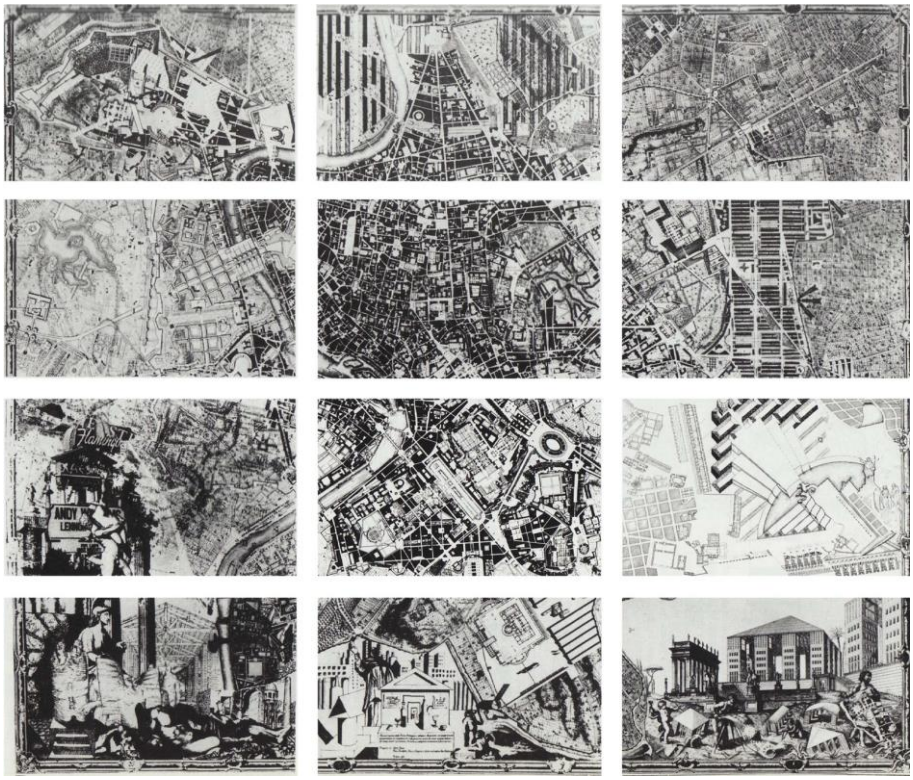


Fig. 14. Twelve reinterpretations of Nolli's map for Rome, 'Roma Interrotta', 1978.

Yet, despite the apparent historical interest, Rome's urban context was framed by a collection of newly commissioned, grandiose proposals. Instead of tracing and working with the historic material of architecture and the city, the postmodern reiterations of Nolli's map related to history mainly through formal, and sensational, appropriation. Thus, in the context of the exhibition, Nolli's map fulfilled its role as a monumental symbol rather than a historical document: an iconic object which became

[78] Pevsner wrote: 'the trend to believe in the power of history to such degree as to choke original action which is inspired by period precedent,' in: Nikolaus Pevsner, 'Modern Architecture and the Historian or the Return of Historicism', *RIBA Journal,* 68 (1961), 230-240.
[79] The Council of Europe held a Congress on the European Architectural Heritage in Amsterdam from 21 to 25 October 1975, and in order to co-ordinate the Architectural Heritage Year on a European level, the European Charter of the Architectural Heritage was accepted and published at the congress.
[80] Such as James Stirling, Paolo Portoghesi, Robert Venturi, Colin Rowe, Michael Graves, Leon Krier and Aldo Rossi.

instrumental in legitimising the new heroes of the Postmodern architecture and in reinstating the cult of celebrity and the ideal of the architect. [81] In short, 'Roma Interrotta' introduced the Postmodern paradigm of historicism, which was a phenomenon strongly tied to the postmodern emergence of the 'starchitect'.

This same phenomenon was also echoed in Frankfurt's historical reconstruction. Beyond conceptually repairing its urban past and physically preserving some of its remaining historic urban artifacts, Klotz's curatorial programme – similar to Ungers' architectural approach – employed the historic city as both theme and material in order to subscribe to a new trend of identity politics as performed through urban memory. Klotz's cultural regeneration programme recreated the image of the city by recycling its very own ruins and reframing its past – a self-referential and essentially a-historical attitude characteristic of the postmodern historicisation of the material and language of history, an approach full of contradictions. While the conceptual and architectural merits of Frankfurt's Museumsufer divided contemporary critics, it was unquestionably instrumental in boosting the local economy by means of employing culture and articulating the language of history; Frankfurt soon became an iconic model for the historic reconstructions of other German cities and cultural regeneration projects throughout Europe.

Like the 'Beaubourg effect',[82] Frankfurt's regeneration was symptomatic of post-Fordist society and economy. The integration of the cultural sphere into urban economies happened in parallel with the emergence of a new urban audience whose needs could no longer be accommodated by the tools of technocratic urban planning (as production had been replaced by consumption). This 'society of the spectacle', as described by Debord,[83] was built on the exploitation of the creative industries, and, as in the case of Frankfurt, the recycling of the past in a postmodern pastiche of temporal synchronicity alluded to the idea of a new pluralism. The political and social instrumentality of this cultural model of ensemble and plurality (that normalised difference and excluded all real alternatives by its total inclusivity) has, however, been questioned ever since its emergence. The paradoxical nature of Postmodern's historicism lies in the very negation of the concept of progress, as it also implies the negation of history itself. In other words, it institutes a state of 'post-history',– consonant with Hartog's description of 'presentism'[84] in which the past has lost its autonomy and derives its meaning instead from the present – a category that Vidler favoured instead of 'the Postmodern'.[85]

Post-historical thought – which had culminated by the 1980s in Hans Belting's theory of the end of art history – became a central concept of theoretical thinking from the 1950s onwards, especially in German cultural circles.[86] Drawn from Antoine Augustine category of 'a period without history', this was a pessimistic dystopia symbolising a world without change and the end of politics, symptoms of the

[81] As argued in Thomas Weaver, 'Civitas Interruptus', in *Postmodernism: Style and Subversion, 1970-1990*, ed. by Glenn Adamson, Jane Pavitt (London: V&A Publishing, 2011) pp. 127-131.
[82] A term coined by Baudrillard to describe the museum's role in urban regeneration in the 1970s. see: Jean Baudrillard, 'The Beaubourg-Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', *October*, 20 (1982), 3–13.; Chapter 5 will return to the discussion of Baudrillard's critique.
[83] Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle* (London: Rebel Press, 1987), thesis 1.
[84] François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).
[85] Anthony Vidler, *Histories of the immediate present* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008)
[86] See: Hans Sedelmayr, Ganni Vattimo, Arnold Gehen, Hans Belting, etc.

crisis of post-industrial societies, forewarning the advent of a post-political society. If the postmodern architectural dictionary reintroduced the formal language of history to offer a contrast to Modernism's abstract language and 'un-humanistic functionalism'– as Ungers has it, its political message was ambiguous, if not lost altogether. Ungers' search for a renewed architectural language – his representational fiction that he proposed in place of architecture's social function – equally lost its radical agency.

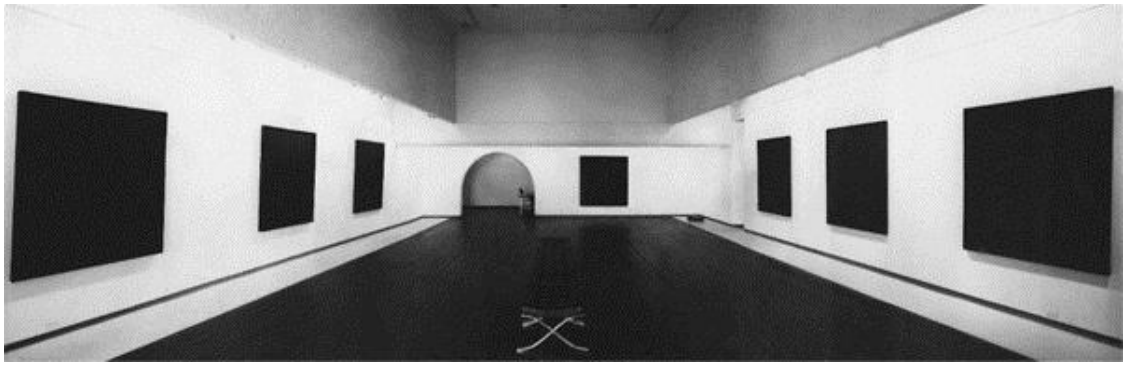


Fig. 15. View of 'Ad Reinhardt: Recent Square Paintings', Dwan Gallery, Los Angeles, 1963.

Ungers defined his architecture in relation to art, and – paraphrasing Ad Reinhardt's dictum 'Art is art, and everything else is everything else!'[87] – he solicited an autonomous language that he described in the parable of *architecture as architecture*. He saw his architectural work as analogous to an artistic endeavour, which was exemplified by Reinhardt's research into the language of abstract Minimalism. Reinhardt's progressive simplification of the syntax of painting's 'language', and his rectilinear and monochrome works, are echoed in Ungers' architectural language, for which the ultimate symbol is the reductive repetition of the self-referential formal and spatial structure of the DAM.

This Ungersian architectural *mise en abyme* was described by Klotz as an 'art of architecture' that replaced function with fiction. In fact, the DAM represents, rather than fulfils, its function, and the building became an exhibition in its own right – or rather its own exhibition. Its aesthetic and thematic autonomy, however, stands in stark contrast to its practical use as an exhibition space; its dominant formal language and strict spatial structure overpowers exhibits, and the use-value of Ungers' architecture is heavily compromised.[88] The photographed building looks most purposeful when empty, without any human presence, which suggests that the function of Ungers' fiction is no other than producing self-perpetuating images of its own architecture. While the boundaries between the contained

[87] Ad Reinhardt, 'Art as Art', in *Art-as-art*, ed. by Barbara Rose (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991) p. 53.

[88] This consistent and justifiable criticism is applicable to most of Frankfurt's newly built museums. - 1990 BD complains that the new museum buildings in Frankfurt are competing with the exhibits and therefore are not functional: for example, Richard Meier's museum is light and airy but it was necessary to add blinds to darken the exhibition spaces and preserve works on display from ageing and fading. See Layla Dawson, 'Museum Fest', *Building Design,* 1008 (19 October 1990), 32-33.
Vittorio Lampugnani, the DAM's second director, also remarked in a 1990s exhibition catalogue that the practical usefulness of the new museum buildings in Frankfurt's Museumsufer were often compromised by the artistic autonomy that the architects enjoyed. In the same catalogue, Roland Burgard even asserted that the theoretical approach of the participants in the building competition for the Museumsufer was more important than their experience of building.

and container seem to gradually dissolve, the constant competition between function and ‘fiction’ sits at the heart of the postmodern paradox of the museum, whose site engendered a leap from the dematerialisation of architecture to its depoliticisation.

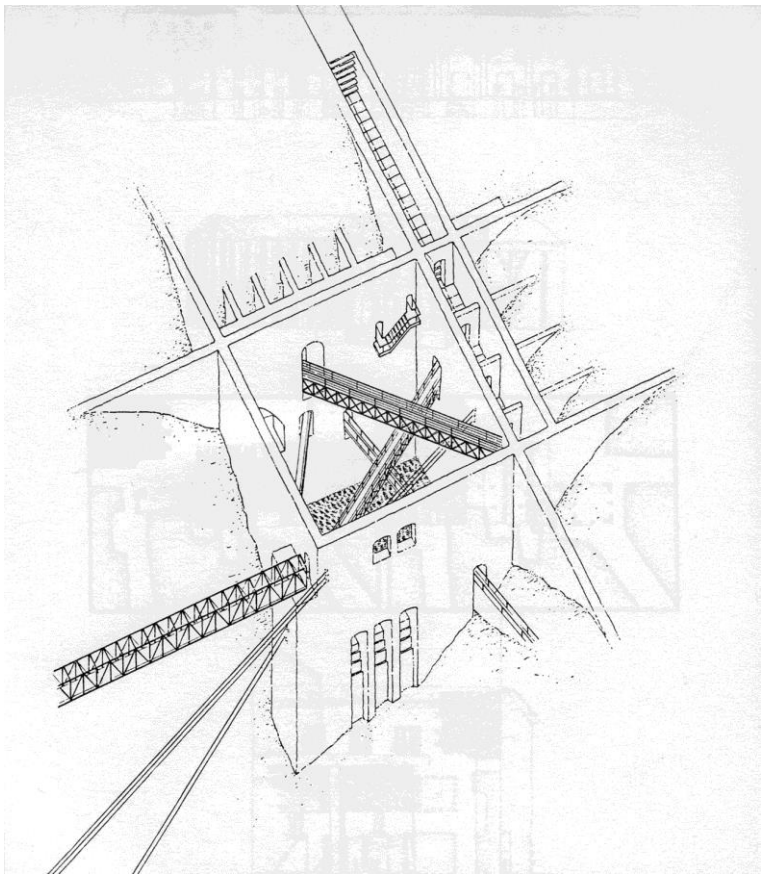


Fig. 16. Leon Krier, *Difficult Access to O.M.U.*, 1975.

END NOTE

The institutional critique of 1960s and 1970s art practices was tightly intertwined with the disciplinary changes that defined contemporary architecture. Architecture's disciplinary emancipation, within the space of art, came hand in hand with the redefinition of the spaces and the concept of the museum itself, and, as a result of the spatial turn of the 1970s, the architectural space of the museum ceased to be a pure container. With the emergence of a new context-consciousness and the recognition of context as both signifier and the signified – as O'Doherty put it – the gallery itself became an instinctive form of artistic expression, as well as a new site and *medium* of architecture's self-definition.

The building of the DAM favoured fiction over function and replaced architecture's analogy to technology with that of art. Most importantly, however, in challenging the function in architecture through a turn to the representational value of *langue* – architecture's 'resemiticisation' – it was the function of representation itself that eventually changed; as Dalibor Vesely, quoting Gadamer, states: 'representation doesn't imply that something merely stands in for something else as if it were a replacement or substitute that enjoys a less authentic, more indirect kind of existence. On the contrary what is represented is itself present in the only way available to it.'[89] If the museum – as Klotz and Cladders argued – became the primary work of architecture: a total work of art; architecture was produced through the museum. The essential nature of architectural production – as in the case of the DAM – became synonymous with its own representation. As opposed to the insular definition of the abstract space of the Modern museum, the fragmented image of the late-capitalist museum implied a new cultural model in which – as in Klotz's historical pastiche of the Museumsufer – the fragments of the past came together as the constellation of a new age of post-history.

The example of Ungers' writings, exhibitions and architecture indicate his developmental worth, his diverse oeuvre being both an analysis and reflection of his own era. The concerns that found fruition in the various aspects of his work offer disciplinary points of departure and debate, and, even though a number of critics have found his 'experiment' wanting – overly theorised or self-referential – his value should not be underestimated. While this thesis is not a monographic survey of Ungers' work, he remains a key figure in the context of the analysis that converges with the multiple stages of Ungers' prolific career. His professional activities began in Berlin, where he developed the early theoretical work and experimentation that are still of interest, and after some years away he returned; his extension for the Pergamonmuseum – a case study of the last chapter of this thesis – was to be his last built project. Ungers' journey, for the purposes of this study, intersects with, and helps orientate, all that came to question and reformulate the position of architecture as form and content in this period – he worked on the DAM with Klotz, took part in the first Architecture Biennale in Venice and the 'Strada Novissima' exhibit, conceived an art collection as a work of architecture and worked with the exhibition as his medium – and as such he will be returned to throughout the thesis as an investigative reference and fellow-traveller.

[89] Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays,* ed. by Robert Bernasconi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 35.

**CHAPTER 3**

**EXHIBITION AS MEDIUM: FROM THE STREET TO THE MUSEUM AND BACK AGAIN**


Fig. 17. Guy Debord, *The Naked City: Illustration de L'hypothèse des Plagues Tournantes en Psychogéographique*, 1957.

PROLOGUE

The third chapter, 'Exhibition as Medium: from the Street to the Museum and back again', investigates how the trope of the street – from 1960s counterculture to 1980s urban regeneration projects – became the spatial model of contemporary exhibition, and asks how the political function of the street was then converted into a representable fiction within the walls of museums and exhibitions.

Starting from the analysis of Ungers' collection of art works as well as his own exhibitions, the first part of this chapter explores a semiotic shift in the language of art and architecture; how their structural organisation and spatial exposition became the central theme of the two respective fields, and how this radical formal reduction led to the conclusive fusion of the sign and the signified (in Baudrillard's terms the simulacrum). Through the thorough mapping of the methaphoric and literal conceits of the 'cube' (the square on the square in mathematical equasion), the chapter explores representational techniques of a new post-industrial condition in that representation replaces both meaning and production.

The consecutive sections of this chapter contrast and compare the representational values and political notion of the 'street as exhibition': Through a survey of the so-called 'street generation', examples of artists in the 1960's and '70s that recognised the site of the city – the street – as a preferred site to that of the museum, which seemed to allow for a politically autonomous and socially conscious position; and, in comparison, through Vittorio Gregotti's post'68 attempt to reform and re-configure the biennale as an urban format, a political project for the city. Finally, this chapter suggests that these types of representations resulted in the framing of the street itself as the exhibition, and ultimately considers how the exhibition, an analogy for the formal metaphor of the street, an urban site of postmodern imagination, has simulated the concurrent transformation of the European city centre, as figured in Frankfurt's 1980s urban regeneration.

Within the walls of the museum, the political metaphor of the street turned into an analogical device for the architecture exhibition: Ungers' exhibitions, for example, models of his epistemological proposals of architecture, solicited disciplinary autonomy and the emancipation of architecture. Consonantly, the practice of the art installation, 'democratic' in intent, paradoxically arises from the symbolic privatisation of occupied public space: an unconditional, sovereign act of the artist.[1] If democracy is brought about through the violently sovereign act of revolution,[2] the 1970s – as Habermas described – was a retro-revolution.[3] It answered ideological struggle with depoliticised solutions: Benjamin's urban stroller – as in Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima' (1980), a key study of this chapter – was turned into a cultured consumer.

[1] Boris Groys, 'From Medium to Message: The Art Exhibition as Model of a New World Order', Open, 16 (2009), 56-65.
[2] Groys, 'From Medium to Message'.
[3] See: Jürgen Habermas, The Past as Future (Modern German Culture and Literature), tr. by Max Pensky (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).

### 3.1 UNGERS INSIDE THE CUBE

*Stand up. Turn 90° left from your desk and walk 6 paces to B.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 8 paces to D.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 6 paces to A.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 8 paces to C.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 6 paces to D.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 8 paces to B.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 6 paces to C.*
*Turn 135° to your left and walk 8 paces to A.*
*Sit down.*
Samuel Beckett[4]

Fig. 18. *City Metaphors*, at the 'MANtransFORMS' exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design, New York, 1976-77.

Exhibition as Analogical Device

Exhibitions played a crucial role in Ungers' architectural practice, not only because most of his theoretical texts and manifestos were finally elaborated and published on these occasions, but also because the spatial organisation of the exhibition provided further opportunities to confront theory with practice, to carry out further architectural investigations of space, form and language. Ungers considered this process of assembling spaces, objects and images as a form of *synthetic* thinking, and the exhibition became a site of experimentation that fuelled both his architectural theory and his design. This systematic development, which Ungers explored fully, indicated a change in architectural practice in

[4] Samuel Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays of Samuel Beckett* (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), p. 291.

which the built was often replaced by expressed thought, and the architect sought artistic licence and equivalence.

Ungers' 'City Metaphors' – in which he first described this design method – was itself originally presented within the framework of a group exhibition organized at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum in New York.[5] As Hans Hollein, who was responsible for the exhibition's concept, explained, the show understood design as an approach and attitude that was conveyed to the visitor through actual physical experiences rather than didactic explanations.[6] Ungers' exhibit occupied a long corridor-like space in the basement of the museum, in which he hung a sequence of photographs of a range of city plans, matched and juxtaposed with images of natural organisms as well as with single words that provided a formal or conceptual description for each visual pairing.

His exhibit spatially recalled an urban street, which he achieved by painting a dashed line longitudinally on the floor of the rectangular space, placing human silhouettes[7] and a variety of dividing panels on the walls, floor and ceiling and visually extending the exhibition space in a longitudinal direction with a full-scale mirror at one end. The physical layout of the exhibition was, however, more than a purely metaphorical reference to the city. As Wallis Miller has pointed out, Ungers adopted an existing space and constructed the physical experience of his exhibition in order to evoke a spatial concept and to provide a structure for thought.[8] The spatial organisation provided the syntax for the images on display, while the spatial concept (the mirrored space) formulated new meaning by suggesting infinite possibilities for his visual associations and city metaphors.

Ungers republished 'City Metaphors' as a fanzine a few years later, in 1982, with an introductory text that was an important document and summary of his early theoretical thinking about architecture and the city. As he later explained, he considered *City Metaphors* as an artist's book illustrating the relationship between ideas and reality, and described it in comparison to the work of Joseph Kosuth that confronted the object with both its photographic image and its conceptual description. On the cover of *City Metaphors,* a close-up image of a human eye is a reference to vision, a metaphor for a synthetic approach to reality. For Ungers, architecture meant discovering, rather than inventing, the world. Visual and structural analogies between images of cities, objects and natural organisms thus became part of his prodigious research.

For Ungers, this visual approach to the conceptualisation of physical reality superseded the functionalist interpretation and extrapolation of statistical data, and it opened up new avenues for a more complex design method.[9] The visual metaphors provided the basis and the material for his architectural design, while the analysis of these images signified for Ungers the design process itself. The spatial structuring of his exhibition, as well as the layout of his book, was illustrative of his thinking and design process,

[5] Hans Hollein organised 'MANtransFORMS', New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, October 1976.
[6] See: Hans Hollein, *MANtransFORMS,* exhib. cat. (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1976).
[7] A direct reference to René Magritte's work, as it often recurres in Ungers' work.
[8] Wallis Miller, 'Circling the Square', in *O. M. Ungers: Cosmos of Architecture*, ed. by Andres Lepik (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2007), pp. 97-107 (p. 99).
[9] As Ungers noted in his manifesto for the exhibition: Hans Hollein, *MANtransFORMS,* exhib. cat. (October 1976) (New York: Cooper-Hewitt Museum, 1976), p. 105.

and it became the architectural model of his epistemological proposal. The medium of the exhibition therefore became significant for Ungers as an analogical device.

The Janus Face of Architeture

Fig. 19. Installation view of O. M. Ungers' 'Kubus' at Galerie Max Hetzler, 1990.

Ungers' exhibition 'Kubus', at the Galerie Max Hetzler in Cologne,[10] was another milestone in Ungers' practice, as it once again distilled his architectural ideas into the form of a spatial proposal within the gallery. The exhibition consisted of a large-scale installation of five three-metre cubes, each structured and sliced in a different geometrical pattern. These configurations resembled large-scale architectural objects, buildings or entire urban units, which the audience could experience by walking in and around them. However, the reading of the architectural objects on display was ambiguous, due to the way that Ungers played with scale and the resulting bodily experience of the objects' spatial reality. The human-scale models of Ungers' ideal architectural structures became autonomous objects in their own right in the space of the gallery.

Like an architectural counterpart to the numerous 'void shows' of the 1960s and '70s, Ungers' 'Kubus' presented the physical and formal qualities of architectural space through an unmediated and direct exploration of reality. Werner Lippert wrote in the exhibition catalogue: 'Is an object that is supposed to represent a space, which is so big that it seems to me to be a real space itself, still a representation of something – say of a space that it allegedly represents – or has it already became that space itself?'[11] Lippert's question reiterated the same oxymoron that Ungers described as the 'Janus face of architecture',[12] which in the context of the 'white cube' of the gallery became even more explicit. As

[10] In June 1990.
[11] In Wallis Miller's translation from the Kubus exhibition catalogue, Werner Lippert, 'Der Architect, Der Maler, Der Gallerist und Ihr Fotograf', in *O.M. Ungers: Kubus*, exhib. cat., ed. by Günther Förg and Avner Sundelson (Köln-Braunsfeld: Galerie Max Hetzler, 1990), p. 8.
[12] Oswald Mathias Ungers, 'Das Janusgesicht der Architektur', in: *Sieben Variationen des Raumes über die Sieben Leuchter der Baukunst von John Ruskin* (Stuttgart: Hatje, 1985).

Tschumi and Goldberg argued, in relation to their exhibition 'A Space: A Thousand Words', space both exists and continually represents something else. Unlike O'Doherty's examples of the artistic gestures unmasking different ideologies represented by architectural space, Ungers' white cubes referred to architecture both as an idea and as a physical reality. While in his 'City Metaphors' the spatial conceit of the exhibit was a device to frame and structure the architectural and design concept, more than a decade later, in 'Kubus', Ungers moved toward a more abstract architectural expression exploring the sculptural dimensions of space. Here, the spatial conceit *was* the concept of the exhibition, and the differences between the two were no longer distinguishable.[13]

Architecture also stood as its own presentation at the first Biennale of Architecture in Venice in 1980. Similar to the 'City Metaphors' exhibition, the 'Strada Novissima' – one of the most iconic and contested architectural exhibits of all times – also simulated a full-scale urban street, with the difference that each of its facades was designed by a different architect and the spatial concept of the street became a curatorial device.[14] The exhibit occupied the newly renovated interior space of Venice's Corderie dell'Arsenale as the central hub of Paolo Portoghesi's exhibition 'The Presence of the Past'. This was the first biennale in Venice officially dedicated to architecture,[15] as well as being the first major exhibition that attempted to define the Postmodern in architecture.

Fig. 20. 'Strada Novissima' at the Corderie dell'Arsenale, 'The Presence of the Past', 1st International Architecture Exhibition, Venice, 1980.

Ungers was among the 20 architects invited to contribute a facade to 'Strada Novissima'. In his catalogue entry, he published a short manifesto arguing for an autonomous language of architecture. A formal language and its aesthetic value, in Ungers' view, was the most basic foundation of architecture.

[13] While this conceptual and structural shift must be interpreted in relation to poststructuralist cultural influences, it is also important to note that 'Kubus' took place more than a decade after 'City Metaphors', and it was staged in a commercial gallery in 1990s Germany. The sculptural cubes of the exhibition therefore belong to a conceptual, geopolitical and economic context radically different from the experimental atmosphere of the 1970s New York avant-garde, and one might argue that as signature pieces of Ungers' late period they purposefully fulfil the demands of an emerging market for emblematic architecture at the dawn of a newly united post-Cold-War Germany.

[14] See Léa-Catherine Szacka, 'The 1980 Architecture Biennale: The Street as a Spatial and Representational Curating Device', *Oase,* 88, 14 (2012), 14-25.

[15] Although this was held in 1980, during the 1970s there were a number of smaller-scale but significant exhibitions organized by Rossi and Grassi in Venice's Magazzini del Sale, which many count as the predecessors of the first 'official' architecture biennale.

He rejected functionalism and expressed his distrust in architecture's potential to solve social problems. Instead, he believed in the 'spiritual responsibility' of the architect and the importance of architecture as an *art form* that relates humankind to its intellectual and cultural legacy.

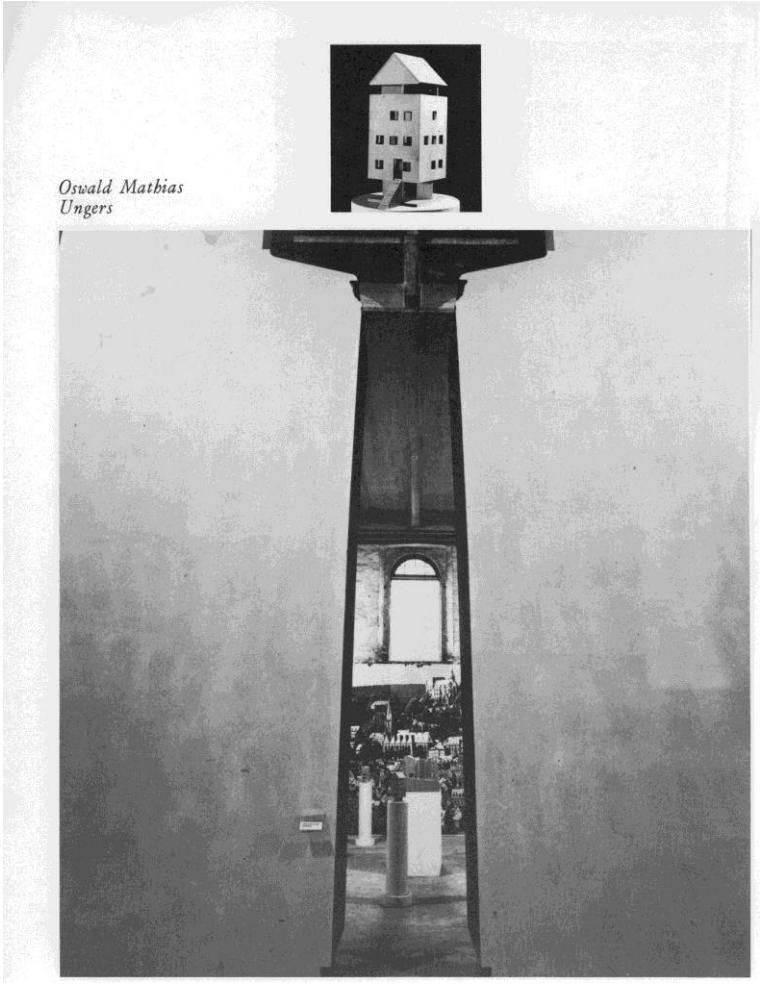


Fig. 21. O. M. Ungers' facade at the 'Strada Novissima', 1980.

Ungers attributed the failure of Modern architecture to the fact that it could not transmit cultural models through formal symbols, and for Ungers this represented a fundamental problem of *language* – as already explored in relation to the building of the DAM. '[Architecture] is not a subordinate function of something else, but rather finds fulfilment in and of itself as an independent and free concept', as he wrote in retrospect.[16] In Ungers' interpretation, autonomy meant a new language for architecture, freed from functional determination. His installation for 'Strada Novissima', a column-shaped single silhouetted opening on a thick wall, was a bold gesture to turn his facade into an image of a single architectural element, or more precisely its hiatus: the negative space of a column. Ungers' facade stood as a manifesto soliciting an autonomous architectural language in its own right.

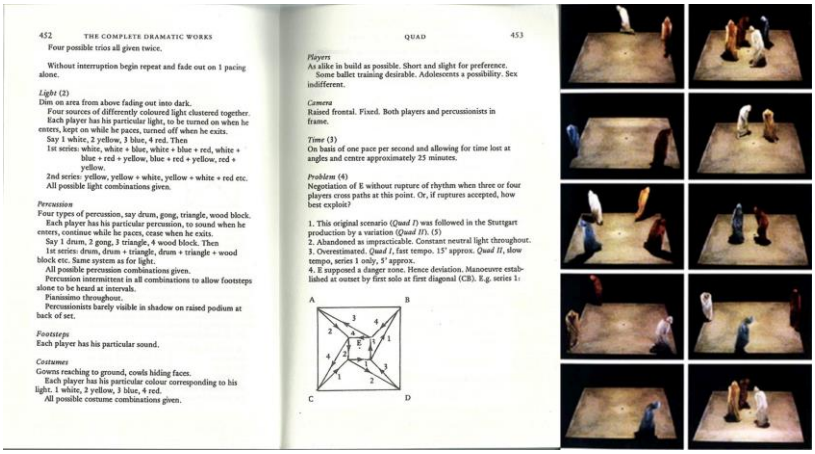
Thus, beyond proving to be a device for spatial experimentation, the exhibition as medium became important for Ungers in order to position his discipline as an equal in its dialogue with art – a

[16] Oswald Mathias Ungers, 'We are at the Beginning', in *Postmodernism Revisited*, ed. by Ingeborg Flagge and Romana Schneider (Berlin: Junius Verlag, 2004), pp. 108-119.

'*paragone*'[17] that he always concluded in favour of architecture. While Ungers' ambition to emancipate architecture amongst the 'liberal arts' is most clearly spelt out in relation to his contribution to the 'Strada Novissima', this tendency was consistently evident in relation to his earlier 'City Metaphors' which he republished in the form of an artist's book, as well as in his later experiments with a sculptural language in the context of his 'Kubus' exhibition. Ungers' search for an autonomy of architecture that paralleled the autonomy of the artist would seem, however, to reveal a paradox: in that architecture became more aligned with art. Yet, can these practices ever become readily 'interchangeable,' and what is to be achieved by this? Does this desire for 'equality' actually diminish 3autonomy, and, instead, erode architecture's specificity?

## A Shrine to the Cube

Ungers' interest in language belonged to a poststructuralist tendency in architecture that was also present in other disciplines, such as theatre, literature, music, and contemporary visual art. In the 1970s, Beckett's late work, which admittedly also influenced Ungers' thinking on language, was also characterized by a radical structural reductionism.[18] The apex of this tendency in Beckett's oeuvre was presented in *Quad*, a work that premiered on German television in 1981, only a year after Portoghesi's first Venice Biennale of Architecture and Ungers' first manifesto exploring the autonomous language of architecture.


452 THE COMPLETE DRAMATIC WORKS

Four possible trios all given twice.

Without interruption begin repeat and fade out on 1 pacing alone.

*Light* (2)
Dim on area from above fading out into dark.
Four sources of differently coloured light clustered together.
Each player has his particular light, to be turned on when he enters, kept on while he paces, turned off when he exits.
Say 1 white, 2 yellow, 3 blue, 4 red. Then
1st series: white, white + blue, white + blue + red, white + blue + red + yellow, blue + red + yellow, red + yellow.
2nd series: yellow, yellow + white, yellow + white + red etc.
All possible light combinations given.

*Percussion*
Four types of percussion, say drum, gong, triangle, wood block.
Each player has his particular percussion, to sound when he enters, continue while he paces, cease when he exits.
Say 1 drum, 2 gong, 3 triangle, 4 wood block. Then
1st series: drum, drum + triangle, drum + triangle + wood block etc. Same system as for light.
All possible percussion combinations given.
Percussion intermittent in all combinations to allow footsteps alone to be heard at intervals.
Pianissimo throughout.
Percussionists barely visible in shadow on raised podium at back of set.

*Footsteps*
Each player has his particular sound.

*Costumes*
Gowns reaching to ground, cowls hiding faces.
Each player has his particular colour corresponding to his light: 1 white, 2 yellow, 3 blue, 4 red.
All possible costume combinations given.

QUAD 453

*Players*
As alike in build as possible. Short and slight for preference.
Some ballet training desirable. Adolescents a possibility. Sex indifferent.

*Camera*
Raised frontal. Fixed. Both players and percussionists in frame.

*Time* (3)
On basis of one pace per second and allowing for time lost at angles and centre approximately 25 minutes.

*Problem* (4)
Negotiation of E without rupture of rhythm when three or four players cross paths at this point. Or, if ruptures accepted, how best exploit?

1. This original scenario (*Quad I*) was followed in the Stuttgart production by a variation (*Quad II*). (5)
2. Abandoned as impracticable. Constant neutral light throughout.
3. Overestimated. *Quad I*, fast tempo. 15' approx. *Quad II*, slow tempo, series 1 only, 5' approx.
4. E supposed a danger zone. Hence deviation. Manoeuvre established at outset by first solo at first diagonal (CB). E.g. series 1:



Fig. 22. Samuel Beckett*, Quad*, 1981.

In *Quad*, Beckett reduced the language of drama to its absolute minimum, to the most basic elements imaginable. The play started with the painted image of a white square, a void, which throughout the play is filled and mapped out by the monotonously repeated movements of four actors walking along the side of the square or diagonally crossing it. The players were dressed in robes of primary colours: white, blue, red and yellow; they are silent, but accompanied by the rhythmical percussion of four different

[17] The word *'paragone'* is used here in its Vasarian sense (a key reference for Klotz), who, in his iconic work, in the 'Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects' – similar to Ungers' art-architecture comparison – has compared the medium of painting to that of sculpture as competing means of artistic expressions of his time.
[18] See Rem Koolhaas and Hans-Ulrich Obrist, 'An Interview with O. M. Ungers', *Log*, 16 (2009), 50-95.

musical instruments.[19] Their synchronized walk was organised according to a mathematical sequence that derives from the square: six acts in four stages. The geometric pattern of the square (quadrat) therefore describes not only the physical shape of the play but also its inner structure; the mathematical pattern becomes the 'language', the form, the organising structure and the content at the same time – just as in the case of Ungers' 'Kubus' installation. Beckett reduced the drama of *Quad* to its very core and placed it at the centre of the performance, just as Ungers did in his architecture.

The adoption of the geometric shape of the square – also a regular element in Ungers' architectural design – became a linguistic tool for both poststructuralist drama and postmodern architecture. The use of geometric shapes and mathematical proportions can be traced to the artistic and philosophical traditions of antiquity, where the most basic rules of composition and beauty were often associated with mathematical harmony. If this inner structure of the artwork had traditionally remained hidden, for Beckett and Ungers, language – its structural organisation and exposition – had become the central themes of drama and architecture respectively. Their radical formal and thematic reductions led to a linguistic confusion: the fusion of the sign and the signified. Form and content could no longer be distinguished: this was 'architecture as architecture', and drama as drama. This idealism, and the ontology of mathematical relations, for Ungers reflected a 'human desire to an ideal objectivity',[20] the representation of the human as absolute, which ultimately also coincided with Ungers' aspiration to elevate architecture to the spheres of high culture and art. As Ungers noted, in relation to architectural form: 'Architecture's expressive capacity transforms what is useful into something spectacular, that is, into art.'[21] Thus, he aspired to establish architecture as an autonomous cultural field, in which the exhibition played a crucial role.

Ungers argued that architecture and art had a complementary relationship. Besides his legendary library of prints and books of architecture, he was a dedicated collector of art. His collection ranged from early copies of ancient Roman sculptures to 16th-century architectural vedutas and 19th-century architectural models and drawings by Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Etienne-Louis Boullée and Leo von Klenze to pieces of Neue Sachlichkeit, Minimalism and Conceptual art of the late 20th century. The theme and focal point of his collection was architecture and the exploration of the language of abstraction, exemplified by such iconic works as an early painting by Piet Mondrian, Josef Albers's concentric composition *Homage to the Square*, Dan Flavin's neon portrait of architecture's archetype and Mario Merz's self-portrait as an architect, *Io Son Anche un Architetto* [I am also an Architect]. The three-dimensional

[19] Beckett's simplified monochrome version of *Quad I* was *Quad II*. According to an anecdote, it came about accidentally when Beckett first saw the piece on a black-and-white TV monitor, and he said: "My God, it's a hundred thousand years later!" See: Martin Esslin, 'Towards the Zero of Language', in *Beckett's Later Fiction and Drama,* ed. by James Acheson and Kateryna Arthur (New York: St Martin's Press, 1987), pp. 35-49 (p. 44).
[20] Ungers, 'We are at the Beginning'.
[21] Paolo Portoghesi, Vincent Scully, Charles Jencks and Christian Norberg-Schulz, *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale,* exhib. cat. (London: Academy Editions, 1980).

works included an outdoor installation by Richard Long and a number of pieces by Donald Judd, Carl Andre, and Sol LeWitt, among others. [22]

Fig. 23. (left) Joseph Albers, *Homage to the Square*: *Waiting*, 1962, from Ungers' collection; (middle) Sol LeWitt, *Untitled*, 1984, from Ungers' collection; (right) Klotz's office designed by Ungers, DAM, Frankfurt, 1984.

The collection was ostensibly dominated by Ungers' attraction to geometry and the elementary language of forms – especially the square and its three-dimensional rendering, the cube. The purely formal analogies between these works and Ungers' own architecture, rather than any other art-historical narrative, would seem to determine the collection: 'I am not a collector, but I see things structurally. […] Things are structurally comparable to me, regardless of the era they are from.'[23] Ungers compared his collection to André Malraux's notion of the 'museum without walls' in that he did not seek any categorical – periodical or stylistic – cohesion in its organisation. The synthetic approach of his 'City Metaphors' became the foundation for his design method in his proposals for Berlin and New York – as well as his building for the DAM, and eventually this also provided the organising principle for his personal collection, which he described and presented as an assemblage.

In his Kubushaus,[24] home to his collection in Cologne, Ungers aimed to achieve a total formal and 'spiritual' harmony between his collection and the architecture by amalgamating them into a kind of *Gesamtkunstwerk* – a total work of art. The building was completed in the same year as his exhibition 'Kubus', and its spatial organisation followed a concentric succession of cubic spaces, repeating the logic of the DAM building but in a much more minimal fashion. His collection was centred on the inner cube of the library room and arranged as a palimpsest of analogies and juxtapositions, all precisely aligned with the architecture of the house. Ungers referred to the collection as his visual archive, which surrounded the workspaces, the library and workshop, as well as the living and outdoor spaces of his home. The carefully calculated spatial arrangement of the works around the formal and functional features of his house emphasised the structural and thematic dominance of architecture that took a central role in Ungers' display. The art became an inseparable part of the building, a permanent evolving exhibition, in which Ungers' architecture was not merely the framework and a curatorial device, but also the main thematic subject. The works of art on display assumed an interpretative role in

[22] Ungers' collection still belongs to the family, and is displayed at the Kubushaus in Cologne.
[23] Koolhaas and Obrist, 'An Interview with O. M. Ungers', p. 94.
[24] Ungers originally built the house as his own home and office in Cologne in 1990; later his family moved out and the space was taken over entirely by his office.

expressing and contextualizing his idea of architecture, establishing a dialogue in which art and architecture reflect each other, like infinity mirrors.

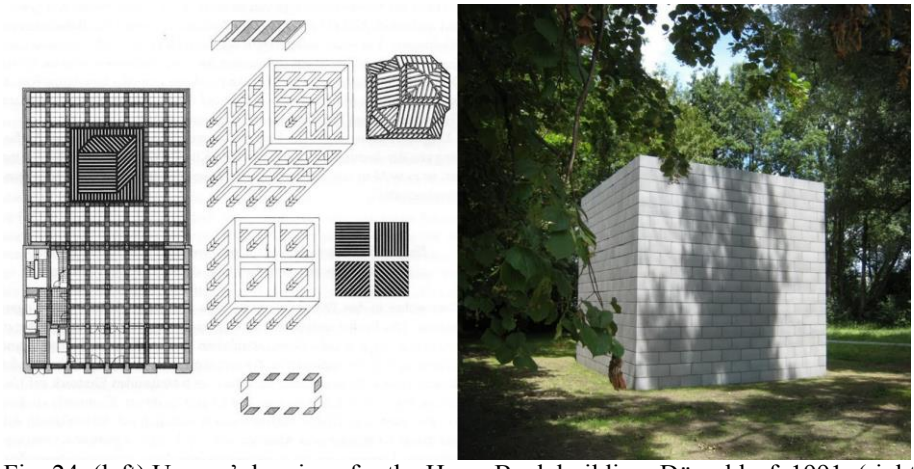


Fig. 24. (left) Ungers' drawings for the Hypo-Bank building, Düsseldorf, 1991; (right) Sol LeWitt, *Cube*, Basel, 1984/2011.

The work of Sol LeWitt, a significant inspiration for Ungers,[25] had also revolved around experimentation with the language of abstraction from the early 1960s. In the 1970s, LeWitt further developed this interest in his open modular structures, removing the skin of his sculptures in order to reveal their basic structure and language. This resulted in a radically simplified open cube that became the most basic building element of his complex three-dimensional structures, some of which also appeared on the wall paintings and floor mosaics of the Hypo-Bank building in Düsseldorf, on which Ungers worked closely with Sol LeWitt and Gerhard Richter in 1991.[26] Richter's and LeWitt's work not only provides inspiration for the formal and structural organization of this late building; it was also physically assimilated and absorbed by Ungers' architecture. Their pieces appeared on Ungers' drawings of floor plans and isometric views of the building as a kind of '*bauschmuck*', echoed by the cubic structure of Ungers' design, which amalgamated with the artworks on the seamless surfaces of the building – a self-referential shrine to the cube.

[25] From the 1980s onwards Sol Le Witt also started to work with cement. His first monumental cement sculpture, *Cube*, erected in 1985 in Basel, had very obvious connotations with architecture both in scale and material, signalling a return of an early interest of Sol LeWitt's. This work was also an important reference for Ungers' 'Kubus' in 1990, which aimed to map out the intersections between art and architecture.

[26] Ungers was not only a collector of their work, but also a close friend. Ungers lived in the same city as Richter, Cologne, from the 1980s onwards. Richter's paintings were an important reference for Ungers' late architecture – including both the Kubushaus and the Hypo-Bank building – which he described as an ultimate architectural experiment in reaching total abstraction, comparable only to monochrome abstract painting. Richter's systematic experimentation with the language and techniques of painting and photography, his investigations of the image in the dichotomy of the hyper-real and the abstraction, as well as his interest and returning references to history painting reveal many similarities between his and Ungers' thinking.

Ungers, also known by the German epithet 'der Herr der Kuben',[27] was not alone in his cubic universe. One could even argue – from a strictly formalist standpoint – that the 1980s became the decade of the cube. It does not seem incidental that the 'Rubik's Cube' appeared in this very moment of history as the most expressive icon of its age. The Hungarian sculptor and architect Ernő Rubik designed the first model of his cube in 1975. He only realized the potential of his cube as a combinatorial puzzle later, when he painted the sides in different colours. The 'Magic Cube' was first introduced and licensed in Germany in 1980, when it immediately received the title 'German Game of the Year'. In the same year it appeared in London, Paris and New York. It soon conquered the global market and become a cult object and symbol of 1980s popular culture.

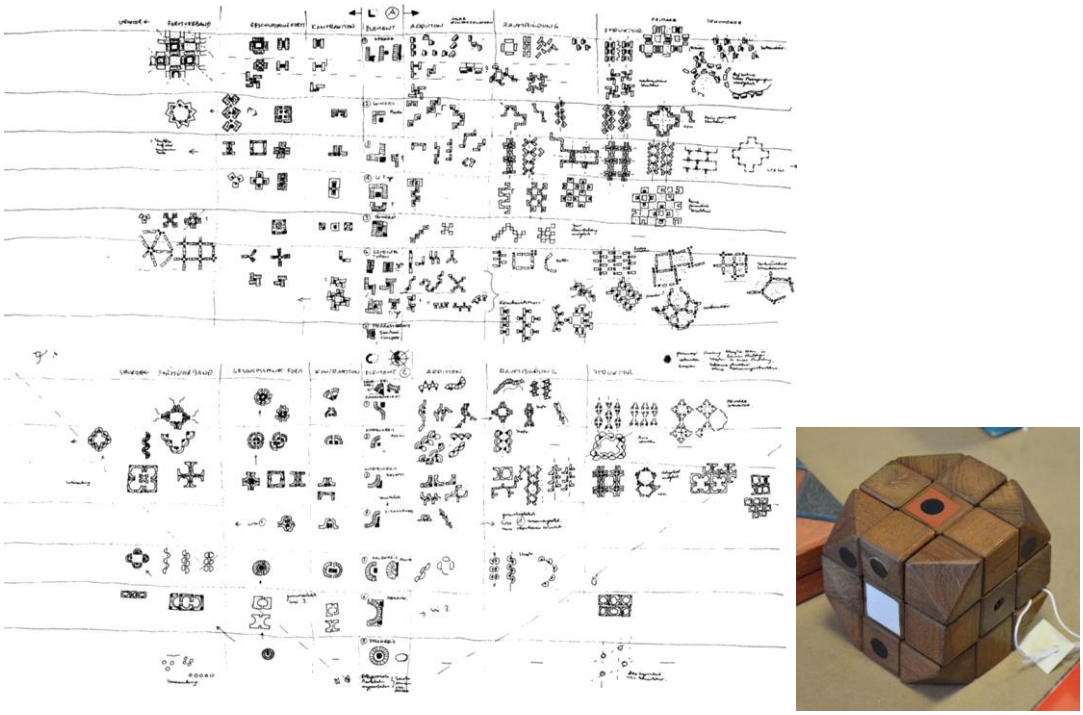


Fig. 25. (left) Detail of an incomplete morphological code based on fundamental geometric forms and their variants by O. M. Ungers; (right) Rubik's cube prototype, ca.1978.

Beyond the obvious formal analogies between Ungers' and Rubik's work, their shared interest revealed a new paradigm of language and representation – the 'square on a square', a model of three-dimensional architectural space and structure, became a codified sign and symbol for both. Rubik originally created his Cube as an educational tool to illustrate and model architectural space for his students of interior design in Budapest. His Cube worked in the same way as Ungers' cubic structures – as a device to abstract and map the basic spatial relations of architecture; both resulted from the radical abstraction and formal representation of the language of architecture.

One year after the international debut of Rubik's Cube, and in the same year as the release of Beckett's *Quad*, Jean Baudrillard published his collection of philosophical essays entitled *Simulacra and*

[27] An article in *Die Welt*, 'Der Herr der Kuben', refers to Ungers by this title. Ingeborg Prior, 'Der Herr der Kuben', *Die Welt*, 25 March 2001.

*Simulation*.[28] His book examined the relationship between reality, its symbols and society, and established a new theory of the sign, which might shed some light on coinciding trends in the artistic, architectural and scientific thinking of a contemporary generation. According to Baudrillard's observations, the late capitalist period signalled the end of theatrical representation and introduced instead an entirely new code of sign systems. This was the third of three representational systems identified by Baudrillard, which he ordered according to different historical periods: In the pre-industrial, classical age signs referred directly to their original signified: this was a sign system of mediated reality. In the age of the Industrial Revolution, this direct relation between the original and its copies was broken down by serial mass production, which led to a 'depictive mediation' of reality. This was then further complicated in the postmodern age, when representation and reality became indistinguishable from one another, 'simulacrum' replaced reality and meaning was taken over by symbols.

Werner Lippert's struggle to decide whether Ungers' 'Kubus' stood as a presentation or representation of architectural objects – white cubes in the 'white cube' – was symptomatic of this representational and spatial turn in which, as Tschumi argued, space could not be separated from its discursive context. This relation between sign and signified represents Baudrillard's simulacrum, where signs reflect signs in total equivalency. Baudrillard's theory thus informed the spatial theories and context-consciousness in architecture, as well as the site-specific turn and the consequent institutional critique that was at the forefront of radical artistic practices from the early 1960s. The metaphor of architecture, seen in Ungers' 'Kubus' and the architectural metaphor of space as narrated by O'Doherty's white cube both originate from the same spatial ideas that collide in Borges's fictional 'Map of the Empire', from his short story 'On Exactitude in Science'[29]: they describe a hyper-real condition, in Baudrillard's terms the ultimate analogy for the postmodern condition of the simulacrum.

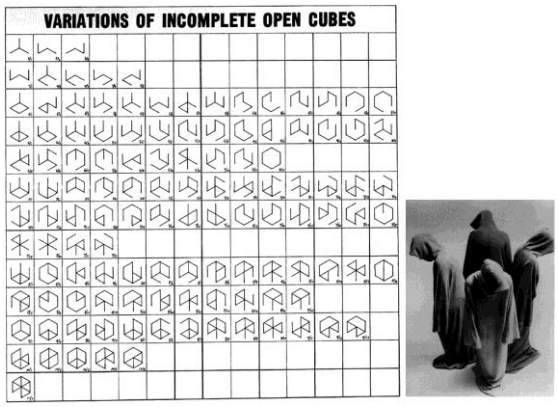


Fig. 26. (left) Sol LeWitt, *Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes*, 1974; (right) Beckett, *Quad II,* 1981.

Baudrillard described his contemporaries as a mathematized society. The underlying mathematical interest in the language of representation seems obvious in relation to Rubik's algorithms, Sol LeWitt's systematic permutations of geometrical structures or Beckett's radical reduction of drama to a geometric

[28] Jean Baudrillard (1981), *Simulacra and Simulation*, tr. by Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1994).
[29] Jorge Luis Borges, 'On Exactitude in Science', in *Universal History of Infamy* (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 131.

pattern; Ungers' design method and theory, too, were heavily influenced by mathematical thinking, in particular by that of Nicholas de Cusa, the 15th-century German philosopher and astronomer. His theory of the ontology of numbers and his principle of *coincidentia oppositorum* was a major influence on Ungers' design method and his idea of the assemblage, as demonstrated earlier. By the 1980s, Ungers' interest in the 'art of mathematics': geometry, proportions, numerology and abstraction, reached an almost religious level; mathematics became an essential point of reference of his 'cosmos'.

Ungers' architecture may not fit into Jencks' category of Postmodernism,[30] because he did not look to the extra-architectural terrain for inspiration, but his systematic research into architecture's inner language did link him to poststructuralist thought in a more substantial way than many of Jencks' picturesque or eclectic case studies. Ungers' rootedness in his changing times is evident in the many ways in which his synthetic approach to reality corresponded with Baudrillard's description of the postmodern phenomenon of the simulacra.

Ungers' creed to reintroduce a 'humanist responsibility' into architectural thinking[31] and to 'accept architecture again as art' was just as indicative of the realities of a post-industrial society as it was an intended critique of, and remedy for, a percieved crisis of the contemporary architectural profession. His protest against outmoded technocratic ideologies in relation to the function and language of architecture can be contextualized in a wider cultural and social perspective. Baudrillard located the origin of the simulacrum as a new representational order in relation to the new media techniques of late capitalism, the language and images of publicity, the phenomenon of the separation of production processes resulting in end products completely divorced from their origin and source – from their reality–, and also the effects of an overwhelming urbanisation which led to the total estrangement of humanity from nature, replacing it with an artificial version of reality, or the 'hyperreal' – a condition of postmodern society.

Despite the usefulness of Baudrillard's thinking in the interpretation of Ungers' architecture, beyond their shared contemporary experiences and some important commonalities between their observations there are substantial differences in their respective positions; Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation* is a critical theory, and thus it is purely descriptive and conclusive, whereas Ungers' *City Metaphors* was mainly operational and propositional as a text. Ungers' thinking first and foremost served as a basis for his methodology, through which he aimed to *realise* an 'absolute architecture'– an idea contained and symbolised in every detail of his work, whether this was a piece of furniture, a detail of a house, an art collection, a plan for the city, or even a theoretical text. The same cultural and social phenomena against which Baudrillard took a critical stance, for Ungers presented a different set of problems with which he had to engage in much more complex and often instinctive ways: his architecture was shaped by his perception of his contemporary reality, just as much as it eventually shaped the experience of reality – through his physical architecture, often rendered as fiction.

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[30] He argued this in an *AD* interview with Heinrich Klotz in 1984, while after the 1990s he revised his opinion and finally accepted Ungers as Postmodernist. Charles Jencks, 'In the Steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks Interviews Heinrich Klotz', *Architectural Design*, 55 (1985), 9-16.
[31] Portoghesi, Scully, Jencks, and Norberg-Schulz, *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale.*

This duality of the thinker and the doer that characterized Ungers' persona is exemplified in the context of exhibitions, which represented a realm between theory and practice. Architectural experimentation took physical and three-dimensional shape here: Ungers' exhibitions also functioned as built architecture even within the context of the gallery. His 'City Metaphors' turned the gallery into an imaginary street, while in 'Kubus' he converted his models into rooms on a human scale and dimension. Ungers not only considered his exhibitions to be architecture: his museum buildings also became exhibitions in their own right. This idea was already inherent in his DAM building (as well as in his Kubushaus), that is not just a museum dedicated to the display of architecture – eventually it became, in Ungers' terms, a monument to the art of architecture. However, ultimately the *display* of his buildings in the context of the space of late-capitalist consumption worked against itself: it locked architecture permanently inside the museum, which meant that it not only lost its subversive power but – according to the cultural logic of the late-capitalist museum as described by Krauss[32] – it finally become an emblem of the late-capitalist economic order. This dedicated monument to the idea of architecture signalled the beginnings of a new cultural paradigm of the iconic building, in Baudrillard's portentous words 'the monument of cultural deterrence',[33] and this became intrinsically linked to the rise of the *starchitect.*

Only a year before Ungers' death, in 2006, a major retrospective exhibition in Berlin's Neue Nationalgalerie, entitled 'Oswald Matthias Ungers: The Cosmos of Architecture', portrayed him as a collector and humanist intellectual as much as an architect. His wooden models and drawings were exhibited in the context of his collection, 'a trove of visual ideas and stimuli', once again confirming that *art* is the main intellectual and formal fundament of Ungers' work and theoretical thinking. The organizing themes of the exhibition were further outlined in the catalogue essays that focused primarily on Ungers' own house and his collection of art, books and models, his museum projects and exhibitions. Ungers' Kubushaus was compared to the neoclassical architect Sir John Soane's home in London, and it was described by Andres Lepik, the curator of the exhibition, as a microcosm and personification of Ungers: 'the individual elements [of his Kubushaus] are indivisibly interwoven with the architect's person'.[34]

The exhibition's main source and inspiration, Ungers' house was presented therefore as a treasury, laboratory, a built manifesto and above all 'an intellectual self-portrait'. Lepik's exhibition in fact reconstructed Ungers' home and studio as an exhibition of Ungers' oeuvre: 'The house of the architect is a structure of thought', as Stephanie Tasch concluded in the exhibition catalogue. [35] Thus, in Lepik's exhibition it was the persona of Ungers rather than the architecture that was on display, placed right next to his inspiration, figures such as Piranesi, Palladio, Dürer, Ledoux and Schinkel, an even more indicative statement than in the case of the 12 architects of the 1970s 'Roma Interrota' exhibition. As Ungers stated, architecture's expressive capacity transforms the functional into the spectacular, and, in the context of Mies van der Rohe's Neue Nationalgalerie, Ungers became the spectacle himself.

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[32] Rosalind Krauss, 'The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum', *October*, 54 (1990), 3-17.
[33] Jean Baudrillard, 'The Beaubourg Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', in *Simulacra and Simulation,* pp. 61-74.
[34] Andres Lepik, 'Preface', in *O. M. Ungers: Cosmos of Architecture*, p. 16.
[35] See Stephanie Tasch, 'A Visit to the Architect's Home', in *O. M. Ungers: Cosmos of Architecture*, p. 19.


Fig. 27. ‘O.M. Ungers – Kosmos der Architektur’, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, 2006.

The contrasts and divergences between Ungers’ early and late exhibitions outline a narrative within the histories of architecture exhibitions over the past four decades which is equally useful in offering a retrospective insight into the development of certain architectural tendencies at large, as well as a better understanding of the role of these separate exhibitions in the construction of this history that spanned from the reclaiming of architectural autonomy to the emergence of the starchitect.

In the case of Ungers, the unfolding narrative of these exhibitions seemed to come full circle. In his early exhibitions, throughout the 1970s and early ’80s, Ungers defined his architecture in relation to art practices and within the space of art – a somewhat paradoxical exercise to restore architecture’s autonomy that, as we have seen, actually risked architecture’s specificity. As Vesely has noted: ‘it is a sign of the avant-garde mentality that the architect sees himself as a sole agent of creativity […] culminating in the belief that world is essentially each architect’s own world.’[36] In Lepik’s retrospective, it was Ungers’ persona that was reconstructed through his relation to art: an intellectual, polymath, collector, *the artist*. The art of architecture – the means of a desperate search for autonomy – results in architecture’s separation from everyday reality. Rather than offering a critical negotiation of disciplinary conventions – as the ‘void shows’ of the 1960s and 70s attemted – it encloses the discipline (as well as the architect) in its self-referential universe. The manner in which his practice relates to his profession, the coming together of a number of synchronous concerns and the assent of the starchitect forms an epochal narrative. He placed the street in the gallery, the *everyday* becoming art, and this reconstituted context also exercised a number of other minds: some sought a different formulation, one in which architecture would become part of life.

[36] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), p. 30.

## 3.2 ARCHITECTURE AS INSTITUTIONAL CRITIQUE

Friedman's *Street Museum*

'[T]he best museum of a period is the city itself, as conceived and materialized in that period,' Yona Friedman remarked while explaining his idea of the 21st-century museum for Paris.[37] His proposal, a '*Ville Spatiale*'[38] neighbourhood, was to be initiated at the beginning and inaugurated at the end of the 21st century, during which period all formal and structural changes to the space would be introduced – democratically – by the inhabitants themselves through their everyday use of the architecture on site. Friedman's proposal, like most of his earlier works, remained on paper, and his 'self-building museum' of Paris persists as a paradoxical projective vision of the contemporary city as museum, as a purpose-built future Pompeii that turned into its own natural monument.[39] More significantly, however, the concept of the 'city as museum' for Friedman symbolized the possibility of architecture without building; it challenged the traditional notion of the museum building and opposed the primacy of the architecture that is usually implied by these structures: 'The museum is not a building', as he protested.[40]


Fig. 28. Yona Friedman, *Street Museum*, 2011.

A number of Friedman's most recent projects that revolve around the theme of the museum have implied a similar approach and dispensed with the museum building in favour of adopting pre-existing

[37] see María Inés Rodríguez, *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman*, exhib. cat. (León: Coleccion Arte Arquitectura AA MUSAC, 2011).
[38] *Ville Spatiale'* (1999) is an architectural concept elaborated by Friedman that involves multiplying the original surface of the town by top-elevated levels, a three-dimensional grid structure, urban intensification as spatial infrastructure.
[39] Within the context of the modernist tradition the future of the city in the form of a museum is an oxymoron: the city and the museum have a dialectic relationship in which the museum contains all things that are dead (belonging to the past) while the city represents life, modernity and progress, which points to the future. Whereas within the modernist tradition there were several attempts to interweave these two categories and to use the analogy of the city for the museum (as for example Le Corbusier's plans for the Mundaneum), the reversal of the formula that regards the city as a museum results in an unintended (by Friedman) but heavily dystopian vision for the city of the 21st century. (See also Chapter 5 for further discussion of the relationship of the city to the museum)
[40] See Yona Friedman, 'A Museum is not a Building' in *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman*, pp. 74-81.

architectural structures within the city – seen, for example, in the chain of shop windows on the street,[41] or the niches left empty by the Buddha statues that were destroyed by the Taliban in Bamiyan for his 'Museum of Afghan Civilization' (2008).[42] Other projects, include the 'Graffiti Museum' in Paris (2007) and his series of *Iconostases* consisting of lightweight and flexibly transformable support structures that were constructed from transparent Plexiglas or other recycled materials to create three-dimensional 'space chains', skeletons of walls and shelves to be modified and filled with objects by the local city dwellers. Instead of expensive and 'superfluous' museum buildings, Friedman advocated the street as an organizing structure that could offer a low-cost and more democratic architectural model for contemporary exhibitions. His display structures pertain to his early mobile architecture that similarly proposed to superimpose three-dimensional grid-like structures on top of existing cities, soliciting a new way of thinking about contemporary city planning in a participatory manner, in which the inhabitants and architect would be equal participants in mastering the design of the spaces of their own city.[43]

The street as a display structure therefore implies for Friedman a more democratic – and somewhat utopian – idea of the self-governed museum, which fulfils a different social function from traditional privately owned or state-funded collections. In order to subvert the institutional process of public decision-making, he reimagined instead a new model of the museum that is collectively authored and derives in both its form and content from the local community and its urban vernacular. Accordingly, the only built example of Friedman's numerous museum proposals, the 'Museum of Simple Technology' in Madras, India,[44] involved the participation of the local community and relied strictly on vernacular techniques and materials, with the aim of providing information on methods of survival and help in improving the living conditions of the disadvantaged. Friedman's critique of the contemporary institution of museums worked against the hegemonic systems of representation with the ultimate goal of improving society through the model of non-hierarchic participation. The role of his museum – as well as that of his architecture – was subordinate to the needs of individuals, which it aimed to facilitate in the most accessible and simple ways. Every project and proposal, therefore, was a hopeful indication of the future, or a 'feasible utopia',[45] as Friedman put it.

Whereas Friedman's ideas initially enjoyed significant attention at the 1956 Dubrovnik meeting of the CIAM – following which he founded the GEAM group[46] to pursue his participatory techno-utopias – his mobile architecture, however, was soon dismissed and forgotten. Friedman himself, following the 1968 movements in Paris, revised his early ideas on the megastructure and refocused his attention from

[41] Yona Friedman, 'Shop Windows: A Museum of Our Civilisation' in *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman,* p. 83.
[42] The 2008 project is an itinerary created out of footbridges and staircases to link the niches. Rodriguez, *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman*, p. 78.
[43] Mobile architecture, spatial city and continent city; a 'space-frame grid' infrastructure on several levels in which lightweight space-defining elements can be placed.
[44] Built in 1982, conceptualized with the Austrian architect Eda Schaur
[45] In Friedman's opinion every utopia is feasible if the necessary consensus is reached – for him the utopia *par excellence* is the town itself as a synthesis or 'skeleton of society' (which he distinguishes from the 'universalist utopia'). Manuel Orazi, 'The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman', in *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman,* p. 128.
[46] Based on his manifesto of 'mobile architecture', after the Dubrovnik meeting, in 1957, he founded GEAM (Groupe d'Etude d'Architecture Mobile) in Paris, together with Paul Maymont, Frei Otto, Eckard Schultze-Fielitz, Werner Runhau and D. G. Emmerich.

technology to society. However, the participatory methodology on which he based his 'feasible utopias' was not acknowledged in a period that was predominantly preoccupied with the disciplinary autonomy of architecture, or later, when the figure of the starchitect occupied centre stage in the postmodern architectural discourse.[47] Friedman was 'discovered' in his old age by the art world, which generally classified his participatory approach in parallel to relational art practices of the late 1990s. His debut on the contemporary art scene was marked by his appearance at 'documenta 11' in 2001, after which he became a returning participant in the Venice Biennale of Art and the subject of a number of museum shows globally,[48] resulting in paradoxical presentations of his work within these frameworks.

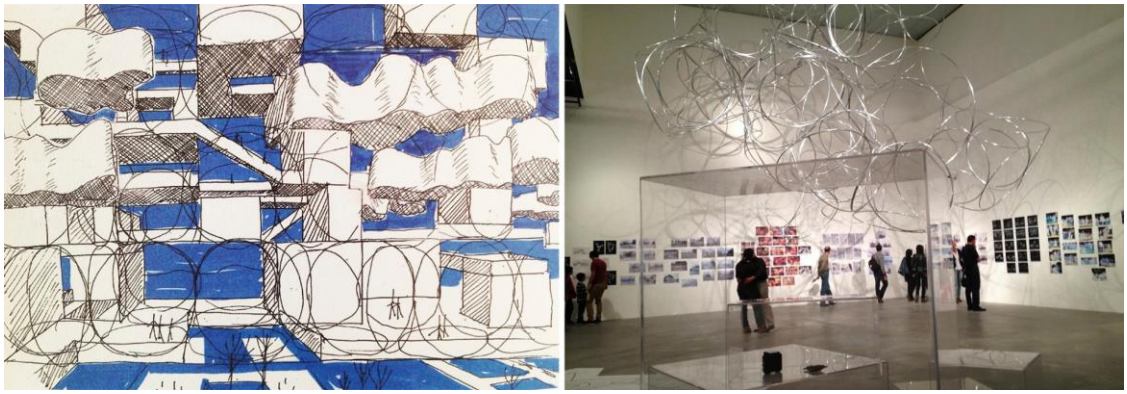

Fig. 29. (left) Yona Friedman, *Ville Spatiale*, 1959; (right) Yona Friedman, 'Architecture without Buildings', MUAC, 2013.

While Friedman's ultimate aim was to create a model of the museum without building, ironically his later proposals and prototypes of *Iconostases* ended up in museum collections (often as special commissions) and were turned into sculptural installations within their interiors. This was also the case at the 2013 exhibition at MUAC in Mexico, which, ironically, was called 'Architecture without Building'.[49] In the exhibition catalogue,[50] Manuel Orazi,[51] lamented that while Friedman has been rediscovered and celebrated by the contemporary art world, his work has not been properly considered in relation to the history of architecture and the city. In his essay, Orazi emphasizes the risk that this kind of (mis)contextualisation engenders: 'The danger, however, is to impoverish Friedman's proposals by making them aesthetic, stopping superficially on the generic involvement of the public', [52] finally

[47] His ideas were popular in the early 1960s but soon disappeared when AR's and Venturi's book appeared, bringing about ideas on disciplinary autonomia – see Orazi, 'The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman', p. 123.
[48] He participated at the Venice Biennale in 2003, in 2005, and also in 2009. His work has been shown recently in solo presentations in venues such as MUAC Mexico, MUSAC Leon, Ludwig Museum Budapest, Kunsthaus Bregenz, 11th Biennale de Lyon, Art Basel, CAAC Sevilla, Fondazione Bevilaqua La Masa, and elsewhere.
[49] Yona Friedman, 'Yona Friedman: Architecture without Building', Mexico City: MUAC, 26 January – 2 June 2013.
[50] Rodriguez, *Architecture with the People, by the People, for the People: Yona Friedman*.
[51] Orazi completed his PhD in the History of Architecture and of Cities at the Foundation for Advanced Studies in Venice (SSAV) with the thesis of the same title: *The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman*.
[52] Orazi, 'The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman', p. 133.

concluding that 'Friedman's message has once more been dramatically misunderstood, sublimated in an artistic fake in order to exorcise every political significance.'[53]

The parallels between Friedman's community-based architectural utopias and the politics of participatory art – which attempted to resist the art market while assigning a social function to art – deserve reconsideration in accordance to their original form. Orazi's concerns are justly grounded in relation to the paradoxical displays of Friedman's radical architectural proposals – for instance, *Iconostases* was originally planned to replace museum rooms, but was actually placed inside them. It is not the analogy with artistic tendencies, but the context of the museum itself that transforms and 'mummifies' Friedman's proposals, as it often does with the representation of participatory or 'community-based' art practices. The paradoxical relation between the context of the museum and that of the street remains a recurrent subject of contemporary art practices as well as the central theme of Friedman's proposal for his *Street Museum*, which are both traceable to the counterculture of the 1960s.

## The Street Generation

In the mid-1960s Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown – together with Steven Izenour – led a team of students from Yale School of Architecture to document and analyse the Las Vegas Strip, which became the basis for their influential book *Learning from Las Vegas*,[54] a manifesto that took the urban vernacular as its point of departure in order to question and revise the values and aesthetics of orthodox modernism in architecture. Around the same time, Aldo Rossi published his *L'architettura della cittá* (1966) that, opposing notioins of pure functionalism, reconsidered the role of contemporary architecture in relation to collective memory and the history of the traditional European city. This interest in the street and the urban context was, however, not restricted to architectural research in the 1960s, but was also evident in a number of artistic proposals.

In 1966, the same year that Rossi and Venturi and Scott Brown published their influential texts, Ed Ruscha mounted a camera on the back of his pickup truck in Los Angeles and photographed a two-and-a-half-mile stretch of Sunset Boulevard, including each building on both sides of the drive. He pasted the photographs together in an accordion-like fold-out artist's book, in which he presented the topographical study of the street as an artwork. Ruscha's *Every Building on Sunset Strip* took the street as its main source and subject, and also as its organizational structure.[55] While the rediscovery of the street for architecture was a means to reinvent alternatives to the spatial abstraction of modernist functionalism, for Ruscha – as for many artists of the time – the exploration and occupation of sites outside the museum developed into an artistic counter-strategy to resist the ideology of the museum and

[53] Orazi, 'The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman', p. 135.
[54] Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural*, revised ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977).
[55] Rem Koolhaas recalled the 1971 summer school in Berlin with Ungers, and compared 'the deadpan recordings of Berlin's inconspicuous features' to Ruscha's work on LA ['What Ungers has done was to take the city […] and declare it the single obsessive object'] In: *The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago,* ed. by Florian Hertweck and Sébastien Marot, (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2013). p. 44.

the ‘white cube’, unmasking the recognition of the socio-political and economic implications of the architectural context of the work of art.[56] The street and the city as a site and subject lent artistic practices a renewed social and political agency.

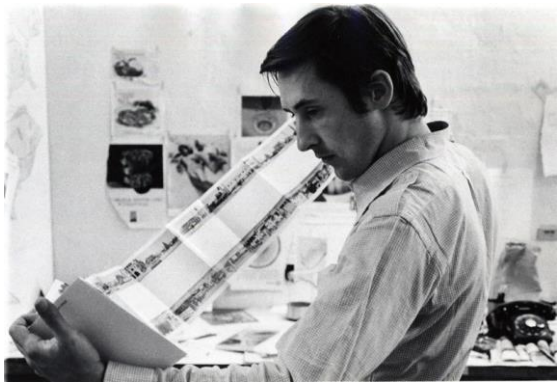

Fig. 30. Ed Ruscha holding his book *Every Building on the Sunset Strip*, 1967.

In parallel with a whole generation of artists moving out from the gallery to seek new territories and definitions of contemporary art’s role within society, architecture sought to redefine the purpose and image of the architectural profession within the museum. In the midst of the changing economic climate of the post-industrial city, the exhibition of architecture allowed for experimentation with new ideas and forms, as well as playing a crucial role in emancipating architecture to join the ‘liberal arts’. This phenomenon was exemplified by Ungers’ early exhibitions and museum buildings, as well as by the practice of a new generation of postmodern architects which initially developed within the walls of the museum.[57]

Friedman’s architectural work in this regard is somewhat unorthodox, and while, unlike Ungers, he never considered himself an artist[58] his attitude and method is more consonant with contemporary art practices. His participatory structures always took place outside the museum, as in the case of his *Street Museum,* assuming a position directly opposite that of Ungers’ ‘street’ installed in the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. In the context of Ungers’ exhibition the street provided the spatial structure for his ‘City Metaphors’ installation, becoming a model, ‘a structure of thought’. For Friedman the street was the *site* and the subject of his ‘architecture without building’ and by remaining outside the museum he aimed to provide an institutional critique akin to that of the radical art practices of his time. While Friedman’s work has never been accepted into the mainstream canon of architecture, it is the irony of history – and symptom of contemporary museum practices – that his retrospective canonisation in art museums led to

[56] Brian O’Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1986).
[57] As Lepik argued, the main intellectual and formal fundament of Ungers’ thinking was art. See: Andres Lepik ‘Preface’, in *O. M. Ungers: Cosmos of Architecture*.
[58] Orazi, ‘The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman’, p. 132.

his sharing of the institutional space that Ungers occupied – which, eventually, also commodified Friedman's work.[59]

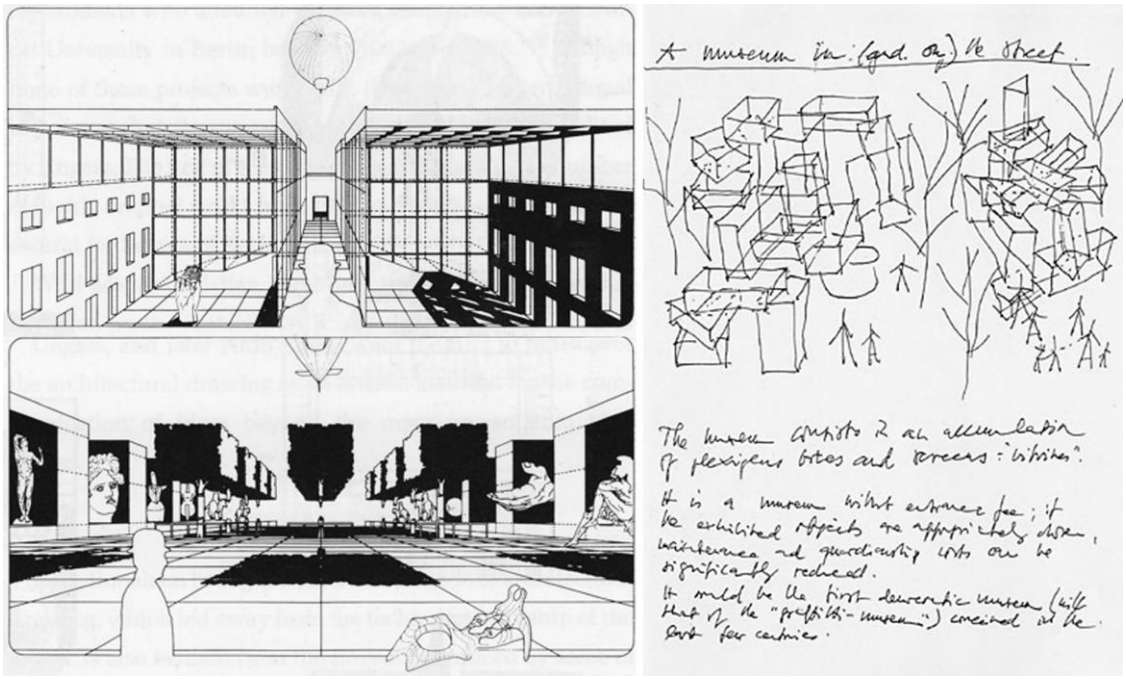

Fig. 31. (left) O. M. Ungers, Ludwig Museum, Cologne, 1975; (right) Yona Friedman, *Street Museum.*

Friedman intended to reform the institution of the museum itself by adapting its form to the street, while for Ungers, the street – like the architecture within his building for the DAM in Frankfurt – became an abstract metaphor within the walls of the gallery. The main difference between Friedman's *Street Museum* and Ungers' building for the DAM can be seen in the divergence of their respective definitions of architecture, and its 'role'. The street was a crucial motif for both Friedman and Ungers, which they respectively interpreted as a social construct and as a morphological element of the city. While recognizing the shortfalls of the naïve functionalism of post-war Modernism – its incapacity to articulate cultural space – Friedman still believed that architecture could contribute to social progress, unlike Ungers, whose starting point was to fully oppose social function by establishing architecture as an autonomous discipline and cultural field.[60] Friedman's focus on the social agenda and the 'feasible utopias' of architecture stood in stark ideological contrast to Ungers' built 'fiction' of architecture.[61]

Apart from their differences, they shared interest in the vernacular of the 'everyday' and the archetypal forms of architecture. This was exemplified by the parallels between Ungers' generic hut and

[59] It might be seen as a contradiction that during his late years – since he was 'discovered' by art curators – Friedman has also started to produce work primarily for the gallery context. Some of this work is presented in the framework of his own retrospective exhibitions, while others are installations (an example being the many works produced for the Venice Biennale) that are presented as part of group exhibitions.
[60] As Ungers wrote in his essay on the architectural autonomy that was his contribution to the catalogue of Paolo Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima', he did not believe that architecture could bring explicit solutions for social problems. Portoghesi and others, *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*.
[61] See: Heinrich Klotz, 'City Wall and Adam's House', in *Museum Architecture in Frankfurt 1980-1990,* ed. by Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani (Munich: Prestel, 1990).

Friedman's low-tech domes constructed from recycled materials, as well as their tendency towards the adoption of pre-existing architectural infrastructures, which create common ground between their ideas. If at first this affinity might appear as a purely thematic coincidence, their hidden theoretical motivations demonstrate a deeper resemblance. Ungers' incorporation of the fragments of a 19th-century villa in the DAM structure could be seen as a purely symbolic formal gesture that is primarily related to his historical and morphological research, while Friedman's idea of recycling and occupying the shop windows on the streets of Zürich, or the empty niches in Bamiyan, is clearly based on a pragmatic and functional, rather than a formal decision or preservationist approach. Yet, if we compare Ungers' theory of the urban archipelago with Friedman's revised '*utopias realisables*', their shared interest in the urban neighbourhood appears more compatible.

By the late 1960s Friedman had shifted his focus from the technological to the social aspects of architecture. He revised his early proposals for mobile architecture – which he originally envisioned in the form of extended mega-structures – by rescaling his *Continent City* and devising instead projects proportional to a 'critical group' – the largest unit in which direct communication and consensus can still be achieved.[62] As opposed to the universal utopia of the mega-structure, the autonomously managed community of the town became the ultimate model for Friedman's 'feasible utopia'.[63] His bottom-up urbanism, based on the theory of the critical group, was therefore primarily concerned with defining the 'limit' of urban structures, which rendered his architectural thinking akin to Ungers' contemporaneous research into self-sufficient urban communities.[64]

The theme of the community and neighbourhood was also recurrent in Ungers' projects such as the 'Green Archipelago' for Berlin, in which he considered distinct parts and districts of the city as autonomous urban islands or 'social enclaves'.[65] While Friedman regarded the street primarily as a social structure, Ungers placed more emphasis on the formal aspects of the physical structure of the city, as in his *City Metaphors,* a morphological study of urban boundaries. Nevertheless, it was the urban fragment that lent agency to both of their architectural proposals that were consonant in rejecting the universalist utopia of inert modernism, soliciting instead a counter-strategy based on fragmentation and pluralities for the architectural intervention into the fabric of the city, understood in this way as a formal or socio-political palimpsest.

The fundamental differences between the thinking of these two architects were representative of a split between contemporaneous groups of a generation of practitioners whose work – inside or outside the gallery – evolved around the newly reclaimed political and aesthetic notions of the urban street, which

[62] See Yona Friedman, *Utopies realisables* (Paris: Union generale d'editions, 1975).
[63] For Friedman every utopia was feasible that could be achieved through the way of consensus, and in this sense the town became the physical skeleton of his feasible utopia. As Orazi has pointed out, Friedman's theory of the critical group is very similar to Doxiadis's 'entopia'; See: Constantinos A. Doxiadis, *Between Dystopia and Utopia* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), pp. 50-51; Orazi, 'The Erratic Universe of Yona Friedman', p. 126.
[64] See Liselotte Ungers and Oswald Mathias Ungers, *Kommunen in der Neuen Welt 1740-1972* (Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch, 1972).
[65] This thesis will return to the discussion of Ungers' theory of the urban archipelago in Chapter 5.

Robert Gutman described as 'The Street Generation' in Stanford Anderson's anthology *On Streets*.[66] In spite of its diversity in the definitions it offers, this collection of essays became an important document in a period remembered as the age of the rediscovery of the street, both in North America and Europe. The anthology included diverse voices representing different approaches and positions from a set of disciplinary fields ranging from history, spatial analysis, economics and sociology to semiotics: some were more socially involved while others focused on representational and formal values. First associated with Situationism,[67] the street, as the site and symbol of the political protests and social conflicts of 1968, gained its central status in mainstream representation during the following decade. Consequently, the street became the central site and theme of artistic representation for a whole generation: as the radical site of contemporary artistic interventions or as a representable fiction within the walls of museums and in exhibitions.

Fig. 32. *The beach beneath the street*, Situationist Graffiti, May 1968.

Architecture's New Heroes

At a time when progressive artistic experimentation left the gallery and entered the public realm, a whole new architectural culture defined – and confined – itself within the walls of the museum. 'I am an architect, therefore I don't build'– as Leon Krier famously remarked,[68] summing up the oxymoron according to which architecture's 'heroes' were not builders any more. After the 1960s, architecture gradually became a hypothetical concept,[69] and its social and political agencies could be fully and undisputedly explored – paradoxically enough – only outside the social realm: on paper, within the academy and in the gallery. It might not be incidental that architectural exhibitions thrive at times of

[66] Commissioned and edited throughout the 1970s, as cited in Robert Gutman, 'The Street Generation', in *On Streets,* ed. by Stanford Anderson (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1986), pp. 249-64.
[67] See: *The Situationists and the City*, ed. by Tom McDonough (Verso: London, 2009).
[68] Ian Latham, 'Léon Krier. A Profile...', *Architectural Design*, 57 (1987), 37.
[69] Including the Italian *Tendenza* that was transmitted to the US by Peter Eisenman, the first executive director of the IAUS (Institute of Architecture and Urban Studies) which ran as an independent experimental school between 1967-1984 and significantly contributed to the transformation of American architectural culture of the 1970s and '80s.

radical social change, as Barry Bergdoll has pointed out in relation to the French and Russian Revolutions.[70] 1968 and the consequent cultural and social changes also provided an ideal terrain for the architecture exhibition and for new experimental practices that placed the social and political notions of urban space at the centre of their focus. Besides socially engaged forms of contemporary art, for which the occupation and thematisation of urban sites became a strategy to oppose the elitism of art museums, architecture itself, as a 'social form of art', assumed a central role in museums and temporary exhibitions.

Vittorio Gregotti's directorship of the Venice Biennale was characterized by these tendencies. Before his involvement with the Biennale, Gregotti, an Italian architect, was closely associated with a group of young architects in Milan, which, in the 1960s, concentrated around the magazine *Casabella Continuá*, directed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers, a figure whose thinking about the historical context of architecture became a significant and lasting influence for Gregotti. Besides collaborating with Rogers, he was responsible for the introductory section of the XIII Triennale in Milan in 1964, which he curated with Umberto Eco, on the theme of 'Tempo libero'.[71] Soon afterwards, in 1966, he published his influential book *Il Territorio dell'Architettura*, an 'anthropogeographic approach',[72] in which he defined the scope of architecture in relation to its territory that he did not restrict to the historical city but extended to the ecological landscape and infrastructure in the widest possible sense.[73] Gregotti, an influential figure in the Italian cultural scene at the time, had been invited to Venice by Carlo Ripa di Meana[74] to direct the visual arts section of the Biennale between 1974 and 1978, in a key period when the institution of the Biennale – together with the city – was in need of radical reforms and major transformation.

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[70] 'Exhibiting Architecture: The Discursive and the Scenographic Space', International Symposium at Centre Pompidou, Paris, 16-17 January 2014. In his lecture Bergdoll remarked that the first public architecture exhibitions opened at the time of the French Revolution – the time from which the idea of the 'modern' architectural museum originated – followed by a second peak of architecture exhibitions associated with the 1920s avant-garde. For more detailed discussion of Bergdoll's related ideas see Chapter Four of this thesis.

[71] Gregotti and Eco's Triennale was the first edition of the exhibition that was organised around a specific theme instead of being a direct and generic survey of art and architecture of the time. (The Triennale was also primarily dedicated to industrial and interior design rather than art and architecture.) In the changing social and economic climate, Gregotti's thematic survey was intended to introduce new questions and a critical reading of the industrialized society of Italy.

[72] Kenneth Frampton, *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1980), p. 399.

[73] Needs to be read in the context of the *Tendenza* Group and Rossi's *L'Architettura della cittá* (that he published at the same year). Their approach is differentiated here in the fact that Gregotti goes beyond the 'architectural memory' and considers architecture as an environmental art that is equally determined by the topography and ecology of a region, besides its cultural and historical traditions (as opposed to Rossi, whose primarily concern was the 'collective memory' of the city). Gregotti's theory of the territory of architecture outlines the approach that also determined his directorship of the Biennale organized in 1976 around the theme of environment and 'cultural structures'.

[74] An Italian politician initially associated with the Italian Socialist Party and later with the Greens. For a period, he was also Minister of Culture and Environment. At the time of his presidency of the Venice Biennale he was the partner of Gae Aulenti, which might have also influenced some of his decisions regarding the appointment of the Biennale directors).

Following the events of 1968, which resulted in the temporary closure of the Biennale, the first official edition of the renewed visual arts section reopened under Gregotti's directorship in 1976.[75] It was organized around the theme of 'art and environment', also including three related thematic exhibitions that were dedicated to the historical and contemporary tendencies of architecture. An architect himself, Gregotti accepted the directorship of the Biennale on the condition that architecture could be introduced into the visual arts section.[76] This decision, in the years following 1968, acquired important political significance in rebuilding the institution of the Biennale in relation to the city of Venice. As Aaron Levy and William Menking have argued,[77] the radical politics of '68, which rejected elitist exhibitions detached from reality, attributed a new function to architecture exhibitions and opened the doors of the Biennale to architecture 'as a public form of art'. In Gregotti's words, 'the architecture section has reinvigorated the biennale'.[78]

Fig. 33. Ugo Mulas, protests during the Venice Biennale in 1968.

The protests of 1968 rejected the commodification of cultural production and the elitist attitude represented by the Biennale at the time. Under the leadership of the Venetian painter Emilio Vedova,[79] students and artists, some of them involved directly in the exhibition themselves, demanded the abolition of the Grand Prizes and the elimination of the sales office[80] and campaigned for a more inclusive Biennale that would aim at the democratisation of contemporary art. They petitioned artists to withdraw their pieces and boycott the Biennale as a sign of protest against the corrupt power structures and statute of the institution, that was originally established during the Fascist regime in Italy in 1938, and which was widely perceived as a model aligned with capitalist values and the commercialisation of

[75] The statute of the Biennale was legally renewed only in 1973 when Vittorio Gregotti was also appointed as director of the Biennale.
[76] See conversation between Gregotti and Levy and Menking in: 'Interview with Vittorio Gregotti' in *Architecture on Display: On the History of the Venice Biennale of Architecture*, ed. by Aaron Levy and William Menking (London: Architectural Association, 2010), p. 22.
[77] A collection of interviews with the former directors, Levy & Menking, *Architecture on Display: On the History of the Venice Biennale of Architecture.*
[78] Levy & Menking, *Architecture on display: On the history of the Venice Biennale of Architecture.*
[79] Vedova was born to a working-class family in Venice. As an internationally renowned figure in *arte informale*, he was actively involved in exhibiting in Venice from the early 1950s, and in 1960 he himself was awarded the Grand Prize for painting at the Venice Biennale.
[80] The Venice Biennale was first organised in 1895 to create both a forum and a market for fine and decorative arts. While the Biennale went through various major transformations in its scope and focus, from the very beginning it functioned as an art fair, and sales provided the financial basis of its model. New sections such as Music, Film and Theatre were introduced, together with the Grand Prizes during the Fascist regime in the 1930s.

art. Instead, they appealed for a new statute built on Marxist ideology that would involve the reform of the Biennale's organization as well as refocus it on issues relevant to wider society.[81] Furthermore, the local scene and the urban decentralisation of the Biennale also became a major concern for the protesters. Instead of offering a tourist-centred approach, the 'Disneyfication' of Venice and entertainment for the dominant classes, they lobbied to bring the focus to peripheral neighbourhoods and the social reality of the city. The decentralisation of the Biennale was not only intended to materialise in space but also in time, suggesting the distribution of cultural activities throughout the year, instead of focusing on biennial events. Thus, the institution of the Biennale was fundamentally challenged by the 1968 movements, resulting in the setting up of a number of congresses and commissions in following years to devise a new, more social and egalitarian model for the Venice Biennale, which was finally accepted a year before Gregotti's appointment, in 1973.[82]

Fig. 34. (left) Gastone Novelli exhibiting his paintings facing the walls in protest against the Biennale, 1968; (right) Yves Klein taking down the paintings exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art of the City of Paris in preparasion for his Void show, 1962.

In the years between 1968 and 1973, while the new statute of the Biennale was being established and the international exhibitions were temporarily suspended, there were still a number of smaller exhibitions and happenings that were held in the spirit of 1968. Both the Grand Prizes and the sales office were completely abandoned, and monographic exhibitions were replaced by thematic shows that focused on contemporary problems in art and society.[83] Responding to the politicisation of the Biennale, in 1974, its newly appointed president Carlo Ripa di Meana[84] decided to dedicate the entire fine art session to Chile as a cultural protest against the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet, bringing together all kinds of disciplines, from music and theatre to painting, that filled the Venetian *campi* with thematic murals. This was the climate in which Gregotti started to plan for the first manifestation of the Biennale.

[81] A legacy that is continued for example in Rossi's 'Venice Project' at the 1985 Biennale – a series of competitions relating to the Venetian area.
[82] The '*legge n. 438'* was accepted in July 1973, serving as the new statute for the Venice Biennale, which guaranteed a democratically organized cultural institute based on the promotion of freedom of ideas, research and experimentation, as well as the quadrennial re-nomination of the Biennale's directorship.
[83] These took place at different sites in the city, such as Mario Penelope's 'Work and Behaviour' in 1972, in the frame of which, famously, thousands of butterflies were set free on St. Mark's Square.
[84] By a more democratic and transparent organisation of the Biennale (elected by councils composed by the main trade unions, together with local politicians and art critics)

The date of the first Architecture Biennale is, however, often disputed. Portoghesi's 'Presence of the Past' was the first official biennale in Venice to dedicate an independent section to architecture, in 1980; Francesco Dal Co's Biennale in 1991 was the first to involve the national pavilions in the Giardini, while many look at the 'prehistory' of Portoghesi's first Biennale and identify Gregotti's exhibitions at the Magazzini del Sale as the '*anno zero'* of the Architecture Biennale.[85] Whereas Gregotti might not have been the first curator of architecture in Venice, his exhibitions – closely related to his theoretical work on territory and environment – introduced a new definition of architecture in relation to the city and in close dialogue with contemporary art practices. Under his directorship, the institution of the Biennale entered into a dialogue with the city in multiple ways. Gregotti's first exhibition, which he started to organise in collaboration with a number of local artists and architects in 1974, opened a year later in the Magazzini del Sale along the Zattere. Under the coordination of Franco Raggi,[86] this show was the first attempt to outline and test a new approach that would bring together and confront art and architecture in a public setting. Compared to Scarpa's exhibition in 1968, which also aimed to present multiple forms and expressions of art and architecture 'in integrity', Gregotti emphasized the thematic rather than the formal relations between the disciplines. He aimed to achieve 'an in-depth interdisciplinarity' through the common theme of the competition of ideas for the reuse of the abandoned industrial structure of the Mulino Stucky.

Gregotti's first exhibition in Venice was intended to actively involve local inhabitants by initiating public debate about architecture. The exhibition, entitled 'A Proposito del Mulino Stucky',[87] included 30 proposals by artists, architects, urbanists, builders and inhabitants of the city, a widely inclusive approach that aimed to introduce the idea of multidisciplinarity and participation in the democratic spirit

[85] Yet there were a number of exhibitions containing displays of architecture even earlier, such as the closed-down 1968 Biennale itself, which incorporated an exhibition curated by Carlo Scarpa (entitled *Linee della ricerca contemporanea: dall'informale alle nuove strutture)* that brought together the work of various practitioners across disciplines, including four contemporary architects: Louis Kahn, Franco Albini, Paul Rudolph and Carlo Scarpa himself. These displays, however – as Orietta Lazarini notes – primarily focused on the formal and sculptural aspects of architecture as an art of formulating and expressing space rather than the project and documentation of the social or political agencies of architectural work and its urban context. See: Orietta Lanzarini, *Carlo Scarpa: l'architetto e le arti: gli anni della Biennale di Venezia 1948-1972* (Venezia: Marsilio, 2003) pp. 215. As Lea-Catherine Szacka has indicated, the genesis and legacy of the first Architecture Biennale led the architectural displays to become a programmatic and indispensable part of most of the manifestations of the Biennale in the period following 1968*,* see: Léa-Catherine Szacka, *Exhibiting the Postmodern: Three Narratives for a History of the 1980 Venice Architecture Biennale* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University College London, 2012) pp. 64-221. Another display of architecture that was part of the 1972 exhibition displayed four unrealized projects for Venice by modern masters, such as Frank Lloyd Wright (Memorial Masieri), Le Corbusier (San Giobbe Hospital), Louis Kahn (Centre of Congress near the Giardini) and Isamu Noguchi (Jesolo Park), a soon-forgotten academic project that dealt with the questions and difficulties for contemporary architecture in the context of traditional historic city centres. Szacka, *Exhibiting the Postmodern,* pp. 189-190.

[86] Gregotti invited Raggi to be the secretary of the Committee, Raggi, at the time editor of *Casabella* magazine and one of the organisers of the 1973 Triennale in Milan, together with Rossi, took a central role in organizing the competition and the related exhibition.

[87] 'Proposte per il Mulino Stucky' 15 Sept – 4 Nov 1975; a second exhibition that year that accompanied the Mulino Stucky competition was the 'Le Machine Celebi', curated by Harald Szeeman and Gino Valle at the Magazzini del Sale between 6 September and 4 November. This exhibition was a touring show.

of 1968. The neo-Gothic flourmill,[88] an industrial structure that had formerly played an important function in the city, thus became symbolic in raising awareness of the problem of historic heritage in the context of the contemporary ecology of Venice. It foregrounded urgent issues such as the rehabilitation of abandoned infrastructures and their reconnection with contemporary urban life and the adaptation of historic urban fabric to the contemporary exigencies of the local community.

Fig. 35. (left) cover of the exhibition catalogue 'A Proposito del Mulino Stucky', 1975; (right) Mario Ceroli and Gianfranco Fini, *Cassa in legno d'abete* installation at the 'A Proposito del Mulino Stucky' exhibition.

The exhibition, which was the outcome of an international workshop organized in Venice, had a mixed critical reception at the time. The polemics stirred by the exhibition were not exactly those originally planned by the curators. The new private owner of the defunct mill, the Romana Beni Stabili refused to cooperate from the very beginning, having no sympathy for the main premise of the competition that suggested the renovation and resisted the eventual demolition of the structure. This resistance prevented the participants not only from exhibiting their proposals in the building but even from visiting the site. This lack of engagement with physical reality thus only opened space for speculation, eventually resulting in an exhibition which the local community and the inhabitants of the Giudecca island criticised forcefully for its elitist conceptual approach. In fact, most of the proposals[89] remained abstract artistic exercises, consisting of absurd fantasies or poetic ideas best exemplified by Mario Ceroli and Gianfranco Fini's *Container of Proposals* – a large wooden box containing a number of proposals for the Mulino Stucky – that was set on fire on the occasion of the opening, even before being displayed to the public.

The work thus exhibited no pragmatic or functional considerations for the reuse of the historic building of the mill, nor did it engage with social and urban issues that the organizers had originally outlined as

[88] The Venetian entrepreneur Giovanni Stucky built the first mill on the Giudecca island in 1882; soon after this, in 1895 (the inaugural year of the Venice Biennale) he commissioned the German architect Ernst Wullekopf to expand the original brick building. Wullekopf added a new neo-Gothic facade. The facility functioned as a pasta factory until Stucky's death. The building was defunct for 20 years – from 1955 – when Gregotti organized his competition of ideas. The Mulino Stucky building was eventually preserved and renovated; however, it functions today as a luxury hotel.

[89] Participants included Christian Boltanski and Annette Messager, Mario Ceroli and Gianfranco Fini, Gianni Colombo, Guy de Rougemont, Erik Dietman; Luciano Fabro, Öyvind Fahlström, John Hedjuk, Jannis Kounellis, Piotr Kowalski, Mario Merz, Naim June Paik, Gustav Peichl, Daniel Spoerri and Jean Tinguely.

the main goal of the competition. Instead of radical intervention, the Mulino Stucky became a subject of pure artistic fiction. Gregotti recalls the exhibition in retrospect as a 'problematic' attempt, in which the engagement with the local public and the non-specialist audience was merely symbolic.[90] This first exhibition, however, clearly informed Gregotti's subsequent Biennale, which was built on the same political and thematic incentives but distinguished between the art and architecture displays and their potential social function more rigorously.

Nevertheless, even if the Mulino Stucky competition ended up as a controversial enterprise that eventually had more to do with fiction and imagination than reality and social function, the legacy of this event remains significant in Venice's history. The organisers' attempt to gain social inclusiveness and lend a political agency to the exhibition – primarily through an engagement with peripheral sites of the city – provided an important starting point for the Biennale after 1975. Although the exhibition was excluded from the building of the Mulino Stucky itself, and one can only speculate about its impact on the building's eventual preservation, Gregotti's chosen exhibition venue, the Magazzini del Sale, was also an important historical structure, which, through its recuperation as exhibition space, was also saved from demolition. In this way the exhibition became functional per se in the preservation and rehabilitation of the abandoned industrial sites of the city, linking the Biennale with Venice as well as assigning a new agency to exhibition practice, namely to outlive the duration of the Biennale itself and leave a permanent mark on the city. And this progressive initiative set the agenda for that which was to follow, whether it adhered to its political invention or retreated to the realm of history and aesthetics.

## The Biennale's Street Secession

Gregotti's next exhibition in Venice, the visual arts section of the Biennale in 1976, was dedicated to the theme of 'Environment, Participation, Cultural Structures'.[91] It included a series of fine art and architecture exhibitions, which, beyond the overarching thematic link, were presented separately, according to disciplinary divisions.[92] Gregotti appointed Germano Celant[93] to curate 'Ambiente/Arte', the central exhibition of the Biennale. Celant had gained international recognition in relation to his involvement with the Arte Povera movement, a term that he had first coined in the context of his 1967 exhibition at the Galleria La Bertesca in Genoa.[94] In this exhibition, Celant presented a group of

[90] Yet Gregotti's biennales were often criticised as exclusive events organized primarily for professionals and specialists. See also Levy & Menking, *Architecture on display: On the history of the Venice Biennale of Architecture,* p. 33.
[91] 'Ambiente, Partecipazione, Strutture Culturali'; while in 1978 he organized another architecture exhibition at the Magazzini del Sale, entitled 'Utopia and the Crisis of Anti-Nature' (full original title: 'Utopia e crisi dell'antinatura: Momenti delle intenzioni architettoniche in Italia: immaginazione megastrutturale dal futurismo a oggi'). By this time the new director of the visual art section of the Biennale was Luigi Scarpa.
[92] These included an exhibition curated by Germano Celant at the Padiglione delle Esposizione entitled '*Ambiente/Arte'*, Ettore Sottsass's selection 'Attualita Internationale' at the Giudecca warehouses, some national pavilions and three architectural exhibitions: on the Werkbund, on Italian Rationalism and on contemporary architects in Europe and America.
[93] Who worked together with Gino Valle and Pierluigi Cerri.
[94] Germano Celant, 'Arte Povera - Im Spazio', Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa, Italy, September-October 1967.

contemporary artworks that explored notions of space and territory,[95] a subject that also stood at the centre of Gregotti's architectural research, and which remained the focus of Celant's explorations as curator of the Central Pavilion of Gregotti's Biennale.

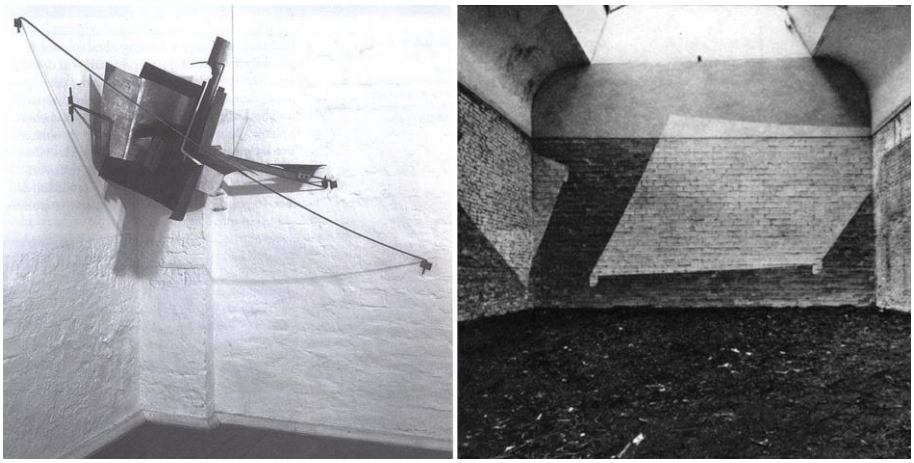

Fig. 36. (left) Vladimir Tatlin, *Complex Corner-Relief*, 1915; (right) Mario Merz, *Tables*, 1976, as exhibited at the two respective sections of the 'Ambiente/Arte' exhibition, Venice, 1978.

The 'Ambiente/Arte' exhibition offered a thematic survey of artistic processes and works that actively engaged with their physical environment. It comprised two sections, a historical and a contemporary exploration of site-specific art practices, a clear attempt to trace a genealogy of the contemporary panorama presented by Celant to the revolutionary avant-garde practices of the 1920s. The historical section included artists from the Italian Futurist and Russian Constructivist movements to those from De Stijl and Surrealism, presenting mainly three-dimensional works and installations by artists such as Giacomo Balla, Fortunato Depero, Vladimir Tatlin, El Lissitzky, Kurt Schwitters, Piet Mondrian, Theo Van Doesburg and Marcel Duchamp. For the contemporary section Celant commissioned site-specific interventions in the rooms of the pavilion by Michael Asher, Dan Graham, Sol LeWitt, Daniel Buren, Bruce Nauman, Mario Merz, Vito Acconci and Blinky Palermo. While the exhibitions of art and architecture were shown in separate sections, the main premise of Celant's exhibition was based on the reciprocal relation between art and architecture, as he remarked: 'art forms the space in the same way as the space forms the art'.[96]

The architecture exhibitions of the Biennale of 1976 were also divided into separate historical and contemporary sections. As Celant noted in retrospect: 'This way of presenting – to give a strong historical matrix to contemporary work – marked all the following exhibitions that were combinations of art and fashion, architecture, media, etc.'[97] The historical showcases of architecture at the Biennale took place in different locations of the city: at Cá Pesaro and the abandoned San Lorenzo church.

[95] Such as Alighiero Boetti, *Catasta*, 1967; Luciano Fabro, *Pavimento, Tautologia*, 1967; Jannis Kounellis, *Untitled*, 1967 (structure of iron and coal); Giulio Paolini, *Lo spazio*, 1967; Pino Pascali, *1 metro cubo di terra*, 1967, and *2 metri cubi di terra*, 1967; Emilio Prini, *Perimetro d'aria*, 1967.
[96] Germano Celant, *Ambiente/Arte, Dal futurismo alla body art,* exhib. cat. (Edizioni della Biennale di Venezia, Electa: Milano-Venezia, 1967), p. 5.
[97] Stefano Casciani, 'Germano Celant: Sharing a Dream', *Domus,* 940 (2010) [http://www.domusweb.it/en/art/2010/10/09/germano-celant-sharing-a-dream.html] [accessed 3 May 2014].

Mirroring Celant's exhibition, they were dedicated respectively to the formation of the Werkbund and Italian Rationalism,[98] as a way of suggesting a direct comparison and symbolic return to these early radical moments of the Modern Movement.

The contemporary section, entitled 'Europa-America, Centro Storico-Suburbio: 25 Architetti Contemporanei' was held at the Magazzini del Sale. Within the contemporary iteration of the exhibition, the European section was curated by Gregotti, with the close collaboration of Franco Raggi, and included a selection of work by a 'new generation of architects' who re-focused their attention on the problems of the traditional city centre and the historic heritage of architecture. Some of the participants were closely associated with the *Casabellá* circle and the Tendenza group, while others included Hans Hollein, Alison and Peter Smithson, James Stirling and Oswald Matthias Ungers too. To compare and contrast these new tendencies of European urbanism with contemporary practices from the United States, the American section – that was curated by the IAUS (Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies) and Robert Stern – presented examples of emerging architectural practices that critically re-examined the notion of 'Main Street' and the suburbia of the American cities.[99]

The point of departure for this international survey, as well as for the Mulino Stucky exhibition a year earlier, was the historical and cultural complexity of the urban environment. However, instead of focusing on one local example – namely the rehabilitation of the abandoned industrial infrastructures of the Giudecca Island – the common link between the various projects was presented by their shared focus on the *site* of architecture. While the main argument of the exhibition was to outline the differences between the new European and American schools of urbanism, each specific to their respective cultural contexts and traditions, it also clearly outlined a tendency in common in these diverse practices, which Robert Gutman's contemporary anthology *On Streets* also aimed to capture.

As in Celant's exhibition, which surveyed site-specific artistic practices that thematised and mediated architectural space, architecture, too, was thematically redefined in relation to the urban context and pre-modern history of the city. The site of art and architecture – in relation to the city – was not only the thematic focus of the exhibitions and the works within them, but also determined the structural transformation of the Biennale itself. The decentralisation of the exhibition venues became a curatorial (and preservational) strategy that reflected the thematic and political statement of the exhibitions and repositioned the institution of the Biennale itself in relation to the city. Gregotti offered a solution for the Biennale through its architecture, which was manifested not only in his thematic exhibitions but also in the logic of his overall curatorial approach that mediated his architectural research on the territory of the city.

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[98] Sonja Gunther, 'Il "Werkbund" 1907, Alle origini del design', Museo d'Arte Moderna di Cà Pesaro, 1976; 'Il Razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il Fascismo' at the abandoned San Lorenzo church, 1976, surveying Italian architecture between 1920 and 1940 (including plans, models and photographs of projects by Piero Gobettui, Lionello Venturi, Eduardo Persico, MIAR, Giuseppe Terragni, Marcello Piacentini, Mario Ridolfi).

[99] The 'American group' was composed of 11 participants: Raimund Abraham, Emilio Ambasz, Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Craig Edward Hodgetts, Richard Meier, Charles Moore, Cesar Pelli, Robert A.M. Stern, Robert Venturi – John Rauch – Denise Scott Brown and Stanley Tigerman, a group that was closely linked to the IAUS circle in New York.

The political legacy of 1968 lent the agency for Gregotti's exhibitions at the Venice Biennale.[100] The actions of the students, who occupied the public spaces and institutions of Venice and brought their debates from the classroom to the streets, blurred the division between education and urban life. Gregotti, too, aimed to establish a new dialogue and return the Biennale to the public spaces of the city, physically through its new venues and conceptually as the central theme and concern of the exhibition. The intended reform and democratisation of the institution of the Biennale through its adaption to the pre-existing infrastructures of the city, brings to mind the logic of Friedman's *Street Museum*. At a time when Friedman was revising his earlier ideas of the megastructure and de-scaled his mobile architecture to accommodate 'critical groups' of local communities – in parallel with Ungers, who defined his architectural practice as a parable of urban archipelagos – Gregotti's Biennale also aimed to redefine and contextualise the institution of the Venice Biennale in relation to local issues and audiences. During Gregotti's directorship the Biennale capitalised on its own political and social instrumentality.

In his attempt to reform and revolutionize the Biennale, Gregotti's programme consciously relied on the legacy and values presented by the spatial practices of the 1920s avant-garde. In a parallel display, the contemporary art and architectural examples, as well as the format of the Biennale, foregrounded a renewed interest in the city as a site of social change and – in association with the political and social claims of the student movements of 1968 – aimed to reclaim the urban site through history and preservation. However, beyond the symbolic and formal correspondence of the spatial experiments of contemporary practices and the historical avant-garde, its utopian ideas of progress vis-à-vis the contemporary return to history revealed Gregotti's idea to be an oxymoron: a radical reform based on the notion of historic preservation. The historic sites of the public buildings reclaimed by Gregotti's Biennale had as little to do with the idea of democratic institutions as did the political project of reclaiming the city with the disciplinary autonomy of architecture. Gregotti's Biennale once again confirmed the same inherent ideological discrepancy that had been evident in his earlier exhibition in the Mulino Stucky. His heroic attempt at the institutionalisation of radical critique was a short but monumental period in the history of the Biennale, before, once again, it returned to its traditional (non)ideological foundations and re-established itself as an international and global event.[101]

Nonetheless, Gregotti's Biennale contributed to a new tradition of architecture exhibitions. While in Celant's exhibitions the architecture became the medium for contemporary art practices, Gregotti aimed to bring about real change in urban space through lasting architectural intervention, whether this was the renovation of pre-existing infrastructures or a competition of ideas. The legacy of this interventionist approach – even if moving on a changing scale between the political and ideological to fictional or purely pragmatic, preservationist proposals – can be traced through various different iterations of

[100] Especially important were the three consecutive exhibitions in the Magazzini del Sale: 'A Proposito del Mulino Stucky', 1975; 'Europa-America', 1976; 'Utopia and the Crisis of Anti-Nature', 1978.
[101] From the 1980s on the Biennale was re-established as an international event. The golden lion was reintroduced in 1986, and so on. Paradoxically enough, Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima', in which the street as the format of the architecture exhibition reached its ultimate manifestation, opened a new chapter of post-ideology in the history of the Venice Biennale.

consequent Biennales directed by Portoghesi, Rossi and Dal Co,[102] or even identified in relation to Klotz's architectural programme for Frankfurt's new Museumsufer, which he had initiated only a few years later, in 1978. The legacy of Gregotti's exhibitions extends beyond merely providing a backdrop and prehistory for the Architecture Biennale in Venice; through offering new models and venues, it contributed enormously to the renovation of the Biennale of Art itself – from which it originally sprung in the critical years following 1968.

Gregotti's attempt to recuperate the Biennale as a political project was manifested through the inclusion of architecture in its exhibitions. The Biennale's expansion into the sites of the city, a reframing of the social and historical sites of Venice, became central to Gregotti's curatorial strategy, which stemmed from his architectural preoccupations with the *territory*. Gregotti's critique of the Biennale's institution – in that it was divorced from the contemporary social and political concerns of its locale – was synonymous with the concurrent artistic practices that moved outside the museum in order to establish an institutional critique of museum practices. Yet, while architecture was only a representational value – a sounding-board – in the hand of art practices, for Gregotti, architecture (and the site of the city) was not only the material and theme but it also became an operational tool: it left a permanent mark on the city and assigned a new activist role for architectural practice. For Gregotti the exhibition – even with its inherent self-contradictions – became the radical project of architecture. However, it was not long, as in the case of Yona Friedman's *Street Museum*, before it was absorbed (and reconstituted) within the regressive frame of museums. Gregotti's exhibitionary strategy was disarmed and appropriated by the Biennale, which, soon after this short episode of dissent, recuperated its spectacular status in its full glory, in parallel with the rise of the globalizing world of art.

[102] Aldo Rossi's 1985 Biennale was titled 'Progetto Venezia': it invited architects to submit design proposals for the renovation and transformation of specific urban areas in Venice and the Veneto region, including the re-design of the Ponte dell'Accademia on the Grand Canal, and the Piazzale Roma. A different approach again was Portoghesi's contribution to the restoration and reopening of the abandoned military barracks of the Arsenale, which consequently became a permanent venue for exhibitions. A later example is Francesco Dal Co's exhibition, which set an ambitious goal of renovating the communal spaces and infrastructures of the Giardini. Due to financial constraints Dal Co finally succeeded in commissioning only one permanent building, by James Stirling, that still hosts the Biennale bookshop today.

### 3.3 THE CITY AS EVENT

Fig. 37. (left) 'Strada Novissima', at the Corderie dell'Arsenale, 1980; (right) 1:50 model of the reconstruction of the old market of Frankfurt, 2014.

From the Street to the Market Place: The 'Strada Novissima'

Gregotti's 1976 Biennale aimed to introduce a new architectural discourse in relation to the city by recuperating urban sites as part of his curatorial strategy. Portoghesi's subsequent exhibition in 1980 – the very first independent section in the history of the Venice Biennale that was dedicated exclusively to architecture – became the ultimate manifestation of the thematic exhibition centred on the notion of the urban street. The central, and most memorable exhibit in Portoghesi's 'Presence of the Past'[103] exhibition was the 'Strada Novissima' installation, a life-size model of a fictional street with ten pairs of newly designed facades that filled the renovated longitudinal spaces of the Corderie dell'Arsenale.[104] If Gregotti aimed to bring the Biennale to the street, Portoghesi brought the street to the Biennale.

The street provided both the theme and the organizational structure for the 'Strada Novissima.' The exhibition catalogue explains the manifold curatorial ambitions behind this monumental installation, which were 'to reaffirm the centrality of the street' in order to foreground questions related to the quality of the urban environment; to present the plurality and variety of contemporary architectural voices that oppose and revise the orthodox modern[105] and to reach out to a wide public of non-professionals by exhibiting a tactile and spatial architectural experience. The exhibition communicated architectural ideas *with architecture*, and aimed to introduce – in Portoghesi's words – the 'imaginary as an antidote to urban sterility'. He later recalled the curatorial intentions and method: 'The idea was not

[103] 'Presence of the Past' was the title of the Biennale that, besides a number of other thematic exhibitions and displays, also included the 'Strada Novissima' installation.
[104] A historic military barracks in Castello, in the heart of Venice,
[105] Portoghesi identified this as the architectural 'postmodern' – there was much confusion around this term even between the organisers of the exhibition, as revealed through the different tones of the exhibition catalogue. See: Portoghesi et al., *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*.

to show images of architecture, but to show real architecture. […] to make something close to reality that accommodated the various interpretations of symbolic architecture set out by the architects.'[106]

The 'Strada Novissima', therefore, while following some of the trajectories outlined by Gregotti's previous Biennale, reversed its core logic: it brought the street into the exhibition space, or turned the exhibition itself into a formal metaphor of the street, an urban site of the postmodern imagination. Portoghesi's attempt 'to replicate the condition of all Italian cities'[107] inside the Arsenale did not engage with the real sites of the city but rendered the street as a symbolic construct – reminiscent of Ungers' 'City Metaphors' at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, which had used the street as a structural analogy and a spatial syntax to organize and articulate Ungers' ideas in three dimensions, as he also did in his later 'Kubus' installation. Portoghesi claimed that the conceptual influence for his 'Strada Novissima' was Venturi's research on the theme of the 'Main Street',[108] while his most immediate formal inspiration came from Berlin. In the winter of 1979, on the occasion of an international seminar organized by Joseph Paul Kleihues (in relation to the International Bau Austellung), which Portoghesi attended together with Carlo Aymonino and Aldo Rossi, the three Italian architects encountered a Christmas market near Berlin's Alexanderplatz.[109] This temporary structure – in Portoghesi's words 'a marvellous enclosed amusement park' – consisted of a number of stalls dressed as miniature houses that together created the illusion of a fairy-tale piazza in miniature. This temporary marketplace, an exhibition itself – a simulated square within a square – set the example for Portoghesi's theatrical display that privileged architectural fiction over function.[110]

An idealised old-fashioned square in the middle of the vast crossroads of modern architecture, Berlin's Christmas market left an impression on Portoghesi. He later interpreted this architectural enclosure as a form and expression of vernacular ingenuity that aimed to remedy the social dysfunctions of orthodox modernity. He understood the temporary structure as a 'space of the imaginary' that he related to the tradition of the festive temporary urban furnishings of 16th-century Venice. Based on this historical local reference, the 'Strada Novissima' – constructed by the technicians of Cinecittá – was built as a set piece of architecture for play and to stage.[111] 'In a city reinterpreted in function of the new collective needs, the temporary space can reacquire its importance and become an instrument for the socialisation of urban space and the continual creative reinterpretation of its appearance', as he suggested in his introductory essay to the exhibition.[112] Portoghesi's street, populated and animated by the crowds of

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[106] Levy & Menking, *Architecture on display: On the history of the Venice Biennale of Architecture*, p. 36.
[107] Levy & Menking, p. 39.
[108] Portoghesi quoted Venturi's idea, according to which it is possible to communicate not only through verbal/ideological messages but through architecture itself. Despite Portoghesi's close interest in Venturi's theoretical work, as he recalled, it was difficult to convince Venturi himself to participate in the exhibition, which was seen by many, including Venturi, as problematic for its historicist approach and the simplification of the concept of the 'postmodern'. Portoghesi et al., *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*, p. 9.
[109] Portoghesi et al, p. 12.
[110] Another historical prefiguration of the 'Strada Novissima' was the late 16th-century Strada Nova in Genoa, the earliest urban experiences of the Renaissance as Portoghesi explained.
[111] In parallel with Portoghesi's references to these Venetian traditions, the *Carnevale* was also reintroduced in 1979, which was a curious backdrop and parallel to the Biennale's street reiteration.
[112] Portoghesi et al, p. 12.

exhibition visitors, thus transformed the temporary space of the exhibition itself into a theatre of social activity. As opposed to Gregotti's exclusive and elitist Biennales, the 'Strada Novissima' became an architectural stage for the flux of the masses, a 'monument to the games of mass simulation'.[113]

As Portoghesi emphasised, the exhibition did not aim to offer models and direct solutions for architectural and social issues, such as housing; instead it called attention to the problem of the city through the critique of the modern practice of town planning and the symbolic recodification of urban space. This was formally emphasised by the overall organising structure of the exhibition: the hypothetical street.


Fig. 38. Elevations of the facades at the 'Strada Novissima', 1980.

The title 'Strada Novissima' suggested a strong link to the urban practice of the Baroque, when the street – a site of architectural competition – was a kind of exhibition of architecture itself. The 'Strada Novissima' comprised 20 facades by 20 contemporary architects 'competing' against each other – as on the market. As Portoghesi suggested,[114] the individual facades were to be regarded as self-portraits of the invited participants. Each of these cinematic cardboard facades was custom-fitted to the interior of the newly renovated building of the Arsenale, an imposing medieval structure that had previously served as a shipyard, a rope factory and, most recently, an armaments depot. The renovation and reopening of this monumental and historically significant space became a symbolic act that 'restitut[ed] one of the organs of the city',[115] which Portoghesi regarded as a central agency of the exhibition, an aspect recognized and applauded even by his most vehement critics.[116]

[113] Baudrillard's description of the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Baudrillard, *The Beaubourg Effect: Implosion and Deterrence*, p.61.
[114] In his introduction to the exhibition, Portoghesi noted that originally he was originally planning to set a thematic brief that related the facades to the local area, and later decided to leave the brief more open and invite architects to submit the facades as their architectural manifestos, or self-portraits. Portoghesi et al., *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*.
[115] Portoghesi et al.
[116] See Gregotti – who in retrospect noted that the most significant event of the Biennale was to visit 'an unknown monument' in the heart of the city, or Tafuri, who was also impressed by the spatial effects of Portoghesi's curatorial efforts. In: 'Interview with Vittorio Gregotti' in *Architecture on Display: On the History of the Venice Biennale of Architecture*, pp. 21-34.

Whereas the temporary structure in Berlin, the prefiguration of the 'Strada Novissima', formed a square, the space of the Arsenale dictated the layout of a street.[117] This longitudinal space was divided into three naves by two rows of columns that also provided the rhythm and spatial structure of the exhibition. Each facade occupied a seven-metre-wide surface between two adjacent columns, which together constituted a six-metre-wide and 70-metre-long cinematic street. This site-specific street of facades was accompanied in the side naves by two rows of 20 exhibition rooms, each correlating to a facade, which – like the stalls of the street vendors in Berlin – displayed a selection of works by each architect.

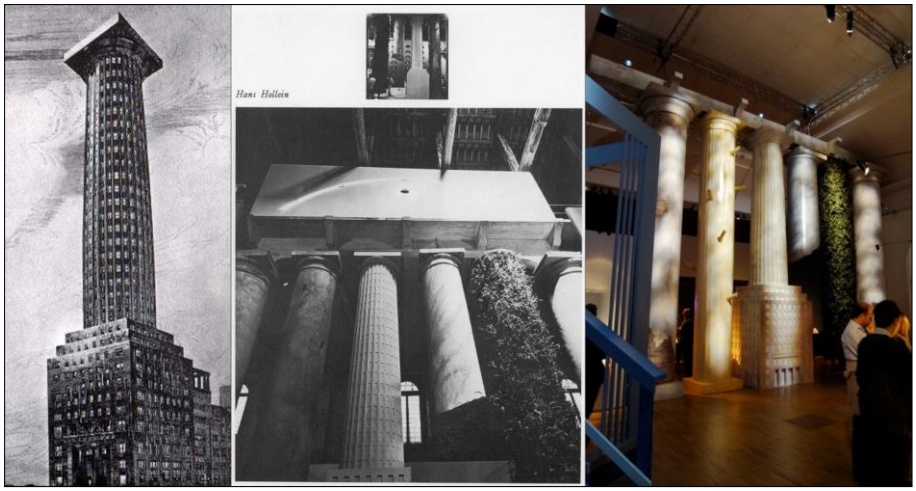


Fig. 39. (left) Adolf Loos, Chicago Tribune Tower, 1922; (middle) Hans Hollein's facade, on the 'Strada Novissima', 1980; (right) Reconstruction of Hollein's facade at the 'Postmodernism' exhibition, V&A, London 2011.

In its contextual approach, Hans Hollein's installation stood out from the other facades of the street. 'Hollein's facade with the different column variations was without doubt the most impressive' – as even Klotz remarked to himself in his travel notes.[118] Hollein incorporated two of the original columns of the Arsenale in his installation and created a facade that was more of an extension of the pre-existing historical environment than a pure fictional addition to it. His appropriation of the real and functional colonnade, next to his four additional cardboard columns,[119] in its absurdity exemplified a site-specific gesture that best expressed a new relation to the historical material of the city beyond a purely historicising or ironic linguistic exercise.[120]

[117] In Paris the exhibition was held at the Chapelle Saint-Louis de la Salpêtrière which, due to its central layout, required the reconfiguration of the exhibition as a square.
[118] See: Oliver Elser, ed., 'Die Klotz-Tape' [Special issue]. *Arch+,* 216 (2014), 98.; Hollein's facade subsequently acquired specific status and became symbolic of the Strada Novissima: see the exhibition 'Postmodernism: Style and Subversion, 1970-90' at the V&A in London (curators: Jane Pavitt and Glenn Adamson, 24 September 2011 - 15 January 2012) that reconstructed Hollein's facade as the symbol of Portoghesi's iconic first Biennale.
[119] One referencing Philibert de L'Orme's primitivist 'tree trunk' column, the other Adolf Loos's 1922 Tribune Tower in Chicago, one covered with grass (as an environmental reference), and one hanging in the air.
[120] In contrast to Hollein, who had completed a number of large-scale commissions by this time, many of the architects included in the exhibition had little practical experience of building, which might also explain this difference in their approach.

Besides Hollein, the exhibition included architects from 12 countries and three continents[121] selected by an international committee of a diverse group of architects and critics, including Constantino Dardi, Rosario Giuffre, Udo Kultermann, Giuseppe Mazzariol and Robert AM Stern, as well as Charles Jencks, Christian Norberg Schulz, Vincent Scully and Kenneth Frampton.[122] The selection process – described by Portoghesi as a 'dialogical choice' – was famously full of contradictions and heated debates, symptomatic of the enduring lack of consensus about the definition of Postmodern architecture, which Portoghesi set out as the central theme of his exhibition.[123]

As Szacka has observed, Portoghesi's exhibition was postmodern not only in theme but also in format.[124] Opposed to Gregotti's exclusivist approach, Portoghesi's exhibition became a metaphor for architecture's relationship to the masses, and engaged its audience through illusion. But for all the talk of social engagement it would seem to have operated on the level of a facade, or an elaborate set, in which the (educated) populace play at being the visitors to a square or market, knowing that they are having a cultural excursion. Bourdieu suggests that 'art perception involves a conscious or unconscious deciphering operation', and that any 'deciphering operation requires a more or less complex code which has been more or less completely mastered.' And these codes are derived from educational capital – an education that allows, in this case, postmodern sleights-of-hand to be *got* (and enjoyed).[125] The street facade as illusion became the central code, the postmodern sleight of hand of Portoghesi's exhibition.

## The Avant-garde of Reversed Fronts

The 'Strada Novissima' installation, as a central section of the Biennale, aimed to bring together the best contemporary practices that, according to the organisers, constituted the manifestation of these new international tendencies: in Portoghesi's words, 'a great common effort: that of linking old and new, of contaminating memory and the present, of gradually focusing a set of contrasting methods, a patrimony of experiences which, summed up and compared, already make possible the identification of a long road of research.'[126] Despite the refusal of this categorisation by many – if not most – of the participants, the 'Strada Novissima' became the iconic symbol of triumphant postmodernism, which – partly due to

[121] The full list of participants on the left-hand side of the 'Strada Novissima' includes Costantino Dardi, Michael Graves, Frank O. Gehry, Oswald Mathias Ungers, Robert Venturi & Denise Scott Brown with John Rauch, Léon Krier, Joseph Paul Kleihues, Hans Hollein, Massimo Scolari and Allan Greenberg; on the right-hand side: Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, Paolo Portoghesi, Ricardo Bofill, Charles W. Moore, Robert A M Stern, Franco Purini and Laura Thermes, Stanley Tigerman, Studio G.R.A.U., Thomas Gordon Smith and Arata Isozaki (plus Aldo Rossi, who designed the entrance and the *Teatro del Mondo* in the lagoon).
[122] Kenneth Frampton was originally among the invited critics and curators, but eventually he withdrew from the exhibition due to his disagreement with Portoghesi's views on 'postmodernism' and historicism. See: Kenneth Frampton, 'The needs for roots', *Archetype*, 1 (1982), 14-17.
[123] Portoghesi identified at least three separate tendencies, including European neo-rationalism – organized around the figure of Aldo Rossi and the *Tendenza* group; the 'semiological poetics' of the American school, mostly identified with Venturi, and the 'radical eclecticism' that he associated with Charles Jencks. See Portoghesi et al., *The Presence of the Past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*, p. 10.
[124] Szacka, *Exhibiting the Postmodern.*
[125] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), p. 217.
[126] Bourdieu, p. 217.

Portoghesi's unfortunate choice of title for the exhibition, 'The Presence of the Past'[127] – was once and for all associated with a historicist stylistic method, and soon dismissed as a dark chapter in the history of architectural styles.

In September 1980, on the occasion of his receipt of the Theodor W Adorno Prize by the city of Frankfurt, Jürgen Habermas started his speech with a short description of the First International Architecture Biennale in Venice, which he summarized as a 'disappointment'. Habermas portrayed Portoghesi's exhibition of Postmodern architecture as 'an avant-garde of reversed fronts [… that] sacrificed modernity in order to make room for a new historicism'.[128] This historicism, however – which Habermas identified with a neo-conservative turn in politics and in culture at large – was not a descriptive reference to the stylistic or linguistic questions of architectural Postmodernism debated at the Biennale.[129] It rather referred to an ideological conservatism that determined the new political project of the Biennale itself as a cultural institution, as well as the transformation of the public sphere of the street.

Fig. 40. (left) Uliano Lucas, *Carnevale di Venezia*;[130] (right) Ugo Mulas, a protestor arrested on St Mark's Square, 1968.

As Szacka explains,[131] the leading figures of the 1980 Biennale, such as Portoghesi or Ripa di Meana, who were closely associated with the Italian Socialist Party (PSI), signified a new era, not only for the

[127] A reference to T S Eliot; Portoghesi was aware of the problematic and confusing connotations of the term 'postmodern' in relation to architecture, which is well illustrated by his catalogue entry that takes a defensive mode even in prospect to anticipate the criticism regarding these kind of definitions: "We can already predict the reactions to the exhibition. There will be an attempt to proclaim the consumption of the Post-Modern Category, or an attempt to classify the recycling of historical forms as reproductions of the Surrealist avant-garde, or the Beaux Arts method." (p.10). See also Szacka on the choice of title – which was changed in the last minute from 'POSTMODERNISM', due to the controversial connotations of the word in the field of architecture.

[128] See: Jürgen Habermas, 'Modernity: An Incomplete Project', in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster (London: Pluto Press, 1985), pp. 1-16.

[129] In the case of the Venice exhibition these were mainly determined by the division of a linguistic interpretation solicited by Jencks (and associated with the work of Venturi) and a historicist approach that Portoghesi's name became associated with.

[130] After its long closeure since the 19th century, the street festivities of the Venice Carnevale has been reintroduced a year before the opening of the 1st Biennale of Architecture in Venice, in 1979.

[131] Szacka's PhD thesis was devoted to archival research into the exhibition 'The Presence of the Past', which she examines in the context of the development of architectural exhibitions, examining the history of the Venice Biennale, and exploring this in relation to the history of Postmodernism. See: Szacka, *Exhibiting the Postmodern.*

Biennale but in Italian history generally, known as the *Craxismo*.[132] The leftist themes of a socially engaged discourse were replaced by a phenomenon described as the '*riflusso verso il privato*' ('retreat to the private'), which the historian Paul Ginsborg has identified as the final closure of a progressive period that had previously been animated by the political ideas of 1968.[133] As Szacka summarizes:

> Paradoxically, if the 1968 protests gave rise to the Biennale's new statute, which in turn prefigured the creation of the architecture section of the Biennale, the 1980 International Architecture Exhibition was far from responding to the 1968 activists' claims. If the 1980 exhibition did acknowledge the demand for a more 'popular' manifestation, it was certainly not inspired by leftist themes or ideologies. […] The 1980 exhibition, in so far as it may have been inspired by the ideology of the PSI and its leader of the time, Craxi, was oriented towards the reconstruction of the public space of the street and towards a greater accessibility of architecture via the media, and fostered themes of consumerism, hedonism and playfulness.[134]

As Szacka notes, the transformation of the political climate influenced both the themes and format of the consequent editions of the Biennale, which resulted in a populist exhibition culture that – as with the facades of Portoghesi's 'Strada*'* – promoted a new cult of the personality.

If Gregotti was often criticised for the exclusive tone of his exhibitions, which primarily addressed his professional peers, Portoghesi instigated a publicly oriented strategy; his new hypothetical model of the postmodern street attracted and entertained a non-specialist audience. Despite its progressive rhetoric, the 'Strada Novissima' had little to do with the political ideas that had initially motivated Gregotti. While architectural language and the question of communication took centre stage in the 'Strada Novissima', the original message, associated by Gregotti with the public site of the street, had been long lost. Despite Portoghesi's own political beliefs and involvement in the 1968 movements,[135] his exhibition, which launched the architectural section of the Venice Biennale, also marked the opening of a new era in the socio-political history of this cultural institution. The Italian '*riflusso*' of the late 1970s not only favoured a new individualism (reflected in the emergence of the figure of the starchitect) but also led to the transformation of the meaning of the public space, precisely as it had been modelled by Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima'.

The building of the Centre Pompidou was famously described by Baudrillard as a spectacular monument of cultural deterrence,[136] which prefigured a new typology of cultural institutions, comparable to the entertainment park or the supermarket. In her essay on the postmodern museum, Rosalind Krauss remarked with great regret that the contemporary fate of Malraux's 'museum without walls' – a misinterpreted prototype for the postmodernist museum – had been reduced by the dominant

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[132] The term refers to Benedetto Craxi, who was the head of the PSI between 1976 and 1993 and prime minister of Italy between 1983 and 1987, a period of economic growth when Italy became the fifth-largest industrial nation and gained entry to the G7 Group of the most industrialised nations. During his leadership Craxi aimed to distance the party from the Communists and to bring it closer to the Christian Democrats and other central parties. His initial 'successful' years were followed by years full of political scandals, and by the early 1990s Craxi's name became synonymous with political corruption. Craxi escaped from Italy in 1994 and died in Tunisian exile in Tunisia in 2000.
[133] Paul Ginsborg, *A History of Contemporary Italy 1943-1980* (London: Penguin, 1990), pp. 424-5.
[134] Szacka, p. 212.
[135] Portoghesi, as a teacher at the Milan Politecnico at the time of the 1968 revolts, was suspended from his position for years due to his collaboration and active involvement in the student uprisings.
[136] Baudrillard, *The Beaubourg Effect: Implosion and Deterrence.*

aesthetic practices of 'pastiche' into something like a flea-market.[137] This new populist model of cultural production, which facilitated a constant play of exchange between high art and mass culture, can also be detected in Portoghesi's first Biennale.

Whereas Baudrillard's and Krauss's consonant suggestion of the analogy between the postmodern museum and the marketplace were only symbolic, the temporary exhibition of the 'Strada Novissima' was literally based on such a model. This reference was further extended by Portoghesi, who expanded the analogy to describe the architects as street vendors, 'selling' their ideas displayed in their individual stalls behind their facades. Ironically, while the Biennale sales offices were closed for good in 1968, on Portoghesi's street market real exchanges actually occurred. [138] The Baroque notion of the architectural competition, a historical model propagated by Portoghesi, was transformed at the contemporary 'Strada Novissima' into a late capitalist *free* market, where everything had a price. In other words, the ideological difference between Gregotti's and Portoghesi's exhibitions can be best described with reference to the transformation of public space, the street into the market place, a process that determined the spaces of the city at the time, and whose influence can still be felt.

From Town Planning to Curating

In parallel with the development of the architecture exhibition, the postmodern city also reimagined itself, notably in Germany from the 1970s onwards, based on the model of the marketplace. Michaela Giebelhausen has observed, in relation to Frankfurt's urban regeneration in the 1970s and early '80s, that the pedestrianisation of the city implied a new urban model and strategy to revise the city's post-war functionalist reconstruction. Here, the idea of the flaneur – reintroduced as the strolling shopper – became a central concept. Soon after the introduction of the first new pedestrianised areas in 1969,[139] the city established a flea-market in Frankfurt's south bank area that hosted a number of open-air public programmes, which contributed a great deal to the revitalisation of the deserted inner city at the time. As Giebelhausen points out, 'Benjamin's claim that the department store was the last hunting ground of the flaneur found its modern equivalent in the pedestrianized city centre, which also conflated seduction and

[137] Rosalind Krauss, 'Museum without Walls', in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. by Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 346-7.
[138] Heinrich Klotz, for example, bought a number of drawings for the DAM collection as a result of his visit to the 'Strada Novissima', including the entire exhibition staged by Thomas Gordon Smith. See the record of Klotz's visit to the Biennale: Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes*, pp. 97-105. The period around the 1980s was determined by a rising market for the architectural drawing, a result of the increasing number of architecture exhibitions after the 1960s. At this crucial and turbulent time, when the architectural profession was being redefined within the walls of the gallery as a cultural discourse beyond building, it was characteristic that many of the young architects - even some included in the 'Strada Novissima' exhibit - had no previous building experience at all. Thus, their drawings - displayed, sold and exchanged - on Portoghesi's 'Strada', constituted the end product of their architectural work. For a more detailed analysis of Klotz's involvement in the building of the DAM's Collection, see Chapter Four of this thesis.
[139] This started with the *Fressgasse* and *Zeil*, while the flea-market on the south bank opened in 1972; see: Michaela Giebelhausen, (2003) 'Symbolic Capital: The Frankfurt Museum Boom of the 1980s', in *The Architecture of the Museum – Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts*, ed. by Michaela Giebelhausen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p. 80.

consumption.'[140] While the contemporary iteration of the flaneur deployed by city planners was a far cry from the complexity of Charles Baudelaire's or Walter Benjamin's concept of this 19th-century figure, the historic reference lent a sophisticated cosmopolitan aura to the post-war city, as well as offering a desirable role-model for the contemporary consumer.

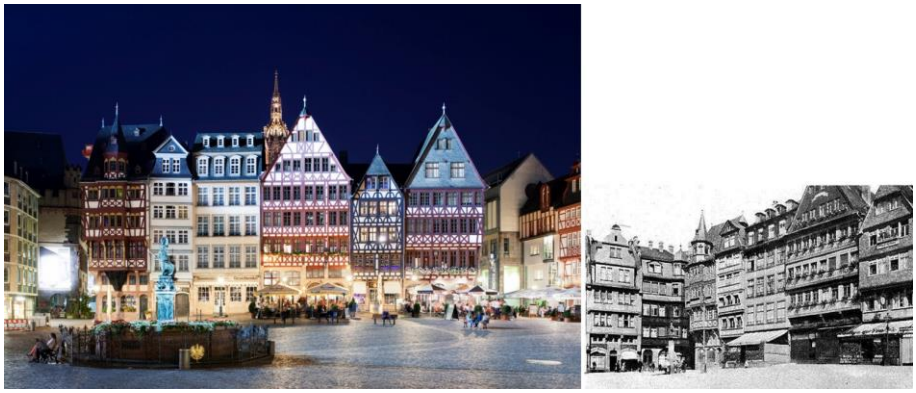

Fig. 41. (left) The reconstructed *Ostzeile* in Frankfurt today; (right) *Ostzeile* in 1930 before it was completely destroyed.

Besides large-scale pedestrianisation, the re-urbanisation of Frankfurt's inner city consisted of a number of parallel urban interventions, which included the Museumsufer project on both banks of the river Main, the mixed-use redevelopment of the Römerberg area, and not least the reconstruction of the so-called *Ostzeile* in the historic centre. This medieval marketplace, completely destroyed during the 1944 bombing of the city, was fully rebuilt between 1981 and 1984 as the new centre of the old town. While the rebuilt facades of the 16th- and 17th-century half-timbered townhouses are exact replicas of the destroyed originals, seen from the side the reconstructed row of buildings is deliberately revealed as a kind of stage-set. The medieval marketplace of the city in this sense was turned into an open-air theatre, or, in Klotz's words, 'a living museum', and the theatrical reconstruction of the *Ostzeile* became a permanent version of Portoghesi's postmodern 'Strada Novissima'. The historic model of the marketplace employed by Portoghesi to turn his exhibition into a mass-media event became equally useful in reinterpreting the urban space of Frankfurt as a spectacle. As Giebelhausen remarks: 'The marketplace depended on consumption and helped to create the city as an event.'[141]

This apparent correspondence between Portoghesi's curatorial strategy and contemporary town-planning practices is also manifest in Frankfurt's Musemsufer, which explicitly aimed to recreate the image of the city as an imaginary museum. This was done through the renovation of Frankfurt's entire museum system and the rehabilitation and preservation of the historic buildings (as introduced in the previous chater, in the context of Unger's and Klotz' collaboration), which included 13 new museums as 'architectural set pieces'. Ungers' building for the DAM is the ultimate example of this phenomenon. Just as Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima' display assumed the real dimensions of buildings, Ungers' building-within-a-building exhibited its own image as exhibition. Ungers – like many of the architects in the displays of the Arsenale – turned around Yona Friedman's reformist dictum 'The museum is not a building!', by rendering the architecture of the building itself as the museum.

[140] Giebelhausen, p. 80.
[141] Giebelhausen, p. 80.

The reinterpretation of the architecture exhibition through building, as in the case of the 'Strada Novissima', and the parallel reading of the building as a display of architecture, such as the example of the DAM, can be better understood by looking at the constant exchange of ideas and the position of their producers that occurred at this time. Klotz, a museum director and architectural critic, applied his curatorial ideas on an urban level when shaping the plans of the Museumsufer. As a result, this new architectural programme for the city forms a curious parallel to Klotz's collecting activities and the foundation of the DAM's core collection. This is contrast to Portoghesi, a practising architect, who, by building an entire street to scale, offered – even if built from 'paper' – a clearly architectural solution to the paradox of the architecture exhibition.

Fig. 42. Malraux's *Le Musée Imaginaire*, 'museum without walls'.

Beyond the mutual exchange between the curatorial and architectural practices exemplified by Klotz's and Portoghesi's positions, Rosalind Krauss observed[142] an additional parallel between the two dominant tendencies in the fields of art and architecture in the early 1980s: namely between the artistic practices of 'pastiche' that recycled the past, and an 'extraordinary outpouring of new museums' that defined the field of architecture at the same time. She traced these aesthetic tendencies, as well as the new contemporary architectural typology of the museum, to Malraux's 'museum without walls', a repository of ideas for postmodern practices, which – like Frankfurt's museums – mixed together old and new, form and style, high art and mass culture in a seamless assemblage of images. This new typology of the postmodern museum: the architectural configuration of the 'museum without walls' – as discussed previously in relation to Hollein's museum building in Mönchengladbach – translated the aesthetics of 'pastiche' into architecture, reinforcing a new way of looking and experiencing art within the space of the museum.

[142] Krauss, 'Museum without Walls'.

Krauss's examples, two museums by Richard Meier and Hans Hollein, the Museum of Decorative Arts, Frankfurt, and the Museum Abteiberg, Mönchengladbach, respectively,[143] were chosen deliberately for their stylistic differences. Thus, Krauss intended to emphasize the 'pastiche' in architecture not as a stylistic tendency – that of the recycling of past architectural styles and types – but rather as a spatial-structural approach that became a quasi-curatorial gesture. The labyrinth-like non-linear spatial layout of gallery rooms, together with a new type of arrangement of walls and large openings, created a primarily visual experience within these new museums. This assemblage of unexpected and overlapping vistas in the postmodern 'museum without walls' can also, however, be further explored in relation to the city. Calum Storrie has described the experience of the 'delirious museum' from the viewpoint of the contemporary urban flaneur, whose strolling blurs the images of the museum with that of the city and creates a cinematic experience of the architectural space as montage, merging the vistas of museum interiors with the building's exteriors and cityscapes.[144]

As Klotz discussed, in relation to his urban regeneration proposal in Marburg, the preservation of historic buildings produced a pretext for the creation of something new next to the old: he initiated the project in order to reinterpret the historic city and to create a substitute architecture museum, which he had been trying to establish since the early 1970s. [145] While the urban project of Marburg remained only a proposal, the Museumsufer provided an opportunity to realise a number of other designs by international architects and recycle historic buildings (and their image) through the creation of something new, that is to rebuild the city on the ruins of its own past. If Portoghesi's Architecture Biennale, with its theatrical street, was the first monumental exhibition of Postmodern architecture, then Frankfurt – with its collection of new museum buildings – became its first permanent museum. In fact, Klotz compared the architectural project of the Museumsufer to the International Building Exhibition in Berlin,[146] claiming that it fulfilled all those aspirations that Berlin failed to achieve – namely to reposition and reconnect the German architectural scene with an international discourse through Frankfurt's urban renewal.[147]

[143] The white cubic spaces in an orderly arrangement that describes Meier's museum is not even associated with postmodernism as a style, but is most often described as a revivalist modernist approach.
[144] Calum Storrie, *The Delirious Museum: A Journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2007)
[145] Klotz described his preservationist urban project in Marburg – which was summarized in the 1978 exhibition 'New Construction in the City" – as a substitute activity that would replace the role of an architecture museum (that he had been trying to fund since 1972) in supporting the 'movement'. At the time Marburg was Klotz's home town, where he invited architects such as Charles Moore, James Stirling, Oswald Matthias Ungers, Aldo Rossi and even Venturi to tackle different problems of the city and the restoration of the historic quarter. See: Heinrich Klotz 'The Founding of the German Architecture Museum', *Architectural Design*, no.55 (1985), 5-7 (p. 6).
[146] 'International Building Exhibition Berlin', Berlin, 1979-1987.
[147] See Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes*, pp. F02-F15.

The Museumsufer – together with Klotz's programme for the DAM – was not at all well received in Frankfurt at the time of its construction; the attacks came from the old museological institutions of the city, which 'feared' the new competition presented by the Museumsufer, the local media and a dominant group of intellectuals who fiercely criticised the 'formalist' approach of the architectural and aesthetic autonomy that Klotz's museum proposed.[148] Frankfurt-based Jürgen Habermas, as discussed previously, also offered a consistent critique of Postmodern architecture,[149] against which Klotz repeatedly aimed to define his mission. In this adverse context, Klotz found his only 'allies' outside Germany, and endorsing reviews of his museum were only published outside the German context, in international journals and newspapers.[150] This long struggle against public opinion, which Klotz described as the 'Frankfurt Culture War', was finally resolved years later, when Ungers was awarded the BDA Grand Prize in 1987. '[V]indication has been achieved for something that, for the past ten years, nearly every single architect in West Germany has viewed as an insult to his or her honour,' as Klotz concluded in his recordings on the day of the award ceremony.[151]

Often described as 'the German Charles Jencks', Klotz preferred to differentiate his ideas on architectural Postmodernism from those of Jencks and Portoghesi – maybe it was the similarity of their thinking that made it so important for all of them to be clearly and categorically distinguished from each other.[152] While Portoghesi's name – following his Biennale – has been conclusively associated with a historicist ramification of the Postmodern, Jencks' key determinants became the 'communication' and 'language of architecture', which in Klotz's version translated as the 'fiction' of architecture. In a recent interview,[153] Portoghesi described the difference between their views by identifying the opposing disciplinary approaches that they all individually assumed. While he regarded himself first and foremost

[148] Klotz's 1977 article on facadism and then the 'back to form' provoked some real resistance among local architects and intellectuals who saw the purely aesthetic argument set by Klotz as the 'violation of a social taboo' and the meaning of the social relevance of architecture that could not tolerate the 'aesthetic autonomy' proposed by Klotz and his architects – including Ungers who had to leave after 1968. In Frankfurt, Habermas too, was a passionate critic and opponent of postmodern architecture, who never directly 'attacked' Klotz's activities but provided a firm criticism against which Klotz tried to defend himself in many of his writings. See: Heinrich Klotz, *Die röhrenden Hirsche der Architektur. Kitsch in der modernen Baukunst* (Frankfurt: Bucher C.J., 1977).
[149] Habermas, 'Modernity: An Incomplete Project'.
[150] Including Barry Bergdoll, 'Modernism in Frankfurt', *Progressive Architecture*, 67, 10 (1986), 33-34; Barry Bergdoll, 'Prototypes and Archetypes: Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, West Germany', *Architectural Record*, August (1984), 104-117; Marcel Cornu, 'Post-Mod at the Museum', *Techniques et Architecture*, 359 (1985), 15-17; Pierre-Alain Croset, 'L'architettura in Vertina: Il Museo Tedesco di Architettura', *Casabella*, 494 (1983), 14-23; Layla Dawson, 'Museum Fest', *Building Design,* 1008 (19 October 1990), 32-33; Peter Wilson, 'Frankfurt flat-iron: competition for Museum of Modern Art, Frankfurt', *Architectural Review*, 175, 1044 (1948), 40-44.
[151] See: Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes*, p. 240.
[152] Interestingly, Portoghesi is included in the DAM collection (although Klotz is not speaking too highly about the work– he is more appreciative of the gesture of the donation rather than the actual drawings themselves) while Jencks is missing – he even challenges Klotz in an *AD* interview because his work is not included in the inaugural show of the DAM. (Klotz's answer that he rather considers Jencks as a critic than a first generation postmodern architect. Jencks disagrees, and claims credit for Venturi's turn to linguistics – which according to him mainly happened due to his influence). See: Jencks, 'In the steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks interviews Heinrich Klotz', pp. 9-16.
[153] Lea-Catherine Szacka, 'In Conversation with Paolo Portoghesi', *Arch+,* 216 (2014), 23-27.

as a practising architect, he called Jencks a linguist, and remembered Klotz as the philosophically most well versed of the three of them. In fact, despite their differences, the Habermasian critique left a strong impact on Klotz's thinking: in contrast to the other two, he never acknowledged a full break with modernism. He used the term of a 'Second Modern' (*Zweite Moderne*) to avoid or replace Jencks' use of 'Postmodern', a difference that is maybe most strikingly outlined in their debates around Ungers' architecture.[154]

In August 1980 – as the plans of the building for the DAM and its collections started to take shape – Klotz visited the Venice Biennale. He was impressed with the building of the Arsenale itself, as well as with Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima', which he described with humour as an exhibition of columns: 'as if the architects had rediscovered the five orders', he wrote.[155] However, he seemed to be most excited about the exhibition of emerging architects on the top floor of the building. After his visit to Venice he even delegated a group of photographers from Frankfurt to carefully document Portoghesi's exhibition, which Oliver Elser jokingly described as 'an espionage project'.[156] However, four years later, in his inaugural exhibition at the DAM, Klotz's survey of Postmodern architecture aimed to establish a critical distance from the 'Presence of the Past'.

Fig. 43. Installation view of the 'Revision of the Modern: Postmodern Architecture 1960-80', the inaugurating exhibition of the DAM, Frankfurt, 1984.

This first exhibition, which mainly comprised drawings and models from the DAM collection, was entitled 'Revision of the Modern. Postmodern Architecture 1960-80.'[157] It offered a survey of 'Postmodern practices' – that Klotz defined[158] much more widely than Jencks – while keeping its focus on the work of the 'first generation' and the origins of this newly emerging architectural discourse. This

[154] Jencks' opinion at the time – which he subsequently revised – was that Ungers' belief in architecture's disciplinary autonomy rendered him a modernist at heart. Jencks – as well as many other critics – have accused Klotz of having too broad an understanding of the architectural postmodern, which, in Jencks' view, erroneously confused 'radical postmodern' with late-modern practices – such as Ungers' or Richard Meier's work. Jencks, 'In the steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks interviews Heinrich Klotz', pp. 9-16.
[155] Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes*, p. 97, (30/August/1980 – Venice Biennale).
[156] Nicholas Kuhnet and Anh-Linh Ngo, 'The Klotz Tapes: The Making of Postmodern', *Arch+,* 216 (2014), 6-7.
[157] Heinrich Klotz, 'Revision of the Modern: Postmodern Architecture 1960-80', DAM, Frankfurt, 1984.
[158] He did use – temporarily – the term 'postmodern' here, later returning to his original concept of the '*zweite moderne'* in which he acknowledged the continuity of the modern and distinguishing the early modern vision from the post-war orthodox functionalism.

emphasis on the 'Postmodern classics' distanced Klotz's exhibition – and collection –from both Jencks' dogmatic definitions and Portoghesi's exhibition, that aimed to capture the most recent and yet undiscovered moments of Postmodernism. However, besides these oppositions, Klotz's curatorial historicising of the 'Postmodern movement' itself can be also explained as a well-chosen rhetoric to legitimise and defend his new museum and collection in the adverse context of Frankfurt.[159] Klotz's position, negotiated in between the international and German scenes, from the perspective of his local critics was seen as too exclusivist,[160] while from an international perspective his exhibition was a late-comer and many international critics deplored his loose, inclusivist version of 'Postmodernism'.[161]

Beyond his architectural selection, Klotz's late arrival also rendered anachronistic his revisionist approach and the Marxist terminology that his title suggested. After years of unsuccessful attempts, Klotz's proposal to found an architecture museum was finally accepted only in 1977, a year that marked a shift in the political climate in Germany, and especially that of the city of Frankfurt.[162] As even Klotz acknowledged, his project was enabled by the 'fortunate' alliance between two opposing parties, namely that of the Christian Democrats (Walter Wallmann) and the Social Democrats (Hilmar Hoffmann), which, similar to the Italian *Craxismo*, was a constellation of interests that prescribed depoliticized solutions (the freedom of the market and consumerism) to the problem of ideological struggle. Ultimately, it was Frankfurt's recreated marketplace, as well as its new museums,[163] that superseded public housing projects, and this provided the new settings in which the figure of the late-capitalist consumer could finally replace that of the worker. By the mid-1980s the progressive ideological impetus implied by Klotz's title had become obsolete, and eclipsed by Klotz's actual architectural programme itself.

[159] This historical perspective might be also explained by the characteristic differences between the institutions of the museum and that of the biennale. Furthermore, in the adversary German context Klotz needed to legitimize both his collection and museum; therefore, his exhibition that aimed to write history, offered a more adequate approach instead of a 'survey exhibition of the current trends.'
[160] Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes.*
[161] Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1977).
[162] A new Christian Democrat city councillor, Walter Wallmann, was elected, who supported – together with the Social Democrat Hilmar Hoffmann – Klotz's proposal for the *Museumsufer*, as well as the DAM.
[163] Note: In his introductory essay to *AD* magazine on the DAM collection in 1985, Klotz recalled a 'funny afternoon' that he spent together with his long-term ally and supporter, Hilmar Hofmann and the newly elected mayor, Walter Wallmann: 'It was very funny. We drove in a Mercedes up and down the road along the river Main and decided well, this one is going to be the Post Museum, this one is going to be the Ethnological Museum and that one is going to be the Film Museum…'Which one do you want for the Architecture Museum, Heinrich?' they said, and I replied, 'Well, the smallest one.' That was how things happened. It was a bit like a fairy tale," as Klotz recalled. In: Jencks 'In the steps of Vasari: Charles Jencks interviews Heinrich Klotz', p. 10.

After its debut in Frankfurt, the 'Revision of the Modern' exhibition travelled to the Centre Pompidou in Paris,[164] where it was restaged by Jean Dethier under the new title 'Nouveaux Plaisirs d'Architecture' (Architecture's New Pleasures).[165] It was not only the title that Dethier changed; he also added a number of new works by French architects – including Jean Nouvel, Antoine Grumbach, Christian de Portzamparc, Fernando Montes and Philippe Starck – some of them more contemporary than the time frame specified by the original exhibition, which Klotz did not seem to mind at all, since he acquired these works for the DAM collection.[166] The main novelty of Dethier's re-staged exhibition was, however, its design, which Klotz described as an entirely new visual genre of exhibitions.

> His exhibition […] represents a new visual genre. You could say that the exhibition is slowly developing into its own representative medium. We live in a booming age of exhibitions – a development that's no doubt connected to the curiosity of the masses and their desire to learn during their increased amount of leisure time.[167]

Klotz's highly popular[168] exhibition at the Pompidou was re-staged as a classical architectural landscape: floating obelisks surrounded the red exhibition booths that were lit with dramatic bright rectangular spotlights, creating a theatrical contrast against the backdrop of Rogers' high-tech interior. Thus, the design became a dramaturgical element of the exhibition, blurring the boundaries between display and the displayed. Indeed, despite Dethier's preference for avoiding this terminology, Klotz even described the setting itself as 'very postmodern'.[169]

Fig. 44. (left) 'Nouveaux Plaisirs d'Architecture', Centre Pompidou, 1985; (right) View of Jean-François Lyotard's 'Les Immateriaux' at Centre Pompidou, 1985.

[164] As well as to Japan and a number of other venues in the US.
[165] 24 February - 22 April 1985, hosted on behalf of the CCI – the architecture/design department of the Centre Pompidou; note that Dethier had not only replaced Klotz's Marxist terminology but he also abandoned the term 'postmodern' from the main title of the exhibition.
[166] Klotz acquired these works for the DAM collection.
[167] Klotz made these remarks before he even saw the exhibition restaged by Dethier at the Pompidou, following a preparatory meeting in Frankfurt. See Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes,* p. 202.
[168] Klotz recalls that on the first day alone they had 100,000 visitors coming to the show, and that the organisers had to close the exhibition due to the overcrowding of the space. See Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes,* p. 202.
[169] Elser, *Die Klotz-Tapes,* p. 202.

Dethier's exhibition was still open at the Centre Pompidou when the iconic 'Les Immateriaux' was inaugurated on the top floor of the building.[170] Also hosted by the CCI (Centre de Création Industrielle), the architecture and design department of the Centre Pompidou, the exhibition was curated and conceptualized by philosopher Jean-François Lyotard, together with design historian Thierry Chaput.[171] Lyotard's name was associated with his theoretical book of 1977 announcing the dawn of a new 'postmodern condition',[172] and his exhibition became a tool to explore and illustrate the emergence of a new materiality that contributed to a radically new definition of the concepts of body, language, science and art. In other words, a destabilizing experience of contemporary life that he associated with the revolution of telecommunications.[173] The exhibition thus set out to question how these 'immaterials' alter the classical Cartesian conception of human beings' relation to the world.

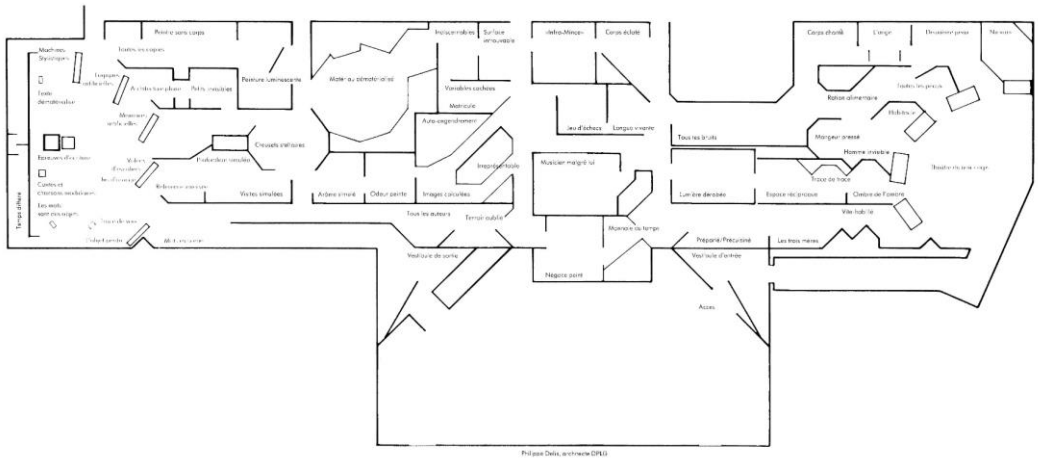

Fig. 45. Layout of 'Les Immateriaux' at Centre Pompidou, 1985.

While Lyotard left his question open, a latent uncertainty was fully reinforced by both the conceptual and the bodily experience of the exhibition. The labyrinth-like displays mixed together artworks, everyday objects, technological devices and scientific instruments. The exhibition was spread over 3000 square metres and was organized loosely into five sections that were further subdivided into over 60 sections,[174] all of which connected in a non-linear way and without predetermined itineraries.[175] In

[170] 28 March–15 July 1985; the exhibition occupied the entire floor place of the upper floor, and allegedly it was not only the largest but also the most complex – and expensive – exhibition ever staged up to that point in the Pompidou.
[171] Director of the Centre de Création Industrielle in Paris.
[172] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report On Knowledge* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); At the time Lyotard tried to get rid of the idea of the Postmodern, replacing it with a project of 're-writing modernity', but to no avail: Bernard Blistène asked: "What, finally, is postmodernism?" Lyotard answered: "My work, in fact, is directed to finding out what that is, but I still don't know. This is a discussion really that's only just beginning. It's the way it was for the Age of Enlightenment: the discussion will be abandoned before it ever reaches a conclusion." Bernard Blistène, 'Les Immatériaux: A Conversation with Jean-François Lyotard and Bernard Blistène', *Flash Art*, 121 (1985), 32-39.
[173] This shift, which was brought about by advancements in telecommunications technology, presented for Lyotard the ultimate paradox of the Modernist utopia of technology that resulted in the negation of modernity itself.
[174] The space was loosely divided into five potential paths or zones (subdivided into no less than sixty sites), each path inspired by a word containing the Sanskrit root "mat," to make by hand, measure, or build. [The *matériau* path, for example, began with the *Nu vain* (Futile nude) and led to subsequent

contrast to the Cartesian tradition of exhibitions that only appealed to the eye, 'Les Immateriaux' aimed to speak to all the five senses. Each visitor received headphones upon entering the show, and a set of differing radio transmitters helped their navigation between the distinct sections and zones of the exhibition. This maze-like environment provided a spatial version of Lyotard's ideas that – rather than being didactically displayed – were played out through the choreographed chaos of the display itself. As Philippe Parreno recalled: "Les Immatériaux' was an exhibition producing ideas through the display of objects in a space.'[176] In other words, the exhibition became its own representative medium – as did Klotz's exhibition in Dethier's adaptation at the Centre Pompidou.

Lyotard's exhibition is commonly regarded as a turning point in the history of exhibitions,[177] and is often described as a process of transforming philosophy into a spatial experience, rendering exhibition making synonymous with the making of philosophy.[178] 'We may think of 'Les Immatériaux' as a move from philosophy to exhibition, which formed part of Lyotard's ongoing attempt to recast the discipline Kant called 'aesthetics' in a period after the Second World War that had seen the displacement of [Alexander] Dorner and Warburg's archive into English-speaking cultures', as John Rajchman remarked.[179] However, in Lyotard's exhibition the concept of 'immateriality' was no longer lawful, in the Cartesian sense: rather than referring to ideas freed from material form, the idea of materiality was not restricted to formed matter, and the modernist distinction of form-content also lost its validity. 'The model of language replaces the model of matter,' as Lyotard himself wrote. [180]

The exhibition simulated a new postmodern space-time that was inspired by Lyotard's experience of driving across American cities, where the car radio indicated the changing zones, rather than the visible

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rooms titled 'Second Skin,' 'Angel', 'Singing Body','Fragmented Body','Infrathin' 'Untraceable Surface', 'Indiscernables','Dematerialised Material', 'Neon Painting', 'Painting without Body', and 'Every Copy'.] Five words were chosen in which to create the zones of inquiry and physical arrangement: material (the support of the message), materiel (hardware that moves the message), maternity (the function of the sender), matter (what the message is about), and matrix (the code of the message). See also: Jean-François Lyotard, 'Les Immatériaux', *Art & Text*, 17 (1985), 47–57 (p. 48).

[175] The exhibition had no predetermined itineraries; each visitor received the print-out of his or her individual itinerary when they left the exhibition.

[176] Hans-Ulrich Obrist, 'After the Moderns, the Immaterials', *The Exhibitionist*, 5 (2012), 12-15 (p. 15).

[177] John Rajchman, 'Les Immatériaux or How to Construct the History of Exhibitions', *Tate Papers*, 12 (2009) [http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/les-immateriaux-or-how-construct-history-exhibitions] [accessed 9 September 2014].

[178] See Daniel Birnbaum, Sven-Olov Wallenstein, 'Thinking Philosophy, Spatially: Jean-François Lyotard's *Les Immatériaux* and the philosophy of the Exhibition', in *Thinking Words: The Moscow Conference on Philosophy, Politics and Art*, ed. by Joseph Backstein, Daniel Birnbaum, Sven-Olov Wallenstein (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2008); See also Daniel Birnbau, 'The Archeology of Things to Come', in *A Brief History of Curating*, ed. by Hans-Ulrich Obrist (Zurich: JRP|Ringier, 2008), pp. 293-8.

[179] John Rajchman, 'Misadventures of Universality', in *Thinking Words: The Moscow Conference on Philosophy, Politics and Art*.

[180] Jean-François Lyotard, 'Les Immateriaux', republished in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. by Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), first published in *Art & Te*xt, 17 (1985), 47-57; written in 1983; exhibition opened between 28 March to 15 July 1985.

or physically palpable experience of the built environment.[181] Thus the exhibition was designed as an analogy to the postmodern city, and Lyotard aimed to recast the experience of the metropolis in the museum,[182] as Portoghesi did with his 'Strada Novissima' in the Corderie dell'Arsenale in Venice. While Portoghesi was aware of Lyotard's thesis on postmodernism, which partly informed his 1980 exhibition in Venice,[183] his 'Strada Novissima' in Paris[184] was condemned by his French critics as a superficial misinterpretation and an illustrative reduction of the postmodern concept of plurality as a multiplicity of architectural and historical styles.[185] Even if Lyotard and Portoghesi's understanding of the postmodern differed, their exhibitions shared something else in common. As Szacka has summarised, 'The Presence of the Past' was more authentic as a 'postmodern type of event' itself, rather than an exhibition on postmodernism, an observation that is equally valid with regard to Lyotard's exhibition.[186]

Fig. 46. (left) René Magritte, *Ceci n'est pas un pipe*, 1948; (right) Joseph Kosuth, *Five Words in Red Neon*, 1965.

What Portoghesi's and Lyotard's exhibitions brought to the history of architecture displays, therefore, is that instead of being a documentation, prototype or model of a past, present or future (substitute) reality, they constituted their own reality; the medium of the exhibition achieved complete autonomy. This burgeoning age of exhibitions signalled the emergence of the exhibition as a new medium of architecture as well as the principal format of cultural production. To paraphrase Marshall McLuhan's famous statement, the medium – here the exhibition – became the message, and, as Lyotard asserted, language and matter, or the medium and the message were no longer distinguishable. The semiotic paradigm that René Magritte's *Ceci n'est pas une pipe* (1948) epitomized had been replaced by a new syntax, exemplified by the tautological linguistic deadpan of Joseph Kosuth's *Five Words in Red Neon* (1965) that consisted of the work's title written on the wall with red neon tubes, recalling Beckett's *Quad*, that staged and thematised its own linguistic model. These works, by two artists who were a key

[181] "The streets and boulevards have no facades. Information circulates by radiation and invisible interfaces."- he wrote in his exhibition proposal Exhibition proposal (second version) first published in *Art & Text*, 17 (1985), 47-57 (p. 48).
[182] In particular, the idea of the zones and the related radio transmitters were based on this experience
[183] Paolo Portoghesi, 'The End of Prohibitionism', in *The presence of the past: 1st International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale*, pp. 9-13.
[184] A version of Portoghesi's 'The Presence of the Past' was held between 15 October and 20 December 1981 at the Chapelle Saint-Louis de la Salpêtrière in Paris, curated by Jean-Marie Genet and Bernard Leroy.
[185] Gilles de Bure, 'L'architecture-spectacle' in *Festival d'Automne à Paris,* ed. by Marie Collin Jena-Pierre Leonardini, Joséphine Markovits (Paris: Messidor/Temps Actuels, 1982), pp. 329–331.
[186] Szacka, *Exhibiting the Postmodern,* p. 285.

reference for Ungers' work, encapsulated the same oxymoron that the new genre of exhibitions bestowed. In other words, in both Venice and Paris – echoing Ungers' motto of 'architecture as architecture' – the show itself became the show.

The total autonomy of this new genre of the exhibition might have developed from initiatives such as Friedman's *Street Museum* or Gregotti's Biennale, both of which used the trope of the street to lend political agency to their exhibitions and which were meant as an operational tool for social change; it was, however, a far cry from their original ambition. Besides the semiotic paradigm shift another underlying condition of this new genre of exhibitions was the re-evaluation of the city that developed in convergence with the emergence of the so-called 'street generation'. As Koolhaas remarked in relation to his 'retroactive manifesto' for Manhattan in 1978, *Delirious New York*, one could not write manifestos any more but only write about the city as manifesto.[187]

The simulacrum of the city thus replaced the role of the manifesto or that of the metanarrative in Portoghesi's and Lyotard's thematic exhibitions. Portoghesi's street constructed an image of the city as event, which, symptomatically, simulated the concurrent transformation of the European city centre, as did Lyotard's exhibition in regard to American suburbia. As Lyotard's 'Les Immateriaux' implied a complication of the relationships between form and content, or material and language, the new typology of the 'museum without walls' blurred the clear division between the inside and the outside of the museum's institutional context. As seen in the case of Frankfurt, the city's past – as well as its present – was reconstructed through museological practices and was restaged as a quasi-exhibition; the trope of the street within the exhibition changed in correlation to the concurrent transformation of the public space of the late-capitalist city: if the exhibition was framed as street (the site of the postmodern imagination), the street was re-framed as *the* exhibition.

[187] Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

END NOTE

This new spatial-structural approach of the 'museum without walls' accompanied architecture's search for disciplinary autonomy and the rediscovery of the exhibition as a conceptual medium. In parallel with a generation of artists who were moving out of the gallery to seek new territories and definitions for art and its place in society – in search for autonomy from the museum's hegemony; architecture sought to redefine the purpose and image of the profession within he museum. The exhibition became an analogical device, as in Ungers' 'City Metaphors'; its spatial organisation provided a method to confront theory with practice and to explore the space, form and language of architecture through the architectural construction of the exhibition. The spatial structuring of exhibitions became models for architecture, and by soliciting an autonomous architectural language in its own right the exhibition became a site to re-position the discipline in an equal dialogue with art. This semiotic shift in architectural representation was manifested not only as a curatorial strategy within museums, but also in contemporary town-planning practices, which recreated the image of the city as an imaginary museum. The street became an abstract metaphor within the walls of the gallery, and vice-versa; the exhibition provided a new model for the quasi-curatorial practices of the postmodern and the late capitalist neo-liberal reconstructions of public space.

Whereas the architecture exhibition became operational as a critical tool for the post-'68 reform of the institution of the Biennale, by the time the first official and independent edition of the International Architecture Biennale opened in Venice, its original ideological implications were fully transformed (if not reversed). The ideological differences between Gregotti's 'leftist-elitist' exhibitions that still regarded the public space of the city as a potential site for radical social change, and Portoghesi's populist, but self-satisfied, simulation of the street in the galleries of the Arsenale can be best understood in relation to the changing conception of the public space of the post-industrial city. The transformation of public space coincided with a shift from politics to economics. This turn was named by Habermas as 'an avant-garde of reversed fronts',[188] which brought about a new ideological conservatism that equally described the Italian *Craxismo* and the political climate of Frankfurt during the founding years of the DAM. In this light, Portoghesi's Biennale, as well as the urban reconstruction of Frankfurt, were indications of the final closure of a progressive period that had previously been animated by the political ideas of 1968. The problem of ideological struggle was replaced by the depoliticized architectural representation of spectacle within and through the museum.

The ultimate avatar of the phenomenon of the architecture exhibition's role in the reconstruction of the public space of the post-industrial city is the historic structure of the Mulino Stucky, whose history closely aligns with that of the Biennale in Venice. It was established as an industrial enterprise in the same year as the first-ever Biennale in Venice, in 1895, while its closure during the city's leap into a post-industrial era tellingly paralleled the institutional crisis and temporary closure of the Biennale. For a short period, the post-industrial ruin of the mill became a cornerstone of the debates on the contemporaneous urban transformations that through Gregotti's exhibitions aligned with the

[188] Habermas, 'Modernity – An Incomplete Project'.

institutional reforms of the Biennale itself. Whereas its building has been saved from demolition and ‘triumphantly restored’, it is symbolic of the consequent political and economic changes as it has finally resumed a new function as a luxury hotel. Today, the Molino Stucky caters to the elites of the global art tourism boosted by the restored spectacle of the Biennales of art and architecture in Venice, a ritual that turns the city into a global destination and stage for an art event that is repeated, year after year, in an ever more predictable and consumable manner.

Fig. 47. Mulino Stucky today as a luxury hotel and previously as a functioning mill.

**CHAPTER 4**
**THE SUBJECT AS THE OBJECT: COLLECTING ARCHITECTURE**

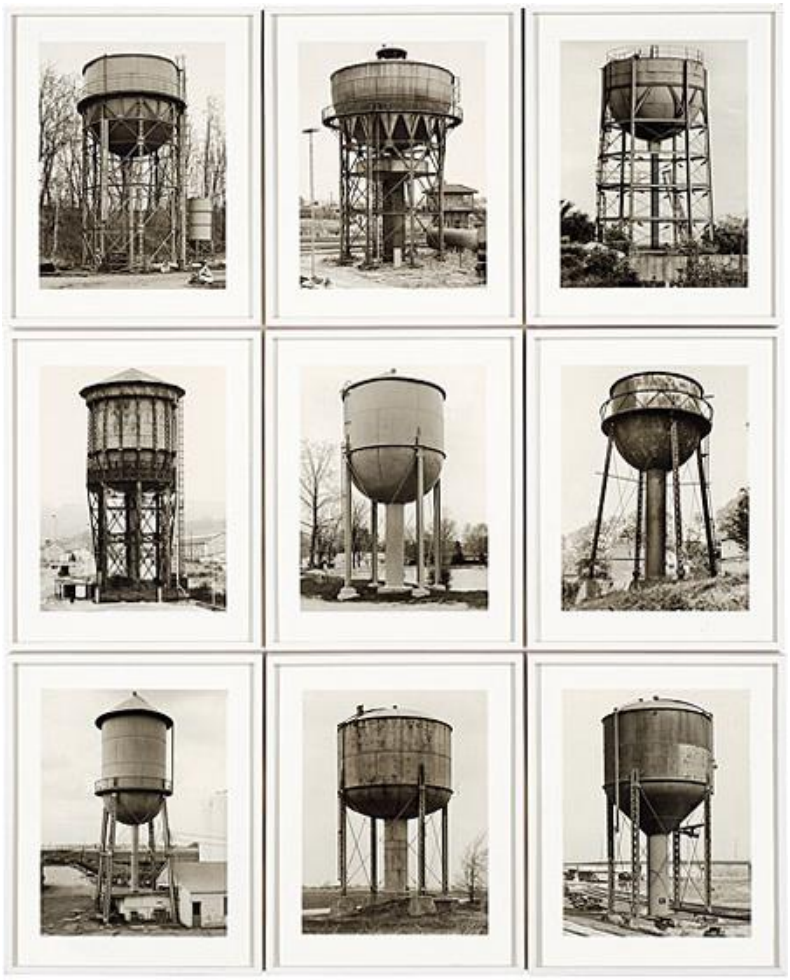

Fig. 48. Bernd and Hilla Becher, Water Towers, 1980-89.

PROLOGUE

By contrasting the concepts of the architectural context and object, the fourth chapter, 'The Subject as the Object: Collecting Architecture', asks why architecture moved into the museum at precisely the moment that contemporary art was deserting this space. It introduces questions related to the media of architecture, and investigates how the architectural object, that by the early 1980s became extensively a collectable commodity, changed in the context of the museum (and that of the market).

The revolutionary potential of architecture within the museum, as well as the changing status of the architectural object, will be explored through a comparison between the work of Gordon Matta-Clark and Ilya Kabakov, an architect and an artist – both working with the medium of architecture, on opposing sides of the ideological, geopolitical and material divides: inside and outside the walls of the museum, and in the respective contexts of the former West and the former East.

The chapter concludes with a consideration of the ideological implications of collecting architecture and the promise of 'paper' or 'cardboard' architecture by compairing and contrasting the institutional models of the DAM and the CCA in Montreal – two institutions founded in 1979, a year that saw a boom of the architectural market for galleries, marks the first specialst sale of the Sothebies, the re-opening of Max Protech's gallery in New York, as well as the first architectural commissions of Alessi. The chapter explores how the nostalgia of 'paper' architecture would return utopia from life to art; and how they relate to the respective political contexts of the post-totalitarianism and neo-liberalism of the 1980s – a period, Habermas has suggested[1], that prepared the 'retroactive revolution', which paved the way for transition from the global political order to the post-political ideology of the global market.

[1] Habermas, *The Past as Future.*

## 4.1 CONTEXTUALISM AND SOCIAL CONCIOUSNESS: FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL SUBJECT TO ARCHITECTURE AS OBJECT

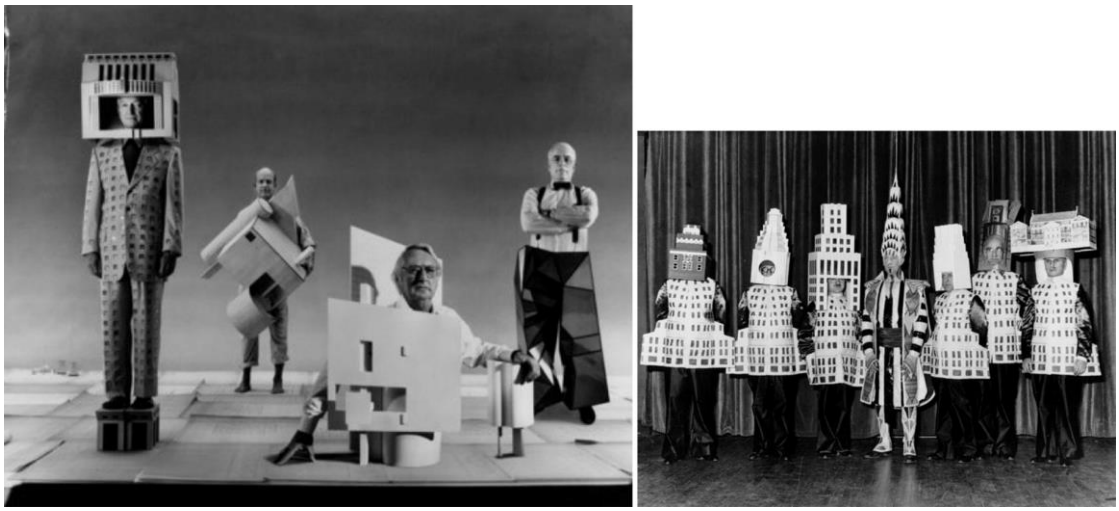

Fig. 49. (left) The New York Five in *Vanity Fair*, 1996; (right) Architects at the 1931 Beaux-Arts Architects Ball, from left to right: Stewart Walker as Fuller Building, Leonard Schultze as Waldorf-Astoria, Ely Jacques Kahn as Squibb Building, William Van Alen as Chrysler Building, Ralph Walker as '1 Wall Street', D.E.Ward as Metropolitan Tower, Joseph H. Freelander as Museum of New York.

Form and Figure

Inspired by New York's iconic 1931 Beaux-Arts Ball, but more than half of a century later, in 1996, *Vanity Fair* commissioned a group portrait[2] of the architects of the so-called 'New York Five', proudly posing in wearable models of their own built work: Richard Meier wore a costume mimicking the iconic facade of Barcelona's MACBA; on his right, Michael Graves dressed up as Louisiana's Humana Building; in the background Charles Gwathmey posed as the Long Island Gwathmey Residence (somewhat off-balance), while on the right, Peter Eisenman appeared in a pair of Mobius-like trousers that eerily resembled his unbuilt design for the Max Reinhardt Haus in Berlin. To further his reputation as the 'outsider' of the group, the eldest of the Five, John Hejduk, despite being invited, was not present at the *Vanity Fair* photo shoot. Later that year he was also absent at the 'Five Architects Reunion Evening', which was described by *The New York Times* critic Paul Goldberger as 'a celebrity-seeking talk show', a symptom of the conclusive triumph of image over idea in architecture.[3]

This turn to the early Beaux-Arts tradition was a recurring source of inspiration for the informal group of Five. The emblematic 1931 event at New York's Hotel Astor was organised around the theme 'Fête

[2] Josef Astor, *Skyscraper Couture,* published in *Vanity Fair,* 431 (July 1996), 90-96.
[3] 'They gave in to the allure of image in very different ways, for their work and their identities diverged more and more as the years went on. But by the late 1980s every one of The Five had become a kind of icon, almost a logo, for something.' Paul Goldberger, 'Architecture View; A Little Book That Led Five Men to Fame', *The New York Times*, 11 February 1996 [http://www.nytimes.com/1996/02/11/books/architecture-view-a-little-book-that-led-five-men-to-fame.html] [accessed 19 July 2014].

Moderne: A Fantasie in Flame and Silver', referring to the new architectural horizon – and skyline – of New York. However, the famous line-up of the more than two dozen architects impersonating New York's significant new buildings also heralded the emergence of the figure of the so-called 'starchitect'. While the 1996 photo confirms a similar commitment to the form and figure of architecture as expressed in 1931, on the pages of *Vanity Fair* the image of the four architects is not only disconnected from the actuality of an event but conjures a reality far beyond New York's physical skyline: the model-outfits of the architects' reference buildings scattered across two continents and four cities. As seen in Lepik's retrospective exhibition that placed the architect, Ungers himself, at the centre of his own built universe, it is no longer the facades of the buildings but the *faces* of the architects that appear as the central focus in the *Vanity Fair* photograph. What once, at the Beaux-Arts Ball, had been a playful and burlesque-like attitude of a group of local architects, by the mid-1990s – as Goldberger observed at the time – had transformed into a genuine symptom of the new global condition of architecture: that is the cult of iconic form and its equally iconic creator, the *starchitect.*

The 'New York Five' as they became known, was never a formal group or a movement. Its 'members' were initially brought together on the occasion of the 1969 CASE (Committee of Architects for the Study of the Environment) meeting at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), where Arthur Drexler and Colin Rowe initiated discussions around the work of the then little-known young architects. The outcome of the CASE meetings was published in 1972 in the form of the influential publication *Five Architects* that aimed to reignite professional discourse about architecture as a *formal* concern.[4] While the work of the five architects was only loosely connected, their architecture reflected the return to form (as opposed to function) in the search for a new language, and advocated the disciplinary autonomy and redefinition of architecture in opposition to the orthodox Modern; this newly emerging discourse was defined in relation to the site of architecture: the city.

Around the early 1960s, the site-specific turn in the visual and plastic arts coincided with the emergence of a new discourse on the site of architecture. A whole generation of architects began to rethink architectural theory and redefine the discipline based on the critique of naïve functionalism and the abstraction of site, as previously proposed by the Modern Movement and its globalised form, the International Style. From the late 1950s into the 1960s, a contextualist architectural approach emerged, one that was closely related to the neo-rationalist Italian school and the circle around *Casabella Continuità*, edited by Ernesto Rogers, which contributed to the rediscovery of urban architecture and the city in its historical architectural context.[5] Concurrently, in the United States contextualist research in architecture was associated with Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter's work at Cornell University that focused on a reading of urban space and morphology. From the 1970s onwards this was further theorised in the work of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS) in New York – research that was at the

[4] As Goldberger remarked, the black-and-white book *Five Architects* was surely the beginning of high-end architectural marketing. Peter Eisenman, Michael Graves, Charles Gwathmey, John Hejduk and Richard Meier, *Five Architects: Eisenman, Graves, Gwathmey, Hejduk, Meier* (New York: Wittenborn, 1972).

[5] The neo-rationalist school's most influential writings, Aldo Rossi's *L'Architettura della Cittá* (The Architecture of the City) and Vittorio Gregotti's *Il Territorio dell'Architettura* (The Territory of Architecture), were both published in 1966.

centre of the American section of Gregotti's 'Europa-America, Centro Storico- Suburbio: 25 Architetti Contemporanei' at the 1976 Venice Biennale.[6] The site and the form of the city therefore gradually became an important reference and material for architectural theory and design. This was a movement happening in precise parallel to the site-specific turn in art – as seen in Celant's parallel 'Ambiente/Arte' display at the 1976 Biennale – and as theorised by Krauss in her influential essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', which questioned the site of art by examining the decline of modernist medium-specificity and the consequent shift in the boundaries between art and architecture.[7]

Ruins of Representation

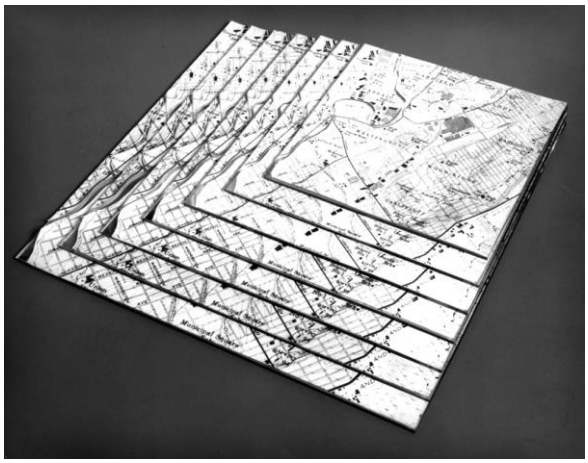

Fig. 50. Robert Smithson, *Untitled (Map on Mirror-Passaic, New Jersey)*, 1967.

While exploratory site-specific art practices moved out of the gallery and away from the museum, the architectural discourse on the disciplinary autonomy and (urban) form of architecture found its natural home within the space of art, the museum. The work of the New York Five –Eisenman, Graves, Gwathmey, Hejduk and Meier – was first recognized and validated by the museum itself, despite their having produced no major built work, which was unusual for the time. Correspondingly, MoMA funding enabled the creation of a number of new initiatives and institutions for architecture, including the IAUS in New York, whose contemporaneous activities, workshops, publications and exhibitions also involved – in different ways and capacities – the affiliate architects of the New York Five.

It was in this context that Peter Eisenman organized the seminal 1976 exhibition 'Idea as Model' at the IAUS in New York. Eisenman's exhibition can be understood in many ways as a reaction to Arthur Drexler's show 'The Architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts' that had opened a year earlier at MoMA. This display of 200 drawings, made by students of the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in

[6] The IAUS in New York was founded in 1967 as a non-profit independent agency dedicated to research, education and development in architecture and urbanism. From 1973 it launched its undergraduate education programme in architectural practice and theory. The core group of its young founders included Peter Eisenman, who was also executive director of IAUS up until 1982, when Anthony Vidler succeeded him.
[7] First published in: *October*, 8 (1979), 30-44.

Paris between 1756 and 1906,[8] aimed to outline and recall an alternative tradition in architecture. In doing so, as an expression of Drexler's growing unease, it contrasted with the legacy of the International Style and the mainstream contemporary architecture at the time.[9] The exhibition provoked heated debates and further contributed to the ongoing reassessment of the modernist legacy, signalling a significant turn against the paradigm that had been set by MoMA itself some 50 years before – often associated specifically with Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's 'International Style' exhibition.[10] As Scott remarked: '[the exhibition] prompt[ed] not only scholarly research and polemical exchanges but, to Drexler's surprise, a revitalist recuperation of historical form.'[11]

While Drexler's display presented a distinct historical tradition, Eisenman's exhibition focused on contemporary examples, drawing a comparison between the roles of models in contemporary practice with that of the drawings of the École des Beaux-Arts. 'Idea as Model' comprised works by 28 architects, including Eisenman himself and Meier, Gwathmey, Graves and Hejduk among many others, representing a new generation of architects from the extended circles of the IAUS, many of whom also participated four years later in the 'Strada Novissima' at Portoghesi's 1980 Venice Biennale, a scale model of Portoghesi's vision of the new urban street.[12]

At the time of 'Idea as Model' most of the participants had little built work, and, as Graves famously asserted, architectural practice remained on paper and produced 'models of ideas' instead of real buildings. Models and drawings were no longer seen as pure representational tools but were appraised as manifestations of the creative process of architecture, acquiring a status of their own as *works of architecture*. The exhibition therefore set out to contrast notions of representation and actuality. It stressed the role of the model as a *conceptual*, as opposed to purely *narrative,* tool for architecture, and emphasized the artistic existence of these architectural objects – models and drawings – as independent from the projects they might represent. [13] This change in the understanding of architectural media that Eisenman's exhibition asserted was revelatory of an important transformation, not only in exhibitionary practice, but also in the notion of the architectural profession at large: it expanded architecture's definition from 'building' to a dematerialized, conceptual process. The consequent change in the status

[8] As well as some drawings by Henri Labrouste and Charles Garnier for the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève (1850) and the Paris Opéra (1861-75), and photographs of 'Beaux-Arts style' French and American buildings.
[9] The influence of Vincent Scully is evident in Drexler's choice of topic.
[10] This was not the first of this type at MoMA, others being 'Architecture without Architects', and so on. Arthur Drexler, *The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts* (New York, Museum of Modern Art, 1977).
[11] Felicity Dale Scott has emphasised that Drexler's exhibition has been largely misinterpreted in the context of the 'resemiticisation' debate, and that his consideration of the Beaux-Arts tradition was by no means intended to suggest a literal return to historical form in contemporary discourse. See: Felicity D. Scott, *Architecture or Techno-Utopia: Politics after Modernism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010), p. 59.
[12] In the catalogue there was a revised list of works that included also built works by architects, such as the museums planned for Frankfurt's Museumsufer by Meier and Ungers. Kenneth Frampton and Silvia Kolbowski, *Idea as Model,* exhib. cat., ed. by (New York, N.Y.: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1981).
[13] See Peter Eisenman, 'Preface', in *Idea as Model*, p. 1.

of the architectural object – its ambiguous play between the architect's oeuvre and his/her *ouvrage*[14] – as it unfolds within the context of the exhibition, is of particular interest in this chapter.

Fig. 51. (left) Installation view of 'Idea as Model' at IAUS, New York, 1976; (right) Aldo Rossi, *Teatro Scientifico,* 1978.

The catalogue for 'Idea as Model' was not published until a few years after the exhibition, in 1981, with a revised selection of works, many of which were models of real buildings, including the 'house-within-a-house' model of Ungers' DAM that was under construction in Frankfurt at the time. Yet this new selection only further complicated the exhibition's original concept, according to which the models that were selected would represent ideas on their own. As Richard Pommer pointed out in his essay for the catalogue,[15] in the first place, the participating architects did not seem to take Eisenman's brief seriously enough, which resulted in a number of shortcomings and discrepancies in the show. According to Pommer, eventually it was only Michael Graves and Rafael Moneo who consistently addressed the concept of the model as medium, and even Eisenman failed his own original brief in that his exhibited model did not present a new reading of his *House X*, which had already been explored extensively in other media.[16]

Instead, as Christian Hubert has pointed out,[17] the boundaries between representation and objecthood were blurred in a rather different way, especially in the revised selection of the catalogue, with many examples playing on the ambiguity of the model's relation to built reality. Ungers' DAM or Eisenman's *House X* were presented as theoretical models themselves, while other models became quasi-buildings,

[14] See: Yve-Alain Bois, Dennis Hollier, Rosalind Krauss and Jean-Louis Cohen, 'A Conversation with Jean Louis Cohen', *October*, 89 (1999), 3-18.
[15] Richard Pommer, 'The Idea of "Idea as Model"', in *Idea as Model*, pp. 3-9.
[16] Between 1967 and 1978 Eisenman used the single-family house as a starting point to investigate the rules and language of design, to circumscribe the autonomous essence of architecture and question the notion of function. From his series of ten numbered houses, four were eventually built. Eisenman's formal experiments, critical of the functionalist and aesthetic interpretations of modern architecture, aimed to make visible and to expand on intellectual operations (such as superposition or rotation) as the new grammar of the modern language of architecture. His numbered houses exist as drawings, collages, models, etc. in the holdings of the CCA Collection in Montreal.
[17] Christian Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation', in *Idea as Model*, p. 1.

like the playful facades of the 'Strada Novissima', which served as a key reference for Hubert's retrospective introduction. The cover of the catalogue summarised this effectively with a photograph of Aldo Rossi's *Teatro Scientifico* that conclusively blurred the reality and fiction of architecture (objecthood and its representation) through the powerful allegory of a building-within-a-building.

The relative autonomy of the architectural model and its complicated relationship to reality was developed in the catalogue through examples drawn from the field of the visual art: 'Artists have stolen much of the ground from architects,' Pommer remarked,[18] and situated the show in relation to the tradition of Conceptualism and Minimalism, noting examples of how artists such as Barnett Newman, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer appropriated tools – maps, scale drawings, and models – and other architectural *modi operandi* in their work.[19] Pommer invited architects to respond from their own field and to borrow from art reciprocally.

To establish the role of architecture in relation to art, this interest in disciplinary autonomy was closely linked to a new interest in the history of the discipline itself, a phenomenon that Vidler described as product of a post-historical age, a return to a past that had never existed. Hubert objected to the creation of fictional histories of architecture –'the derealization of the real' – urging instead that the present should be recognised as a moment of history itself.[20] His essay 'The Ruins of Representation' aimed to caution about the dangers of this ambiguity, and compared the role of the model in contemporary architecture to that of the quotation in the Borghesian imagination:

> The errors of those ancient Cartographers are, of course, clear. These enormous maps were no more exact than their predecessors, for size and scale are not to be confused. Nor could these ever more cumbersome objects hope to substitute themselves for the Empire, despite an unacknowledged desire to do so. Mountains, rivers and cities would never spring forth from them. Like written texts, they would always remain flat sheets with marks inscribed, representations of the Empire, never substitutes. Perhaps those scholars would have been wiser to have built models rather than maps. They might have created an analogical Empire, a replica fit for kings, not just for beggars and beasts. Thereafter, if some calamity should befall the original, the site of the Empire could simply be transposed. In retrospect, their discipline might be called Architecture.[21]

While contemporary art practices privileged the concept over the object, 'Idea as Model' encouraged a new consideration of the model as a medium for an 'art of architecture', which reveals ideas (over buildings), follows its own aesthetic and structural logic, and – due to its three-dimensional, spatial and sculptural qualities – provides an alternative illusion of reality.

[18] Pommer, 'The Idea of "Idea as Model"', p. 3.
[19] Pommer's argument in many respect supports Krauss's analysis of the same artists in her essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' from three years earlier.
[20] Christian Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation Revisited', *OASE*, 84 (2011), 11-19 (p. 11).
[21] Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation'.

Thirty years later, when republishing his original essay,[22] Hubert needed to revise his own historical account, inserting an addendum about a work by Gordon Matta-Clark that was removed from the exhibition.[23] While 'Idea as Model' established a frame within which the works of architecture acquired the status comparable to that of the object of art, it resisted the work of Matta-Clark. He was invited to participate in the show, and was – ironically – the only architect who primarily practised within the context of art, and yet his critical contribution ended in controversy. Matta-Clark's intervention was ultimately rejected and still remains shrouded in ambiguity.[24]

It was Eisenman himself who had first invited – and then disinvited – Matta-Clark to participate at the exhibition at the IAUS. The young architect had moved to New York five years earlier, immediately after his studies at Cornell with Colin Rowe (a similar path to Eisenman's own) and at the Sorbonne in Paris, and had become well known among the New York art community by the mid-1970s for his active engagement in the SoHo. Like many of his young contemporaries, Matta-Clark had no built works of architecture, but unlike them he turned to artistic practice to radicalise and further develop architectural thinking. As Jane Crawford recalled later about the 'Idea as Model' exhibition, 'To Gordon it represented everything that was wrong with architecture, primarily its exclusivity.'[25] Thus it might have been a deliberate provocation when Matta-Clark, in response to Eisenman's invitation, decided to exhibit an explicitly political subject – and a violent gesture – that forcefully disrupted the otherwise politically disengaged display of delicate balsa wood and paper models.

Matta-Clark's contribution to the exhibition, his legendary *Window Blow-Out,* was based on a set of eight photographs of smashed windows of a housing project that he had recently visited in the South Bronx. The photographs were complemented in the installation by the shooting-out of the windows of the 20th-floor exhibition space of the IAUS, with a pellet gun allegedly borrowed from Denis Oppenheim, an active intervention that took the curators completely by surprise. While Matta-Clark intended to paper over the broken windows of the space with his photographs, Eisenman strongly opposed the display.[26] Matta-Clark's photographs were promptly removed, the windows swiftly repaired and the project was completely erased from all records of the exhibition, including its posthumous catalogue. While many have dismissed it as a drunken attack and others even questioned its

[22] Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation Revisited', 11-19.
[23] Apparently completely erased from the documentation of the exhibition at the time; Hubert claims that for a long time after his essay was written he had no idea of Matta-Clark's involvement with the exhibition at all. Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation Revisited'.
[24] As Mary Woods has remarked about *Window Blow-Out*, it became an urban legend: Eisenman refuses to discuss this episode, etc. See: Mary Woods 'Art in the Time of Deindustrialization: Gordon Matta-Clark's Interventions into Buffalo and New York City', lecture, Montreal: CCA, 30 July 2015 [http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/study-centre/2586-art-in-the-time-of-deindustrialization-gordon-matta-clarks] [last accessed: 10 August 2015].
[25] Jane Crawford, 'Matta-Clark in Context', in *Gordon Matta-Clark, Moment to Moment: Space*, ed. by Philip Ursprung, Hubertus von Amelunxen and Angela Lammert (Nürnberg: Moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 2007), pp. 154-171.
[26] According to Hubert, Eisenman was outraged and compared the work to 'the Nazi rampage of Kristallnacht'. Hubert, 'The Ruins of Representation Revisited', p. 18.

authenticity,[27] Matta-Clark's intervention at the IAUS survived as a powerful urban myth. As such, it became even more successful in distancing the 'work' from the 'worker' and the object from the art, as well as in creating a blueprint for the potential and limitations of the passage between the fields of art and architecture.

Fig. 52. (left) View of the IAUS building in New York; (right) Gordon Matta-Clark's *Window Blow-Out*, 1976.

In contrast with the purely architectural and formal concerns of the exhibition, Crawford emphasised the strong social and political focus behind Matta-Clark's work and remarked, in relation to the 'Idea as Model', that eventually '[Gordon] changed the exhibition from moneyed classes to inappropriate and impractical proposals for the oppressed.'[28] The reasons for the objection to Matta-Clark's intervention at the IAUS were, however, likely to be more complex, going far beyond the explicit political content of the work. His very direct response to Eisenman's brief may have been unexpected, but more than any other contribution it succeeded in problematising the economy of representation. Matta-Clark extended the metaphor of the work of art to the space of the exhibition, and architecture became his medium. Instead of rendering fiction as reality, which many of the models on display at the exhibition attempted to do, Matta-Clark actually staged *reality* as *fiction*. In quoting the social realities of architecture, and especially in the context of the IAUS exhibition, his explicit destruction of the architecture on site became an implicit attack on the discipline itself.

The mid-1970s witnessed the dematerialisation of art practices; this period also experienced a marked increase in the disciplinary self-reflection of architecture, which resulted in a turn towards history and the accompanying production of architectural ephemera. Artists moved away from the museum, and instead of objects, space became their main focus and medium. In this context, Matta-Clark, a trained architect, explored new ways of working *with* architecture that established a functional dialogue with the

[27] There is no documentation, and many of the exhibition's activities at the time that were not documented are remembered in contrasting ways by former participants, like the one of Matta-Clark's at IAUS – see also Mark Wigley on anarchitecture group exhibitions in Greene Street. See Mark Wigley, 'Anarchitecture: reception. Anarchitectures', in *Gordon Matta-Clark, Moment to Moment: Space*, pp. 12-28.
[28] Crawford, 'Matta-Clark in Context'.

field of art. He did not regard space as an abstract medium and, accordingly, moved away from the categorical separation between plan and building, concept and reality, or even that of object and event. It was as if he was pushing Krier's famous motto[29] even further, his architectural gesture and philosophy manifested appositely as 'unbuilding' or 'anarchitecture'. Unbuilding contrasted ideologically the artistic and architectural production of objects, instead setting processes into motion that mapped the limits of architecture, which in Matta-Clark's words became 'anarchitecture', offering an alternative to what is normally considered architecture.[30]

In her account of Matta-Clark's work, Pamela Lee described the architect's oeuvre as mainly characterized by its 'worklessness'.[31] For Matta-Clark, architecture presented a subject rather than an object, and the physical three-dimensional outcome of his practice – the shells of his cutting of buildings – were to be destroyed, without exception, and remained only in form of photography or moving image documentation.[32] As Lee remarked, in the context of site-specific art practices at the time, Matta-Clark's cuts presented a paradox in that his interventions dissected and destroyed the very site of the work. Matta-Clark regarded his 'building cuts' as a way to open up the history of the building, an interest inspired by Benjamin's idea of historic memory.[33] Another important influence in the early 1970s was his encounter with Robert Smithson at Cornell University: Smithson's concept of ruin and entropy[34] left a major impression on him. Minimalism and Land Art served as crucial references for Matta-Clark's practice, and it was only the work's relation to its site that constituted the main difference compared to these models. Matta-Clark's 'land' – the context and the subject of his architectural research – was the disappearing post-industrial urban landscape of New York City, an instantaneous ruin, which became both the site and the material for his interventions.

Like Perec's dissection of the residential building at 11 rue Simon-Crubellier in Paris,[35] the spaces of everyday life were the focus of Matta-Clark's building cuts. Through the deconstruction of the architectural site he aimed to reclaim abandoned spaces while also reinterpreting, and complicating, public and private relations. As Philip Ursprung remarks, the 'destructive character' of Matta-Clark's work pertains to another Benjaminian context, his '*Denkbilder*': making room and clearing away for new meaning to emerge.[36] His destructive attitude towards building was not as much a violent attack or

[29] 'I do not build because I am an architect.'
[30] See Wigley, 'Anarchitecture: reception. Anarchitectures'.
[31] Pamela M. Lee, *Object to be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).
[32] Friends and colleagues attempted to preserve his last building cut in Brussels (title…) however the attempt failed due to real-estate speculation on the site, which apparently – due to the bankruptcy of the holding company - still stands empty today. See: Lee, 'On the Holes of History' in *Object to be Destroyed: The Work of Gordon Matta-Clark*, pp. 162-209.
[33] Consonant with Matta-Clark's interventionist approach on the historic site of the city, see Benjamin's remark: 'knowledge within the historical moment is always knowledge of the moment. In drawing itself together in that moment – in the dialectical image – the past becomes part of humanity's involuntary memory.' (Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, tr. by Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 403.)
[34] Robert Smithson, 'Entropy Made Visible', (1973) [http://www.robertsmithson.com/essays/entropy.htm] [accessed 12 October 2013].
[35] Georges Perec, *La Vie Mode D'emploi* (Paris: Hachette Livre, 1978).
[36] Philip Ursprung, 'Gordon Matta-Clark and the Limits to Architecture', references Benjamin's *Denkbilder* (trans. '*Thought Figures*') in *Gordon Matta-Clark, Moment to Moment: Space*, ed. by Philip

a *tabula rasa*, but rather a reaction to the emergent globalisation and deregulated urban transformations of the 1970s. The post-industrial landscape and the temporary sites of fast-paced urban transformation became the prime expression of the social realities of everyday life, and hence the site of social critique. As the physical deconstruction of the white cube became the form of the institutional critique within the museum, for many artists at the time contextualism – the intervention into the site of the city as manifest through its physical, *built* architecture – became synonymous with class-consciousness and socially-engaged art, which in Matta-Clark's case was an explicitly architectural gesture.

*Conical Intersect*

In 1975, a year before the IAUS show, Matta-Clark was invited by Georges Boudaille and Jean-Hubert Martin to participate in the 9th Paris Biennale. Matta-Clark arrived in Paris as a fugitive, immediately after he had performed a monumental cut on a derelict pier in Manhattan, a work titled *Day's End,* which had resulted in a law suit filed against him by the City of New York. In Paris he was formally invited to intervene on the site soon to be demolished on the Plateau Beaubourg that was to accommodate the new building of the Centre Pompidou. Matta-Clark's first proposition was to make intersections on the site of the Pompidou skeleton itself, which was turned down by the curators. He was offered instead a neighbouring site with the last standing buildings, two matching town houses, built in 1699 for Monsieur and Madame Leisevilles, which were adjacent to the monumental construction site for the new cultural complex.

Fig. 53 (left) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Conical Intersect*, 1975; (right) View of the completed Centre Pompidou, 1977.

*Conical Intersect* was a radical incision on the facades of these two adjacent 17th-century buildings, designated for imminent demolition after Matta-Clark's work had been carried out. The cone-shaped incision opened up the bourgeois interiors of the houses and offered the passers-by a view of the internal structure of the buildings. The monumental hole spiralled back at a 45-degree angle to exit through the roof and to direct the gaze toward the massive structure of the Centre Pompidou. While mimicking the hi-tech structure, Matta-Clark's intervention contrasted historical and contemporary sites in Paris, and,

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Ursprung, Hubertus von Amelunxen, Angela Lammert, Gordon Matta-Clark (Nürnberg: Moderne Kunst Nürnberg, 2007), p. 42.

as Dan Graham observed, by linking the Pompidou and the area that was being torn down, the open duct of *Conical Intersect* created 'a tour of the city plan'.[37] The work was destined to be destroyed, and as a kind of an anti-monument it only existed for the short duration of a few days. It became an event which only survived through its documentation, a handful of carefully edited photographs, montages and a documentary film which – an attempt to articulate a critique of urban gentrification that wiped out the historic heart of the city of Paris – recorded the process of making as well as the final demolition of the work and its site.

The local reception for *Conical Intersect* was far from positive. In the context of the ambitious project of the 'Gaullist clearing', as Matta-Clark termed it, that had continued in central Paris since the 1950s, Matta-Clark's work was perceived not as a critique but as a symptom of a social space filled with voids and emptiness. The structural system of the Centre Pompidou allowed for the flexible enveloping of the empty interior, resulting in a building 'with all its guts on the outside', as Baudrillard put it,[38] alluding to the myth of an open society. In the institutional context of the Paris Biennale, Matta-Clark's work stood as the representation, rather than rupture, of the very condition of which the building of the Centre Pompidou became the central symbol. His empty cone echoed the void of both the Pompidou's open modular space and the black hole it created within the historic area of Les Halles.

While Matta-Clark ascribed the harsh critique of his work to its European context, it was the institutional rather than the cultural framework that provoked the main difference in its reception. For Matta-Clark, architecture (and art) ought to be a direct social action that should happen outside the museum, because both the subject and the outcome of the process of creation were part of the critical transformation of urban space itself. His cuts in Manhattan and the Bronx – as well as his proposed 1975 'building cut' in Milan's Sesto San Giovanni[39] – which he failed to realise due to the intervention of the local police, – were self-initiated interventions into sites of social activity. Counter to this aspiration, Matta-Clark's *Conical Intersect*, as well as his *Circus* in Chicago, created in a brownstone building adjacent to the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA), that the museum had recently purchased in order to convert it into additional galleries, were both formal commissions by museums. As such, within this frame, their representation became dissociated from their political context and resulted in the objectification and validation of the museum's own cultural function in the process of urban regeneration. If the models of the IAUS exhibition objectified architecture within the space of the gallery – the subject of Matta-Clark's critique of 'Idea as Model' – then *Conical Intersect* achieved the same result, by enacting the museum's principles in the social space of the city.

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[37] Ursprung, *Gordon Matta-Clark and the Limits to Architecture*, p. 48. Matta-Clark's work is always relative to the city and the city plan. He is inspired by the same sources as many of his architectural contemporaries, such as Aldo Rossi (oppositions) etc.

[38] Jean Baudrillard and Jean Nouvel, *The Singular Objects of Architecture* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), pp. 38-39.

[39] *Arc de Triomphe for Workers*, a local communist party squat of a post-industrial factory building to resist the intervention of laissez--faire real-estate developers from exploiting the property. His *Arc de Triomphe for Workers* in Milan even backfired: the representational technique of the cutting of Matta-Clark's intervention resulted in the undoing and objectification of the political discourse itself.

Kabakov's Void

The inclusion of everyday spaces into the normative space of the museum occurred through a wide array of contemporary exhibitionary practices, from Bernard Rudofsky's iconic exhibition 'Architecture Without Architects' at MoMA – the first to introduce the space of spontaneous architecture to the museum – to a number of 'artist museums' and collections that from the 1960s onwards rediscovered Duchamp's ready-made and extended the conception of the museum to the realm of the everyday,[40] as well as Ilya Kabakov's 'total installations', which functioned as period rooms representing the everyday spaces of a 'vanished society' in the Soviet Union, and, as such, created an Eastern counterpart to Matta-Clark's work in the West.

Fig. 54 (left) Robert Filliou, 'Galerie Légitime', ca 1962-1963; (right) Bernard Rudofsky, 'Movable Architecture: Figure 138', in *Architecture Without Architects*, 1964.

If Matta-Clark was an architect who refused to build, Kabakov's artistic practice was dominated by building. His earliest work consisted of illustrations for children's books, while by the 1970s his focus had increasingly become a critique of the cultural and architectural space of his homeland. The turning point in his practice was marked by his installation *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Apartment,* first staged in 1984 in his own studio in Moscow as a sequel to his earlier albums, *Ten Characters.*[41] This 'total installation' – as Kabakov in retrospect described the genre – depicted a typical Soviet environment, a room decorated with political posters and defined by the complete absence of material culture, a replica of the ubiquitous domestic environment in the Soviet Union. The central room of the installation could be observed through the cracks of a boarded-up door. Inside this room a catapult-like contraption, a gaping hole on the ceiling and scientific diagrams drawn on the walls covered with Soviet propaganda told the story of the escape of a man who propelled himself through the roof into outer space to travel on powerful streams of energy.

[40] The genre of artists' collections – expanding the concept of the museum collection to the sites of the everyday or, on the contrary, bringing the collections of banal objects, the material manifestations of the everyday, into the space of the museum – was a newly emerging genre for artists in the 1960s and '70s. See: Walter Grasskamp, 'Artists and Other Collectors', in *Museums by Artists*, ed. by A. A. Bronson and Peggy Gale (Toronto: Art Metropole, 1983), pp. 129-148.
[41] The first ten albums are arranged into a series called *Ten Characters* (1972–75).

Fig. 55. (left) Ilya Kabakov, Installation view of *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Apartment*, 1988; (right) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Conical Intersect*, 1975.

The main subject and protagonist of Kabakov's work was 'nothing' – just like the Leningrad artists Timur Novikov and Ivan Sotnikov's conceptual creation entitled *Zero Object*, a rectangular hole exhibited two years earlier at an experimental show in Leningrad that stirred controversy and caused headaches for the interpreters of state censorship.[42] The avant-garde's notion of emptiness, the materialised and spatialised holes and zeroes in Kabakov's art – as for many of the Moscow Conceptualists at the time – became a tool for the interpretation of the everyday. The analysis of the spatial structures of Soviet society became synonymous with social critique within the practice of the 'unofficial artists' of Moscow Conceptualism.

Kabakov's installation represented a fictitious built space, dominated but no longer controllable by the Soviet state: As a downtrodden private citizen, the domestic occupant's revolt did not take place within ideological iconography. His escape meant crossing between spaces which did not abide by the rules of political geography: instead they were present in a Moscow apartment, where the claustrophobic political space of the USSR was replaced by the infinity of outer space. Kabakov's work, an allegory of the émigré, illustrated the absurdity of rebelling against dictatorship within the system of hegemonic cultural space. Russian culture had become synonymous with Stalinism, and even many decades after Stalin's death the two remained inseparable. Kabakov's total installations and Novikov's neo-academic interventions both pointed to the unsustainability of the myth of the classical avant-garde and the radical formal experimentalism of the 1920s. The metaphor of the void in this context, therefore, became just as literal as it did in Matta-Clark's 'building cuts': it was the space experienced as home by innumerable citizens.

It seems absurd, yet is completely comprehensible, that Kabakov's total installations could only come to life in immigration, when he himself lived *apart* from the cultural space of the Soviet Union. In 1987 Kabakov finally decided to emigrate to the West, where he continued to depict the political and cultural

[42] In 1982, Novikov exhibited the 'Zero Object' (*Nol' ob'ekt*), which he created with Ivan Sotnikov. In the same year, Kabakov conceived his project for the installation *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Room*.

system of the Soviet Union, which itself ended shortly afterwards. *The Man Who Flew into Space from His Room* was first publicly exhibited in 1988 when Kabakov re-created the installation as part of the exhibition 'Ten Characters' at the Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York. However, within the architectural interface of the Western exhibitionary system, his scale reconstructions of the everyday spaces of a vanished, sunken universe became merely objects of nostalgia, ruins of the Soviet period. Within the frame of the semantic universe of the contemporary capitalist world – which Kabakov never critically reflected in his works – the total installation functions as a theatre that performs an avant-garde play of contemporary museology, turning into a period room of the dictatorship, which now represents a memory of another time and place. Kabakov's museum-within-a-museum became, therefore, a double quotation of representations which ultimately only reverses its own potential for criticality and – as seen in the case of Gordon Matta-Clark's interventions in the context of museums – reveals the vulnerability of an art of subversion.

Kabakov and Matta-Clark lived in the same period, but in a space cut in half, a global total installation, which has become imperceptible today. Yet, if the architectural models exhibited at the IAUS and Matta-Clark's urban 'anarchitectural' interventions depicted two sides of the same coin – the art and architecture produced within the same cultural context and paradigm – Kabakov also belonged to the same period on the other side of the Wall, which Habermas described as preparatory for the 'retroactive revolution'[43] of 1989, the arrival of a post-ideological global era.

The ideological and semantic differences dictated by the East-West divide dissolved with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which had already been projected through Kabakov and Matta-Clark's comparable applications of spatial iconography, through explorations of the spatial and social structures of their different settings and their archaeological appreciation of the everyday. The symbolic significance of the 'void' in their respective works foreshadowed the same political and existential experience of global capitalism.[44] While Matta-Clark, who died prematurely in 1978, would not see this transformation, Kabakov's artistic career unfolded from the total installation to the global museum.[45]

Matta-Clark's site-specific interventions in the city, like Kabakov's reconstructions of the everyday spaces within the gallery, were haunting explorations of the political power of architecture itself. The discourse, which explored the site of art and architecture, developed from both the critique of abstract Cartesian space and self-critical disciplinary and institutional concerns. It sought to rediscover the meaning of the concrete place and its wider conceptual, historical and social context. It was no coincidence that Robert Smithson introduced the concept of 'non-site' – describing works in the 'idealized space' of a museum or gallery setting – at the same time as the architectural discipline was reinventing itself within the museum. The critique of the gallery system led to proposals for new sites

[43] Jürgen Habermas, *The Past as Future* (Modern German Culture and Literature), tr. by Max Pensky (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994).
[44] See: Michael J. Ostwald, 'Ranciere and the Metapolitical Framing of Architecture: Reconstructing Brodsky and Utkin's Voyage', *Interstices: A Journal of Architecture and Related Arts*, 8 (2008), 9-20.
[45] 'Ilya and Emilia Kabakov Retrospective', The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Center for Contemporary Culture Garage, Winzavod Moskau Contemporary Art Centre, September 17 - October 19 2008.

for art, along with the recognition of the ideological values of these representational spaces, as notably described by O'Doherty. Paradoxically, this artistic critique of architectural space itself ultimately rendered the context of the city and everyday life – subjects for both Matta-Clark and Kabakov – as objects within the museum's ambience. Architecture – building or 'unbuilding'– became event, object, theatre or museum, but architecture *itself,* marking a transition from the architectural subject to architecture as the collectable object.

If the built form of architecture appears as a definition of power and the establishment, from the perspective of art, as Andrea Philips has pointed out, there seems to be a tendency to try and make architecture 'weak' – a critique that aims to break the powers in hegemony.[46] Architecture staged as art within the frame of the museum – as seen in the case of the work of Matta-Clark and Kabakov, or the IAUS exhibition – equally weakens its power and social/political agency. Massimo Scolari's anecdote about Michael Graves, one of the pioneers of 'cardboard architecture' in North America, is a symbolic example of 'paper' architecture's paradoxical relationship to the built. Graves once had to rush over to a client's house because a parapet was falling down; when he arrived he found a man holding up the parapet with his hands. Scolari was amazed that one man could support all this weight, but Graves reassured him: there was no reason to be shocked, as the parapet was simply made of 'paper'! [47] Paper architects had thus literally built – in retreat from the realm of reality – of *paper*. When conceptualism supersedes practical resolve it suggests that intentionality has become a semblance of its originating purpose. And if this influences actual construction, this then indicates a crisis of attainment, a desire to reverse all that was solid and to untether normative rationality.


Fig. 56. Giulio Paolini, *Il Trasloco*, 1973.

[46] Andrea Philips, 'Introduction to the Second Curating Architecture Seminar', *Goldsmiths, University of London*, 2007 [http://research.gold.ac.uk/2417/2/CuratingArchitectureBooklet.pdfhttp://www.art.gold.ac.uk/research/archive/curating-architecture/seminar_downloads/Introduction2.pdf] [accessed 12 December 2012].
[47] Léa-Catherine Szacka and Thomas Weaver, 'Massimo Scolari in Conversation with Léa-Catherine Szacka & Thomas Weaver', *AA Files*, 65 (2013), 33-47.

## 4.2 BEYOND QUESTIONS OF DISPLAY: FROM BUILDING TO DRAWING

*Young architects save every scrap of paper.*
– Max Protetch, 1984[48]

*The creation of worlds that are not meant to be totally realized is to some extent an irresponsible matter, to another a humorous thing.*
– Alexander G Rappaport [49]

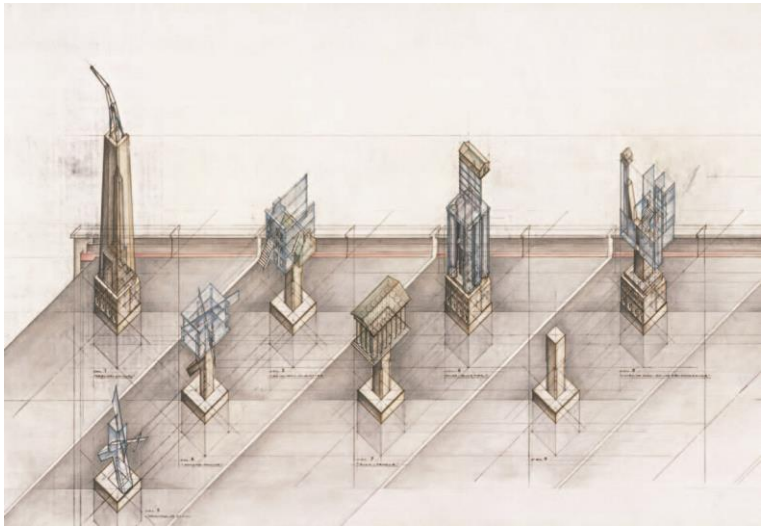

Fig. 57. Melvin Charney, *The Allegorical Columns*, CCA Garden, Montreal, 1988.

Questions of Medium

Brian O'Doherty rendered the 'white cube' as a kind of counterfeit archetype, a frame within which art and life separate. He contested the illusive neutrality of the gallery's architecture, seeing it instead as an agent of dissipation and abstraction, destroying the artwork's relation to its social and cultural frameworks. This ideological and physical 'void' of the white cube gallery space became a central concern from the 1960s onwards, not only in O'Doherty's observations and writing, but also in the practice of many of his contemporaries. [50] Artists employed countless strategies of staging or destroying this symbolic architecture through the manipulation of the physical space of the gallery. The critical reframing of the site of art and life – as also outlined in relation to Kabakov's total installations, or the urban interventions of Gordon Matta-Clark – resulted in a prolific new discourse around the context of art, which also radically changed the way we think of the spaces of display today. Notably, the critical challenge to the objectification of architectural contexts contributed to the eventual emancipation of the architectural object itself within the space of art – the re-contextualising of the spaces of display

[48] Max Protetch, cited in *The Art Dealers*, ed. by Alan Jones and Laura de Coppet (London: Clarkson Potter, 1984) p. 229.
[49] Heinrich Klotz, *Paper Architecture*: *New Projects from the Soviet Union*, exhib. cat. (Frankfurt: Deutsches Architekturmuseum, 1989), p. 15.
[50] As outlined in previous chapters, specifically in relation to the so called 'Void shows' (see Chapter 2).

materialised through the display of contexts themselves, in which architecture became both the medium and the object.

As discussed in relation to Tschumi and Goldberg's exhibition at the RCA,[51] O'Doherty's observations on the ideology of the gallery space – associated with its specific architectural frame – seem even more pertinent when thinking about the display of the architectural subject itself. Exhibiting architecture raises a number of questions that specifically relate to the spatial conditions and the medium of architecture. Buildings, with the exception of some rare examples,[52] cannot be removed from their own (real) sites. Exhibitions often replace buildings with their own image, the documentation and/or projective visions of architectural projects and ideas, rendering the museum display – a prop for presentation – a representational device. Hubert Damisch asserted that the architecture museum always deals with lack and displacement.[53] Drawings, blueprints, models and renderings reveal and animate the design processes of architecture, yet they fail to evoke the experience of real buildings and the city. The experience of the living city can hardly be evoked in the museum. As opposed to art exhibitions, where the presence of the original is self-evident, architecture exhibitions necessarily remove and alienate their objects from a specific context, while in addition their subject remains remote from the gallery and always in a contingent state. The architectural exhibition is therefore a double quotation: its context, the 'white cube', as well as its objects, elicit substitute realities. Consonant with Damisch's remark, Jean-Louis Cohen concluded that the main challenge of the architecture exhibition lay in this very problem, which essentially differentiates it from the art exhibition. As opposed to art practices, where the work – the final product of the artist – is *present*, Cohen distinguished between the built work (oeuvre) and the intellectual project of the architect ('*ouvrage*').[54]

Considering architecture's *normative* purpose, it would seem commonplace to conclude that the medium of architecture – buildings – de facto resists exhibition as result of an inexplicable problem of display. But this raises some fundamental questions: if the context of the gallery really works against architecture, why has the institutionalised collecting and exhibiting of architecture become so prevalent since the late 1970s? What does architectural representation within the space of art imply, beyond problems of display? And, if the white cube – as a fictional site – might enable an architecture that consigns to oblivion the mundane constraints of its reality, what exactly is this fiction of architecture, and what/who is it for?

In his foreword to the exhibition catalogue for 'Modern Architecture: International Exhibition' at MoMA in New York in 1932 – the first thematic exhibition at the newly established Department of Architecture at MoMA under the directorship of the young Philip Johnson – Alfred Barr famously remarked: 'Exhibitions and expositions have perhaps changed the character of architecture of the last 40

[51] *A Space: A Thousand Words*, ed. by Bernard Tschumi and Roselee Goldberg (London: Dieci Libri, 1975), see in Chapter 2.
[52] Such as the Pergamonmuseum, Berlin, or Sir John Soane's Museum in London.
[53] Hubert Damisch, 'A Very Special Museum', in *Skyline: The Narcissistic City* (Stanford: Stanford Uni. Press, 2001), pp.49-67.
[54] Yve-Alain Bois, Dennis Hollier, Rosalnd Krauss and Jean-Louis Cohen, 'A Conversation with Jean Louis Cohen', *October*, 89 (1999), 3-18.

years more than any other factor.'[55] In his statement, Barr was intending to do justice to both the exhibition and the newly established department, which was unique and groundbreaking at the time in that it integrated art, design and architecture within a new spatial concept of exhibitions, following the model set by the Bauhaus just a decade earlier.[56]

More than half a century later, the Chief Curator of Architecture at MoMA, Barry Bergdoll, reconfirmed and further developed Barr's thoughts in his thesis on the modern history of architecture exhibitions, which he dates from as early as the late 18th Century in France. [57] Bergdoll states that key moments in the history of architecture exhibitions have always been closely aligned with radical social movements and change. The rise of academic competitions in the 1760s was consolidated by the turn of the century, a corollary to the French Revolution, when a new language for art and architecture was being developed and Salon displays included more proposals for new public architecture than for art. When there was not enough political stability to build, the display of architectural drawings – the projection of a future architecture for a future state, as seen in Boullée's proposals for a new Republican typology – was the primary focus for contemporary displays. While the issue of simulacra remains a problem for contemporary displays, the space of exhibitions – on the crowded walls of the Salon – were the only sites where architecture could reimagine itself and react most spontaneously to the social changes proposed by the Revolution.

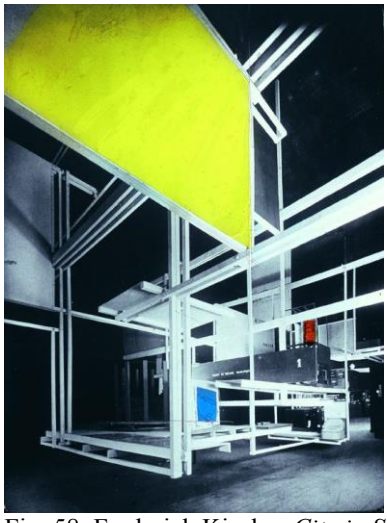

Fig. 58. Frederick Kiesler, *City in Space*, Grand Palais, Paris, 1925.

The second important peak in architecture exhibitions, according to Bergdoll, materialised around the 1920s, following the Russian Revolution, when avant-garde practices of art and architecture recognized

[55] Alfred H. Barr: 'Introduction', in Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Henry-Russell Hitchcock, Jr., Philip Johnson and Lewis Mumford, *Modern Architecture: International Exhibition*, exhib. cat. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, February 1932).
[56] Alfred Barr had already proposed in 1929 to organise MoMA departments based on a model provided by the Bauhaus instead of conventional modern art museums; see: Barry Bergdoll, '75 Years of Architecture at the MoMA', *A&U,* Special Issue 451 (2008), 66-73.
[57] See Barry Bergdoll, 'Out of Site in Plain View: A History of Exhibiting Architecture since 1750: In and Out of Time: Curating Architecture's History', lecture, part 1*, A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts,* Washington: National Gallery of Art [http://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/audio-video/mellon.html] [last accessed: 10-06-2015].

the space of the exhibition as a non-narrative display – a possible site for exploration and communication of radical ideas with an agency to reform society. At this time, once again, architecture and art conversed and merged in the space of exhibitions: Russian Constructivists tested temporary structures while the De Stijl movement actually displayed *display* itself. The number of architecture exhibitions increased further, featuring the work of Mies van der Rohe, Frank Lloyd Wright, Walter Gropius and practitioners from the Bauhaus, amongst others, which contributed to the emancipation of the progressive ideas of modernist architecture, a project that climaxed in MoMA's very own blockbuster exhibition on the International Style.

For Bergdoll, in summary, the history of architecture exhibitions does not simply concern documentation, representation or projection – the history of '*something lacking*' – but instead concerns a history that significantly shaped modern architecture by enabling discourses rooted in the setting up and shaping of new social institutions. The architecture exhibition can be more than a pure reflection of a panorama – the Salon displays that followed the French Revolution and the exhibitions of the 1920s avant-garde both echoed changes in society and served as crucial tools to implement social and disciplinary innovation in architecture. In these key moments of radical social change, exhibitions became a unique site for new architecture, where ideas were imagined and implemented. The architecture created within and for the gallery actually surpassed representation: it was no longer a substitute for building, but existed in its own right.

The Object of Architecture

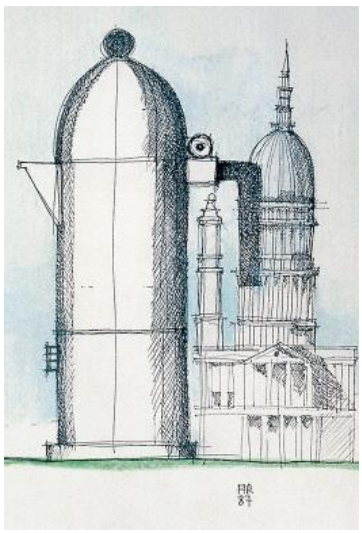

Fig. 59 Aldo Rossi, *La Cupola*, 1987.

While Bergdoll's account and examples do not extend beyond the first part of the 20th century, it is arguable that the late 1970s is comparable to the transformative moments that occurred during the French and Russian revolutions. The end of the 1970s marked an important moment in the history of architecture exhibitions. This period saw not only an unprecedented number of exhibitions, but also newly formed collections of architecture. A number of the newly founded international museums were

dedicated exclusively to the collection of architectural objects, and, in parallel with a dynamically growing art market, an array of commercial galleries emerged that specialized in dealing in architectural prints, drawings, models or even kitchenware and jewellery designed by architects.

As previously implied in this thesis, 1979 brought about a special constellation of important events. This was the time, when – just a year before the opening of the first official edition of the Venice Biennale of Architecture, Paolo Portoghesi's 'The Presence of the Past' – a handful of architectural historians, writers and curators met in Helsinki to establish the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (ICAM) that bought together museums, centres, archives, collections and libraries, all dedicated to research into the history and/or collection of contemporary architecture, an interest that was increasing at this time. The DAM in Frankfurt and the CCA in Montreal[58] were also both founded in 1979 – the year when Max Protetch moved his gallery to New York and began to sell architectural drawings – and were soon followed by a number of other international institutions. However, it is less clear what exactly the turn that this exhibitionary transformation in architecture signalled, during the height of the Cold War period, a decade after 1968 and just a decade before the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the final disintegration of the Soviet Union. Architects felt the need once again to occupy the site of art, while the political and social agency behind the objects that soon filled up the vaults of the newly established collections and museums remain obscure and intensely self-referential.

The radical institutional critique of the social and political movements of the 1960s made clear the crisis of the totalizing utopias of Modern architecture. By the mid-1960s, a critique of architecture's capacity to achieve the revolution promised by Le Corbusier was accompanied by complete political disillusionment, a loss of faith in the post-war mission of political, social or technological progress. The crisis of the architectural project of the International Style and post-war politics went hand in hand. In an attempt to gain distance from the modernist connotations of structure and function, a new generation of practitioners and educators focused their attention on architectural form. Drawing, as well as other visual techniques of representation, heralded a renaissance in architecture, and many of the exhibitionary practices were defined by an attempt to recover the lost aura (that perhaps never existed) of the architectural object itself.[59]

The turn to form and language in architecture implied a renewed interest in the historical forms and knowledge of the discipline, which together explicitly resulted in a break with the orthodox Modern and a beginning of a new discourse that was initiated mainly from within the gallery context. A 1979 charter that outlined the joint goals of the ICAM articulated a resistance to the functionalist understanding of architecture and aimed to foster a critical attitude and scholarly projects in history; to expand the understanding of cultural continuity and the context of architecture, and, finally and most importantly, to disseminate research through the format of exhibitions, publications, and other media.[60] In other words,

[58] The latter opened its galleries to the public only ten years later, in 1989.
[59] On cardboard architecture, see Kazys Varnelis, *The Spectacle of the Innocent Eye: Vision, Cynical Reason, and the Discipline of Architecture in Postwar America* (Unpublished PhD thesis, Cornell University, 1994).
[60] See ICAM Charter, Helsinki, 22 August 1979, [http://www.icam-web.org/about.php?subnode_id=8&language_id=en] [last accessed on 01-03-2012].

it initiated the instrumentalisation of architectural exhibitions and scholarly research in re-positioning (and re-producing) the discipline.

The emancipation of the architectural objects within the gallery – as well as the way in which the architectural context of the gallery itself had been reframed – also led to the transformation of the architectural objects that occupied that site. If the spatial experiments and concerns of 1920s architectural and art practices interlinked and conjoined through their 'exhibitionary' nature, a similar formal overlapping and twinning of roles of the arts and architectural practices could be observed in the 1970s. An important difference, when compared to the 1920s avant-gardes, however, lay in the re-evaluation of history and the evident rejection of technological and social progress as a grounding principle, which eventually worked against the conceit of the avant-garde itself.

Rosalind Krauss, an important commentator on the end of avant-gardism,[61] observed an apparent fusion between the traditional medium of sculpture and that of architecture in the late 1960s and 1970s.[62] While she described modern sculpture's relation to site as essentially nomadic, and identified it as total abstraction: 'a kind of a black hole in the space of consciousness',[63] she argued that 'the logic of the space of post-modernist practice is no longer organised around the definition of a given medium on the ground of material, or, for that matter, the perception of a material. It is organized instead through the universe of terms that are felt to be in opposition within a cultural situation.'[64] Krauss canonized the extension of the terrain of the gallery, and in contrast to the prevailing ideas that regarded works of art as *stand-alone*, she classified works depending on their relation to their setting as site-constructions (Smithson's *Partially Buried Woodshed*, 1970), marked sites (Heizer's *Double Negative,* 1969) or axiomatic structures (Nauman's *Video Corridors*, 1970). Krauss defined this expanded terrain of art by default in relation to the physical architecture of the site, which in these terms could be identified as 'the cultural situation in opposition' to the work of art.[65]

As the theoretical foundation and medium of sculpture were being transformed, so did the concerns and form of architecture, in responding to economic and socio-cultural changes: the radical critique of the late 1960s, and the changes in the building industry that devastated the profession in the period following immediately after 1968, irreversibly changed the discipline. Anthony Vidler describes how the foundations of architecture – in analogy with Krauss' observations on the sculptural field – was substantially redefined by a widening interest in different disciplines and the 'non-architectural',

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[61] See: Rosalind E. Krauss, 'In the Name of Picasso', in *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 23-40.
[62] Krauss' observations were based on the analysis of mainly Minimalist, Conceptual and Land Art practices of the late 1960s and 1970s, including works by Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer, Sol LeWitt, Bruce Nauman, Mary Miss, Robert Morris, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, Dennis Oppenheim and many others. See: Rosalind E. Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', *October*, 8 (1979), 30-44.
[63] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', p. 34.
[64] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field', p. 34.
[65] This is rendering Krauss's expanded field synonymous with Miwon Kwon's first, 'phenomenological' paradigm of site-specificity, which Miwon Kwon complemented with two other paradigms/categories that gave an ampler definition to site beyond its physical aspects, considering social, institutional and discursive aspects. See: Miwon Kwon, 'One Place after Another: Notes on Site Specificity', *October*, 80 (1997), 85-110.

constructing an 'expanded field' that offers new answers for architecture's fundamental problems.[66] This paradigm-shift – architecture's broadening relations to its cultural situation – materialised in the diversification of architectural production, a shift away from building and the ideology of orthodox functionalism.

When the era of avant-garde art was declared 'dead', a new post-progressive and post-liberal period commenced, and, as Kazys Varnelis pointed out in his study of the phenomenon of American cardboard architecture,[67] the extra-disciplinary events that architecture reacted to were, in fact, outcomes of the failure of liberalism. These disciplinary changes, however, as Varnelis has argued, discounted a radical critique of institutions and instead laid the foundations for the return of traditionalism in the 1980s: in other words, signposting the transition to a late-capitalist architecture of spectacle. The disciplinary response to the economic crisis of the building sector and counter-cultural critique was to abandon claims of social responsibility and restrict the domain of architecture to a rigorous formal system, the result of the spectacular attention to the image and its reproducibility in late capitalism.[68] The change in architectural production, based on the reproduction of architecture as image, resulted in the eventual spectacularisation of architecture and the ultimate replacement of a social discourse, with a new discourse organized around the spectacle. As Varnelis asserts: 'The idea of the balanced vital centre, however, is really conservatism in disguise, a model of society that supposedly works through the autonomous structural forces of the market.'[69]

Max Protetch was one of the most prominent architectural dealers throughout the 1980s in North America. While in its initial period between 1969-78 the Max Protetch Gallery mainly represented Minimalist and Conceptual artists, many of whom were the subjects of the theories that Krauss was developing at the time, it had entirely shifted in scope by 1978. When he moved from Washington D.C. to New York City, Protetch decided to change his focus and to deal in contemporary architectural 'masters', including Varnelis' 'cardboard' architects, as well as many others from beyond the United States.[70] However, this connection between Krauss's exemplars and the newly emerging paper or

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[66] Anthony Vidler, 'Architecture's Expanded Field: Finding Inspiration in Jellyfish and Geopolitics, Architects Today Are Working Within Radically New Frames of Reference', *Artforum*, April (2004), 142-147.

[67] Although the term is generally associated with the early work of architect Peter Eisenman, Kazys referred to cardboard architecture in relation to a lineage preceding Eisenman's appropriation, and used it to cover 'the reproductively-driven, surface-obsessive work of both the architects that emerged around the figure of Philip Johnson in the late 1970s, thinking and performing architectural design in the most prestigious American schools of architecture'. See: Kazys Varnelis, *The Spectacle of the Innocent Eye*.

[68] As Jameson writes, evidentially drawing on the ideas of Debord: 'Life has now become part of the institutional realm and the image's intrusive purchase has expanded so that social space is now completely saturated with the culture of the image.' […] 'the sphere of culture expands to the point where everything becomes in one way or another acculturated, the traditional distinctiveness or 'specificity' of the aesthetic (and even culture as such) is necessarily blurred or lost altogether.' See: Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern 1983-1998* (London/New York: Verso, 2009), p. 111.

[69] Varnelis, *The Spectacle of the Innocent Eye*, p. 191.

[70] Between 1969-78, while Protetch's gallery was based in Washington, D.C., it represented contemporary artists such as Dan Graham, Dennis Oppenheim, Donald Judd, Sol LeWitt, Dan Flavin, Joel Shapiro, Jo Baer, Lawrence Weiner, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Joseph Kosuth, etc. In the years after 1978 Protetch moved into the architectural market, representing contemporary practitioners such as

cardboard architects was not at all accidental. The gallery's conceptual continuity – beyond its obvious strategy of reflecting newly emerging markets between 1969 and 1978 – is clearly traceable across the representative language and syntax of these distinctive practices, which, within the space of the gallery, allude to the same logic of interpretation.

Both groups were in the vanguard: radical, but only in image. They both started out as part of the critique of modernism's totalising utopias, but were soon to be consumed by the free market of emerging total-global capitalism. Sol LeWitt once remarked: 'Minimalism wasn't a real idea – it ended before it started.'[71] Like the paradoxical example of Minimalist and Conceptual art, which radically challenged the idea of the *original* in art, but which, in a relatively short space of time, was reproduced as a marketable commodity – architecture's reproduced images followed the same logic. The disciplinary expansion of the architectural field corresponded precisely with the newly expanding markets of late capitalism.

Collecting and the Market

As Leon Krier famously declared, 'I do not build because I am an architect.'[72] Similarly, many others turned to the theory and history of post '68 architecture, which implied the consequent ascent of the medium of drawing that provided both a suitable mode for both contemplative intellectual engagement and commercial consumption by the newly inflated art markets. The predominance of the medium of drawing in architectural practice was clear by the late 1970s, affirmed by countless exhibitions, including Drexler's iconic 'The Architecture of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts' at MoMA in 1975, or Stern's 1978 exhibition at the Drawing Center, 'America Now', which surveyed contemporary architecture purely through drawings. This interest was further affirmed by Stern's and Deborah Nevins' thematic monograph on American architectural drawings,[73] presenting the history of 200 years of architecture through the medium of drawing, that was published in 1979.

Along with the rising significance of drawing, the model – that Eisenman's exhibition set out to defend – also acquired a renewed interest as an architectural means in its own right. Heinrich Klotz, 'the 'Vasari of contemporary architecture'[74] dated his earliest ideas concerning the collection and preservation of architectural ephemera to a visit, in 1969, to Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, late in the architect's life. It was the vision of Mies' discarded architectural models – regarded by the architect and his family as no longer functional – that convinced the historian and critic Klotz of the importance of establishing an architectural collection and museum, and exactly a decade later the DAM was founded. Architectural drawings and models were originally regarded as secondary by-products of the planning

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Aldo Rossi, Robert Venturi, John Hejduk, Michael Graves, Peter Eisenman, Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Frank Gehry, Tadao Ando, Daniel Libeskind, Samuel Mockbee, etc.

[71] Saul Ostrow, 'Sol LeWitt by Saul Ostrow', *Bomb Magazine*, 85 (2003).

[72] Ian Latham, 'Léon Krier. A Profile...', *Architectural Design*, 57 (1978), 37.

[73] *The Architect's Eye: American Architectural Drawings from 1799-1978*, ed. by Deborah Nevins and Robert A. M. Stern (New York: Pantheon Books, 1979).

[74] In: Heinrich Klotz, ed., 'Revision of the Modern' [Special issue]. *Architectural Design*, 55 (1985), 9.

and production of buildings, but a generation after Mies these media have gained a new status and became an independent form that has contributed to the global circulation and expression of the notion of 'architecture as idea' – architecture's dematerialisation.

The ascent of drawing in architecture was not unique to North America and Western Europe. In the 1980s Soviet Union, too, as Klotz described in a DAM exhibition catalogue on late Soviet architecture, 'drawings became exercises in survival of the imagination.'[75] Like postmodernist cardboard architecture, the 1980s post-totalitarian[76] 'paper architecture' of the Soviet Union symbolised a reaction to the systematic realization of utopias, and the gigantism and the normative monotony of post-war functionalism. The creation of a new architectural language with a primary focus on form and fiction meant liberation from functionalism and other bureaucratic routines. The return to the language of classicism and constructivism of the paper architects was, however, just as ironic as postmodernism's historic recycling.

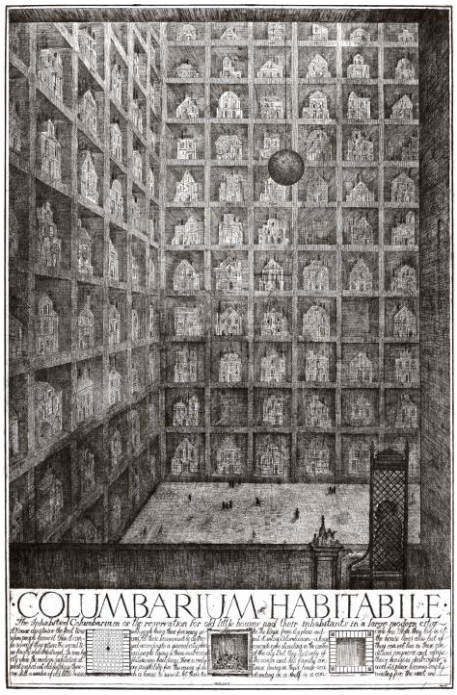

Fig. 60. Alexander Brodsky and Ilya Utkin, *Columbarium Habitabile*, 1989.

With no concern for building or social organisation, the paper architecture of the Soviet Union, like its postmodern Western counterparts, did not serve as a surrogate to real architecture. It was self-sufficient, an independent cultural phenomenon, which aimed first and foremost to express an individualistic realisation of its authors' ideas – as did the cult of the starchitect in Western society. Growing initially out of a resistance to the totalitarian architecture of the Brezhnev era, it readily catered to the 1980s politics of *perestroika*, which – just like the paper architects – replaced ideological utopia with a post-political fiction. As Michael J. Ostwald points out, despite the politicised perception of Soviet paper architecture in the Western canon, the significance of its politics was precisely that they were

[75] Quoted in Heinrich Klotz, 'Preface', in *Paper Architecture*: *New Projects from the Soviet Union*, exhib. cat., ed. by Heinrich Klotz (Frankfurt: Deutsches Architekturmuseum, 1989), p. 8.
[76] See: Alexander G. Rappaport, 'Language and Architecture of "Post-Totalitarianism"' in *Paper Architecture*: *New Projects from the Soviet Union*, pp. 11-18.

completely absent.[77] Paper architects, in parallel with their initially illegal participation in international competitions and their subsequent touring exhibitions in Western Europe and North America,[78] enjoyed the State's support at the same time, and were encouraged to partake in numerous dedicated – and official – exhibitions, also organised within the Soviet Union. Their post-political fiction was equally consonant with the young neo-liberalism of Western institutions and the new order of Gorbachev's *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

In January 1981, *The New York Times* announced with despair that the sheer quantity of architecture and design exhibitions resulted in a situation whereby it was impossible to visit and review them all.[79] Besides the countless museum exhibitions – or perhaps both the result and the cause of them – by the early 1980s the traditional clientele of contemporary architects had greatly expanded to include dealers and galleries. Drawings and models, previously regarded as secondary and unimportant evidence of architectural procedure, found their primary market. As they invaded the walls of galleries, the price of single drawings rose steeply. Sotheby's auction house organized its first 'specialist sale' of architectural drawings in 1979, while other small domestic design objects also found their way into the gallery, and a decade later Larson concluded: 'Having reconstructed the traditional identity of the architect-as-artist, formalism helped designers to effect a strategic retreat toward the individualism of one-of-a-kind commissions. […] In sum, in our century architectural modernism went from technocratic social engineering to the service of corporate power.'[80]

Fig. 61. Alessi *Tea and Coffee Piazza* collections by Richard Meier, Michael Graves and Aldo Rossi.

In the same year as Sotheby's opened up a new specialist market for architecture, Italian kitchenware manufacturer Alessi initiated a series of commissions entitled 'Tea & Coffee Piazza'. A number of contemporary architects – among them Meier, Graves, Hollein, Mendini, Tigerman, Venturi, Rossi, and Jencks – were invited to create tea and coffee services: the hand-made originals, cast in silver, were sold at the Max Protetch Gallery. 'Architecture in Silver' was soon followed in 1982 by 'Architecture in

[77] Ostwald, 'Ranciere and the Metapolitical Framing of Architecture: Reconstructing Brodsky and Utkin's Voyage', 9-20.
[78] The DAM's 1989 exhibition 'Paper Architecture: New Projects from the Soviet Union' subsequently travelled from Frankfurt to a number of North American venues between 1990 and 1991, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, MA; The American Institute of Architects, Washington, D. C.; Yale University School of Architecture, New Haven, CT; Grey Art Gallery, New York University, New York City, and the Rice University School of Architecture, Houston, TX.
[79] Ada Louise Huxtable, 'Architecture View: Shows with a personal vision', *New York Times*, January 11, 1981 [http://www.nytimes.com/1981/01/11/arts/architechture-view-shows-with-a-personal-vision-by-ada-louise-huxtable.html?pagewanted=all] [accessed on 10.12.2015].
[80] Magali Sarfatti Larson, *Behind the Postmodern Facade: Architectural Change in Late Twentieth-Century America* (University California Press, Berkeley, 1993), p. 246.

Gold', for which Cleto Munari commissioned the design of jewellery as a form of architecture from more than a dozen architects, a group that largely overlapped with Alessi's team of architect designers: '[T]he beloved protagonists of the great architectural *telenovela* incessantly fuelled by corporate and society gossip broadcast by magazines and reviews and echoed by students, intellectuals, and pursuers of celebrities.'[81] It was not accidental that these commissions coincided with the boom in architectural publishing. One of its largest players, Rizzoli, entered this lucrative market in 1980,[82] focusing on the vanguard of the Postmodern movement and contributing a great deal to the circulation of the figures, images and discourse that also stimulated Protetch's, Alessi's and Munari's markets – revealing the inner working of a profession responding to its precarious socio-economic reality, and aiming to reaffirm the status of architecture in society through emerging new markets and channels of publishing and communication.

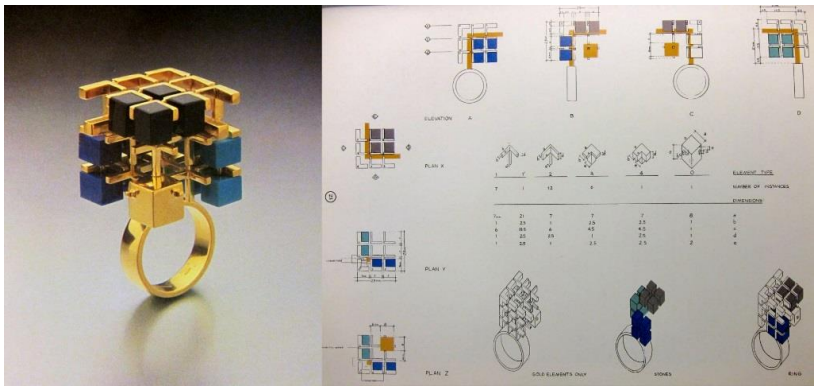

Fig. 62. Jewellery by Peter Eisenman, commissioned by Cleto Munari.

It was not only ephemera that was supporting the growth of the architectural publishing market, but also the myth and the idea of architecture that was for sale in the showrooms. This was notable in the case of 'Architecture II: Houses for Sale' in 1980 that the Leo Castelli Gallery organised in its showroom as a sequel to its first exhibition of architectural drawings, 'Architecture I' in 1977. The exhibition displayed drawings and models by eight architects,[83] specifically commissioned by the gallery to design and respond to the simple architectural brief of a single-family house on a plot of one acre. Albeit in different ways from those of Eisenman's earlier 'Idea as Model', the Castelli showcase also aimed to challenge the traditional idea of the medium and representation of architecture by flattening difference between the drawing of an idea and the architectural project itself. In the Castelli show, clients who bought the drawings – as in the case of the earlier Minimal or Conceptual art projects – also received the

[81] Barbara Radice, *Jewelry by Architects* (New York: Rizzoli, 1987), p. 7. Ironically, what makes Radice's remarks even more poignant is the fact that its publisher, Rizzoli, had a major part in the making of this reality.
[82] Between 1980 and 1985 alone the publishing house produced more than two hundred books and editions of journals on architecture, and reached unprecedented sales figures. See: Varnelis, *The Spectacle of the Innocent Eye*, p. 212.
[83] Charles Moore, Cesar Pelli, Emilio Ambasz, Peter Eisenman, Arata Isozaki, Cedric Price, Vittorio Gregotti and O. M. Ungers. See catalogue to the exhibition by Barbara Jakobson, writing under the pseudonym B. J. Archer, *Houses for Sale: Architects, Emilio Ambasz, Peter Eisenman, Vittorio Gregotti, Arata Isozaki, Charles Moore, Cesar Pelli, Cedric Price, Oswald Mathias Ungers*, exhib. cat. (New York: Leo Castelli Gallery, 1980).

concession for the realisation of the buildings as instructed in the architects' plans and models.[84] The architect's work and project (building and idea) were no longer symbolically distinguishable.

Fig. 63 (left) Leo Castelli in New York; (right) *Houses for Sale* exhibition catalogue, Leo Castelli Gallery, 1980.

The move away from the categorical separation between plan and building was also crucial in earlier critical practices such as Matta-Clark's interventions on the site of the city as a means to shift the notion of architecture from object to event. The difference between Matta-Clark's interventions and the works presented at Castelli's exhibition – or for that matter at the IAUS – was grounded in a distinction between the instrumental and the communicative roles of architecture, as Dalibor Vesely observed: a gap between the creative and productive realities of architectural representation.[85] The relative independence that architectural representation acquired in the frame of the gallery resulted in a move away from an active engagement and participation in the world – as originally figured in Matta-Clark's on-site interventions – enhancing the discipline's emancipation and its total autonomy instead of its participation in the world. In fact, as discussed in regard to Matta-Clark's work, its dissociation from the political subject, in the space of the gallery, finally unravelled – or rather objectified – his original critique. The work of the paper and cardboard architects, which constituted a conservative move from architecture as social subject to architecture as a hermetic object, flourished in this environment, and

[84] As Felicity Dale Scott describes, Leo Castelli took the idea from a show at MoMA that was created by Emilio Ambasz in 1975 ('Architectural Studies and Projects'), in which drawings were offered for sale in the members' penthouse. The drawings were presented as art, and this fetishising of the drawings – Scott quotes Michael Sorkin's contemporaneous review – contributed to the invention of a new market for architecture. In 'Architecture II: Houses for Sale', as Hal Foster also remarked, the drawings were presented as 'important works' of avant-garde architecture, and the potential buyer '[could] get the house, an object of art, and perhaps a piece of history to boot'. (Hal Foster, 'Pastiche/Prototype/Purity: "Houses for Sale"'*Artforum,* 19, 7 (1981), 77-79.) As Scott argued in regard to Arata Isozaki's participation in the exhibition – as opposed to his *Electric Labyrinth* a decade earlier that assumed a critical potential on the site of the gallery and constituted a revolutionary piece that challenged 'the dominant vectors of society' – his work on sale in the Leo Castelli Gallery lost its critical potential: in the context of this exhibition it became a collectable object that demonstrated instead architecture's relation to the market of neoliberal capitalism. see: Felicity D. Scott, 'Out of Place: Arata Isozaki's *Electric Labyrinth*, 1968*',* in *Exhibiting Architecture*, ed. by Thordis Arrhenius, Mari Lending, Wallis Miller, Jérémie Michael McGowan (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2014), pp. 21-40.

[85] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), p. 4.

marked the transition to the new market for collectables – the instrumental value of the work of architecture thus became its marketability.

## The Sum of the Whole in Its Parts: The Collection of Architecture

> *The whole is always smaller than its parts*
> – Bruno Latour[86]

The expansion of the market for architecture was a direct consequence of the rising number of museums dedicated to the systematic collection of architecture at the turn of the 1970s. Among these, two crucially important and pioneering institutions were the DAM and the CCA (Canadian Centre for Architecture), both founded in 1979, in Frankfurt and Montreal respectively. These two institutions, shaped by the ideas and understanding of architecture of their respective founders, Heinrich Klotz and Phyllis Lambert, set out substantially different missions and distinct collecting policies, yet they both played an equally influential role in the shaping of this history of the institutionalisation of architectural collecting, providing the foundations and models for subsequent institutions in a fast-growing field.

The DAM was the first to focus its collection specifically on the Postmodern movement in architecture, with a mission to introduce innovative contemporary practice to a broad audience for the first time in Germany. Although the museum was founded with a strong national mandate, its founding director, Klotz, aimed to cover an international panorama and to include a broad selection of works and practitioners. He travelled around Europe and the United States in search of valuable objects, and his purchases, drawings, models, plans and photographs were rigorously recorded in his journal, later published as *The Klotz Tapes*.[87] For Klotz, collecting also meant a kind of patronage. He often gave endowments and commissioned young architects – such as Rem Koolhaas, Peter Cook or Ron Herron – who at the time had not yet received commissions, and whose work, to Klotz's pleasure, materialised exclusively on paper. As Klotz wrote: 'As such, the drawings themselves can be seen as their actual work; they prepare them with the greatest care and present them like works of art."[88] This framing of architectural media within the museum – not so different from the commercial showrooms of the galleries – was seen as a way to ensure the recognition and the autonomous status of the architectural discipline as equal to that of the liberal and fine arts.

While the market for architectural drawings had already entered a period of increasing professionalisation, Klotz mostly purchased directly from the architects themselves. He took every opportunity, meeting and travelling, to further his new acquisitions, and the collection of the DAM rapidly expanded in its first decade, numbering more than 35,000 drawings, 150 paintings and 350 scale

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[86] Bruno Latour, Pablo Jensen, Tommaso Venturini, Sébastian Grauwin and Dominique Boullier, 'The Whole is Always Smaller Than Its Parts: A Digital Test of Gabriel Tarde's Monads', *The British Journal of Sociology,* 63 (2012), 590–615.
[87] The *Klotz Tapes*, Klotz's journal, was translated into English and republished on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the DAM's founding. See: Oliver Elser, ed., 'Die Klotz-Tape' [Special issue]. *Arch+,* 216 (2014).
[88] Julia Voss, 'Heinrich Klotz, the Price Explosion, and the Star System: A Lesson on the Relationship between the Art Market and Museums', *Arch+,* 216 (2014), 38-44 (p. 40).

models in its collection by 1987.[89] However, Klotz soon faced the reality, presented by the booming American market, of the exponentially expanding price of drawings and other ephemera.[90] His moderate budget for the DAM's acquisitions could no longer compete: the more he purchased, the higher the prices went, which Klotz sarcastically compared to the paradox of the 'god of omnipotence', who created a stone so heavy that even he could not lift it.[91] Whereas his initial collecting activity contributed to the further expansion of the market – especially his interest in providing young architects with new opportunities for commissions outside building – the eventual explosion of this field put a halt to the initially rapid growth of his collection.

Fig. 64. 'Mission: Postmodern – Heinrich Klotz and the Wunderkammer DAM', Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, 2014.

Unlike Klotz's collecting policy that centred on contemporary and emerging practitioners of the Postmodern the CCA established an entirely different strategy. Observing the contemporary landscape of architecture in the late 1970s, its founding director, Phyllis Lambert, noted the loss of an architectural 'quality' that she identified as a 'loss of literacy in the history of architecture'.[92] Accordingly, the central premise of the CCA was initially less concerned with the collection of contemporary production,[93] focusing instead on the promotion of scholarship in architecture. Lambert's ambition was to invent a new type of collecting institution, with guiding principles that initiated research and aimed to foreground process and inquiry as a free-ranging and *connective* activity in the canonical history of architecture.[94] By tracing how architects think and learn throughout history, the CCA aimed to influence

[89] Charles Bonenti, 'Speaking for Post-Modern Architecture'*, Berkshires Week*, June 26-July 2, 1987.
[90] For a detailed description of the market and Klotz's early acquisitions see: Voss, 'Heinrich Klotz, the Price Explosion and the Star System: A Lesson on the Relationship between the Art Market and Museums', pp. 38-44.
[91] As quoted by Voss, in 'Heinrich Klotz, the Price Explosion, and the Star System: A Lesson on the Relationship between the Art Market and Museums', p. 44.
[92] Phyllis Lambert, 'History and Architectural Literacy', *ARQ, La Revue des Membres de L'Ordre des Architectures du Quebec*, 11 (1983), 23-25 (p. 23).
[93] The CCA started to systematically collect post-war contemporary archival material only from the 1990s onwards.
[94] For Phyllis Lambert's writings on the CCA's mission and collecting strategies see: Phyllis Lambert, 'Foreword'*,* in *Architecture and Its Image: Four Centuries of Architectural Representation*, ed. by Eve Blau and Edward Kaufman (Montréal: Centre Canadien d'Architecture /Canadian Centre for Architecture; Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989). (See also the Introduction.); Phyllis Lambert, 'Director's

and activate contemporary discourse, and proposed its new museum as a research centre for architectural practitioners, critics and historians alike. Accordingly, the CCA Collection was conceived and positioned as a quasi-database of architectural ideas and documents, rather than a collection of autonomous objects, which was the result of Klotz's approach.

The CCA Collection initially grew out from Lambert's personal collecting activity, which amounted by 1979 to about 4,000 items of mainly French and Italian architectural prints and drawings, most dating from between the 15th and 19th centuries. Lambert acquired the first pieces of this collection as a student with Mies in Chicago, around 1953, conversely at a time when the teaching of architectural history – under the growing influence of the masters of high modernism – had completely disappeared from the curriculum of most schools of architecture, in both Europe and in North America.[95] While there was no conscious attitude or position behind her initial collection, Lambert's interest was not concerned with the history per se, but with 'outstanding' examples and the connecting ideas behind unique pieces and structures of architecture. It was in support of this collection that Lambert also established a personal library on the theory, practice and publishing of architecture. This became the basis for the CCA's extensive library collection, which reflects the main purpose of the institution in interweaving research activity.

The library occupied a central focus within the CCA's acquisition policy from its very beginning, and by 1989, when its new Montreal building opened, the library had expanded from 10,000 to more than 100,000 volumes. It included many rare books and special collections – such as architectural periodicals, treatises, trade catalogues, oral histories and related ephemera – and was dedicated to the literature of architecture in the broadest sense, including its professional history as well as its relationship to the main intellectual currents. As in the focus of the library collection, Lambert emphasised from the very beginning the concept of the CCA Collection(s) as a whole that brought together the otherwise fragmented parts of architectural production.[96] However, the medium-based organization of its distinct types of collections, as well as the allied operational apparatus of the CCA, actually worked against Lambert's original idea of connecting research. The parts of the Collection were kept and catalogued separately, based on the various categories of prints, drawings, photography, library, and other ephemera.[97] The structure of the institution, according to the nature of its different collections, became a mosaic of distinct institutional models, from libraries to art museums, with highly specialized divisions that eventually resulted in the further fragmentation, rather than the consolidation,

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Choice: Report on Selected Acquisitions, 1985-1989'. *RACAR*, 16, 2 (l989), 121-130; Phyllis Lambert, 'The Architectural Museum: A Founder's Perspective', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 58, 3 (1999), 308-315.

[95] The Burnham Library at the Art Institute of Chicago closed in the 1960s while Lambert was there as a student of architecture. See: Lambert, 'History and Architectural Literacy'.

[96] Lambert emphasized the use of 'collection' in the singular and introduced a policy from 1982 about single access to the collection that helped to shape both the cataloguing of the collection and the building. On the questions of cataloguing and access to the collections see: Phyllis Lambert, 'The First Five Years', in *Canadian Centre for Architecture: The First Five Years, 1979-1984* (Montréal: Canadian Centre for Architecture, 1988) pp. 109-113.

[97] Up to the early 2000s there were four different consecutive cataloguing systems within the institution.

of the notion of *one* Collection. This medium-based approach also further reinforced object-based research, as opposed to the foregrounding of 'free-ranging ideas'.

Fig. 65. (left) Richard Pare, *View of North facade of CCA,* Montreal, 1988; (right) Gábor Szilasi, *View of the CCA Conservation Laboratory*, Montreal, 1989.

Besides the library and the equally expanding collection of historic prints and drawings, architectural photography became another focus of the CCA, which was recognized at the time as a new medium for architectural imaging, in that its 'immaterial' qualities offered a counter to models and drawings, as manifest also in Matta-Clark's dematerialized documentation of his own work.[98] The CCA's acquisition strategy was developed systematically from 1974 onwards, under the leadership of its founding curator Richard Pare in close collaboration with Lambert.[99] The Collection of Photography stretched from the earliest examples of 19th-century architectural documentation to contemporary work. It was first of its kind to focus on the architectural genre within the history of photography, and played a pioneering role in laying the foundations of scholarship in this field. When in 1982 the CCA staged its first exhibition, 'Photography and Architecture: 1839-1939', which toured internationally,[100] it only presented the beginning of its prolific collecting activities within the field of photography. During the 1980s its collection increased from 3,000 to over 46,000 photographic items, a growth that was made possible through the burgeoning market of galleries, dealers and auction houses that promptly emerged during this decade.

As Grasskamp has remarked, serial photography – which he noted as deriving from the tradition of art museums – played a key role in relation to the changing concept of collecting and museums in the 1960s and 1970s. It was the work of Bernd and Hilla Becher, recording the formal taxonomies of a post-industrial landscape, that helped to re-position this genre of documentary photography in the context of art, which before had only had its place 'in the darkroom' – as a form of pure technical experimentation.

[98] This thesis has no scope to give an overview of the development of the medium of photography and moving image in relation to architectural documentation, yet it is important to acknowledge the role of these media in the development of architectural representation – and dematerialization – within the museum. On Gordon Matta-Clark's strategic use of photography see: Pamela Lee, 'Other Spaces: Proleptic Photography', in *Gordon Matta-Clark, Moment to Moment: Space*, pp. 98-121.
[99] This was initially part of the Seagram Collection and moved to Montreal in 1988, a year before the opening of the CCA's new building.
[100] The exhibition was organised prior to the construction of the CCA's current building. It was presented in a number of international venues, such as the Galerie Lempertz Contempora in Cologne (1982), the Art Institute of Chicago (1983), the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York (1983), Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris (1984) and the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa (1984).

Grasskamp argued that this kind of 'documentary' photography, in fact, was more about openness and formal free play than documentation, and that it was a form of collecting the everyday: 'The photograph relieves the collector of the many disappointments arising out of the fact that there are certain objects that he simply cannot possess without restoring to theft; the photograph makes possible collections of objects which cannot be brought together in one place.'[101]

Accordingly, as well as collecting, the commissioning of photography constituted a specific approach for the CCA, which was to facilitate strategic growth, as well as opening up new themes and readings within its own fragmented Collection.[102] The first commissions predated – and also foreshadowed – the foundation of the institution, and were closely intertwined with Lambert's ongoing activism in saving architectural heritage: a history of architecture in stone. [103] These included two major projects recording the 'greystone' buildings of the Montreal area (1971-74) and the *American Court House* (1974-76). It was Lambert's involvement in the 'Save Montreal' movement that also lead to the 1974 acquisition of the historic greystone mansion of the Shaughnessy House – built in 1874 according to plans by William Tutin Thomas – which she bought in order to save it from demolition. It is suggestively symbolic, that this building, with Peter Rose's additions, later became the home of the CCA Collection.

Tellingly, the two exhibitions that celebrated the 1989 inauguration of the institution's new building – the iconic exhibition 'Architecture and Its Image',[104] in the main galleries of the CCA, and a smaller accompanying display 'Building and Gardens', in the newly opened Octagonal Gallery – were respectively devoted to the CCA Collection and the building itself, positioning one in relation to the other. In this way, not unlike the case of Ungers' DAM, the CCA's building became part of its Collection. A built representation of the CCA's institution and a fragment of the disappearing historic fabric of the city of Montreal – as seen through Lambert's ongoing photographic commissions – the building *contained* itself, both as a concept and as object.[105] As the fragmented object of history became the advocate for architecture's disciplinary self-definition, within the CCA Collection, once again, the ideas, images and contexts of architecture became oblivious to clear differentiation.

Whereas the DAM and the CCA manifested two disparate strategies and missions at the dawn of the institutionalized collection of architecture, they were symptoms of the same cultural model. If the DAM was established as a Collection of postmodern architecture, the CCA – despite the distance it took in its actual Collection (in that it initially stayed aloof from the acquisition of the work of the neo-avant-garde

[101] Grasskamp, *Artists and Other Collectors*, p. 135.
[102] Phyllis Lambert, 'The Archeology of Collecting', in *En chantier: The Collections of the CCA 1989-99*, (Montreal: CCA, 1999), pp. 17-33 (p. 17).
[103] Lambert actively participated in the 'Save Montreal' movement that was set up to resist the controversial demolition of the Van Horne mansion in the early 1970s, which eventually led to the foundation of 'Heritage Montreal' in 1975, a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of the architectural, historic and cultural heritage of the Montreal area.
[104] See: Eve Blau, *Architecture and Its Image: Four Centuries of Architectural Representation*.
[105] The building and gardens of the CCA have been systematically photographed since the mid-1980s, producing a whole body of photographic documentation that forms part of the CCA Collection. Some of these documents were the result of the CCA's commissioning activities, including works by Robert Burley, Serge Clément, André Dubois, Tom Gibson, Stefano Graziani, Guido Guidi, Clara Gutsche, Naoya Hatakeyama, Armin Linke, Richard Pare, Filippo Romano and Gabor Szilasi. See: Eszter Steierhoffer, 'The CCA in Photographs' (exhibition), Montreal: CCA, 22 April – 15 December 2015.

architects) – became a herald for the postmodern institution through the organisational logic and fragmentation enforced by its isolating (and in essence modernist) taxonomies. While one might expect an alternative treatment of objects in these respective exhibitionary contexts (considering Lambert's emphasis on the 'idea' as opposed to the object),[106] the CCA's sophisticated and strict framing and conservation standards echoed precisely Klotz's insistence on the fetishised status of the object of architecture. Isolated objects, quasi-artworks, became 'advocates' for the conceptual autonomy of disciplinary thought, which ultimately fortified a fragmented notion of the collected parts, as opposed to the conceptual whole. It is ironic, but not accidental, that it was within the institutional frame of the CCA (and its Collection) – when its focus shifted to the acquisition of the archives of contemporary architects[107] – that Matta-Clark's oeuvre definitively and irreversibly became part of the very canon that it originally aimed to disrupt, and which it finally shares with Eisenman's work.

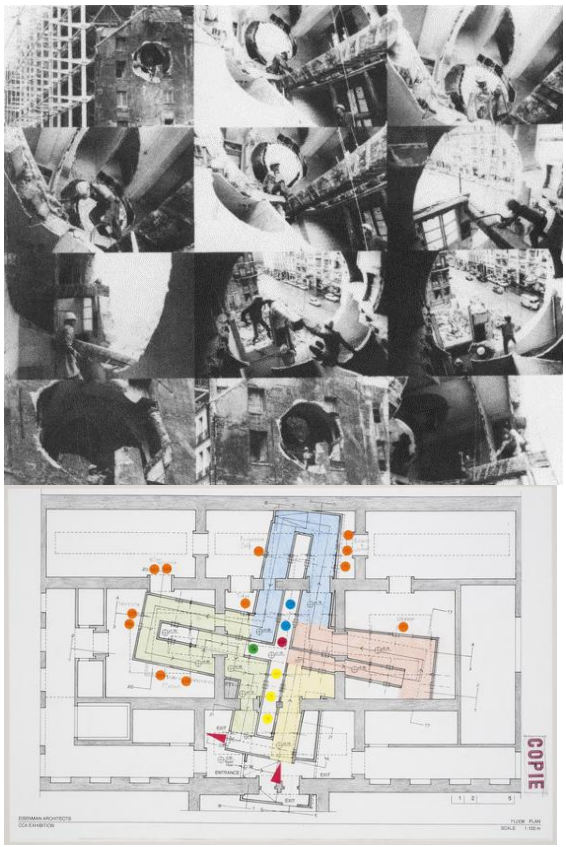


Fig. 66. (left) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Conical Intersect,* 1975; (right) Peter Eisenman's deconstruction of the CCA Galleries as part of his exhibition 'Cities of Artificial Excavation', Montreal, 1993–1994.[108]

[106] Beyond collecting, there was an apparent contrast also in the format and ways of presenting history through exhibitions at these two institutions, seen in Klotz's permanent and central showcase of a historical narration of architectural types and the sequence of temporary exhibitions at the CCA that aimed to outline the complexity of architectural thought and a plurality of its histories.
[107] From the early1990s the CCA started to actively focus on the acquisition of contemporary architects, including the office archive of Peter Eisenman, John Hejduk, Gordon Matta-Clark, Cedric Price, Aldo Rossi and James Stirling.
[108] It is telling – and perhaps symbolic – that, as the collecting of archives has implied a gradual restructuring of the infrastructure and concept of the museum, it was Peter Eisenman's archive that was the first to be deposited at the CCA, while Eisenman, in his legendary exhibition 'Cities of Artificial Excavation' (1994), contemporaneously deconstructed the building's physical galleries.

END NOTE

From the late 1990s, resulting from economic restrictions and the changes in the managerial direction of the CCA,[109] a new culture of collecting emerged that started to actively focus on the acquisition of the work of contemporary architects. This, however, concentrated not on the acquisition of singular artifacts – as Heinrich Klotz did throughout the 1980s – but instead on the exclusive collection of the entire archives of single architects or projects. Accordingly, the CCA slowly moved away from the collecting and cataloguing of the singular item, and the notion of the series and archives of architecture have now replaced that of the artwork-like object. This shift – that overlaps with the emergence of the new epistemological model introduced by the information society and digital culture – implied new coordinates not only for the operation of the museum, but also for that of the architect.

Whereas the CCA's first impetus was to establish the discipline through its representative history and objects, by the turn of the millennium, as a related strategy to the collection of archives, a new representational model was introduced that refocused on architectural research as process through the medium of exhibition itself.[110] As the CCA's current director, Mirko Zardini, has summarised: 'The emphasis is no longer on *what* the institution does but *how* it does it'.[111] This kind of positioning of the architecture museum itself as *the* architectural producer, explains the museum's contemporary self-representation as the perpetuation of the postmodern representational self-reference: the institution's *own* quest for emancipation and autonomy.

As the *new heroes of architecture* became the curators – who, concurrently, also replaced the central role of the *artist* within the exuberantly bureaucratized field of the art museum – the context of the archive provides a new semiotic terrain for the continued assimilation of emerging architectural practices.[112] Besides rendering the architectural museum's (re)production as architecture, the ascent of the archive and its new representational model also greatly contributed to the professionalisation of the architect *as* curator. The move from the object to the archive foreshadowed a shift from the 1980s exhibitionary practice to the increasingly professionalised curatorial architecture of the new millennium,

[109] The most drastic cuts to the CCA endowments happened in January 2003, resulting in a dramatic downsizing of the institution, its employees and activities. Although the funding was soon rebalanced, a more careful and sustainable collecting policy has been established. Many of the archives arrived at the CCA as donations, while others are in deposit.

[110] This new exhibition practice dates to Mirko Zardini's arrival at the CCA and the subsequent thematic exhibitions, especially the 'Out of the Box' series which set up a new format of curating the archives of architects, and treated the exhibition itself in an 'archival' manner. (Zardini arrived at the CCA as consultant and curator in 2003, and became its director in 2005.) Note also that the acquisition of entire archives and the shift to a more contemporary collecting approach in the 1990s was defined predominantly by an Anglo-American focus. It was only during Zardini's directorship that – aligning with a globalising tendency in both the art and architecture worlds – a more international collecting approach was initiated (refocusing on India, Spain, Portugal, Japan, etc).

[111] Interview with author, 3 December 2015, CCA, Montreal.

[112] See for example the exhibition 'Out of the Box: Abalos & Herreros' at the CCA throughout the year of 2015, in the context of which three 'emerging' architectural practices, OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen (Brussels); Juan José Castellón (Zurich); and Florian Idenburg and Jing Liu of SO – IL (New York) were invited for residencies in the CCA's Abalos & Herreros archive, with the desired outcome of three exhibitions, curated as a reflection of their own practices. In other words, the three emerging practices were compared and contrasted through their curatorial engagement with the archive.

a journey from building to drawing, and finally to curating. The architectural object's transition 'from the space of real possibilities to the space of possible realities'[113] culminated in today's new *modus operandi* for architecture. As the essential nature of making becomes synonymous with curating, the museum's representation of architecture once again doubles as architecture's representation of the museum.

[113] See: Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation,* p. 21.

**CHAPTER 5**

**THE MUSEUM IN THE EXPANDED FIELD: THE MUSEUM AND THE CITY**

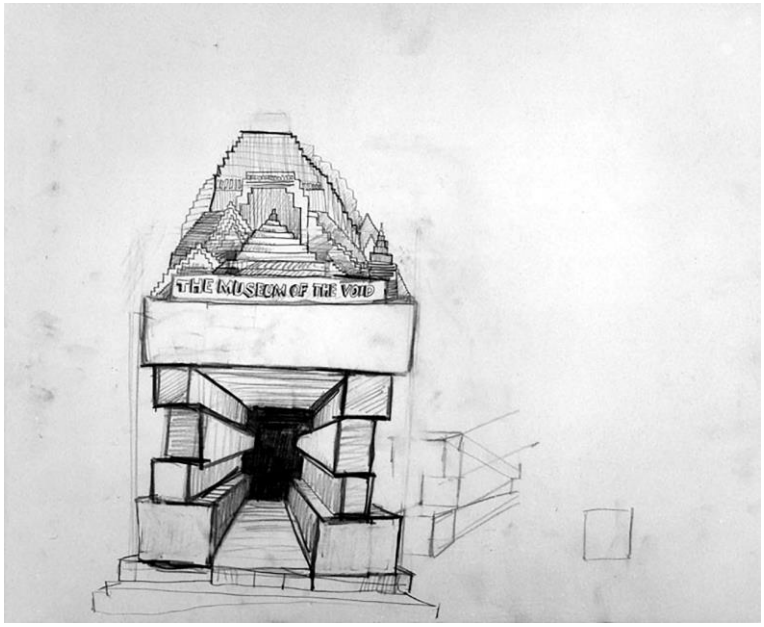


Fig. 67. Robert Smithson, *Museum of the Void*, 1968.

PROLOGUE

The fifth and final chapter, 'The Museum in the Expanded Field: The Museum and the City', considers the city as the expanded field of the museum, which, by the regressive reframing of dissident art practices, found its new structural origin through its own site within the city.

The hypothesis of this chapter is that it was the renewed interest in the city in the 1960s and '70s which also brought about a renewed interest in the museum. The very critique that drove contemporary art outside the museum also brought into focus the spatial metaphor and the site of the museum. This will be illuminated in relation to examples of artists' museums by Christo, Asher and Filiou, artists who questioned the traditional frame of the museum, ventured out in the city and proposed new models for surrogate museums.

From its origins, the history of the public museum progressed in tandem with the development, and the dominant spatial hegemonies, of cities. As Vidler has argued, the Modern museum's isolation within the city was more rooted in the Cartesian spatial theories of the early 20th century than in the 19th-century tradition of objective historicism.[1] From the late 1970s onwards the museum and the city were transformed from opposite to apposite concepts: the post-Beaubourg museum produced the notion of urbanity – through the case study of Tschumi's New Acropolis Museum, this chapter argues that the aura of the site of origin is both framed and produced by the museum.

The intellectual developments of poststructuralism and the consequent trend of plural historical readings ultimately implied a shift in scale from the monumental to the normative, everyday, architecture of the city.[2] The expansion of late-capitalist museums into the city provided a new syntax for the representation of contemporary economic and political powers. This chapter argues that the late 20th-century city was finally transformed by the 21st century into a 'total museum' – a tendency exemplified by the reconstruction of the urban spaces of the reunited Berlin – and its reconstructed museuminsel, the final case study of this chapter – that turned from a utopian ruin into the ruin of utopia. As contemporary architectural practice appropriates curating as its modus operandi, this thesis understands that the 'crisis' of the contemporary city is closely related to that of the contemporary museum. In this way, the globalised phenomenon of contemporary curating is finally confronted and interrogated within the intersection of cultural sociology and urban geography.

[1] Anthony Vidler, 'The Space of History: Modern Museums from Patrick Geddes to Le Corbusier', in *The Architecture of the Museum – Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts*, ed. by Michael Giebelhausen, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 160-82.
[2] In relation to the contemporary city Lefebvre summarized this phenomenon as 'the demise of the monument and the rise of the building'. See: Henry Lefebvre, 'Toward an Architecture of Enjoyment', *Artforum*, April (2014). This imprint (originally published in 1973) has an introduction from Lukasz Stanek.

## 5.1 HE MUESEUM IN THE EXPANDED FIELD

> *When you make, it is art, when you finish, it is non-art, when you exhibit, it is anti-art.*
> – Robert Filliou[3]

Museum in Context

Since the beginning of the early 20th century, museums have often been compared to tombs and mausoleums, places for dead things that are not relevant to life any more.[4] In 1967, exactly ten years before the opening of the Centre Pompidou, Robert Smithson asserted that 'Museums are tombs and it looks like everything is turning into a museum.'[5] It is not surprising, then, that a decade later, at a time when more museums were being built and more literature had appeared on museums than in the previous century,[6] a new generation of artists opted to 'move out' of the museum as an act of resistance. Their attempt to bring art back to life – and to challenge the boundaries of contemporary art by reinserting it in the spaces of the everyday – started out clearly as a reaction to the ideological implications and limitations of the museum; paradoxically, this artistic attitude itself contributed significantly to the rise of the postmodern museum and brought the museum back to life, or as one could argue – as Smithson did – it gradually turned life itself into a museum. [7] This new exhibitionary paradigm, key to postmodern identity politics and the contemporary museum landscape, can be understood in the light of the changing notion of publicness, as well as that of the changing concept of architectural representation as defined within the museum. The extent to which artists made this 'move' was made explicit in work and display strategies – how the very fabric of a museum could become part of a work – but this act of defiance had unintended results, and brought about a change in the constitution of the museum.

In substance, art and the museum have a symbiotic relationship; they have a synaesthetic existence. The museum that selects, collects and frames art practices is at the same time continually redefined in the context of its collection. O'Doherty argued, in *Gallery Gestures*, that the space of the gallery became a new medium of artistic expression. In the context of the 'void shows', the physical space of the gallery became a metaphor for the ideological, political and economic structure of the gallery. By the 1970s the museum, as well – both as a physical and conceptual structure – became the material of artistic manipulation, and eventually the content and medium of new subversive artistic practices. Artists

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[3] *New Media Encyclopedia* [http://www.newmedia-art.org/cgi-bin/show-art.asp?LG=GBR&ID=9000000000066026&na=FILLIOU&pna=ROBERT&DOC=bio] [accessed on 11.15.2015].
[4] Theodor Adorno wrote, for example, that 'The German word 'museal' [museum-like] has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects to which the observer no longer has a vital relationship and which are in the process of dying... Museum and Mausoleum are connected by more than phonetic association. Museums are the family sepulchres of works of art." in: Theodor W. Adorno, *Prisms*, tr. by Shierry Weber Nicholsen and Samuel Weber (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), p. 175.
[5] Robert Smithson, 'Some Void Thoughts on Museums', *Arts Magazine*, 41 (1967), 40–41.
[6] As Donald Preziosi has remarked about the 1980s, in: Donald Preziosi, 'Museology and Museography', *Art Bulletin*, 77, 1 (1995), 13-15 (p. 13).
[7] As Douglass Crimp put it, the rise of the post-modern museum was founded on its own ruins. See Douglas Crimp, 'On the Museum's Ruins', *October*, 13 (1980), 41-57.

proposed critical projects in the form of personal and fictional museums. These alternative models included a diverse range of works both inside and outside the museum, some of them taking actual physical form and others existing only in the realm of ideas. However, the museum remained inescapably a common point of reference, whether the works were indexical to the museum or the museum to the works.

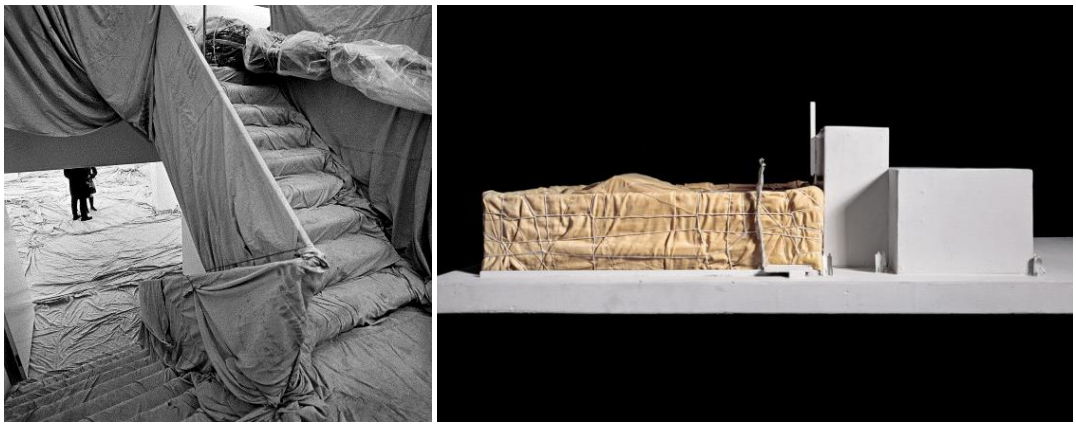

Fig. 68. Christo and Jeanne-Claude, (left) *Wrapped Floor and Stairway; (right) Wrap In, Wrap Out,* 1969.

An early example of this ambiguous relationship was Christo and Jeanne-Claude's first wrapping of a monumental building in the late 1960s, the newly opened Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in Chicago. Their *Wrap In, Wrap Out* covered the museum's refurbished one-storey industrial building with dark brown fabric on the outside, while the interior floors and staircases were also emptied and wrapped in white cloth.[8] Their wrapping – 930 square metres of fabric and 1219 metres of manila rope – transformed the museum into a monumental sculptural piece that physically turned the dynamics of the artwork-museum relationship inside out by framing the architectural context of the museum as an object fully appropriated and controlled by the artist. It was not clear whether the museum exhibited Christo's work or the other way around.

A few years later, when the museum celebrated its tenth anniversary by remodelling and expanding its building, Michael Asher was invited and commissioned to create a work for the glassed-in Bergman Gallery that linked the old building of the MCA with its new annex. Asher also intervened by altering the architecture of the museum: in order to conceptually deconstruct the museum, he physically dismantled its facade. He stated that 'architecture and art, as practices, have become irreconcilable',[9] and proposed to remove two horizontal rows of square aluminium panels from the outer wall of the Bergman Gallery. The panels then were to be exhibited for the duration of the exhibition on the interior walls of the gallery as a sculpture, which, according to Asher, stylistically recalled the language of Minimalism. The pieces were also visible from the outside, and could be directly confronted and compared with their empty site on the facade. As a result of Asher's gesture, the identical panels inside and outside the gallery moved between architectural or sculptural readings according to their context; 'I

[8] Which they regarded as a separate work and titled it *Wrapped Floor and Stairway*.
[9] Michael Asher, 'June 8-August 12,1979: The Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, Illinois', in *Writings 1973-1983 On Works 1969-1979*, ed. by Benjamin H. D. Buchloh (Los Angeles: The Press of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1983), p. 199.

contextualized the sculpture to display the architecture and the architecture to display the problems of sculpture,'[10] wrote Asher, exposing the paradoxical inner logic of the museum, as both a built and a conceptual system.

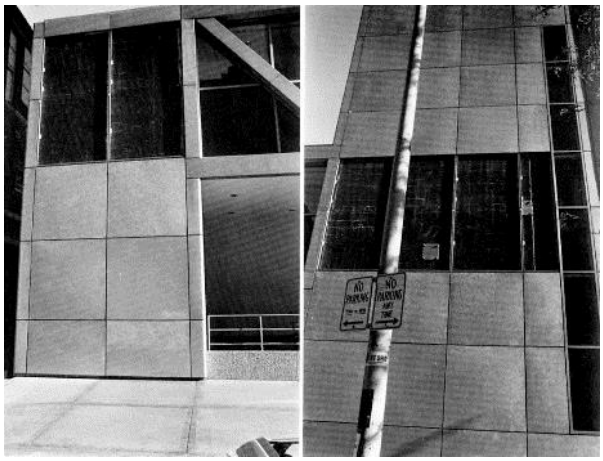

Fig. 69. Michael Asher's intervention on the MCA facade, Chicago, 1979.

It was a further complexity of Asher's concept to insist that the MCA agree to the acquisition of his piece before it was even installed, and, accordingly, conceived it as a temporary installation that could be repeated at any given moment when the museum's curators decided to do so. In this way, the facade for Asher became 'open storage', enabling his work to be continually on display, and not only conjoining the various definitions of his object but also confusing the contextual layers and functions associated with the different physical sites of the museum.[11] Ultimately, by integrating his installation piece – a physical part of the building – into the collection, Asher rendered the museum itself a museological object. Asher's subversive gesture exposed the overlapping multiple definitions of the museum – that had also been framed and employed in Christo and Jeanne-Claude's work – as a self-asserting conceptual loophole. The square aluminium panel from the museum's facade could be interpreted not only as sculpture, architecture or an actual physical part of the museum, but eventually also as Asher's conceptual piece that pertained to all and none of these definitions at the same time. [12] This oxymoron was the foundation and substance of the late-capitalist museum – in Foucault's words a heterotopic site, a single real place juxtaposing several spaces at once. The museum thus became a collection of spaces, shifting from the earlier paradigm defined by diachrony to its contemporary state of synchrony, described by Krauss as hyperspace or a revisionist understanding of the spatial conceit of Minimalism.

[10] Asher, p. 199.
[11] To add a further complication to Asher's installation, Sol LeWitt draw a large work on the bare wall of the museum on the site of the removed panels, which becomes visible only when Asher's panels are installed temporarily in the gallery.
[12] The ultimate and unavoidable paradox of Asher's work is that while his oeuvre is centred on the critique of the notion of artistic autonomy, he himself, as an artist, operates from a neutral conceptual space with an absolutist and nonaligned attitude that he impersonates only in order to unveil it.

Fig. 70. Michael Asher, moving the statue of George Washington into Gallery 219 at Art Institute of Chicago, 1979.

In the same year that his installation appeared at Chicago's MCA, Asher also participated in the '73rd American Exhibition' at the Art Institute of Chicago. As in his other installation, here too Asher investigated the relations between sculpture and architecture and their discursive contexts within the museum. In this project he proposed to remove a 20th-century bronze cast of Jean-Antoine Houdon's 1788 marble sculpture of George Washington from the building's facade and relocate it inside Gallery 219, devoted to 18th-century European art. The displacement of this weathered decorative object in the context of a fine art display confused the art and non-art relations as well as the arrangement of art-historical periods assigned to the different physical spaces of the museum. The sculpture from the neo-Renaissance facade was not only recontextualised in its new 18th-century environment, it also became part of the contemporary exhibition that framed Asher's installation. As Anne Rorimer, the exhibition's curator, remarked:

> Whereas the American Exhibition furnished the contextual framework for Asher's work, the entirety of Gallery 219 with the sculpture of George Washington at its center defined the work as a material whole. During the installation of this work, however, Gallery 219 never ceased to serve the purpose of displaying 18th-century objects of art. For this reason, the space of the work and the "real" space of the gallery coincided with each other.

In other words, by superimposing the different periodic and disciplinary spaces of the museum, Asher put the museum itself in context. His conceptual exercises in critiquing the notion of artistic autonomy resonated with Tschumi's assertion that space and discourse are indistinguishable, rendering the definitions of the art object and the museum also mutually dependent.

Asher explored the institutional contexts of art through the confrontation of art and non-art realities, and mapped the physical and conceptual boundaries of the museum as a site that blurs these divisions. Unlike his 1979 Chicago pieces that explored the physical confines of the institution's built space, his work for the first edition of Sculpture Projects in Münster mapped the museum's institutional domain in relation to the city. In Münster, he proposed to exhibit a trailer that throughout the 19-week period of the exhibition was relocated to 19 different locations around the Landesmuseum. In a radius of about 5 kilometres, it moved first away and then back towards the museum, rendering it the geographical and symbolic epicentre of his piece. The 11-foot trailer, which the museum hired only for the duration of the

exhibition, thus became a nomadic public sculpture that assumed the status of an artwork only in the locations assigned by the artist.[13] Asher's piece, an elusive icon of the Sculpture Projects – originally commissioned in 1977 and then repeated for all the subsequent editions of the exhibition[14] – was an *objet trouvé* on the move, shifting constantly between the realities of art and non-art while mapping the city of Münster through space and time. Testing the relationship between sculpture and its physical site in this way, Asher's public sculpture became specific to its conceptual site rather than a static physical place. He mapped the city in relation to the museum's institutional and discursive space, and the 19 parking spaces that his work temporarily occupied in and around the city became for the exhibition's duration the expanded field of the museum's institutional domain; in other words, as argued in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the *dematerialised museum.*

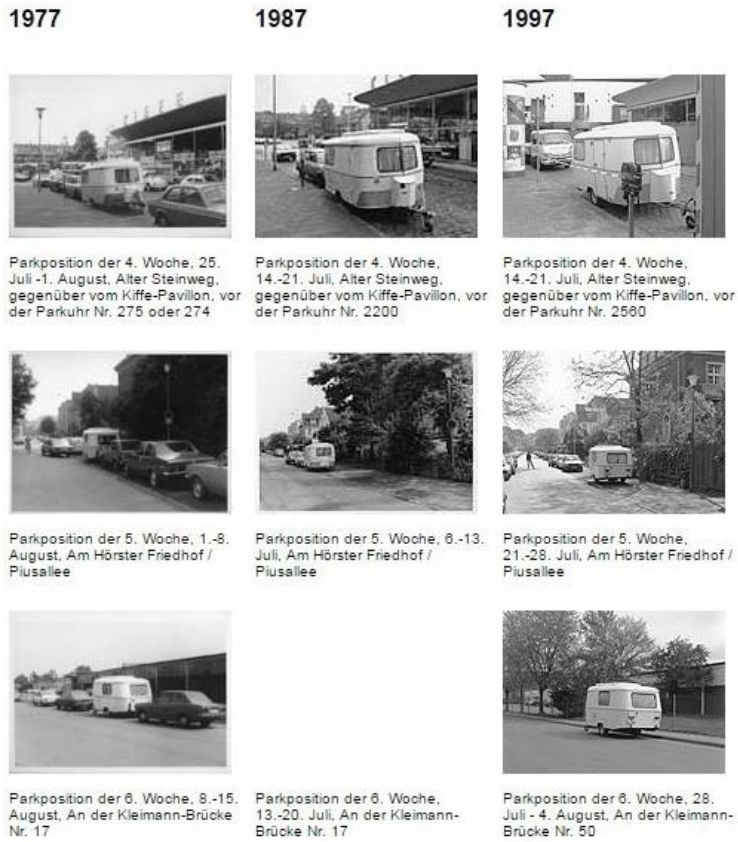


Fig. 71. Michael Asher, *Installation Münster (Caravan),* Skulptur Projekte Münster 1977-1997.

[13] A recent episode of theft in 2007, when Asher's re-enacted piece was stolen, further emphasised the paradoxical nature of the object as art or non-art. Stephan Pascher, 'Phantom Limb: Michael Asher's Sculpture Project', *Afterall*, 17 (2008), 114-121.

[14] The Sculpture Projects in Münster was first organized in 1977 as a public art exhibition spread around the city, curated by Kasper König in collaboration with the Landesmuseum and Klaus Bussmann. Since then the exhibition has been repeated every 10 years; the 4th edition took place from 16 June to 30 September 2007. In 1977 the curators worked with 9 artists including Asher; this number has grown exponentially in subsequent years (to 64 in 1987 and 79 in 1997, dropping to 36 in 2007).

Whereas Asher's work was both qualified and defined in relation to the institutional and physical space of the museum, other artists proposed surrogate museums. Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie* was founded in 1969 in Berlin with the aim of transferring the function of the museum to that of television. Schum treated the television screen as a potential exhibition space and invited other artists to experiment with this truly contemporary medium, one that reached out to individuals in the intimacy of their living room, and offered a means to merge art with life. Even if Schum's project proved too radical for his time and was short-lived in the context of West German public television,[15] he continued his collaborations and experiments with this new medium in the context of his private gallery in Düsseldorf. Beyond finding a new platform for visual art, Schum's most significant discovery was a new kind of publicness, one that was most explicitly expressed through the medium of television that delivered public discourse in private spaces – which became the ultimate expression and essential condition of the realm of the contemporary.

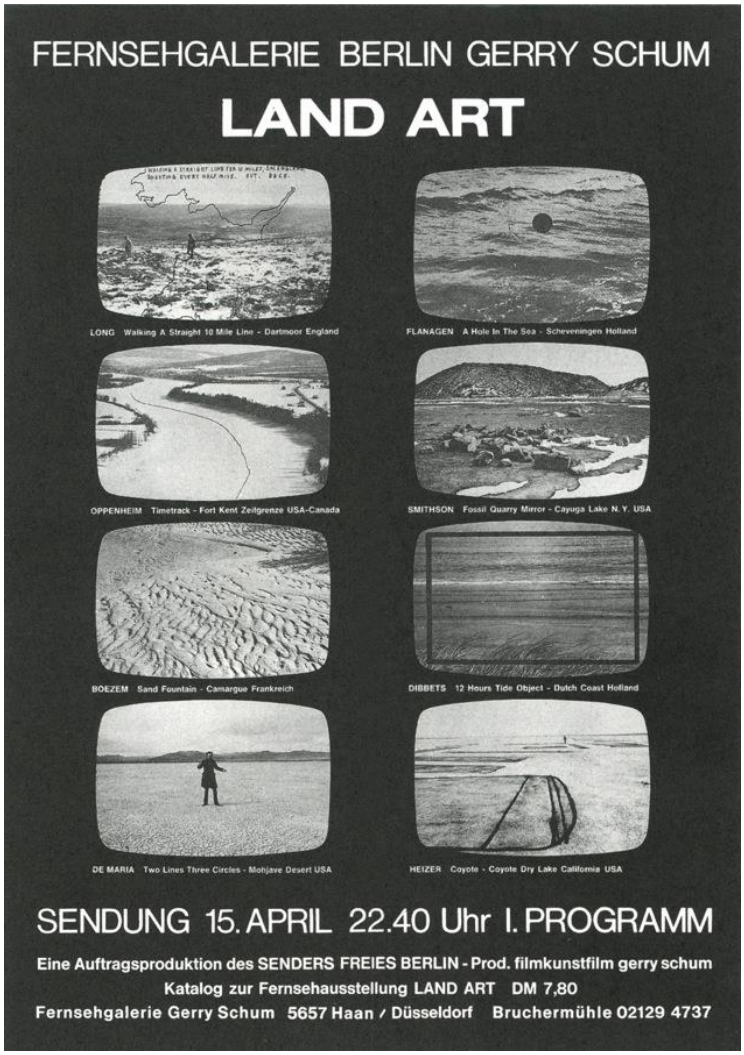

Fig. 72. The Programme of Gerry Schum's *Fernsehgalerie*, 1969.

[15] Which suspended the transmission of his series after its second 'episode'; later episodes were only exhibited in Schum's private gallery in Düsseldorf between 1970 and 1971.

This new phenomenon of the 'contemporary intimate society' was theorised by Richard Sennett in relation to the 19th-century emergence of individual personality as a new social category that he identified as a cornerstone of capitalism. In his account, the 18th-century split between the private and public was based on the division between nature and culture (as between the 'human animal' and the social being).[16] This late modern fusion of public and private spheres was then reflected in contemporary art as the renegotiation of the nature-culture relationship, by the move away from the museum and the search for new sites of publicness; in other words, the merging of art and life, which, through his surrogate museum, was also the main focus of Schum's experiments.[17]

Fig. 73. Robert Filliou, *Frozen Exhibition*, 1972.

Schum's attempt to withdraw from the public space of the museum and to occupy private or domestic spaces instead was not an isolated tendency in contemporary art, and by the 1970s it became central for many of his contemporaries. 'Art is what makes life more interesting than art,'[18] as Robert Filliou put it: he opened his miniature portable gallery, the 'Galerie Légitime' in his hat, first exhibiting his own work and later hosting others' too, mainly from the circles of fluxus. As an opposite strategy to Filliou's, Les Levine monumentalized his studio address in New York by turning it into a fictional museum. He founded the Museum of Mott Art, Inc., which took the form of a one-to-one consultation service organization providing advice to fine arts professionals on life and other everyday practices.[19] Whereas Levine's and Filliou's conceptual structures rendered the museum as a thought experiment with slight irony, Barbara Steveni proposed the bonding of art with reality in even more radical ways. In 1965, together with John Latham and a loose group of London-based artists,[20] she founded the Artist Placement Group (APG), which aimed to arrange legal agreements with selected businesses or governmental organizations for short-term artists' residencies. In this way the APG sought to refocus art activities outside the gallery in a complete fusion with life, proposing that 'creative' activity – as

[16] Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), pp. 90-91.
[17] See: Jürgen Habermas, *The New Conservatism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989).
[18] Robert Filliou, *Dear Skywatcher: Art is What Makes Life More Interesting than Art*, 1984.
[19] His catalogue included a long list of proposed one-to-one sessions on such themes as 'how to become an artist's spouse'; 'how to enjoy life as an art dealer' and 'how to abandon art as an artist'.
[20] Among the APG participants were Barbara Steveni, John Latham, Barry Flanagan, David Hall, Jeffrey Shaw, Stuart Brisley, Hugh Davies, Andrew Dipper, David Toop and Ian Breakwell.

symbolised by art, the artist, and the process of art – may be thought of collectively as a model for social interaction.[21]

Ironically, the format of the artist museum was recognized and also appropriated by the museum itself as a remedy for its isolation – the very origin and cause of museophobic tendencies in contemporary art. While Schum could appropriate public television only for the brief duration of a few episodes, museum practices subsequently adopted comparable strategies and appropriated new sites with more enduring success. Jan Hoet, at the time director of the City Museum for Contemporary Art in Ghent, noted in relation to his 1986 exhibition 'Chambres d'Amis':

> A long time ago, painting broke loose from its frame and the canvas was cut into bits. The sculpture is no longer at ease on its socle – if it still has one. The sculpture is often not even standing. […] Art seems to be running wild, it has lost its regular place, its centre. This phenomenon does not grieve for the contemporary artist; on the contrary, it fills him with abundant force and vital stimuli. […] The museums lag behind. […] As if the museum is only now discovering for the first time that its space – a space which usually simply exists – is developing all over town, in all its aspects. The museum reflecting itself in all the spaces where it propagated, is now witnessing its structural origin.[22]

Hoet's exhibition therefore ventured outside the museum in order to explore potential new sites from which the museum could renew itself. 50 international artists were invited to transform selected domestic spaces, private homes scattered around the city, which in Hoet's view – like Asher's experiment at the Sculpture Projects in Münster – became the newly formed territory of the museum.

The city was not only the context, but also the content of the exhibition – it showcased a cross-section of the history of Ghent through the selection of the homes of its citizens, 'Art and the city, through the individual house', as Hoet described it.[23] Unlike Schum's and Steveni's attempt to integrate art into everyday reality, 'Chambres d'Amis' framed life as art. Fulfilling Kaprow's prophecy, Hoet described the pieces of his exhibition as a collection of environments that were turned into art,[24] and the exhibition as a framework that transformed the city into a living museum staging 'the historic importance of its own present.' The museum in this sense was no longer an island but an *archipelago* spread around the city, which – following such archetypes as the 'Chambres d'Amis' or the Sculpture Projects in Münster – gradually became the norm for the self-definition of the contemporary art museum 'without boundaries'.[25]

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[21] Stuart Brisley, 'The Artist and Artist Placement Group', *Studio International,* (1972) [http://www.stuartbrisley.com/pages/29/70s/Text/The_Artist_and_Artist_Placement_Group___Studio_International/page:16].

[22] Jan Hoet, *Chambers d'Amis*, exhib. cat. (Gent: Museum van Hedendaagse Kunst, 1986), pp. 341 & 348.

[23] Blauer Hase, 'Protection of the Individual: Jan Hoet Interviewed by Blauer Hase' in *Furniture Music*, ed. by. Blauer Hase (Blauer Hase, 2009). p. 35.

[24] 'When you entered the house, you were in the artwork. (...) The inhabitants of that house are living in the work of Spalletti and Salvadori.' - as Hoet remarked in retrospect in Hase, p. 36.

[25] See SMAK's succession of related shows that continued the legacy of Chambers d'Amis: 14 years later, in 2000, *Over the Edges*, curated by Hoet together with Giacinto Di Pietrantonio in the public spaces of the city and, in 2012, TRACK curated by Philippe Van Cauteren and Mirjam Varadinis.

As with Schum's original *Fernsehgalerie*, the APG's conceptual model also failed to match its stated intentions; this was not only because the artistic outcome of the APG was primarily the subject of museum shows, but also, within the context of late-capitalist corporate culture, the art – as well as the model proposed by the APG – soon became the emblem of 'social responsibility'. This new category was indexical to the greater values symbolised and legitimised by the museum, and fused a discourse specific to the museum with corporate reality. This was also consonant with Krauss's remarks on the paradox of Minimalism that reinforced and extended the very principles of capitalism that it originally sought to resist. In other words, in the era of capital, artistic experimentation outside the museum became the very ground for a new definition of the late-capitalist museum.

This paradox of the collecting activities of the museum that both preserve and distort at the same time was also the focus of Daniel Buren's piece *Le Décor et son Double – Pièce en Deux Actes* that he created for 'Chambers d'Amis'. Opposing the gestures of other participating artists in the show, Buren moved back into the museum to reconstruct his guest room there. While he stated that 'art is all about context' he recreated his domestic environment, an *objet trouvé* – a counterpart to Asher's piece for Münster – as a context within a context, pointing out the irresolvable fiction of the museum that applies equally inside and outside its walls.

Fig. 74. Daniel Buren, *Le Décor et Son Double* 1986 / 2011 at S.M.A.K., Ghent.

Whereas artist museums – as for example Filliou's or Levine's pieces – were primarily conceptual structures, the adaptation of their models entailed a structural reformation of the museum that was essentially architectural in nature. In order to return to its structural origin, as Hoet also remarked, the museum went through an extensive spatial restructuring. The decentralisation of the spaces of the museum and its expansion into the spaces of the city went together with the reorganisation of its interior by adopting designs that recalled the artist's studio or the collector's apartment. The most iconic examples of this include Gae Aulenti's redesign of the Pompidou's exhibition galleries between 1982 and 1985, and William Rubin's vision for the contemporary refurbishment of the painting and sculpture department of MoMA, that also alluded to the intimate character of the museum interior. Therefore, the museum's spaces developed through a process of scaling down and redistribution. This merging of private and public dichotomies, a twin process both inside and out, was the basis for the physical and conceptual expansion of the late-capitalist museum.

As Johanne Lamoreux has pointed out,[26] the transformation of the museum in the 1970s was a reversal of the development of the evolution of the first public galleries, and thus it brought about the *return* of the flaneur. The Louvre, for instance, made itself accessible to the public by turning its spaces into a grand gallery that recalled the spatial structure of streets and arcades, the sites of public life in the city, thus becoming an interior approximation of a bazaar. The development of the late-capitalist gallery space, however, pointed in the opposite direction, to the privatisation of public space. Instead of a centralised grand space, the museum visit was replaced by a series of itineraries through urban space,[27] recalling progressive anti-authoritarian practices of the 1960s, such as the *dérive* of the Situationists or Cedric Price's unrealized Potteries Thinkbelt,[28] which reimagined the institution of the university as integrated with, and dispersed among, the dilapidated industrial urban infrastructure. In the context of the late-capitalist museum's counter-revolution, this was manifest in the form of the site-specific exhibition, which extended outside the physical walls of the museum and returned the spectator once again to the city. The museum's decentralisation, therefore, not only brought the museum back into the city, it also became its unifying frame – as seen in Klotz's Museumsufer or the case of the renewed Venice Biennale – rendering the city itself as the subject of the museum.[29] Thus by the 1980s the site of the city, rediscovered by experimental art and architecture practices, had become the museum's expanded field.

While surrogate museums of dissident artists located the museum as a reverse conceptual structure within the social construct of the city, other institutional critiques – such as those represented by Asher or Christo and Jeanne-Claude's interventions – were implemented through the appropriation of the museum's physical infrastructure. Asher mapped the physical boundaries of the museum by juxtaposing sculpture with architecture, pointing out their stylistic similarity and yet often paradoxical relationship within the museum. His intervention to turn the MCA's Bergman Gallery inside out, and Sol LeWitt's parallel work that occupied the space that had been temporarily freed up by Asher on the museum's facade, are symptomatic of the prevailing processes and the resulting discourse that determined the museum's place in the territorial intersection between art and architecture.

The very critique that drove contemporary art outside the museum also brought into focus its spatial metaphor, and site. The often-overlooked co-dependence of these two seemingly opposing tendencies of the 'spatial turn' is at the heart of the late-modern exhibitionary complex, which, through its new representational apparatus, redefined the art-reality dichotomy. As contemporary art defined itself in relation to the physical site of the museum (from within or outside its walls), the museum was reconstituted by the regressive reframing of these dissident practices, and found its new structural origin through its own site within the city. That which was initially intended to be a form of critique had been

[26] Johanne Lamoreux, 'The Museum Flat', in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. by Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 112-31.
[27] Lamoreux argues that the contemporary art installation therefore plays an important role in the 'light from the museum to the city and the "broadening" of the spectator through tourism.' Lamoreux, p. 116.
[28] Cedric Price, Potteries Thinkbelt, 1964; see: *Cedric Price: Potteries Thinkbelt: SuperCrit #1*, ed. by Kester Rattenbury and Samantha Hardingham (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007).
[29] See for example Norbert Radermacher's piece *The Four Winds* that marked with bells the roofs of all the participating homes in the *Chambers d'Amis* exhibition, creating a unifying framework for the city while dispersing the space of the museum.

incorporated into the museum's remit; the radical potential of expansive exhibition strategies had been co-opted into the museum's terms of reference, and, rather than engendering an emancipatory merging of art and life, it ultimately reinforced, and extended, the power structures that the museum had always embodied.

## 5.2 SHIFTING GROUNDS: THE CITY AS MUSEUM

*The Louvre is my studio, the street is my museum.*
– Braco Dimitrijevic[30]


Fig. 75. Malraux's *Le Musée Imaginaire*, 'museum without walls'.

The Aura of Representation

Andre Malraux's *Musée imaginaire* (museum without walls), a conceptual assemblage of art works across a variety of cultures and centuries that could only be brought together through their photographic reproductions, appeared first as a collection of essays in 1947; it was to become one of the most influential and debated documents of contemporary museology (as previously discussed in relation to Krauss' observations on the structural transformations of the Postmodern Museum). Many of his contemporary critics, in a Benjaminian spirit, questioned Malraux's use of photography, which, in their view, inappropriately replaced and abstracted the notion and the aura of the original work of art, but in essence Malraux never truly challenged Benjamin's thesis.[31] Malraux recognized the medium of photography as a device that offered new possibilities to 'intellectualize' and gather works in complete new systematic orders, as a way of questioning the 19th-century traditions and taxonomical system of the museum. However, if Malraux's museum might hint at the spatial representation of the postmodern museum,[32] he never considered the photographic representation as the art object's replacement. When in

[30] See: 'The Louvre is my Studio, the Street is my Museum: Retrospective exhibition of Braco Dimitrijević', Ludwig Museum, Budapest, 2008.
[31] Which they discussed extensively in 1936, years before Malraux published his ideas. As Walter Grasskamp argued, Malraux's idea of the 'museum without walls' had already been in currency since the appearance of the 18th-century encyclopedia, a means of representing the world that competed with the museum. See: Walter Grasskamp, 'Reviewing the Museum, or: The Complexity of Things', *Nordisk Museologi*, 1 (1994), 65-74 (p. 68).
[32] Krauss has used this term to describe the new architectural and representational type of the late-capitalist museum (for reference see the description of Hollein's museum in Mönchengladbach in Chapter 3)

1973 the Fondation Maeght attempted to recreate Malraux's 'museum without walls' in the form of an actual physical exhibition, 'Le Musée Imaginaire de'André Malraux', Malraux protested and declared that – as its name testifies – his museum could only exist in the artist's head, in a mental space, as an abstract concept.

Even if Malraux's museum heralded the temporal synchrony of the postmodern museum that replaced earlier chronological traditions of museology, its purely abstract, symbolic space was still as firmly rooted in the tradition of modern art as the universalism that governed his unorthodox analogies across geographical and temporal boundaries. Whereas Malraux's concept of the museum dispensed with the contexts, rather than the objects, of art, by the 1970s – around the same time that the Fondation Maeght's exhibition revisited Malraux's idea – the museum as a collection of objects was commonly criticised as an unsustainable concept. In Douglas Davis's vision, the future museum materialised as a collection of contexts instead: 'The time – in brief – is ripe for a new concept, of the museum not as place, not as object, but as moving, three-dimensional, human solvent, a disseminator of regulative truths rather than abstracted objects.'[33] Davis's assertion was right. The self-reflexive museological practices at the turn of the 20th century refocused from the singular object to its correlations, and brought about a substantially new understanding of the relation between the object and its museal frame.

Fig. 76. Thomas Struth, *Pergamon Museum I*, 2001.

In his study of the Pergamon Museum, Can Bilsel, unlike Malraux, did invert Benjamin's thesis, arguing that the aura of the archaeological objects displayed was actually created through the reproduction of their (often remote or non-existent) originals. [34] He stated that the lost monuments of antiquity are

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Rosalind Krauss, 'Museum without Walls', in *Thinking about Exhibitions*, ed. by Bruce W. Ferguson, Reesa Greenberg and Sandy Nairne (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 346-7.

[33] Douglas Davis, 'The Idea of a 21st-Century Museum', *Art Journal*, 35, 3 (1976), 253-258. The article was a forerunner to his book *The Museum Transformed: Design and Culture in the Post-Pompidou Age* (New York: Cross River Press, 1990).

[34] See: Can Bilsel, 'Architecture in the Museum: Displacement, Reconstruction and Reproduction of the Monumnets of Antiquity in Berlin's Pergamon Museum' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Princeton University, School of Architecture, 2003). Bilsel's reworked PhD thesis was published as *Antiquity on*

authenticated by the museum; the exhibits derive their authenticity from the condition of their modern displacement, which consequently transforms their original meaning instead of restoring it.[35] By pointing out the impossibility of the division between the 'frame' of the objects within museums and the museum itself, Bilsel indicated that not only the archaeological object is the construct of museological reproduction, but eventually also the site of its origin. While Bilsel's contention addressed the contested issue of the restitution of the Pergamon Altar by questioning the dispute's raison d'être, his remarks also illuminate the change in the understanding of the museum's relationship to the city.

The trend towards an escalation in museum building – in view of the Beaubourg and the Bilbao effect – rendered the museum as the central agent of the cultural regeneration of post-industrial cities, but to regard it merely as an industry in the service of the society of spectacle would simplify and understate its new position. A very similar restoration debate to that discussed by Bilsel in relation to the Pergamon Altar relates to Athens' Acropolis Museum – which was first conceptualized in 1976[36] and finally realized more than three decades later by Bernard Tschumi – which is a specific example that reveals a more holistic image of the museum's new representational function within the contemporary city. While this building is an iconic addition to the contemporary landscape of Athens, its relationship to the history of antiquity – constructed in relation to, and through the physical sites of, the Greek capital – indicates the evolving ideological role of the museum and the ways in which it is defined in relation to contemporary urbanity. The history of the museum that predated its physical construction is closely entangled with that of the struggle for contemporary national identity, which was manifested through an enduring campaign to 'reunite' the sculptural elements of the Acropolis with their original site, initiating extensive international debates around the restitution of the Elgin Marbles, held by the British Museum in London since the early 19th century.[37]

Tschumi's new museum, constructed at a time when the restitution debates were still unresolved, was designed with the means to translate and communicate these ideological problems in relation to the

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*Display: Regimes of the Authentic in Berlin's Pergamon Museum* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[35] Bilsel differentiated three types of display within the Pergamonmuseum. The first was Messel's architectural exhibit of the Pergamon Altar, which overshadows the original pieces of antique sculptures: in other words, it is not only an architectural frame, but Messel's work of art. The second was Wiegand's reconstruction of the Market Gate of Miletus, which pieces together original parts based on evidence of archeological fragments: it is a modern pastiche of ancient architecture, a utilitarian structure that is elevated to the status of an artwork in the frame of the museum. The third was the reconstruction of Babylon by Andrae, a decorative reenactment of larger structures (without archeological prefiguration): it recalls an art nouveau interior, in which *ergon* and *parergon*, art and its frame, create an inseparable totality.

[36] This is the date when Prime Minister Kostas Karamanlis's first public announcement of the need for a new Acropolis Museum that would house the restituted Elgin Marbles in Athens.

[37] A significant proportion of the classical Greek marble sculptures from the Parthenon and other buildings on the Acropolis were transported to Britain by Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin, between 1801 and 1812, seen by many as vandalism or looting while supported by others as conserving the pieces that belong to the whole of Western culture rather than just the modern state of Greece. After heated public debates, the marbles were finally purchased in 1816 by the British Museum and have been exhibited there in the purpose-built Duveen Gallery ever since: the debates regarding their restitution is still ongoing.

physical and spatial realities of contemporary Athens. The site of the museum occupies a strategic location within the city, and the new building – integrated into the surrounding 19th- and 20th-century urban fabric – is in relatively close proximity to the site of the Acropolis, with an unobstructed view between the two sites. Tschumi's site-specific architectural approach is evident in the monolithic block of the first four floors of the museum that follows the layout of the surrounding streets, while its top floor – designed to host a life-size replica of the Parthenon with the Elgin Marbles inside – slightly rotates in order to be visually aligned with the orientation of its original. Beyond this formal gesture that connects the two structures in space and time, the dialogue between them is further strengthened by the view of the archaeological site from the fifth floor of the museum. The view of the original structure, framed by the museum's grand windows, was meant to allow for an immediate comparison between the original sculptures (planned to be displayed in the space of the museum) and their original site in the background. Thus, as Bilsel argued, through the museal framing of the archaeological object, ultimately it was the site of origin – the site of the historic city as seen directly from the museum's window – that the Acropolis Museum also aimed to frame and re-construct.

Fig. 77. Bernard Tschumi's Acropolis Museum, 2009.

Tschumi's museum finally opened to the public in 2009. In the eyes of many it never achieved its goal, namely to legitimise the return and to house the original sculptures of Greek antiquity still 'in exile'. Thus, as Péter György has argued,[38] it is the failed project of restitution itself that was rendered as a closed historic subject within the museum's walls. The Acropolis Museum – staging the absence of the Elgin Marbles – concluded the political debate. Instead of achieving the physical restitution of the marbles, Tschumi's building itself became a monument to the crisis of national identity as expressed through the curious dispute of the restitution of the Elgin Marbles. [39] In the urban context of Athens, Tschumi's museum is just as much a product of the political fantasy of its own time as two centuries earlier, when the display of the Marbles within the British Museum was framed by the early 19th-century

[38] See: Péter György, 'Az Uj Akropolisz Muzeum', in *Muzeum, Tanulo-haz, Muzeum Elmeleti Esettanulmanyok* (Budapest: MuzeumCafe, 2013), pp. 242-245.
[39] This is further emphasized by the dramatic whiteness of the plaster casts filling in the gaps left empty in the frieze by the missing Elgin marbles. This whiteness– as Péter György argues – has a political rather than archeological meaning here, since the other casts, which are not the subject of the restitution debate and are reconstructed on the basis of historic documents or the fragments from Athens, are coated with a different 'authentic' patina. See György, 'Az Uj Akropolisz Muzeum'.

British imagination – playing a pivotal role in the neoclassical architectural revival, both within the museum and on the streets of London.

In this way, the museal reconstruction of the Acropolis became the reinterpretation and representation of the contemporary city itself, seen in Klotz's attempt to reconstruct the contemporary image of Frankfurt through the museal framing of its historic ruins. Tschumi's building, which bridged ancient and modern Athens, lent a new definition to each through the other, and in this constellation it is both a sign and a signifier that defines a new syntax between urban space and the museum. As the representational practices of art and architecture merge space and discourse, the museum constructs the aura of the city through its spatial representation. Tschumi's museum operates on an urban scale in order to define a new symbolic cultural space and to canonize the imaginary of a contemporary Athens comparable to its ancient site. Thus, just as Bilsel explored the display of the archaeological fragment by questioning the boundaries between the architectural frame and the space of the museum, this chapter will consider and question the frame of, and boundaries between, the museum and the contemporary city.

## Museum and Urbanity

From its very origins, the history of the public museum has gone hand in hand with the development of the city. Following the French Revolution of 1789, the Louvre Palace, the private residence of the Bourbon royalty, was turned into a national museum, its grand galleries alluding to the arcades of the bazaar and providing an idealised representation of the public space of the city. Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand too, in his neoclassical catalogue of the new architectural building types, reinterpreted the urban order of the historic civilisation of antiquity as a utopian vision of the ideal city, in which the museum took a central place. The museum, together with department stores and railway stations, was regarded as one of the most important new institutions of the 19th-century metropolis. It soon became synonymous with the notion of the expanding urbanity of the early industrial age,[40] as in the case of London's South Kensington, an area that started to develop after the Great Exhibition as a new district of museums and institutions under the coordination of the Victoria & Albert Museum's first director, Henry Cole.

The representative function, together with the museum's underlying historicising role and iconography, resulted in the concept of the 'museum as monument',[41] which, by the turn of the 19th century, had become the main target for the militant activity of the avant-garde, which aimed to replace historical awareness with a future-oriented present. Thus the institution of the museum, dedicated to the study and preservation of historic objects, became recognised as a retrograde object itself, in contrast to the modernist utopia of progress and the perceived evolution of the city. As the American collector and

[40] In Tony Bennett's Foucauldian description the museum's role in society was comparable to that of the school or prison in aiming to provide the education (through entertainment) of the ideal citizen. See Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics*, (London: Routledge, 1995).
[41] In his historical account of architectural typologies Pevsner differentiated between two paradigmatic types of museum: monument and instrument. Whereas Schinkel's Altes Museum is one of the prototypes of the first, the museum as instrument in Pevsner's account is represented by the integration of the traditional museum into a portfolio of cultural activities, such as the 1851 Great Exhibition, for example. See Nikolaus Pevsner, *A History of Building Types* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1976).

patron of the European historic avant-garde, Peggy Guggenheim, famously remarked: 'It can be modern, it can be a museum, but not both.'[42] The museum was seen as a rupture in, rather than an extension of, the public space of the modern city, commonly compared to the tomb or mausoleum, a place containing 'dead' things, worthy of preservation but detached from the reality of modern life, and thus redundant. Ultimately, from the early 20th century onwards, these adverse associations became broadly dominant in the interpretation of the city-museum dichotomy.

While, as a repository of the past, the museum in the city might have had a role in compensating for the eradicative practice of the urban planning of the Modern Movement, many saw the museum itself as the very cause and purpose of the historic city's extinction in the modern age. Paul Valéry described the museum as the 'home of incoherence', and attempted to undo the museum's separation between the object and its everyday context by rethinking the museum's function.[43] This early critique[44] of the museum shared by many of Valéry's contemporaries resulted in a new concept of the modern museum that correlated closely with the contemporary preservation policies that were put in place after the 1913 World Congress of Cities in Ghent, which aimed to balance the historic and functional values of cities. The earlier notion of 'the museum as monument' that was primarily aimed at the preservation and exhibition of objects was replaced with a new ideology of 'the museum as instrument', a tool to educate the masses by extending its enduring values and embracing the present tense and the everyday. This idea, however, did not dissolve the traditional temporal ideology of the museum but merely transformed it into a grand narrative of progress, which resulted in a purely thematic rather than structural reorganisation. In this sense, the avant-garde idea of the 'museum without walls' could only result in the museumisation of the here and now: the contemporary *present* time and the city.

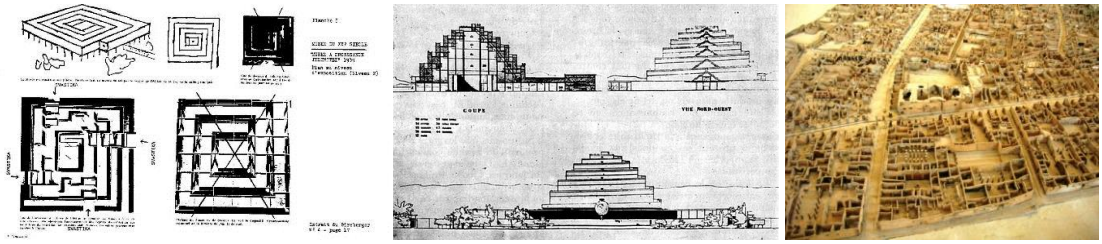
Fig. 78. (left) Le Corbusier, Museum of the 20th Century, 1939; (right) Model of Pompeii.

Le Corbusier's fascination with Pompeii – as the one and only real museum of everyday life and the city – was rooted in the same ideas that Paul Valéry had advocated to bring life to the museum. His 1925 Pavillon Esprit Nouveau was already the forerunner of a new type of museum, performing a real function and displaying functional objects that were neither unique nor rarefied. He further developed the concept of the 'museum of useful things' in his Musée Mondiale, which he designed together with

[42] As cited in John Rajchman, 'Les Immatériaux, or How to Construct the History of Exhibitions', *Tate Papers*, 12 (2009) [http://www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/les-immateriaux-or-how-construct-history-exhibitions] [accessed 9 September 2014].
[43] Paul Valéry, 'The Problem with Museums', in *Degas, Manet, Morisot,* ed. by Douglas Cooper, tr. by David Paul (London: Routledge, 1972), pp. 202-6.
[44] Which reiterated Quatremère de Quincy's earlier observations from almost a century earlier critiquing the museum for separating its collection of objects on display from their original site. See: Antoine Quatremère de Quincy, *Considerations morales sur la destination des ouvrages de l'art*, (Paris: Craplet, 1815).

Pierre Jeanneret between 1928 and 1929, commissioned by the Belgian educator Paul Otlet. The Musée Mondiale was meant to be the central structure of the Cité Mondiale in Geneva, which Otlet had been planning with his numerous collaborators[45] since the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1900. Based on a number of earlier exhibitions organized by Otlet in Brussels and Ghent, Le Corbusier's museum within the new 'World City' would have gathered a systematic archive of the world's knowledge as a totalizing 'encyclopedic museum', which aimed at the 'demonstration of the present state of the world' and the education of the masses.

However, the form of Le Corbusier's museum openly contradicted the ideology that it was intended to represent. As Vidler summarises: 'paradoxically enough, the modernist effort to dissolve the historical and monumental connotations of the museum through the agency of a universalizing gaze foundered at the point where such a gaze demanded an architecturally expressive form of its own.'[46] Le Corbusier's plan, intended as a museum of the everyday, controversially took the sculptural form of the pyramid, a symbolic sign of the origin of architecture itself. Le Corbusier imagined his 'museum of the eternal present' in the shape of an ever-expanding city, a model largely inspired by Pompeii, which fused the archetype of the museum and the encyclopedia with the idea of the archaic city. The structure's interior referenced the form of the 19th-century arcade. At the centre of his monumental structure was the circular 'Idearium', a central sacral space recalling the architectural archetype of the pantheon, embedded in a spiralling stepped pyramid, the 'Useum', in which an exhibition of the history of civilisation would have unfolded in uninterrupted and strictly chronological succession.[47] As one of the most passionate contemporary critics of the Mundaneum, Karel Teige, pointed out, Le Corbusier's museum – a modern scientific town centred around a sanctuary – constituted an absurd combination.[48]

Whereas Otlet's and Le Corbusier's museum seemed to dismantle the notion of the original and its aura in their displays, the building of the museum – a monument to Modernism –was itself the genuine work of the commissioner and the architect. The building's sculptural qualities aimed to give identity to the collection, and – as half a century later Kaprow remarked, in relation to Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York – the primacy of architecture only reinforced the idea of the museum itself as a work of art. The modern museum, equally detached from its own present and the fragments of the past that it contained, became a freestanding monument in the universal space of Modernism. It related to the city in the same way as Modern sculpture to the space of the 'white cube' gallery, which Brian O'Doherty and Rosalind Krauss critiqued for its self-referential abstraction.[49]

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[45] Which included Patrick Geddes, Hendrick Christian Andersen and Ernest Hebrard.
[46] Anthony Vidler, 'The Space of History: Modern Museums from Patrick Geddes to Le Corbusier', in *The Architecture of the Museum – Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts*, ed. by Michaela Giebelhausen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 160-82 (p. 179).
[47] Which was an overwhelmingly western and male-centered narration of the 'progression of world history' that – as Vidler pointed out – was equally fascinated by the Revolution and by the Empire, concluding abruptly with Hausmann's Paris.
[48] See: Karel Teige, 'Mundaneum'(1929), tr. by Ladislav Holovsky, Elizabeth Holovsky, and Lubamir Dolezel, *Oppositions*, 4 (1974), 83-94.
[49] MoMA invented a new aesthetics of display – which was described by Brian O'Doherty as the 'white cube' – that was intended to create an exhibition environment void of any contextualisation or link to national histories. See: Mary Staniszewski, *The Power of Display* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. 2001).

The irreconcilable contradiction of the Modern museum which resulted from the abstract monumentality of Modern architecture revealed, therefore, that the museum's isolation within the city was more rooted in Cartesian spatial theories of the early 20th century than in the 19th-century tradition of objective historicism. The Modern museum's adaptation of the universalizing ideology merely enforced its own isolation, which was only further complicated by urban planning that fully transformed the specificity of the street and destroyed the historic fabric of the city.

## The Beaubourg Effect

While the museum was one of the most contested concepts of the early 20th century, the Modern Movement failed to provide alternatives for its replacement. The museum's modern history remained a story of perpetual crisis, and only the late 1970s brought about a significant turn, when the biggest museum building boom since the 19th century accompanied an explosion of new theories about the museum.[50] Yet, no less paradoxical than the crisis of the Modern museum, the museum's contemporary recovery – as discussed in the previous chapters – paralleled the trend in artistic practices that, around the same time, collectively started to move out from the museum to the city in order to challenge the hegemony of abstract spatial representations within the museum and to question the ideologically neutral space of the 'white cube' gallery.

The renewed interest in the city, which had emerged already in the mid-1960s in the fields of art and architecture, brought about site-specific attitudes in both fields, and a changed perception of the city as a site, and a historical artefact. By the late 1970s this tendency had also established a proliferation of the applications of the museum in the city, which soon became instrumental in urban regeneration projects and boosting global tourism. This turn in the field of museums, coinciding with the postmodernisation of the wider cultural field, is often identified with the opening of the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The building by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano that the French President Georges Pompidou[51] commissioned in order to culturally and economically reanimate the run-down Beaubourg district of Paris, was opened to the public in January 1977.[52] Its building seemed to offer what Foucault had summarized,[53] in 1969, as 'an epoch of space,' in order to describe the dominance of architectural representation and spatial articulation of ideas which had also became the mainstream paradigm in the cultural regeneration of the city. The case of Centre Pompidou – or the 'Beaubourg Effect' – aptly

[50] The mention of the word 'museum' in the titles of books published each year started to grow in the late 1970s, and had doubled by the 1990s, based on the statistics of googlebooks' 'ngram' viewer. See: [https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=museum&year_start=1800&year_end=2015&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cmuseum%3B%2Cc0] [accessed 10 November 2015].
[51] Georges Pompidou was Prime Minister at the time of May '68 and took an important role in the negotiation between the revolutionaries and the Gaullist French government; his name is closely associated with the slow and peaceful reversal of the '68 revolutions. The Centre Pompidou – originally named the Beaubourg Centre – was named after him (he died while still in office as president before its completion).
[52] Seen in the accounts of Vittorio Lampugnani, Michaela Giebelhausen, Douglas Davis, Jean Baudrillard, etc.
[53] Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces', *Diacritics*, Spring (1986), 22-27 (p. 22).

summarises the changes that occurred in the decade following May '68, and the ways in which the radical ideas of the 1960s avant-garde were 'tamed' and reinterpreted in the following decade.

The Centre Pompidou was a radically new model for the museum in both a conceptual and a physical, formal sense. Influenced by André Malraux's concept of the 'museum without walls', it was conceived as a cultural complex housing multiple forms of artistic expression in one building, which simultaneously aimed to communicate through its architecture and create content in its own right. The building – the first built example of his 'high-tech architecture' – was described by Rogers as emerging from the legacy of the 'anti-monumental' revolution of 1968, which therefore aimed to break with both the classical and the modernist traditions of architecture.[54] Based on an attitude which embraced cutting-edge technology and mass culture as well as offering functional flexibility, Rogers' and Piano's building is often associated with Cedric Price's avant-garde ideas.

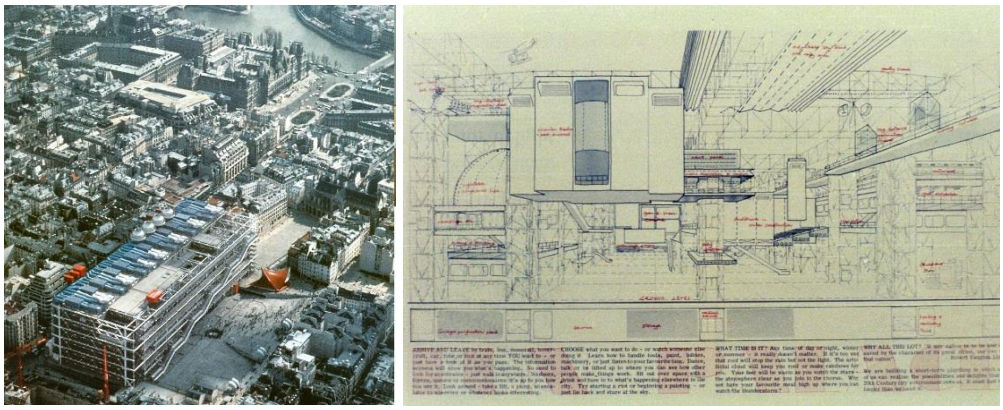

Fig. 79. (left) Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, Centre Pompidou, 1971; (right) Cedric Price, Fun Palace, 1964.

Price's 'Fun Palace' – as a conceptual prototype for the Centre Pompidou – could be described as a building-sized transformable machine. Yet, besides its reliance on structure and technology, its radical agency originates from the ideological foundations of Price's experimental architecture. Inspired by the egalitarian philosophy of the 18th-century pleasure grounds in London, as well as the experimental avant-garde's theatrical practice of the time, the Fun Palace aimed to create a truly democratic form of architecture that would allow for a plurality of social uses. Its adaptable form implied the participation of the user, and its application of new technologies also alluded to the social utopia of an advanced and futuristic society.

The construction of the Centre Pompidou began just a decade after Price published plans for his Fun Palace.[55] However, the cultural and political context of the redevelopment of the Beaubourg Plateau in

[54] Unlike Rogers, Alan Colquhoun discusses the building as firmly rooted in the modernist tradition in that the functionalism of the building – as in the tradition of classical modernism – becomes a system of representation. See Alan Colquhoun, 'Plateau Beaubourg', in *Essays of Architectural Criticism: Modern Architecture and Historical Change* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 110-120.

[55] Theatre director Joan Littlewood commissioned the building in 1961 as part of a larger redevelopment plan for London's Lea Valley. Price completed his plans for the Fun Palace in 1964, but it was finally prevented from realisation. Even though Price never found an alternative site for the building and, like most of Price's architectural works, it remained in the realm of ideas, it became one of the best-known examples of avant-garde architectural experimentation.

Paris was radically different from that of the proposed setting for Price's original idea, London's Lea Valley in the early 1960s – especially considering the fact that, after all, Price's plan remained on paper and therefore in the realm of ideas. The laissez-faire liberalism of the building's design concept in the context of the normative conservatism of its Gaullist commissioner led to a set of ideological contradictions that significantly altered the meaning of Rogers' and Piano's museum building.[56]

Baudrillard – who coined the term 'the Beaubourg effect' – saw the 'Pompidou phenomenon' as a monumental manifestation of anti-culture. In Baudrillard's reading, the building – 'a Möbius of doubtlessly unrealizable utopia' – became a simulacrum of cultural values, an empty container annihilated in advance by its inside-out architectural form. 'It has never been so clear that the content – here, culture, elsewhere, information or commodities – is nothing but the phantom support for the operation of the medium itself, whose function is always to induce mass, to produce a homogeneous human and mental flux.'[57] The building translated meaning into signs and became a spectacle to conceal controlled socialisation, or 'the reversal of the social' that had signalled the final implosion of May '68; its staged circulatory system transformed the critical masses into a mass of consumers, and Price's unbuilt architecture of social utopia was turned in Beaubourg into a cultural spectacle, a built icon of consumer society.

What appeared as an ideological oxymoron for Baudrillard, on the contrary also seemed to guarantee the success of the postmodern museum, which – as Douglas Crimp remarked – was based on its 'both-and' principle that compounded previous models and turned into a monumental instrument and instrumental monument at the same time. [58] The adaptation and appropriation of the architectural typology of the *factory* – as Krauss also illustrated through her analysis of Minimalism and the late-capitalist market – ironically, in the case of the Centre Pompidou, eventuated as *the* representation of the newly emerging museum industry. The architecture of the museum itself turned into cultural capital, and the role of museum building – as a cultural simulacrum itself – became central in the new concept of the museum. It contributed to the process of redefining architecture's position through its representation within the space of art, extended to the late-capitalist city. As Adorno wrote: 'The commercial character of culture causes the difference between culture and practical life to disappear.'[59]

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[56] In an interview shortly after the realisation of the building, Rogers recalled his initial objection to the French conservative government's open call for the Beaubourg project. Rogers explained that he was deeply surprised – and very inexperienced at the time – when their project was shortlisted and chosen for realisation, and also acknowledged the ideological contradictions between the building's experimental intentionality (as well as his strong leftist feelings and sympathy with the social and artistic movements of '68) and the ideological implications of the French government's commission. It is a further contradiction that – despite the architect's original intentions to create an 'anti-monumental' museum building – the Centre Pompidou became a listed monument by the turn of the century, preventing any potential changes and flexibility that would have been the very essence of the building's programme.

[57] Jean Baudrillard, 'The Beaubourg Effect: Implosion and Deterrence', in *Simulacra and Simulation,* pp. 61-74.

[58] See Douglas Crimp, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993).

[59] Theodor W. Adorno, *The Culture Industry*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 61.

Despite its inside-out structure, turning toward the city as a panoramic device, the Centre Pompidou – as mirrored and mocked in Matta-Clark's *Conical Intersect* – can still best be described as a monumental *black hole* in the urban fabric which had no consideration for the pre-existing architectural context and little, if any, formal connections to the surrounding urban space. The construction of Frankfurt's Museumsufer, which started only two years after the opening of the Pompidou, followed a completely different model. Heinrich Klotz's creation, the Museumsufer, was not only a parallel project to the reconstruction of Frankfurt's historic city centre but took a strategic role in a larger urban plan to preserve and recycle the city's architectural heritage, as well as to pedestrianise and revitalise the inner city. As previously discussed in relation to the structural conceit of the street, the Museumsufer of Frankfurt offered an alternative model to the gigantic multifunctional block of the Centre Pompidou. It consisted of a network of small, specialised institutions that were spread around the city, occupying – and designating new cultural functions for – the historic villas set on each bank of the river Main. The case of Frankfurt signalled a shift from the concept of the museum as island to the museum as urban archipelago.

Fig. 80. (left) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Conical Intersect,* 1975; (right) Aerial view of Le Trou des Halles, 1974.

The conceptual origin of the model of the Museumsufer, like that of the Centre Pompidou, can also be traced back to the artistic and architectural avant-garde of the 1960s. If the Fun Palace was a major inspiration for the Pompidou, Price's 'Potteries Thinkbelt'[60] could be seen as comparable, and analogous, to Frankfurt's archipelago of museums. The Potteries Thinkbelt proposed to reutilize the underused industrial infrastructure of North Staffordshire, which had become redundant after the economic and industrial crisis of the 1950s in England. Taking advantage of the abandoned rail network that had linked the coal mines with the production sites of the local pottery industry, Price's plan suggested converting the pre-existing infrastructure into an alternative educational network spread around the city, linking diverse educational facilities, such as teaching rooms, labs and workshops, with student housing. Like the Fun Palace, this plan also proposed a model of flexible infrastructure that would have adapted to the ever-changing needs of its users. This new architectural model of the university, however, also implied a new educational model, which was formulated as a critique of the

[60] Price documented his Potteries Thinkbelt project in 1966 in the sociology journal *New Society* and then in *Architectural Design*. See: Cedric Price, 'Potteries Thinkbelt', *New Society*, 2 June 1966, 14-17, reprinted in *Supercrit #1: Cedric Price Potteries Thinkbelt*, ed. By Samantha Hardingham and Kester Rattenbury (Oxford: Routledge, 2007), pp. 14-17.

anti-utilitarian and hierarchical top-down system of higher education that was prevalent in England, and elsewhere, at the time.

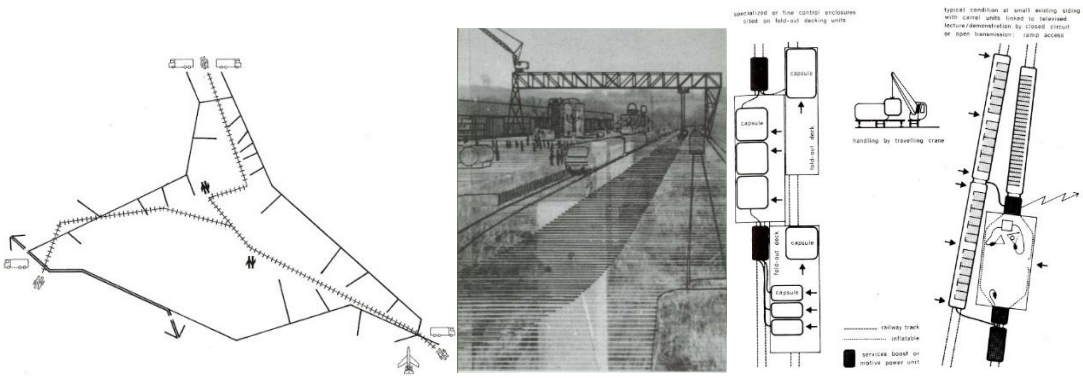

Fig. 81. Cedric Price, Potteries Thinkbelt, 1966.

The structural decentralisation of the university's architecture and its (re)integration[61] into the city became strategic for Price in the same way as it did for contemporary artists who engaged with the site of the city in order to oppose and escape the exclusivity and elitism of art museums – as Schum and Asher also attempted to. Yet, as Pier Vittorio Aureli has pointed out, the Potteries Thinkbelt also clearly signalled a paradigm shift in the economy:

> [I]t can also be understood as a paradigmatic example of an urban environment whose values, forms, and ideology resonate with the great transformations that have affected the global economy since the late 1970s, a period – and mode of production – that historians and sociologists associate with post-Fordism.[62]

Thus, Price's proposal for the adaptive reuse of the industrial infrastructure was more than a simple act of recycling. Instead, it proposed to substitute the production of material goods with production of knowledge, and emphasized the productivity of knowledge and information by reconsidering the role of science in society as a new applied industry. As a proposal for a radical social utopia in the 1960s, by the beginning of the 1980s Price's model had become the inspiration for the redevelopment of a long list of post-industrial cities. However, these ideas, applied in practice, turned out – as with the example of the Centre Pompidou – to be a set of self-eradicating ideological paradoxes.

While the Potteries Thinkbelt proposed to revitalise North Staffordshire through a new model for an educational network, Frankfurt reimagined itself in the early 1980s through its network of museums, a model of development that was based on the museum industry as a new form of cultural capital. Both projects were fundamentally defined in relation to the post-industrial city, and yet, despite the structural and practical similarities of these models, their ideological disparity is self-evident. The discrepancy between Klotz's and Price's projects is not just a consequence of their contextual/cultural differences,

[61] Habermas discusses 'the crisis of capitalism' as something rooted in the separation of life and culture and reads the history of modernism as attempts to reunite these. See Jürgen Habermas, 'Modernity: An Incomplete Project', in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster (London: Pluto Press, 1985), pp. 1-16.
[62] Pier Vittorio Aureli, 'Labor and Architecture: Revisiting Cedric Price's Potteries Thinkbelt', *Log*, 23 (2011), 97-118.

but it emerges from their relationship to their respective contexts (in particular the architectural heritage of the city) and the social function that they delegated to architecture.

Price's plan – as opposed to the practice of the Modern Movement that often eliminated entire parts of cities in order to renew them – demonstrated a sense of contextual consciousness, without succumbing to the romantic notion of the ruin or nostalgia for the past. The Potteries Thinkbelt showed a tendency, parallel to artistic practices at the time, that proposed to explore and rethink the contemporary city through its playful misuse or de-familiarisation,[63] but Price's decision to recycle the pre-existing infrastructure was essentially functional. He passionately opposed historic preservation. This was not only evident in his dismantling and recycling manuals: when his Inter-Action Centre[64] was 'threatened' with being listed, he campaigned for its demolition himself, as he felt that the building had become outdated. Price believed in an anti-monumental architecture that could be flexible, changing and continuously adapting to human and social needs. In contrast to Price's unsentimental position the Museumsufer developed a substantially different relation to the historic buildings of the villas it occupied. While the strategically located network of museums became instrumental as a catalyst for a new urban experience and the revision of the functionalist post-war architectural reconstruction of the city, the programme of the Museumsufer was an essential part of Frankfurt's new historic preservation project, which, in comparison with Price's idea, constructed its image in relation to its past form (that became inseparable from the museum's own history and present), as opposed to its future function.

Price's reformist attitude was thus replaced in Frankfurt by a restorative approach – that Habermas identified with the neo-conservative turn – which emerged in Germany around the same time as the postmodern architectural culture started to appear. [65] Instead of anticipating an undefined future, Frankfurt's new museums solidified nostalgia for past futures that the ruins of a once-flourishing historical city foreshadowed. After its short post-war revival, the ruin, once again, acquired a new meaning and became central to a range of cultural practices,[66] which sought to 'build on' the site of history and achieve a layered complexity, which was paradoxically a-historical, a form of vicarious gravitas.

[63] See in comparison the *dérive* of the SI for example, or even Venturi and Scott Brown's exercise to navigate Las Vegas through Nolli's map of Rome, etc.
[64] 1977, Kentish Town, London; demolished in 2003.
[65] As previously spelt out, Habermas explicitly linked this 'new conservatism' with Paolo Portoghesi's 1980 Biennale in Venice. He distinguished three new schools of conservatism among which the postmodernists were the new conservatives. See Habermas, 'Modernity: An Incomplete Project'.
[66] Regarding the post-war revival of the ruin (see *Ruins*, ed. by Brian Dillon (London; Cambridge, Mass.: Whitechapel Gallery; MIT Press, 2011) in which Dillon argues that after the Second World War the ruin in films and literature became its own genre; however, it had very different connotations compared to the romantic ideas of ruin in the 19th century and before, as after the trauma of the vast ruination of entire cities of the Second World War the ruin became resistant to previous aestheticisation. (see also Rose Macaulay's novel *The World my Wilderness*, 1950)

Ruin in Reverse

In *A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey*, Robert Smithson asserted – while comparing American suburbia to the ruins of the classical monuments of Rome – that the contemporary city is not *falling* into ruin any more, but instead, as a negative utopia of the still dominant but already 'dead modernism', it constantly *rises* into a ruinous state, becoming a 'ruin in reverse'.[67] Thus, Smithson extended the idea of the ruin to the reading of whole territories in order to revise and complicate the space-time of post-war the architectural landscape.[68] In the case of Frankfurt, the city – as a landscape in ruins – became the basis for the new network of museums, which constructed themselves both conceptually and physically through the city while also becoming its framing device – the city became the new expanded field of the museum. However, the myth of the modern ruin was replaced here with a postmodern pastiche of historic styles, a mirror image of Smithson's dialectical landscape as a historical ruin projecting its past into its own future, which did not challenge the status quo but, on the contrary, preserved it.

Fig. 82. Robert Smithson, *A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic*, New Jersey, 1967.

The turn of the 1970s not only brought about major changes in the museum-city dichotomy: it was also a period when the postmodern museum as playground for the 'artist architect' reached its climax.[69] Yet, as Michaela Giebelhausen points out in relation to the late 20th-century history of museums, this often-lamented primacy of architecture over art was a complex issue. Museum architecture was not only a highly symbolic representation of the institution and the collections it held, but – due to the revaluated

[67]Robert Smithson, 'A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic', *Artforum,* 7 (1967), 48-51; repr. in *Writings*, 1979, pp. 52-57.
[68] Brian Dillon argued that the 'zone' in Tarkovskij's *Stalker* (1979) is in the same way the extension of the ruin to a territory and a new way of thinking about the idea of space as ruin. See: Brian Dillon, 'The Violence of the Ruin', lecture, Royal College of Art, 27 January 2012.
[69] See: Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, 'Insight versus Entertainment: Untimely Meditations on the Architecture of Twentieth-century art Museums', in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. by Sharon McDonald (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), pp.245-262.

spatio-temporal qualities of architecture – it also started to function as a symbolic museum display in its own right.[70]

In Frankfurt's Museumsufer many of the new museums incorporated fragments of the city's built heritage or whole historic buildings, as in the case of Ungers' DAM. Likewise, Tschumi's New Acropolis Museum, built over archaeological ruins at the foot of the Acropolis, was at once a site of excavation and a displaced fragment of the ruined city – the double of the Parthenon, which Tschumi described in relation to his museum as a missing *objet trouvé*.[71] 'Here contextual meant going against the context,' summarised Tschumi in an interview,[72] referring to the paradox of the building, which should be simultaneously read as an object, a display and a site of the city. The museum's architecture has therefore been fundamentally redefined not only as a context but also as a subject; a paradigmatic change that developed in correlation with the spatial turn of contemporary art practices and the new exhibitionary representations of architecture.

Fig. 83. Central 'hut' of the Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt; (right) Market Gate of Miletus in the Pergamonmuseum, Berlin.

While the DAM was the first museum in Germany dedicated exclusively to architecture, the exhibition of architectural fragments was an already existing practice in German museums. Berlin's Pergamonmuseum had housed monumental buildings such as the Pergamon Altar or the Market Gate of Miletus since its opening in 1930, and it became an archetype for later architecture museums.[73] The basic similarities between the buildings of the Pergamonmuseum and the DAM are obvious in that they stage entire architectural structures and fragments, yet their differences – in the way these structures are framed and enclosed in the museum's building, as well as in their representative symbolism – are

[70] Giebelhausen refers specifically to extensions and transformations of museums where new additions of the museum architecture frame earlier parts of the building, like a 'patchwork' of architecture, layers upon layers. See Michaela Giebelhausen, 'The Architecture is the Museum', in *New Museum Theory and Practice*, ed. by Janet Marstine (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), pp.41-60.
[71] These two examples incorporate the historic architecture and ruins of the city in very different ways – this difference will be explored in the next section through a comparison of Frankfurt's Museumsufer and Berlin's Museumsinsel.
[72] Enrique Walker, *Tschumi on Architecture: Conversations with Enrique Walker* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 2006) p. 160.
[73] Beyond providing an archetype for the building of the DAM, Ungers later engaged with the Pergamonmuseum even more intimately when he won the commission for its renovation and extension in 2000. The last section of this chapter will return to the discussion of Ungers' extension to the Pergamonmuseum.

striking, and reveal the 1980s climate, which witnessed a major transformation of the general concept of the museum and related spatial practices.

The most significant change that distinguishes the DAM from earlier examples of museums displaying architecture was a new interest in the vernacular of the everyday – as manifest in the phenomenon of artist collections and museums – as well as a new concept of architectural representation embodied by the museum building itself. The structures and spaces of military and religious power displayed in the Pergamon Museum were substituted for idealized informal space in the DAM: Ungers placed in the centre of his museum building an abstract representation of a primitive hut. Thus, the historical references at the core of Ungers' architecture remained at an abstract, symbolic level. Monumental historical architecture was therefore replaced by a generalised history of architectural space and concurrently, as in Ungers' DAM, the architecture of the museum itself became the main object on display. The building of the museum turned into a representational object, which was an attendant phenomenon to the twin process of extending the museum beyond its physical walls (i.e. artists moving outside the museum) and the parallel absorption of everyday spaces into the museum. Paradoxically, the systematic assimilation of everyday space by the museum finally rendered its representative values as counterfeit to that of military space.[74] Instead of framing and presenting military spaces, the re-conceptualised museum came to replace them.

In relation to the contemporary city Lefebvre described this phenomenon as 'the demise of the monument and the rise of the building'.[75] For Lefebvre the monument's meaning was destroyed by a cycle of political and economic revolutions and – just as the monarchy had been replaced by the more abstract notion of the State – it was gradually substituted for an abstract syntax of significations of the buildings in the city. The intellectual developments of post-structuralism and the consequent trend for plural historical readings ultimately implied a shift in scale from the monumental to the normative architecture of the city. The late-capitalist museum's expansion in the city alluded to the 'museumisation' of the city itself through the exhibition of its architecture, which provided a new syntax for the representation of contemporary economic and political power. In this way, in the late 1970s the museum – once again – became a catalyst in contemporary urban development and thus assumed a new economic and ideological role within late capitalism. However, as Tafuri asserted in his *Architecture and Utopia,*[76] a loss of meaning resulted in the social and ideological counter-productivity of postmodern architecture. This contributed to the perpetuating of the crisis of the museum itself, which still continues today. As Hal Foster wrote – quoting Habermas and Jameson – in the editorial preface to his collected essays on the contested notion of Postmodern:

> Assailed though it is by pre-, anti-, and postmodernists alike, modernism as a practice has not failed. […] Originally oppositional, modernism defied the cultural order of the bourgeoisie and

[74] This can be also interpreted as a forecast of the post-Cold-War condition, in that military space was replaced by normative everyday spaces, also indicating a change in scale, as I will argue in the last section, shifting from the universal to the more fragmented individual.
[75] See: Henri Lefebvre, 'Toward an Architecture of Enjoyment', *Artforum*, April (2014), 234. This imprint (originally published in 1973) has an introduction by Lukasz Stanek.
[76] ManfredoTafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1976).

> "the false normativity" (Habermas) of history; today, however, it is the official culture. As Jameson notes, we entertain it: its once scandalous productions are in the university, in the museum, in the street. In short, modernism, as even Habermas writes, seems "dominant but dead".[77]

If Foster called for saving – if by exceeding – the modernist project in the mid-1980s when he published his anthology, this 'moment of crisis' – as in the self-perpetuating role of late-capitalist museums – remains unresolved three decades later, in the present time. The museum is now with *and* without walls, but not as Malraux intended, and its relentless expansion and occupation of space has meant the evident harnessing of culture to commerce, making explicit that which was once implicit. As Jameson suggests, any subversion has been commodified and is now cosseted within the museum's expansive territory. Is it possible to imagine another formulation, one beyond this seemingly invasive cast? As with the professionalisation of curating, artistic practice has also changed in this way and, once again, invariably seeks the benediction of the museum.

[77] Hal Foster, 'Postmodernism: A Preface', in *Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster (London: Pluto Press, 1985), pp. vii –xiv.

## 5.3 THE TOTAL MUSEUM: FROM THE UTOPIAN RUIN TO THE RUIN OF UTOPIA

*On Exactitude in Science*
*…In that Empire, the Art of Cartography attained such Perfection that the map of a single Province occupied the entirety of a City, and the map of the Empire, the entirety of a Province. In Time, those Unconscionable Maps no longer satisfied, and the Cartographers Guilds struck a Map of the Empire whose size was that of the Empire, and which coincided point for point with it. The following Generations, who were not so found of the Study Of Cartography as their Forebears had been, saw that that vast Map was Useless, and not without some Pitilessness was it, that They delivered it up to the Inclemencies of Sun and Winters. In The Deserts of the West, still today, there are Tattered Ruins of that Map, inhabited by Animals and Beggars; in all the Land there is no other Relic of the Disciplines of Geography.*
– Suarez Miranda, *Vijades de varones prudentes,*
Libro IV, Cap. XLV, Lerida, 1658

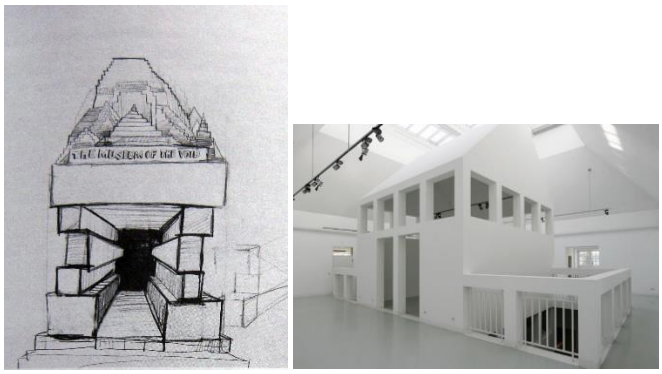

Fig. 84. (left) Robert Smithson, *Museum of the Void*, 1968; (left) O. M. Ungers, DAM, 1984.

The Memory of Architecture

A pencil drawing by Robert Smithson from 1968 depicts a dark abyss, framed by the columns of a monumental entrance, on top of which reside a group of pyramids and towers: a symbolic landscape of an archaic city recalling Le Corbusier's sketches for the Mundaneum. The drawing's title, *Museum of the Void*, echoes Smithson's essay from the same year that contemplated the inescapable ideological context of the museum display. In this, Smithson described his experience of museum rooms as a set of voids as a way of referring to the primacy of architectural representation over art – an observation reiterating the numerous 'void shows' of his contemporaries at the time. While a year earlier, in conversation with Smithson, Kaprow proposed to empty the Guggenheim Museum of New York and exhibit the building as a self-referential monument, Smithson complicated his metaphor of the museum as void by describing Philip Johnson's unrealized proposal for Ellis Island – a monumental circular structure incorporating the fragments of a 19th-century building on site, a ruin in and of itself – as 'nothing but a stabilized void'.[78] While Kaprow simply proposed a reversal of the contained and

[78] Robert Smithson, 'Some Void Thoughts on Museums'.

container of the museum, Smithson's example shed light on architecture not only as a context, but also as a picturesque embodiment of historical time itself.

Kaprow's and Smithson's views define two separate notions of the monument. Smithson's ruin, the 'authentic monument,' is a site reminiscent of a past era: in other words, it is a relic. Kaprow's idea of the monument accords with the second definition that describes a structure (a statue or building) erected retrospectively to honour or remember a site, an era or an idea, which has only symbolic links to what it means to represent. In contrast to the first definition of the 'authentic' monument, that is the material manifestation and the incarnation of memory itself, this second typology of monuments evokes and frames memory, remaining in a remote or representational relationship with their site or subject. The common link between these two kinds of monuments and the museum – the 'house of memory' – is their mnemonic function. Whereas Kaprow's category of the mausoleum might not fit with a post-Beaubourg concept of the museum as a dynamic 'multi-disciplinary factory', the concept of the monument is useful in order to describe the postmodern museum in which the two definitions often coexist and overlap. This is exemplified in many of Frankfurt's museums, which were built as part of Klotz's preservationist programme of the Museumsufer, including Ungers' DAM, regarded as a dedicated monument to the idea of absolute architecture, as well as incorporating the ruin of a 19th-century villa – in essence, Smithson's 'stabilized void'.

In *The Production of Space*, in 1974, Henri Lefebvre wrote that architecture is a 'spatial practice' that has permanence through time, and therefore plays a crucial role in understanding and articulating the relationship between space and time.[79] This notion of space-time surfaced in a number of different disciplines after the 1950s. Anthropologists and cultural geographers argued that space is produced culturally, and that architecture is continually reproduced through use and everyday life. For Lefebvre, the space of the city was a historical and social (re)production, a 'medium and outcome of social being'.[80] Architecture did not construct the space, but it was a tool of manipulation of the perception of spatiality, a 'spatial practice' determined by space, time (history and memory), and the social being. Lefebvre turned against the abstract conception of space through a consideration of the social being, and broke with the abstract notion of time in favour of a periodic one, identifying different paradigmatic readings of space according to historical periods (*zeitgeist*) and social and cultural paradigms, which contain and determine different concepts and productions of space.[81]

In other words, this is the 'memory' of architecture, a loaded and frequently used keyword in architectural theory in the 19th century, which re-emerged in the second half of the 20th century as a central concept to replace and complicate the totalising view of history.[82] Beyond its paradigmatic or

[79] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, tr. by Donald Nichols-Smith (Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 1974), p. 137.
[80] Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Jane Rendell and Alicia Pivaro, 'Things, flows, filters, tactics', in *The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space*, ed. by Iain Borden, Joe Kerr and Jane Rendell (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2002) pp. 2-27 (p. 5).
[81] 'Natural or physical space' (prehistory); 'absolute space'; 'historical space'; 'abstract space' (capitalism) and the space yet to come that Lefebvre calls 'differential space'.
[82] Even by the 19th century Ruskin was referring to memory in relation to architecture: in his *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, the sixth lamp is the Lamp of Memory: 'There are but two strong conquerors of

periodic reading, architectural space was also associated with a mnemonic method, which can be traced back to the ancient Greek and Roman rhetorical treaties of Quintilian or Cicero. English historian Frances Yates's *The Art of Memory* traces the history of these mnemonic systems. Her book, published in 1966, was widely influential for a number of different disciplines, from the arts to neuropsychology. From the 1970s onwards, the spatial model of the 'method of loci', first associated with the Russian neuropsychologist Aleksandr Luria, became popular as a mnemonic approach.[83] In this, one would create the mental image of a (real or fictional) building and populate each room with ideas and related images. These memories could be recalled later by mentally travelling around the building and revisiting all the rooms in the desired order. In this way memory was created through a narrative architectural experience, through the metaphoric use of architecture as a mental space. While the images and the spatial structure were of equal importance in the ancient rhetorical models of the method of loci, in the late 20th century this method was re-adapted as a primarily spatial model, an architectural analogy. Accordingly, the architectural metaphor of space informed and dominated late 20th century ideas of memory, described by Hartog as the memory-history debate that eventuated today's 'presentism'[84] – and reciprocally, eventually psychology influenced the reading of real architectural space, exemplified by Vidler's 'psycho-analysis of architecture'[85] or Giuliana Bruno's use of the method of loci as an analogy in her *Atlas of Emotion* in order to capture the 'film-space' of architecture.[86]

Fig. 85. Frame enlargements from Alexander Sokurov's *Russian Ark*, 2002.

Alexander Sokurov's film *Russian Ark*[87] exemplifies this mnemonic method and narrates Russian history through the thirty-three rooms of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, part of the State Hermitage Museum. Guided through these interiors the viewer encounters historic, private and personal events, real

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the forgetfulness of men, Poetry and Architecture' – Ruskin wrote in 1949 (quoted in Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000) p.206). After the 1950s the concept of memory again became the central focus of architects and architectural critics. This has many interpretations. It has been linked to commemorative buildings and monuments as well as to the typology and morphology of new architecture. The concept of 'memory' represents for architecture continuity with its own history and cultural context. ('…in the city memory begins where history ends.' – Peter Eisenman, 'Editor's Introduction: The Houses of Memory: The Texts of Analogue', in: Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), pp. 3-11 (p. 11).

[83] Aleksandr Romanovich Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemonist: A Little Book about a Vast Memory* (London: Cape, 1969).

[84] François Hartog argues that the concept of memory increasingly replaces that of 'history' from the 1980s onwards (this is the memory-history debate) to take over and occupy everywhere – from Old Europe to the Apartheid Africa, etc. see: François Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 7.

[85] Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space. Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000), pp. 1-13.

[86] Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion* (New York: Verso, 2007).

[87] *Russkiy kovcheg/Russian Ark*, dir. by Alexander Sokurov, (Russia, The State Hermitage Museum and others, 2002).

and fictional characters, private conversations between former residents of the Winter Palace mixed with contemplative moments of the visitors to the Hermitage Museum, as well as public ceremonies, glorious celebrations and scenes of war and terror. This fictitious walk through the palace is a journey in both time and imagination, exploring the building, its changing meanings and meandering social and political context. 'Memory begins where history ends',[88] and this iconic piece of architecture emerges as a monument to collective memory as well as a permanent stage for the theatre of Russian society. As the architectural figuration of space versus the programme (and assigned function) of architecture, or the differing ideas of the authentic and the symbolic monument, the periodic reading of architectural memory has its counterpart in mnemonic representations of space. In Vidler's 'warped space', these categories collide and coexist in the same way as different types of architectural memory do in Sokurov's single-sequence historical drama of the spaces of the Hermitage Museum, where the site and representation of memory become one and the same.

## Contexts in Context

Echoing Sokurov's film, where the architectural interiors of the Winter Palace open up as rich settings and signifiers to evoke different epochs of history, there have been numerous studies in recent years that aim to trace cultural histories based on the display strategies of exhibitions and the interiors of exhibition spaces. For instance, Mary Anne Staniszewski's *The Power of Display* gave an account of early 20th-century art and culture through an analysis of the display strategies of MoMA in New York,[89] and Charlotte Klonk's more recent book on gallery display proposed a spatial history of experience as a way to reconstruct a cultural history.[90] Klonk mapped the shifts and changes in scientific, social and political paradigms through gallery rooms from different periods, based on the design and spatial constellation of their interiors. She examined how Western cultures used (and still use) the gallery 'to conceptualise the nature of subjective experience, its value and its relationship to the ideal of society pursued.'[91]

Klonk used 'experience' as an intellectual category to translate and navigate the cultural values inscribed in the space and design of the museum. Looking at the evolution of a Western tradition of display in fine art museums during the past 200 years, she traced the history of the modern gallery visitor from citizen to consumer: from the bourgeois interiors of the 19th century, through the early 20th century experiments for a 'collective experience' of socialist movements, finally returning to the highly individualized, consumer experience in a 'society of spectacle' of the late 20th century. The space of the museum was thus studied in Klonk's book as a site (a social space), that evolved according to different

[88] Editor's introduction: Eisenman, 'The Houses of Memory: The Texts of Analogue', p. 11.
[89] Brian O'Doherty's 'Inside the White Cube' can be seen in many aspects as the forerunner of Staniszewski's approach; however, while O'Doherty outlines the history of art and its perception by examining the ideological implications of the site of Modernist art, Staniszewski looks at display strategies in order to document the history of MoMA and its exhibitions.
[90] Charlotte Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors 1800-2000* (London: Yale University Press, 2009).
[91] Klonk, p. 12.

paradigms and concepts of experience, and is the subject to social and historical forces; a study of the contexts of art *in* context.

While historical studies of the spaces of art entered art history and museum studies as late as the 1990s, a thematic interest in the history and typology of museum architecture had emerged in the 1970s, even if at times as a rather eclectic or formalist approach often associated with the historicism of postmodern architecture. Douglas Crimp[92] proposed James Stirling's Neue Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart, which opened in 1984, the same year as Ungers' DAM building in Frankfurt, as the iconic prototype of the postmodern museum. Crimp described Stirling's museum as the ultimate postmodern ruin, the manifestation of which was not only in its real site – in that it was an extension of the previous 19th-century building – but also in its creation of a new architectural typology, organized thematically around the theme of the ruin. Stirling's addition to the Staatsgalerie was full of symbolic and formal references to the history and prototypes of museum architecture, while in its language it simulated the fragmentation and the decay of the architectural ruin – in Calum Storrie's phrase 'a delirious memory house'.[93]

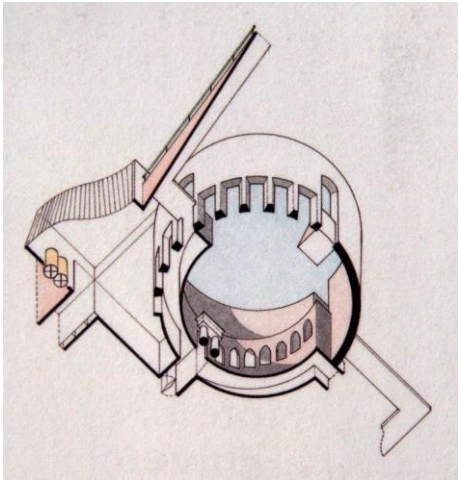

Fig. 86. James Stirling's Neue Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart, 1984.

If Crimp described the postmodern museum as the ultimate ruin, Michaela Giebelhausen described the ruin as a museum. In her study of the typological evolution of museum buildings since the 19th century, Giebelhausen concluded that by the late 20th century the museum equated to architecture itself, which she identified in a series of case studies of museum extensions, where layer upon layer and structures within structures are framed and staged in their fragmentation and contradiction.[94] In Giebelhausen's description, the museum is a palimpsest, an assemblage of architectural fragments, the spatial representation of different periods of time and history. This concept resonates with the new ways of thinking about the city that emerged from the 1960s onwards, and which rearticulated its image as a multi-layered symbolic artefact,[95] such as Aldo Rossi's *Cittá Analoga*, or the neo-classical dream of the

[92] Crimp, *On the Museum's Ruins.*
[93] Calum Storrie, *The Delirious Museum: A Journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas* (London/New York: I. B. Tauris Publishers, 2007).
[94] Giebelhausen, 'The Architecture is the Museum', p. 60.
[95] Michaela Giebelhausen, 'Symbolic Capital: The Frankfurt Museum Boom of the 1980s' in *The Architecture of the Museum: Symbolic Structures, Urban Contexts*, ed. by Michaela Giebelhausen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), pp. 75-107 (p. 82).

museum-city reflected in the numerous reinterpretations of the Nolli map, as well as Ungers' design method, which he described in relation to the Saint Severus Church in Cologne, and which informed his thinking about the city and his 'Green Archipelago'.[96]

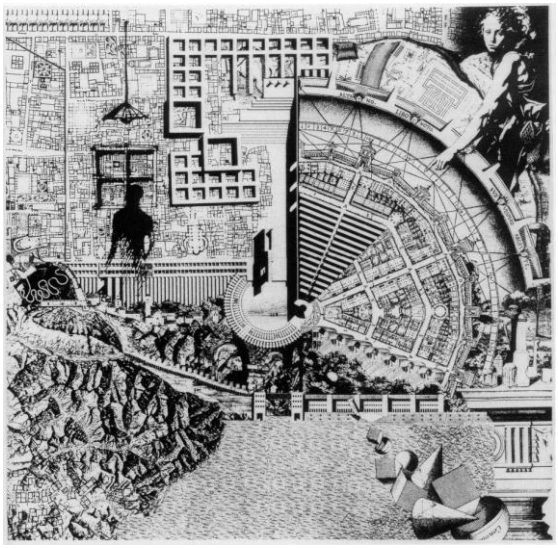

Fig. 87. Aldo Rossi, *Cittá Analoga*, 1976.

Ungers' early years spent as a teacher at Berlin's Technische Universität (TU) between 1963 and 1969 determined his later architectural thinking enormously. His experience of the post-war reality of a fragmented – and at the time divided – city presented the main starting point and inspiration for his architectural thinking and design. Ungers described the urban crisis of Berlin, the 'disurbanization' of a shrinking city, as a fragmented urban form, a ruin, which – as opposed to the functionalist approach of the Modern Movement – he did not see as a problem to solve, but rather as a thematic and formal inspiration for the architecture of the city. He took Berlin, and its fragmentary urban texture as the starting point for his 'Green Archipelago' project, which he organized together with Rem Koolhaas in 1977.[97] As Koolhaas wrote in retrospect, the archipelago was a trope that related to what could be described today as the hypercity or the post-urban metropolis.[98] The green grid – that fused the fundamentally antithetical traditions of the Russian avant-garde idea of the monumental but dynamic

[96] The Saint Severus Church in Cologne that consisted of five different superimposed buildings. This was the model that informed Ungers' 'house inside the house' or 'cities within the city' which he considered as a metaphor for architectural growth, transformation and expansion, 'diversity in unity'.
[97] As part of the Cornell summer school. Other collaborators included Peter Riemann, Hans Kollhoff, and Arthur Ovaska. There seems to be a controversy between Ungers and Koolhaas – while their approach is clearly different from the 1980s onwards, in a recently published monograph dedicated to this issue Koolhaas claims authorship over the original idea of the 'Green Archipelago' manifesto. (See: Florian Hertweck and Sébastien Marot 'Ghostwriting: Rem Koolhaas in conversation with Florian Hertweck and Sebastien Marot', in: *The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago,* ed. by Florian Hertweck and Sébastien Marot, (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2013). pp. 131-143.) Koolhaas described his collaboration and encounter with Ungers in Berlin and later at the Cornell as 'ghostwriting,' 'putting oneself within an other person's theoretical imagination'. Ungers and Koolhaas met in 1972; however, soon afterwards they went their separate ways. In 1975, still in association with OMU Studio, Koolhaas founded OMA that was based simultaneously in London, New York City and Berlin (together with Elia Zenghis, Madelon Viesendorp and Zoe Zenghelis). In 1977 they organized the second summer school in Berlin, focusing on the urban villa. In 1978 Ungers organized the third summer school without Koolhaas.
[98] See Hertweck and Marot, *The City in the City: Berlin: A Green Archipelago*.

structural form with fragmentary Piranesian poetics[99] – was at the same time the expression of the nature-architecture dialectic (as impersonated by the ruin), which later Ungers further explored in relation to the typology of the urban villa, contrasting the idea of the city with that of the countryside.

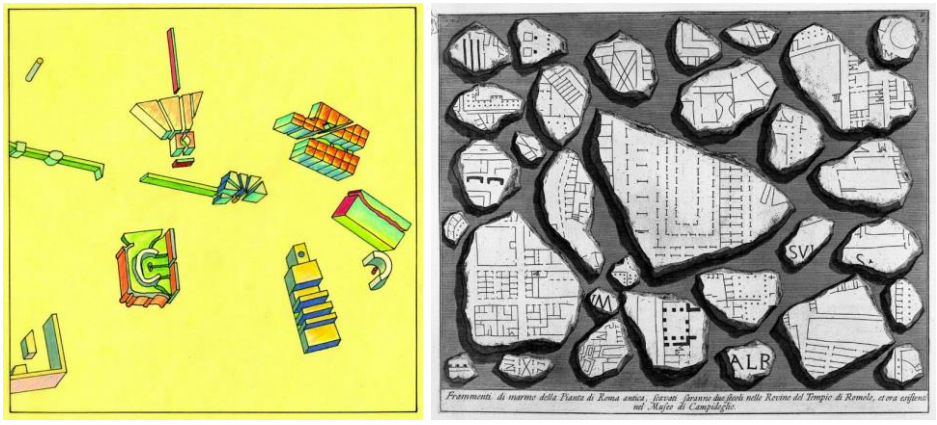

Fig. 88. (left) Peter Riemann with O. M. Ungers, *Die Stadt in der Stadt*, 1977; (right) Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Fragment of the Severan marble plan, *Le Antichità Romane,* 1756.

*Green Archipelago* described the city as a collection of islands – urban artifacts, blocks or ruins – which Ungers aimed to capture and frame as a whole divided into separate, autonomous parts that intensify diversity within the city. As previously discussed in comparison to Yona Friedman's 'utopias realisables', the differentiation between the islands was, however, not only a formal or architectural idea; it was also meant to render social and political differences visible via its socially identifiable enclaves.[100] In Aureli's description – echoing Ungers' ideas – the archipelago is 'an architectural counterform' that manifests political separateness and resists the totality of urbanisation (the avatar of capitalism), and therefore it lends architecture the political agency to re-define the city as a site of confrontation and co-existence. *Green Archipelago* was therefore a manifesto for the city as architectural ensemble, which rearticulated the social and political functions of architecture in relation to the post-industrial city. It declared that the task of the architect was not to precipitate but to anticipate the necessary evolution of society and the city itself. Thus it replaced the earlier totalizing ideas of urban design with a fragmentary and speculative form, in order to allow for a multiplicity of different scenarios and new emerging realities. For Ungers, Berlin became the model for the post-industrial, zero-growth European city, and while he recognized that 'architecture is not only a physical object, but architecture is also what survives the city,'[101] his theoretical interest in the urban fragment clearly went beyond the simple restaging of the historic city as a ruin.

[99] As Frampton suggested in his preface: 'OM Ungers and the Architecture of Coincidences', in *O.M. Ungers: Work in Progress, 1976-80,* ed. by Kenneth Frampton and Silvia Kolbovski (New York: Rizzoli, 1981), pp. 1-6 (p. 1).
[100] See Chantal Mouffe, 'Deliberative Democracy or Agonistic Pluralism?', *Social Research,* 66, 3 (1999), 745-758; see also Aureli's idea on the archipelago as a political concept in relation to the basic differentiation between the Urbis and the Polis; Pier Vittorio Aureli, 'Towards the Archipelago: Defining the Political and the Formal in Architecture', *Log*, 11 (2008), 91-120.
[101] Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2011), p. 227.

Ungers' idea of the archipelago, which he also described as a parable of 'cities within the city', was further 'paraphrased' in his building for the DAM: buildings within buildings that he juxtaposed while defining each with regard to the whole. Yet, the idea of the 'city as ensemble' – a speculative design that incorporated the city's decay so that new scenarios might emerge – clearly contradicts the overall regenerative role of the architecture in Frankfurt's Museumsufer. While *Green Archipelago* proposed that – instead of totalising uniformity – only the incomplete and fragmented reality of the urban fabric could bring about a new spatiality, Frankfurt's Museumsufer engendered yet another kind of representation for the tamed historical ruin within the city.

## Coincidentia Oppositorum

Frankfurt's cultural regeneration, its new Museumsufer aimed to reverse the functionalist approach of the post-war reconstruction of the inner city and provide a new urban vision which was expressed through the architectural reconstruction of a diversity of urban islands from the pre-war period. The archipelago of the museums in Frankfurt was, however, stripped bare of the political meaning, as promoted by Aureli, and – as in the case of the Centre Pompidou – the architectural form of a utopian vision was captured and instrumentalised in the context of the normative conservatism of the late-capitalist metropolis. Like the exhibition spaces of the DAM – the spatial enveloping of Ungers' structure of the 'house within a house' – that was in practice more restrictive than openly permissive, Frankfurt's museum archipelago actually contributed to the social fossilization of the city rather than its diversification.

As Christine Boyer has pointed out,[102] the attempts of the late 1970s and 1980s to restore the relationship between history and the city were paradoxical in that the multiperspectival readings of the city and its histories – a result of the postmodern condition, that challenged the totality of modernism's progressive utopias – have led to the dissolution of unified visions of the future. Firstly, the postmodern fragmentation rendered the envisioning of a stable social order, and thus the potential for relative reforms, impossible. Secondly, the 'city as spectacle', a new (picturesque) representational form and city image that postmodern urban design offered, occurred primarily in the service of commercial interests. While the restructuring and revitalization of older neighbourhoods led to the re-articulation of urban boundaries, these served only to exclude the dispossessed and displaced, and eventually resulted in the disappearance of the 'moral public sphere'.[103]

Exemplified by Frankfurt's regeneration in the early 1980s, this late-capitalist paradigm of urban visions colonised the consciousness of those involved with urban preservation. As Boyer remarks, these borrowed methods for the artistic and/or architectural processes of image construction in order to turn

[102] Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996).
[103] Boyer described three paradigms of the city images and representational forms reflecting different stages of capitalism: 1) the city as work of art (traditional); 2) the city as panorama (modernism; an abstract space in which, due to the new experience of multidimensional travel views, a new 'spatialisation' was born, and this new mobility in space resulted in the loss of the 'in-between-space); 3) the city as spectacle (contemporary, late-capitalist).

entire districts into 'frozen museums'. The ruins and fragments of the historic city in Frankfurt became the representation of an all-inclusive nostalgic longing for the past, which, instead of stressing antagonism in public space through the acknowledgement of social and political diversity, only enforced the status quo further. Historical patrimony and national heritage represented continuity and supported the solidification of hegemonic political and economic power, as opposed to the intention behind Ungers' proposal that initiated the principle of '*coincidentia oppositorum'* as a new method of urban planning.[104]

The discrepancy between Ungers' idea of the archipelago and Frankfurt's archipelago of museums emerged from the transformation of public space in the post-industrial city (and the consequent changing concept of the museum) in which the categories of private and public became ambiguous. While late-capitalist public space was largely privatised and monopolised by the economic interest of a narrow group in society, it still provided the functional basis for the city, the exchange of goods and the social domain of work, and the conditioning forces of the private and the public became one and the same.[105] Hence the dialectic of the private and public – as separate forms and concepts, or as 'distinct figures within the archipelago' – became meaningless and hardly defendable in practice.

This conflation of public and private in urban space was accompanied by the equation of the two overlapping, yet separate, concepts of the authentic and symbolic monument, in this instance collective memory and the museum. Whereas for Lefebvre architecture was a 'spatial practice' that articulated the relationship between space and time – in other words the memory of architecture – Giebelhausen described architecture itself as the museum. Even if Giebelhausen's assertion was made strictly in relation to recent tendencies in postmodern museum architecture,[106] her substitution of the concept of memory with that of the museum is indicative of the phenomenon that Boyer described in relation to the 1980s urban preservation projects, which exacerbated a 'crisis' of memory. The postmodern city – instead of Boyer's proposed model of 'the city of collective memory' that would nurture counter-memories as a form of resistance to the bourgeois appropriation of history – became a 'depoliticized outdoor museum'.[107]

While the historicising language of postmodern architecture was soon exhausted, and widely recognised as substantially 'a-historical',[108] the end of the 1980s also saw the end of the Cold War, which finally and decisively completed a neo-conservative turn by opening up the unrestricted flow of global capitalism. The triumphalism of post-Cold-War urban memory politics as observed by Hartog[109] put in place new historical narratives that included the history of modernism itself, and contemporary urban preservation projects became integral to new museum practices that further contributed to the 'museumisation' of urban space in recent decades. As the history of the spaces of art gradually replaced

[104] Boyer. p. 408.
[105] Aureli, *The Possibility of an Absolute Architecture*, p. 13.
[106] See Giebelhausen, 'The architecture is the Museum'.
[107] See Christine Boyer, 'The Place of History and Memory in the Contemporary City', in *The City of Collective Memory, pp. 1-29.*
[108] See: Anthony Vidler, 'Architecture after History: Nostalgia and Modernity at the End of the Century', *Journal of Architecture*, 1, 3 (1996), 177-187.
[109] Hartog, *Regimes of Historicity.*

the history of art inside the museum, the museum-city relationship also went through major transitions. To draw on the analogy of total warfare, which does not distinguish between civilians and military resources, the museumisation of normative architecture and everyday spaces finally cancelled the ideological and symbolic differences between the space of the museum and that of the city. The late 20th-century city was finally transformed by the 21st century into a 'total museum' – a tendency that is best exemplified by the reconstruction of the urban spaces of a reunited Berlin. Ungers' professional career – starting from and ending in the city of Berlin – clearly illuminates these developments in the city that gradually turned from a utopian ruin into the ruin of utopia itself.

## The Total Museum

Ungers' early ideas for urban design were rooted in his inquiry into the history of architectural types and the ruins of the shrinking post-industrial city. Whereas he believed in the progressive political agency of the architectural form, his 'formalist' approach did not resonate with the counter-architectural movements and the related political ideas of a new generation of students at the TU; he had to leave Berlin soon after 1968. While Ungers continued his research into the fragmented history of a divided Berlin throughout his years at Cornell, his true return to this city was three decades later, at a time when the ruined city of Berlin was turning into a symbol of itself, and its urban space was commonly perceived as a *museum.*[110] This period signaled an important shift in the understanding of urban space, its architectural form and the related politics of memory.[111] Ungers' proposal for the extension of the Pergamonmuseum was finally accepted in 2000,[112] and his idea of the architectural palimpsest reached its final manifestation in his posthumous building extension for this museum, the last addition to the archipelago of Berlin's Museumsinsel, which is yet to be completed.

Fig. 89. Ungers' proposed extension to the Pergamonmuseum, Berlin, 2006

[110] Jennifer Jordan describes Berlin as a museum. See: Jennifer Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
[111] In her *Stuctures of Memory* Jordan investigated urban change in Berlin from the viewpoint of the twin processes of forgetting and remembering, and how the dynamics and mechanisms of urban memory and place-making come to play in relation to land-use policies, property ownership and other market forces. Jordan, p. 10.
[112] The Ungers studio won the competition in 2000, then revised and finalised the plans in 2004. The building work started in 2013. [https://www.museumsinsel-berlin.de/en/buildings/pergamonmuseum/] [accessed 10.10.2015].

The original building of the Pergamonmuseum, the so-called Messel-Bau was designed by Alfred Messel and Ludwig Hoffmann between 1910 and 1930 in a neoclassical style, to house an unparalleled monumental collection of archaeological fragments, a complex architectural assemblage of world history. Ungers' intervention, the addition of a glass cube will close the fourth wing of the building, and therefore restore Messel's original idea of the layout and the circulation between the Greek, Roman, Egyptian and Babylonian galleries. Thus Ungers' architectural addition frames the transient history of the museum's building itself, which in this way becomes part of the collection of the museum. Ungers' contextual approach in Berlin demonstrates a new 'archaeological sensibility', which, while showing some continuity with his building of the DAM in Frankfurt, reveals an approach to history that is very different when compared to his earlier built works. Ungers' treatment of the preexisting architectural context – or the 'ruin' – expresses in itself the main conceptual and interpretative differences between Frankfurt's Museumsufer, created in 1980s West Germany, and Berlin's Museumsinsel, forged in the reunited post-Cold War German capital.

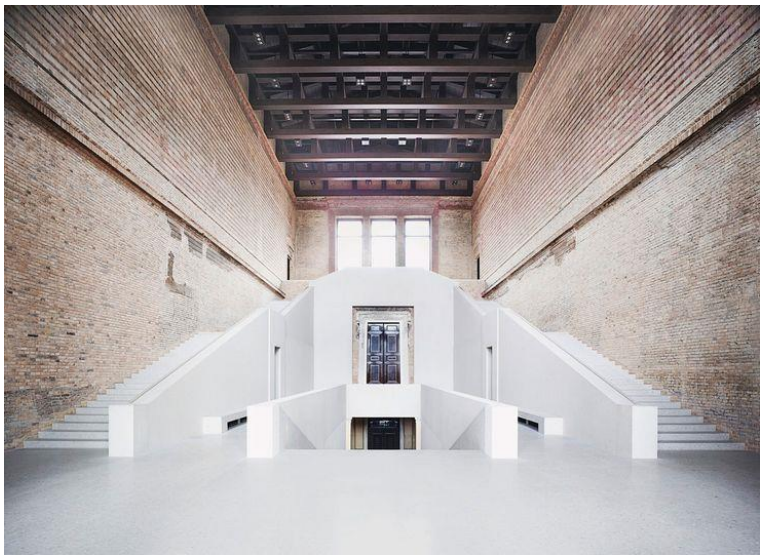

Fig. 90. Candida Höfer, *Neues Museum Berlin*, 2009.

It is revealing that in 1994 – four years after German reunification and a few years before winning the competition for the Pergamonmuseum – when Ungers submitted a plan for the restoration of Berlin's Neues Museum, it was dismissed as too intrusive an intervention in the building's original structure.[113] While Ungers proposed to completely restore Stüler's original exterior to its pre-war state, he also intended to reorganize its inner structure with a logic similar to that of the DAM by linking the two (almost completely destroyed) courtyards of the heavily bombed building. While his similar solution for the DAM was seen as a preservationist approach, in Berlin the winning entry was David Chipperfield's proposal, which, compared to Ungers' method, took an approach that had the archaeological precision of the restaurateur.[114] The plan by Chipperfield that was finally accepted was to restore the original structure of the building in its integrity, but instead of hiding its wounds behind a fake and complete historical reconstruction (as Ungers had recommended), he proposed to render visible the traces of

[113] Andres Lepik, 'An Acropolis of the Mind', in *O. M. Ungers: Cosmos of Architecture*, ed. by Andres Lepik (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2007), pp. 83-96.
[114] In fact, he worked closely on his plan with restaurateur Julien Harrap.

history in the museum in its spatial and physical dimensions.[115] Chipperfield accepted all the marks, scars and layering of the building and reassembled the remains of Stüler's building piece by piece, filling the gaps carefully with authentic materials and building techniques. He left the new parts, the 'bridges', visible but austere by revealing them as raw brickwork, apparent fractures in the fabric of the old building.

Thus the preservation of the museum building became a programmatic element of the architecture of the new Neues Museum, which – like Sokurov's film of the Winter Palace – was meant to include and stage an artefact as a sequence of different constellations of space through time: Stüler's original building for the Neues Museum, as well as its many alterations and later versions. Staging Stüler's architecture of a Hegelian universe in its varied historical and temporal dimensions, Chipperfield's Neues Museum became an interpretation of a new paradigm of history, which prefers multiplicity over singularity, the peculiar and subjective instead of the normative, and the fragmented rather than the whole (as opposed to the ideas underlying the original building by Stüler). On Chipperfield's architectural stage, *time* and architecture are the same; as Peter-Klaus Schuster, director of the Staatliche Museen in Berlin observes, it is a 'self-reflective temple to history, a museum temple that not only exhibits artifacts of history but on and in which history itself dramatically left its mark.'[116]

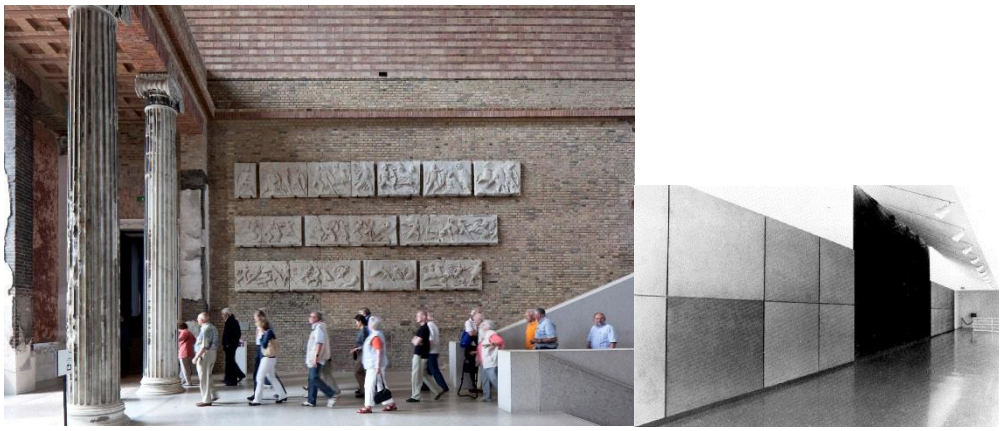

Fig. 91. (left) Ute Zscharnt, *Neues Museum*, Berlin; (right) Michael Asher, Installation at the Bergman Gallery, MCA, Chicago, 1979.

The reconstruction of the Pergamonmuseum – just like Heinz Tesar's renovation of the Bode Museum (2005) – represents the same paradigm of history that is exhibited in Chipperfield's architectural approach, and which determined the new programme for the Museumsinsel as a whole, as outlined by Schuster. The five museums of the Spree Island will be linked by an underground tunnel, an archaeological promenade, in order to frame the site as an acropolis of museums – a symbol of fragmented and reunified German history, in which the role of architecture became congruous with that of the museum. Thus, what was a seemingly radical proposal by Michael Asher in his intervention in the MCA's Bergman Gallery in Chicago – namely, to render the architecture of the museum as an

[115] Péter György, 'Az Uj Akropolisz Muzeum', in *Muzeum, Tanulo-haz, Muzeum Elmeleti Esettanulmanyok, (*Budapest: *MuzeumCafe*, 2013), p. 15.
[116] Peter-Klaus Schuster, 'A Temple of Memory: On David Chipperfield's Neues Museum' in *Neues Museum Berlin: By David Chipperfield Architects in Collaboration with Julian Harrap*, ed. by David Chipperfield Architects and Julian Harrap (Cologne: Walter Konig, 2009), pp. 169-204.

archaeological site and a museological object itself – by the turn of the century became a foundational concept of Berlin's monumental Museumsinsel.

Berlin's Museumsinsel is shaped by a search for history through its authentic sites, revealing them in their fragmentation and contradictions. In the case of Frankfurt, the postmodern appropriation of the language of historic architecture appeared as a purely formal gesture, which was merely symbolic of history itself. While Frankfurt's Museumsufer incorporated historic heritage sites on the banks of the river Main with the aim of preserving them, ultimately the pre-modern architectural heritage was more representational of the contemporaneous postmodern era than any other. Yet, if Frankfurt's historicism was substantially a-historical, Berlin's authentic preservation project resulted in an equally fictional image of history, a fragmentation and plurality that had never existed in its present form at any earlier moment. Berlin's Museumsinsel therefore exhibits history in synchronicity through the imprints of the architecture on the site, and its authenticity is made known through the *clashing* of original fragments from different chronological periods. The spatial representation of synchronicity as described by Krauss[117] in relation to the postmodern museum is thus extended in Berlin to the site of the city. This is through the architectural construct of the Museumsinsel – a monumental representation of the 'presentist regime of historicity', which, as Hartog has suggested,

> […] implies a new way of understanding temporality, an abandoning of the linear, causal and homogeneous conception of time characteristic of the previous, modernist regime of historicity. It has enabled the historian's gaze to shift more freely than ever before, so that the past no longer appears as something final and irreversible but persists in many ways in the present. [118]

If postmodern architecture became the museum itself – as Giebelhausen remarked – one can observe that in today's ever-present awareness of the historical events of collective urban life, museology presents a new model for urbanism.[119] As Kate Fowle has remarked pertinently on the role of curating in contemporary life: 'The institution is now not just the museum, but a whole industry that has grown up around exhibition-making.'[120] The landscape of contemporary Berlin unfolds like a theatre of history, a city assembled as a set of 'authentic sites' that result – like a patchwork – in the representation of the collective urban space of Berlin.[121] In her *Structures of Memory*,[122] Jennifer Jordan understood contemporary urban change in Berlin in relation to the museum, reminding us that its narratives are

[117] Krauss, 'Museum without Walls'.
[118] Hartog's Regimes of Historicity as paraphrased by Marek Tamm. See: Marek Tamm, 'Introduction', in *Afterlife of Events: Perspectives on Mnemohistory*, ed. by Marek Tamm (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 1-26 (p. 1).
[119] Not only in the case of historic museums: this can also be traced in relation to contemporary art practices and related museological strategies, as in the case of the new Whitney Museum of American Art, to be relocated in a new building designed by Renzo Piano on New York's High Line, a regenerated industrial site, the main starting point for the new public programming of the museum that is trying to situate itself in relation to the city through the representation of its site and its immediate urban surroundings, and by focusing on site-specific urban projects in the museum's new location.
[120] Kate Fowle, 'Who Cares? Understanding the Role of the Curator Today', in *Cautionary Tales: Critical Curating*, ed. by Steven Rand and Heather Kouris (New York: Apexart, 2007), pp. 10-19 (p. 11).
[121] List of examples: sites of heroic past, terror, the Wall, the Nazi headquarters, communist memorials, etc; most contested is the case of the reconstruction of the Humboldt Forum and the Schloss on the other side of the Museumsinsel.
[122] Jordan, *Structures of Memory: Understanding Urban Change in Berlin and Beyond*, pp. 14-18.

constructed and not at all neutral, as the 'authenticity' of the sites might suggest. The dialectic of remembering and forgetting depends on a complex matrix of political and economic factors.[123] The representation of the history of collective urban life is therefore carefully constructed through architecture both within the museum and the city, where, as has been evident since the 19th century, the same spatial paradigms apply. The architecture of the city is thus not only the imprint of history: it also becomes its framing/curatorial device.

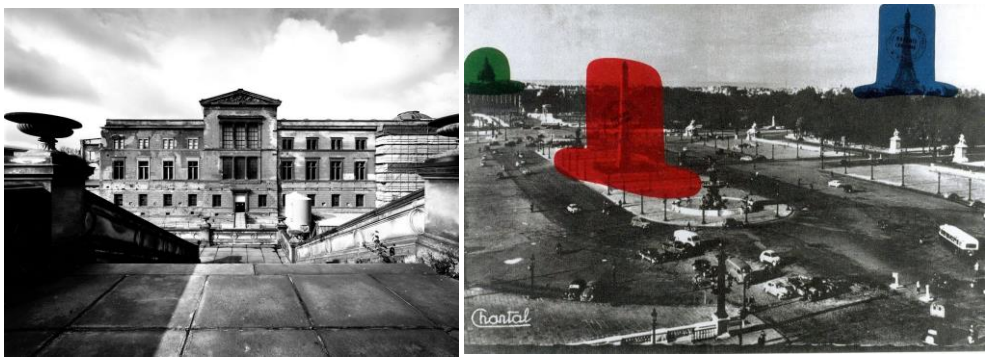

Fig. 92. (left) Wolfgang Reuss, Neues Museum in ruin, Berlin; (right) Robert Filliou, *Galerie Légitime*, 1969.

Chipperfield's architectural intervention at the Neues Museum in Berlin appropriates curating as a *modus operandi*.[124] In order to articulate architectural space and to amalgamate different representations of time as manifested through the architectural layers of the building, Chipperfield curates architecture with his own architecture. His seemingly neutral approach therefore becomes the dominant statement of the building, his mute work of art. Yet, while his curatorial performance achieves an impressive presentation of a plurality of historical narratives by assembling fragments as a whole, his curatorial statement – just like the withdrawn 'objectivity' of his contribution to the building – appears vacuous. The architectural gesture is emptied of meaning in that it does not add or deduct anything from what it presents: it is an assemblage of historical fragments with no hierarchy of one above another, coming together in a whole that means nothing more than the sum total of its parts.

Instead of a new promise, Chipperfield leaves us with the paradox of past promises. The ideology behind this post-historical approach – 'presentism' in Hartog's description – is the negation of all ideologies. Despite its formal resemblance, it is in contrast to the idea of the archipelago that came about as a form of resistance to the powerlessness of a homogenizing and unifying architecture. Chipperfield's building in Berlin is a perfect example of Hartog's 'presentism', that provides the root of today's newly emerging nostalgia for utopia: for Aureli in a form of an 'absolute architecture' or for Boyer as the counter-memories that (re)embrace the long-lost utopian promise of the city. The idea of Berlin as archipelago therefore represented a utopia of the ruin, which was eventually turned into a total museum

[123] On the preservation policies in former East German government programmes, and how they store evidence by keeping or destroying, both physical and non-physical sites see: Matthias Albrecht Amann, 'Caring for Dead Architecture' in *Curating Architecture and The City,* ed. by Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 103-116.
[124] Kayoko Ota considered curating as part of the architectural practice of OMA, when describing the process of exhibition and architecture production: a synthetic process based on the dialogic relationship between the workings of AMO and OMA. See: Kayoko Ota, 'Curating as Architectural Practice', *Log*, 20 (2010), 141-149.

that carefully assembles the ruins of its past utopias, proving once again the old formula of the museum as depository, the paradox that also haunts Ungers' late work. This architectural (re)configuration is implicitly nostalgic, but not for a defined place or time, just another, undisclosed, past: Svetlana Boym, with reference to contemporary Europe, writes that 'Nostalgia, like irony, is not a property of the object itself but the result of an interaction between subjects and objects, between actual landscapes and the landscapes of the mind.' [125] For the new Germany, formed from *good* and *bad* territories, a nation that was separated to pacify competing global ideologies after its endemic misdeeds, history is invariably a matter of atonement, a desire to seek absolution and caution against history's call.

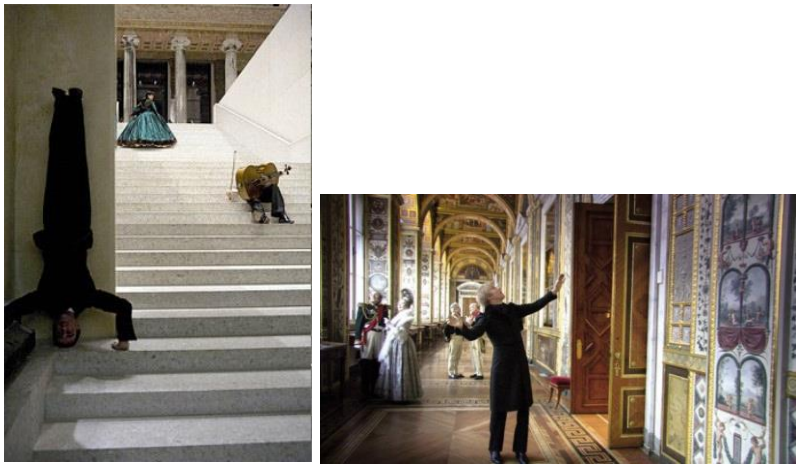

Fig. 93. (left) Sasha Walz, *Dialogue,* Neues Museum, Berlin, 2009; (right) frame enlargement from Alexander Sokurov's *Russian Ark*, 2002.

When the fully rebuilt, but still empty, building of the Neues Museum opened in 2009 for only a few days, more than 35,000 Berliners visited the site. The inauguration of Chipperfield's architecture, as a total work of art, was accompanied by Sasha Walz's dance performance *Dialogue*. Walz's dancers re-enacted the history of the building, and dramatised its space through their dance movements and music. The photographic representation of Chipperfield's architectural work, a series by Candida Höfer, recorded the building in its empty state and echoed Walz's performance in its tactile qualities. In his essay on the photographs, Thomas Weski regretfully noted that the building will eventually lose its form as a pure work of art and will have to fulfil its *function* as a museum[126] – an observation which was also made about Ungers' DAM, and this would seem to suggest the democratic inversion that these built spectacles (un)consciously invoke. In Chipperfield's building Kaprow's prophesy of the museum as a 'mausoleum dedicated to the void' eventually materialised. As did another prophecy of Smithson's, who wrote in 1967 that:

> Museums are tombs and it looks like everything is turning into a museum. […] The museum spreads its surfaces everywhere and becomes an untitled collection of generalisations that immobilize the eye.[127]

[125] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), p. 354.
[126] Thomas Weski, 'Beyond Representation', *Neues Museum Berlin: By David Chipperfield Architects in Collaboration with Julian Harrap*, ed. by David Chipperfield Architects and Julian Harrap (Cologne: Walter Konig, 2009), pp. 205-228 (p. 211).
[127] Robert Smithson, 'Some Void Thoughts on Museums'.

END NOTE

From the late 1970s onwards the museum and the city were transformed from opposite to apposite concepts. The dissident institutional critique of surrogate museums, that took the city as both their site and subject, were appropriated and absorbed by mainstream museum practices, which has finally contributed to the totalisation of the concept of the museum, a phenomenon that still pertains today. Like the transitional narrative of the Museumsinsel, where the spatial representation of Berlin's urban space journeyed from Speer's Germania to the palimpsest, the museum's late-capitalist transition describes a shift – in scale – from the universalising space of totalitarian ideologies to the spatial plurality of urban sites, composites of ideological fragments. The image of the contemporary city is thus constructed through the museal framing of the historic fragment – history restored in forms that never existed before – rendering the museum once again, after its 19th-century debut, the catalyst for contemporary late-capitalist urbanisation and its homogenising effect.[128]

The political and social histories, as presented through their urban sites, are now tamed in their museal frame: the function of their plurality is turned into a representative fiction. Rather than promoting change through diversity, the museum's predominantly preservationist intervention retains the status quo of a neo-conservative hegemony. In Berlin's contemporary urban space, a *utopian ruin*, time is out of kilter; its nostalgia and individualistic subjectivity preempts the notion of collective progress in the Modern Movement's utopias and future visions. As Habermas stated: 'The neo-avant-garde moves today within a more or less non-binding pluralism of artistic means and stylistic schools while no longer able to enlist the force of an enlightening originality released in the violation of established norms, in the shock of the forbidden and frivolous, in irrepressible subjectivity.'[129] The redolent nostalgia of the late-capitalist museum – as expressed through the tableaux of the palimpsest or archipelago – becomes a pure cosmetic masquerade, the ideological void of late capitalism in disguise.

Ultimately, in parallel with the increasing professionalisation of the curatorial field, curating became the prevalent *modus operandi* for architecture as well – as seen in Chipperfield's curating of architectural fragments within his own architecture at the Neues Museum. Here, it is curious to note the formal and conceptual similarities between Chipperfield's curatorial architecture and his architectural curating, as it manifested at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice, which he titled 'Common Ground'. The exhibition set out to address 'the contemporary identity crisis of architecture' by bringing together 'diverse' practitioners who could 'illustrate common and shared ideas that form the basis of an

[128] As Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara note in their introduction to the anthology *Curating Architecture, Curating the City*, the 'palimpsest' became a favourite term in urban studies from Andre Corboz to Giuliana Bruno.' They propose 'a city as collection to be curated' through representations in situ, regarding the city as a public gallery. Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara, 'Introduction', in *Curating Architecture and the City,* p. 2.
[129] Jürgen Habermas, 'Introduction' in *Observations on "the Spiritual Situation of the Age": Contemporary German Perspectives*, ed.by Jürgen Habermas, tr. by Andrew Buchwalter (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 1-30 (p. 23).

architectural culture' as framed within his exhibition.[130] His biennale – like his museum building on Berlin's Museumsinsel – employed a method in which objects of art and architecture came together as illustrative fragments within a thematic 'a-historical' panorama; as Paul O'Neill remarked, in regard to the increasingly authorial role of curator that interweaves with that of the artist: '[The] group exhibition [became a] subjective form of authorship, a kind of total work of art'.[131] Chipperfield's suggested 'common ground' was thus evidenced – beyond the repeated representation of the canon and the status quo of already established practitioners – through the reconfirmation of his authorial role, that packaged in a homogenizing amalgam, a quasi-superarchitecture, both his biennale and his museum architecture. If the return to the fragment originally aimed to recover meaning, as Vesely suggests,[132] the role of art and architecture practices, like that of curating, might be to bring together fragments in a *functional* dialogue, consisting of meaningful communication, to overcome contemporary post-political fragmentation, not only in fiction but in real action.

[130] See: '13th International Architecture Exhibition: Common Ground' [http://www.labiennale.org/en/architecture/archive/13th-exhibition/13iae/] [last accessed: 01 June 2013].
[131] See: Paul O'Neill, 'The culture of curating and the curating of culture(s): The development of contemporary curatorial discourse in Europe and North America since 1987' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Middlesex University, 2007), p. 172.
[132] See: Dalibor Vesely, 'The Rehabilitation of the Fragment' in: Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 317-352.

**CONCLUSION**

*Curating is the answer but what was the question?*

In *Entropy and the New Monuments*, Robert Smithson observes: 'Instead of causing us to remember the past like the old monuments, the new monuments seem to cause us to forget the future.'[1] – a description that precisely captures the role of the contemporary museum in rise, as seen from the late 1970s onwards. Half a century later, in the globalized world of the 21st century, the frame of the museum is yet again in an expansive mode. The number of art museums continues to grow and reframe the sites of our lived urban experience and, consonant with Smithson's observation, the economic, cultural, curatorial and architectural consequences of this global development reveals itself to be the symptom of a new conservatism: that is an inherent paradox of the late-capitalist contemporary art museum. As Foster has remarked in relation to post-Bilbao regeneration projects, today's cultural institutions adopt and employ the sculptural iconicity of architectural representation, which has become the main focus and manifestation of their institutional reform.[2] Reflecting on this phenomenon, in regard to the new building of New York's New Museum, Martin Braathen has pertinently asked: 'To what degree is architecture an antithesis to critical art institutions?'[3]

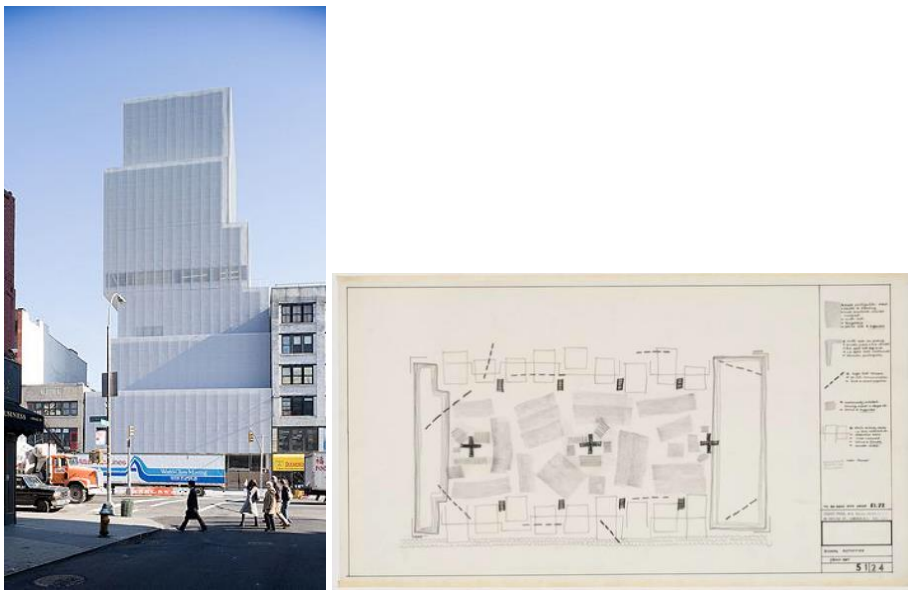

Fig. 94. (left) SANAA's *New Museum of Contemporary Art*, New York, 2007; (right) Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood's Fun Palace, 1961.

The New Museum, founded in 1977 – the same year that the Centre Pompidou opened in Paris, and two years before the founding of the DAM – was conceived as a kind of 'anti-museum.' Its founding director, Marcia Tucker's concept for the museum was based on constant institutional innovation, as a means to spontaneously react to, and interact with, real-time contemporary realities. Thus,

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[1] Robert Smithson, 'Entropy and the New Monuments', *Artforum*, 4, 10 (1966), 26-31.
[2] See: Hal Foster, *The Art-Architecture Complex* (London: Verso 2011), p. xi.
[3] See: Martin Braathen, 'The New Museum, New Institutionalism and the Problem of Architecture', in *(Re)Staging the Art Museum, ed. by Tone Hansen* (Berlin: Revolver Publishing, 2011), pp. 219-244 (p. 242).

impermanence, fluidity and the notion of self-critique were central to the programme of the museum. Tucker ran the institution with no permanent staff or collection, and, most importantly, no permanent building or location, and consequently the New Museum, until 2002, was a 'nomadic institution'. For Tucker, a permanent building would identify institutional stagnation, and, in order to allow her institution to function as 'an active space for political and social expression' she aimed to refrain from associating the museum with any fixed architectural form.[4] However, in 2007 the New Museum acquired a purpose-built new site designed by SANAA architects in the Bowery district of New York, which signalled a crucial turn in the museum's orientation. The new director, Lisa Phillips – who took over from Tucker in 1999 – described this move as a shift for the museum from being an overlooked local initiative to becoming a high-visibility global institution, and this repositioning was to be achieved and symbolised by its newly commissioned building and location.[5]

If SANAA aimed to give architectural expression and spatial reinterpretation to the New Museum's exceptional institutional history and mission,[6] it eventually achieved to assimilate and transform Tucker's critique of the institution into the formal gesture of the building. As Braathen concluded, quoting Cedric Price, who believed '[the] permanent building represents an outmoded understanding between society and its institutions' (as manifested in many of his projects, such as the Fun Palace, and his disbelief in preservation), architecture is 'heavy baggage' that goes with 'heavy institutions.'[7] The New Museum's initial embrace of nomadism, an expressive form of instability and transitoriness, aspired to withstand the 'memory' of architecture; it was the permanence of historical time as framed and figured – and spectacularised – by the architectural representation of the museum that the New Museum aimed to escape at the outset. If Tucker's refusal of a permanent and purpose-built building may have arisen from a fear of architecture's monumentalising political potential, one might duly ask: what exactly is the cause and effect of such representation?

Tucker's project – like many dissident art practices at the time – articulated a clear critique of the contemporary museum,[8] yet, as the institution's history became canonised (normalised and neutralised) through the spatial representation of its own purpose-built architecture, like many radical experiments it could not escape its own institutionalising effects that dispelled its alternative political potential.[9] As

[4] Braathen, 'The New Museum, New Institutionalism and the problem of Architecture', p. 225.
[5] Martha Rosler had studied the Bowery in the 1970s, at the time an area of low-brow entertainment and relative poverty, which artists had started to move into gradually since the beginning of 20th century; by the opening of the New Museum the Bowery was a largely gentrified area. Nevertheless, as Braathen pointed out, Rosler's early study, *The Bowery in Two Inadequate Descriptive Systems,* re-surfaced in relation to the New Museum's opening, and became a 're-mythologising apology for authenticity in connection to the marketing of the New Museum's new building.' The museum thus created its own (global) image in relation to the site of art in the city. See: Braathen, p. 220.
[6] The white-cube-like spaces are rendered relatively roughly, and the architects have divided the space of the galleries (separate from the corridors and spaces of connection and service) 'into autonomous yet related components,' as a symbolic representation of the critical autonomy of the museum's programme and exhibitions: See: Braathen, p. 241.
[7] Braathen, p. 229.
[8] Tucker worked as a curator at the Whitney until 1976, and initiated her experimental museum programme as a critique of, and counter to, mainstream institutional practices.
[9] Even Braathen lamented the way that the exhibition programme has lost its critical edge in the new building, masking the complex interconnections of culture and capital – that goes directly against what Tucker's 'New Institutionalism' set out as the museum's mission at its outset. See: Braathen, p.242.

suggested by Smithson's remark, the museum's monumental representation actually foreclosed future visions and replaced them instead with another temporality: that of the institution's own historicised image. In effect, Tucker sought – even if she failed to sustain – an alternative that favours the social over economic expression, as articulated in a number of other architectural counter-projects – from Cedric Price's Fun Palace to the more contemporary concept of the European Kunsthalle in Cologne[10] – that seek the non-monumental and non-representational. The paradox of these immaterialised practices, as argued throughout this thesis, lies in the museal representation of the art-architecture relation, and in the museum's total expansion into contemporary everyday spaces, that – as Douglas Crimp remarked – arises from the 'both-and' principle of its representational regime.[11]

The example of the New Museum points to the problematic that this thesis attempts to contextualise, by examining the development of architectural representation and exhibition culture within the space of the late-capitalist museum. It considers how and why – once it is embraced and rehearsed by contemporary curatorial practices – political potential tends to be reversed in the contemporary context and become that which it once sought to challenge. This thesis aims to offer a critical insight into the contemporary condition through the analysis of the originating moments of contemporary curating, especially that of the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, which was a significant political and cultural juncture – as Hartog noted, 'an odd in-between period in historicity' – that prefigured the contemporary moment and its political consequences.

The thesis has adopted a circular structure, moving between the present and its originating moments, exploring exemplary case studies of the contemporary exhibitionary complex of architecture as it emerged, such as Ungers' building of the DAM, one of the first purpose-built museums of architecture; Frankfurt's Museumsufer, an illustrative method of urban regeneration; the Centre Pompidou and its originating phenomenon, described as 'the Beaubourg Effect', which established the contemporary museum-city dichotomy irreversibly; and Portoghesi's 'Strada Novissima', an iconic and highly symbolic exhibit at the first Architecture Biennale in Venice. All of these seminal occurrences are analysed from different perspectives across the four main chapters of this thesis, moving from, and between, the singular object and its context, the exhibition, the collection, the museum and the contemporary city. The main avenue of investigation traces the coexisting and often contradictory spatial representations of art and architecture within the context of exhibitionary cultures, outlining, and in turn questioning, the inherently paradoxical foundations (the spectacularised origins) of today's curatorial discourse and the contemporary relevance of the late 1970s, when, as a result of the booming museum industry, curating gradually became a new *modus operandi* for architects and artists alike.

[10] The European Kunsthalle is an experimental model of an institution that is spatially dispersed in different locations of the city and acts as an immaterialized network to facilitate discourse and real-time activities. It adopts an approach of temporary strategies, in the tradition of Situationism. This kind of appropriation of existing territories, however, risks the 'festivalisation' and exoticisation of such spaces. The European Kunsthalle was a research project initiated in 2007 by Nikolaus Hirsch, Philipp Misselwitz, Markus Miessen and Matthias Gorlich. See: *Institution Building: Artists, Curators, Architects in the Struggle for Institutional Space*, ed. by Nikolaus Hirsch, Philipp Misselwitz, Markus Miessen, Matthias Görlich (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009).
[11] See: Douglas Crimp, *On the Museum's Ruins* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993).

Reflecting on the ambiguous nature of representation and abstraction, Sol LeWitt once remarked: 'Obviously, a drawing of a person is not a real person, but a drawing of a line is a real line.'[12] This appears to be less straightforward when looking at architecture in the museum. This thesis takes its point of departure from the paradox of architectural representation as it unfolds within the space of art, and its complicated relation to creative and productive realities: the function and fiction of architecture as represented in museums through contemporary practices of art and architecture. It investigates the ontological and political objections at the intersection of their museal representations by asking how the autonomy of architecture, in the space of art, relates to the problem of art's autonomy, which seeks its own 'solutions' in the architectural terrain.

The highly symbolic representational space of the late-capitalist museum, which destabilised the Cartesian and Kantian paradigms of space and their traditional representational techniques, is analysed in the collision of architecture and art practices. By contrasting the architecture of the museum, in particular Ungers' DAM, and the space of the 'white cube' as thematised through art practices from the 1960s onwards, the second chapter sets out to reveal and demonstrate the changes in the language and theories of space. It emphasises the bisecting tendencies of art and architecture in order to indicate the differences and inherent ambiguities in the discussion of space through the recognition of the shared, but often conflicting, spatial concerns of the two fields. This unfolding 'territorial debate' around the museum's spatial representations – which has become the predominant subject of critique in art and curatorial practices since the 1970s – is further investigated by contrasting alternative models for museums by artists (proposed outside the walls of the museum) with the architectural conceit of the postmodern 'museum without walls'.

Besides its architectural reconfiguration, the tradition of the artist museum played an equally important role in the changing concept of collecting and museums in the 1960s and '70s. As a parallel and consonant tendency in reclaiming the site of the city as a new material for architecture, these artist museums refocused on the site of the everyday, and, by bringing their collections of ready-mades (the material manifestations of ordinary life) into the space of the museum, they eventually contributed to the expansion of the museum's collection and its assimilation of the everyday sites of the city. As the objects and concept of the late-capitalist museum have been reorganised, its spaces followed, and the trope of the street – a recurrent symbol from 1960s counterculture to the urban regeneration projects of the 1980s – became the spatial model of the contemporary exhibition. As outlined in relation to the 'Strada Novissima' display and Frankfurt's Museumsufer, the street's political function was reconfigured into a representable fiction within the walls of the museum, while it was also reframed in situ, in the city, *as* exhibition.

A direct consequence of this phenomenon – explored in Berlin's contemporary museological practices, as articulated through the museum's architectural relations – indicates a representational shift from the universal to the more fragmented and individual experience of the contemporary museum, which was reinterpreted as a 'collection of spaces'. By the 1980s, the site of the city, rediscovered by experimental

[12] Andrew Wilson, 'Sol LeWitt Interviewed', *Art Monthly*, 164 (1993), 3-9 (p. 6).

art and architecture practices, had become the museum's expanded field. Originally the product of the 19th century city, the museum became the site of production for 21st century urbanity. The territorial debate, the merging of the reciprocal representations of art and architecture within the museum, resulted in the ultimate ascendency of *the museum*, which lead to the eventual reorganisation of its own territories. The boundaries of the contemporary museum completely dissolved as it expanded its reach; the museumisation of standard architecture and the spaces of the everyday finally nullified the ideological and symbolic differences between the space of the museum and that of the city, which, in its new museal frame, has gradually turned from a utopian ruin into the ruin of utopia, a codified regime.

The crisis of the contemporary city is closely related to the crisis of the contemporary museum and the representations of its curatorial hegemony, which is a direct result of the simplification of the often-conflicting spatial representations of art and architecture. The question of how architecture can regain its *progressive* agency in the city that is turned into a museum (a merely self-reflexive regime), as Vesely suggested, might be better addressed by opening up the hermetic disciplinary discourse and recovering representation's real participatory – and social – function that is countered by the tendencies of disciplinary autonomy.[13] The comparative analysis embodied in this thesis hopes to offer a new reading of the museum, and – instead of the sleight-of-hand simplifications of spatial representation and the resulting disciplinary fragmentation that the contemporary museum implies – suggests new places for critical thought that brings the two disciplines together and acknowledges their real differences.

With reference to Cedric Price's 1979 lecture 'Technology is the answer, but what was the question?', in which Price attempted to define architecture,[14] this thesis adapts his question – *Curating is the answer, but what was the question?* – and asks why and how today's curatorial realm was formed through the exhibitionary practices that transformed and now define contemporary architectural culture. This originating *question* is sought in relation to the late 1970s, a period that establishes the historical frame of this thesis and which brought about the institutionalised collection, exhibition and museumisation of architecture (as seen in the founding of the ICAM, the inauguration of the Venice Biennale of Architecture and the opening of the building of the Centre Pompidou). This coincided with – and was enabled by – the emergence of neo-conservative political ideologies that prepared the ground for the subsequent ascendency of the totalising claims of neo-liberal capitalism, the advent of the new global order that envelops contemporary civilisation.

Ultimately this thesis questions and problematises the rising professionalisation of the work of the curator that is a delayed mirror image of its originating moment, the late 1970s – a period which, anticipating today's ascent of the curator, saw the rise and professionalisation of the field of the museum. The inherently paradoxical foundation of today's ideologically vacuous curatorial realm, the structural reorganisation and ultimate expansion of the late-capitalist museum, anticipated today's hyper-accelerated curatorial production, a symptom of a cultural 'crisis' aligned with the restructuring

[13] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 2-10.
[14] See recording from Monica Pidgeon's collection: Cedric Price, 'Technology is the answer but what was the question?' [lecture, audio recording] (London: Pidgeon Audio, 1979).

of the economic and political powers of the post-Cold War era. Today's specialised curatorial fields, through the self-perpetuating spectacularisation of their own origins – the very origin of spectacle – recycle the much-eulogised 1970s utopian schema, and strengthen their links to the disputed political structures from which curating itself critically emerged.

Price's original proposition concerning technology and the digital environment is now an omnipresent consideration in cultural presentation and dissemination. Within exhibitionary methodology this has been made evident in the desire to animate what was once still; this is often through the addition of screens and framing devices that allow a different form of temporal and spatial display. This tendency, explored with regard to Lyotard's 'Les Immatériaux', endeavoured to bring together thought and motion, to use technological intervention to make manifest theory into practice, to explore the technology/art axis through the contemporary embodiment of ideas and to show its interaction with the here and now, and a possible future. But, despite this example, contemporary exhibitions invariably utilise technology as an aesthetic rather than a conceptual notion, a means to enhance entertainment – always an important element in the realm of the globalised blockbuster exhibition where images are privileged over text. Technology has undoubtedly revolutionised the museum on an archival and operational level, providing it with new material to collect and further complicating issues of preservation, but while technological innovation exists to provide *value added content,* its exhibitionary importance is on the level of an effect rather than critical innovation.

While virtual reality still conforms to the rules of traditional perspective,[15] as Vesely reminds us, the hallucinatory world of the self-absorbing images of the digital world might further complicate also the museum's illusionary representations: the relation between images that are the product of the imagination and those of an imaginary reality. The digital revolution of technology is essentially changing our perception of space and how it is represented. The next iteration of the museum will be based on its expansion into the realm of digital architecture, and the future potential of this technology, in its illusionary realm, might entail the further emancipation of representation and self-reference. Vesely observed: 'How we are to grasp the relation of abstract or simulated space to the space of everyday life?' and he concluded by delegating his question to the future: 'In the past such a question would be answered by pointing to a sequence of levels of reality that constitutes a link between universal concepts and the particularity of individual phenomena, thereby creating a continuum of the articulated, communicative space of culture. That this space is accessible to us nowadays only with intense effort remains a challenge for the future.'[16]

Today's architectural practice has been radically reshaped by the digital turn. The exhausting 'optioneering'[17] process – a quasi-curatorial strategy – has become the new method of design. Mirko

[15] As Vidler remarked in relation to virtual reality: 'Perspective is still the rule in virtual reality environments; objects are still conceived and represented within all the three-dimensional conventions of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century practice.' In: Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2000), p. 8.
[16] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 40.
[17] To solve a specific problem through the evaluation and selection of different, and often abundant, options with the aid of digital technology.

Zardini, running the CCA as an inherent site of architectural production, argues that architecture is, and always was, an inherently 'curatorial' gesture: many of the landmark exhibitions of the 1960s and '70s were initiated by trained and practicing architects, such as Ambasz, Gregotti or Rossi.[18] In turn, the central argument of this thesis – which despite the extensive literature on art curating remains still largely overlooked – is that curating is an essentially architectural construct. Architecture increasingly adopts curating as its new *modus operandi*, and, compared to Zardini's remark, a significant current difference is to be found in the professionalisation of the curatorial field of architecture. As the artist-curator saw a complete merger of their roles from the 1980s[19], so does the role of today's architect. Today, in their representational and mediating aspect, the two can hardly be distinguished. If in the 1970s the architect aspired to be an artist, today s/he aspires to fulfil the role of the curator, as highlited by the growing number of exhibitions and academic courses of curating.

With reference to Boris Groys' observation that the role of the art curator needs to 'heal' the work of art (disconnected from its context),[20] one might justifiably ask how today's architecture could be healed? If architecture – regarded as the 'antithesis' of the critical art institution – aims to heal through curatorial practice and its exhibition, this may appear as a paradox. A potential, and favoured, alternative to this inherently paradoxical phenomenon would be to revisit what Cedric Price proposed: 'Like medicine (architecture) must move from the curative to the preventive.'[21] The suggested alternative of Price's logic lies outside the institution, which, ironically, has adopted and assimilated his proposals of spatial and historical liberation. This thesis, instead of closing down debate and encircling ready-made answers, proposes to reposition and ramify his questions.

[18] Author's interview with Mirko Zardini, Montreal, 4 December 2015.
[19] Paul O'Neill, *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s)* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012).
[20] Boris Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2008), p. 46.
[21] Cedric Price, *Cedric Price: The Square Book* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Academy, 2003), p. 92.

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