



Università  
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**DA** Dipartimento  
Architettura  
Ferrara



# The Time of Intersection

Time dynamics in the relationship between  
architecture and artworks in public space

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Cycle XXXV

# IDAUP



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International Doctorate in Architecture and Urban Planning



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Architettura  
Ferrara



## INTERNATIONAL DOCTORATE IN ARCHITECTURE AND URBAN PLANNING

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**Curriculum** Architecture / IDAUP Topic 1.5 Cultural heritages, Innovations and ICT processes for cultural heritages use and conservation  
(Area– SSD: ICAR/14 Architectural and Urban Design)

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**THE TIME OF INTERSECTION**  
TIME DYNAMICS IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
ARCHITECTURE AND ARTWORKS IN PUBLIC SPACE.

**The Time of  
Intersection**

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*Curriculum:* Architecture (ICAR/14)

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## Abstract

### The Time of Intersection.

#### Time dynamics in the relationship between architecture and artworks in public space.

Time has always fascinated men for its (apparently) inviolable structure and for the poetic dimension that this concept brings with it, during the history of civilization, time has been a crucial concept to understanding reality. At the beginning of the Twentieth century, thanks to the scientific discoveries, above all, Albert Einstein's general relativity theory, the notion of time became an important element also for science for understanding the structure of the universe. The continuous and ever-faster scientific discoveries have also dissolved the linearity of time and its very nature, offering new possibilities to rethink space-time, as a series of connected, but not necessarily linear, events. Something we are experiencing today through the multi-temporality of the digital world, but which at the same time also shifts our way of perceiving physical reality. A reality made of natural objects but also objects crafted by man, from utensils to symbolic and artistic objects, from the simplest refuge to the city.

Everything we do and produce is inevitably part of a space-time dimension. In this many-temporal reality in which we live, we can therefore interpret time - also - as a distinctive structural element of the things that human beings build, whether small or large, from tools to metropolises.

In this background, it is very interesting to understand how time works in two of the most symbolic categories of objects of human creation, architecture and art, specifically, art in public space. How time influences their realization, thinking of it as a constructive and fundamental category of the project itself.

The time that works into the artwork is naturally different from the time that works into architecture, but the overlapping of these two different times, by structure and perception, inevitably creates a third time, that we will call a "*Time of Intersection*", which becomes the subject of this thesis.

## Abstract

### Il Tempo di Intersezione.

#### Dinamiche temporali nella relazione tra architettura e arte nello spazio pubblico.

Il tempo ha sempre affascinato gli uomini per la sua struttura (apparentemente) inviolabile e per la dimensione poetica che questo concetto porta con sé; nel corso della storia della civiltà, il tempo è stato un concetto cruciale per la comprensione della realtà. All'inizio del XX secolo, grazie alle scoperte scientifiche, prima fra tutte la teoria della relatività generale di Albert Einstein, la nozione di tempo è diventata un elemento importante anche per la scienza per comprendere la struttura dell'universo. Le continue e sempre più rapide scoperte scientifiche hanno dissolto anche la linearità del tempo e la sua stessa natura, offrendo nuove possibilità di ripensare lo spazio-tempo, come una serie di eventi collegati, ma non necessariamente lineari. Qualcosa che oggi sperimentiamo attraverso la multitemporalità del mondo digitale, ma che allo stesso tempo sposta anche il nostro modo di percepire la realtà fisica. Una realtà fatta di oggetti naturali ma anche di oggetti creati dall'uomo, dagli utensili agli oggetti simbolici e artistici, dal più semplice rifugio alla città.

Tutto ciò che facciamo e produciamo fa inevitabilmente parte di una dimensione spazio-temporale. In questa realtà pluritemporale in cui viviamo, possiamo quindi interpretare il tempo - anche - come un elemento strutturale distintivo delle cose che gli esseri umani costruiscono, siano esse piccole o grandi, dagli utensili alle metropoli. In questo contesto, è molto interessante capire come funziona il tempo in due delle categorie più simboliche di oggetti di creazione umana, l'architettura e l'arte, in particolare l'arte nello spazio pubblico. Come il tempo influenzi la loro realizzazione, pensandolo come categoria costruttiva e fondamentale del progetto stesso.

Il tempo che opera nell'opera d'arte è naturalmente diverso dal tempo che opera nell'architettura, ma la sovrapposizione di questi due tempi diversi, per struttura e percezione, crea inevitabilmente un terzo tempo, che chiameremo "*Tempo di Intersezione*", che diventa l'oggetto di questa tesi.

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## INTRODUCTION (WHILE)

While: (wail) conj. 1. in the time that 2. in spite of the fact that, although 3. whereas –vt. 4. pass (time, usu. idly) –n. 5. period of time –whilst conj. while.

### The Time of Intersection – a tale

When I first arrived in Tirana in 2003 and started to wander around the city, walking along Deshmoret e Kombit<sup>1</sup> Boulevard, I came across all the historical buildings built in the first half of the 20th century in a mix of fascist architecture and Russian rationalism and constructivism. To paraphrase Kevin Lynch, we perceive cities as spatiotemporal constructions<sup>2</sup>, and this feeling is felt on a physical level when walking in big cities.

As I continue my walk, at a certain point, not very visible from the boulevard, this vaguely spatial, alienating construction emerges from behind some trees, completely detached from everything I have encountered so far and everything around it. The pyramid.

The pyramid originated as a funeral monument to the dictator Enver Xoxha, built after his death in 1985, by his architect son-in-law Klement Koloneci (and it is said also helped by the dictator's daughter).

The pyramid has a very special architecture, seen from above you could even notice a star placed on top of it. At the time of my arrival in Tirana, this building was used for fairs of various kinds, book fairs, technology fairs, and so on. The thing that struck my imagination the most was that inside, at the top, there were offices housing various associations and also a radio station (Radio Oxygen), and the studios of one of the first private television stations to open in Albania (Top Channel). In short, the place erected in memory of the person who, with his political power, had obscured and closed off Albania for 50 years, was now (in 2003) the site of a private radio and television station, through whose broadcasts, Albanians connected with the world.

I have been in those offices many times, looking at the inside of the pyramid from above, its chandeliers, and its structure, which from my position at the top, widened downwards into the jagged base of the pyramid designed by the architect.

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<sup>1</sup> The main axis of the city, was created by Gerardo Bosio's first master plan for Tirana during the Italian occupation of Albania in World War II.

<sup>2</sup> The correct sentence is found in Lynch, K., (1960) *The image of the city*, 20th edition (1990) page. 1

Over the years, the pyramid was gradually abandoned due to political and economic disputes, the radio and television stations were moved, the offices closed, and slowly, it was no longer even used for trade fairs, remaining there in the still presence of itself.

A presence that has remained very strong, physically and symbolically.

The outer walls of the pyramid were continuously used by people to reach the top and look at Tirana from that vantage point, not particularly high, but certainly significant, given what symbolically represented the building from which the city was being viewed. The outside walls were also used, depending on the occasion, for political messages highlighted with spray cans, or posters pasted on, and at each political rally, the militants of the various parties who paraded along the Boulevard to reach the Government Building, never failed to climb up to make their presence felt and their grievances heard from that scenic and pregnant vantage point.

Meanwhile, the architecture itself was continuing to decay, the white marble that covered it at the beginning of its life had long since disappeared. Graffiti layered along its walls, and the glass panels that emphasized the entrance to the pyramid had been broken and covered with wooden patches to protect against glass splinters.

The pyramid, tortured and raped, stood bleeding like the wounds left open by the communist dictatorship. As its "time" continued to flow, I wondered whether the perception of what it represented also continued to flow over time, degrading like its architecture, or whether it remained, motionless and resistant to time altering its space.

In 2011 during the Berisha government, the parliament, with only majority votes, decided on its demolition. There are protests, mostly from the opposition party, Edi Rama's Socialist Party. The protests of militants against the demolition of the pyramid triggered a debate on the appropriateness of destroying one of the last physical and visible signs in the urban fabric of the harsh period of Enver Hoxha's dictatorship.

Against this backdrop, a performance was created as an attempt to make visible through this building, an unresolved feeling that the Albanian people still have toward their modern history.

The performance consisted of a strip of fabric 40 meters long, as long as one of the front sides of the pyramid (on the side of the main entrance, along the Boulevard), on which was written, in Albanian, the word *HISTERI*, only one letter different from the word *HISTORI*<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> For further references on this performance see: <http://stefanoromano.net/histoeri-removing.html>

In addition to enabling architecture to become a question mark towards the history of its people, there was something else this performance wanted to do and that is to compare two different times.

The *First Time* of which we speak is that of architecture, to which we also give precedence for a question of the temporal succession of events (architecture was born before the performance realized on it). The time of the pyramid begins first of all with its “birth” date, 1987, and the context in which we find ourselves, Tirana, the capital of Albania where the final phase of the dictatorship, carried out by Enver Hoxha’s wife and the party, is being experienced. The material and its rationalism speak to us of that time and geography, the choice of the pyramid shape is in itself, alienating and it would be misleading to place it in the Brutalism common to the countries of the former Soviet Bloc, but clearly this building has its place and its time in the period in which it was built. In the architect’s words, the pyramid shape referred directly to what Enver Hoxha represented to the Albanians as “*trau i shtëpisë*”<sup>4</sup>, and the geometric structure of the building reinforced this idea of a load-bearing axis that did not require any other structures to hold it up because the sides of the pyramid became a beam/column unit.

The *Second Time* of which we speak is that of the work of art. What happens is that the fabric is unrolled along the side of the pyramid, held in place by some kids who have joined the action in an unexpected way. The gesture is part of that fabric of so-called political art that tends to emphasize unresolved social and political situations, but its message is one directed to the past, that is, to the very time of the pyramid’s construction, emphasizing its function as a historical memory, as a monument. Replacing one letter with another, however, turns the meaning of the architecture upside down; the pyramid is no longer representative of Albania’s modern history, but rather of the Albanian people’s inability to look at, analyze and digest their past, transforming the decision to demolish that building into a hysterical act of ecstasy, aimed at erasing, so as not to have to deal with it, the complex figure of their dictator.

We thus ask ourselves whether these two times are capable of creating a relationship between them. A relationship not only spatial, but also temporal, and consequently also perceptual?

---

4 The backbone of the house.

Is it possible to change the time of these two symbolically powerful objects? Is it possible that time flows not only linearly, but moves in a *rhizomatic pattern*<sup>5</sup>?

What does time tell us about our very existence in the space we occupy?

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5 According to the definition given by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, this is a descriptive model in which the organization of the various elements does not follow a line of subordination, but where each element can influence or be influenced by another.



## Background

At the end of 2019 the world begins to experience maybe the first global pandemic, and most of the people in all the continents went through a period of lockdown during which we all experience the necessity to communicate through the digital. The digital is the transformation of an analogic value into numbers, properly into a binary numeral system, so to say the transformation of a “physical” value into something less real we would say, or at the opposite, more than real. As Jean Baudrillard argues, through our technological achievements we have reached such a degree of reality, that we could instead speak of an excess of reality, an excess that derives from the overproduction of images that instantly circumnavigate the globe throughout the World Wide Web. This constant production of images everyday faster, gives us the possibility to see, to hear, to understand what is going on all around the world, even in the most remote part of it, in real time, subverting the perception of space-time that we used till now in our notion of the real.

This is of course a new milestone in our understanding of reality. Along human civilization we changed several times our approach to the world, according to new ways of imagine reality and our capacity to translate it into a visual idea. From centuries, the Renaissance perspective guided us through a three-dimensional vision – and understanding – of the world. Vision that has been dissolve at the beginning of the Twentieth Century also thanks the avant-garde art movements, which transformed the one side three-dimensional view of the perspective, into a multi-sidedness conception of space. This vision is pioneering for the digital experience of reality, which is not anymore many-sidedness, which is something that belongs to the physical world, but we could instead call it many-temporal, because we could literally BE anywhere, every time. This new vision of the world, is inevitably related to our understanding of reality and the idea of the fragmentation of it that we started to shape with the end of the so called Big-Narrations. Indeed, images cannot be considered as something abstract. They are, on the contrary, something very well rooted in and conditioned by the historical context in which they are produced. So much so that the study of images as a part of our culture, became a subject of study in the 1990s, with the establishment of “*visual cultural studies*” especially in the Anglo-American world, although the origins of this programming are already present since the 1920s. In the contemporary world, images have become the primary means by which to “*read*” and “*interpret*” reality. The German philosopher and historian Gottfried Boehm (one of the founders of *Bildwissenschaft*, the German school of visual culture), in the mid-1990s, hypothesized in one of his writings that we are facing what

he calls an “*iconic turn*”. A turn through which to radically change the approach to the study of images used up to that time through iconography and iconology. This shift in approach reverses the perspective whereby one no longer has to look for the concepts of which artistic images are the historical visualization, but rather:

«*understand the radically non-linguistic, non-textual logic by which images produce meaning and knowledge*» (Pinotti & Somaini, 2016, p. 27)

This is also as a result of a radical change in the production of images from a technical point of view, that is, in the means that, especially since the second half of the 20th century, humans have used to create images. That is, images have also begun to change from an epistemic point of view. Today the visual narrative of reality predominates over the theoretical narrative of reality; through images we build our personal and collective memory, we build our knowledge and our approach to what we identify as the reality in which we move. Yet this over production of images, In the form of a continuous stream generated in the Internet, and in consequence this over production of reality, leaves us far more anxious and troubles than the lack of it. Creating a simulacrum of our physical world that, through always more sophisticated technological supports, gives us the possibility to be always connected, always updated and shaped in depth by our own preferences, we somehow feel more and more feared by the physical needs, by the physical emotions, the simulacra of reality is becoming our shelter. So it was during the worldwide lockdown caused by the pandemic this year. But to enjoy from Latin *gaudere* “rejoice” - Enjoy, especially in the sense of having, benefiting from something, to have it available, this is a kind of delight which is only possible physically, also Maurice Merleau-Ponty, described how the experience of vision arises in an indissoluble way with that of the whole body

«*It is by lending his body to the world that the artist changes the world into paintings*». (Merleau-Ponty, Eye and Mind in The Primacy of Perception, 1964, p. 123)

So somehow, we can see the whole world through a screen, but we cannot *gaudere* rejoice it, because we miss our body, we miss the physical relation with what we’re seeing. It seems that the body it is yet something of primary importance in our experience of the world, even if we use only the eyes in this new digital approach to reality. One may object that newest technologies allows us to experience a situation with the all body through the virtual reality,

but in our opinion, this is a cheat to our brain, to force it to think we are really into that situation, it is another simulacrum of the physical world.

The subject is the body into the world that allows us to have a physical relation with reality that surrounds us, in order to create this enjoyment. But as we stated before, our approach to reality is changed according to a new understanding of it, a new point of view that it is a direct consequence of scientific and technological discoveries, of new social achievements, of political changes and of all the things that contribute to the creation of our vision of the world. This new vision of reality that we called many-temporal, also affected our physical understanding of the world, and not only its digital simulacrum.

Time is naturally part of our action, inasmuch it is a dimension of our being, we cannot think, nor act, without take time into consideration both consciously and unconsciously, it is an integral part of our idea of existence. But as Augustine wondered:

*«What then is time? If nobody asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to those who ask me, I don't know anymore».* (Sant'Agostino, [398] 2006, p. 445)

Can we define time? Certainly yes, but we will hardly be able to give it a "simple" definition, because its dimension is omnipresent in our very idea of existence, perhaps it exists only in relation to our existence. In ancient Greece the notion of time had more names, each of which served to indicate a specific aspect of time. *Aión* which basically indicated life and time - that is of eternity; *Chronos*, time in succession, indicated the quantity of time as opposed to quality; *Kairós* indicated the brilliant moment, the quality of the instant in which a brilliant idea arrives; *Eniautòs* finally represented the cyclical time of the eternal return, the time of the seasons.

Time has always fascinated men for its (apparently) inviolable structure and for the poetic dimension that this concept brings with it, during the all history of civilization, time has been a crucial concept to understand reality. At the beginning of the Twentieth century, thanks to the scientific discoveries, above all, the Theory of Gravity developed by Albert Einstein, the notion of time became an important element also for science for understanding the structure of the universe. The continuous and ever faster scientific discoveries, have also dissolved the linearity of time and its very nature, opening up new possibilities to rethink space-time, as a series of connected, but not linear, events. Something we are experiencing today through the multi-temporality of the digital world, but which at the same time also shifts our way of

perceiving physical reality. A reality made of natural objects, but also objects crafted by man, from utensils to symbolic and artistic objects, from the simplest refuge to the city.

Everything we do and produce is inevitably part of a space-time dimension. In this many-temporal reality in which we live, we can therefore interpret time - also - as a distinctive structural element of the things that human beings build, whether small or large, from tools to metropolises.

In this scenario it is very interesting in our opinion, to understand how time works in two of the most symbolic categories of objects of human's creation, art and architecture. How time influences their realization, thinking of it as a constructive and fundamental category of the project itself.

The evolution of what we consider a work of art has to do with technological, social, political, ethical, aesthetical developments, and how changes in these fields affect our perception of reality. Especially in the second half of the Twentieth century we have witnessed an enormous speeding up and widening of the methodological spectrum of what we consider and call Art. New categories of production and of thought have been added, including that of "art in public space" or "art in public sphere". Descending from the idea of sculpture in the urban context, art in public space is a broader category, which fits into the contemporary discourse on the complexity of the idea of the city (or open space more generally), and often of the idea of ephemeral and therefore transitory. The most common methods used to create works of art in public spaces are those of sculpture, installation, performance, different techniques that often have in common the element of time, intrinsic in their inner structures. Of course time is present, as already mentioned above, in every activity or human product, but in some artworks the temporal element is crucial to the understanding of the work itself, we may think of a performance, for example, which follows a space-time development, or an interactive works, in which, the relationship with other people, necessary to the realization of the work, is built over a period of time, or to some installations whose readability can only be achieved through a set period of time, or also to the video production which, it goes without saying, is experienced through the length defined by the author.

Also in architecture, time is a fundamental element, certainly because by its very nature the architectural object is born to resist time; secondly because - as well as for works of art - it is directly connected with the technological and social developments of the time in which it is realized. Architecture also contains the time of its use, and of its physical and perceptive

experience. Being part of our daily landscape, the architectural object is also, inextricably linked, to our memory of the space in which we move. Furthermore, wander around the city is, in turn, a journey through time, as the city itself is built in very long – sometimes millennial – arches of time, so architecture is unequivocally a temporal object.

Now, when we talk about art in public space, we are talking about a work of art installed in an area of the city, having architecture all around it, as a huge scenography. The time that works into the artwork is naturally different from the time that works into architecture, that is, observing art in public space, there are two different times that overlap, or rather the architectural space (and time) houses inside itself the space (and time) of the work of art, but the encounter of these two different times, by structure and perception, inevitably creates a “Third Time”, that we will call a “*Time of Intersection*”, which becomes the subject of this thesis.

## Research Questions

The dissertation will begin with the analysis of the word Time, so to define what we intend referring to this concept and then we will answer the main questions of this thesis.

Today our perception of reality has changed profoundly due to the new outlook on the world that the ever faster technical / scientific achievements offer us. Given these premises, what is our perception of time, as a fundamental element of our construction of reality?

The thesis will investigate how it is changed our approach to the notion of time, following the impact of new scientific discoveries, in particular quantum physics, and in our daily lives, in the new space-time perception that the internet and the virtual world offers us.

What is the relationship between the time of art (we will mainly focus on the category of art in the public space) and the time of architecture?

To answer this question, we will mainly use a post-phenomenological approach; we will choose some architectural key-concepts circumscribed by thematic areas, which will become the framework of the comparative study artwork-architecture.

What are the characteristics of the time of intersection derived from the superimposition of architectural and artistic objects in the public space?

The main question of the thesis faces us with several reflections that will be addressed from a philosophical point of view but also from a technical/practical point of view. Starting from the assumption of the difficulty to find a satisfactory answer on the subject of time, we will however base our research on Western philosophy and on physics. From the analysis of different theories and the definition of some case studies, will be shaped the very definition of this “*Time of Intersection*”.

How this “Time of Intersection” does affect our perception and our construction of reality? Considering the “Time of Intersection” as a system of relationships that generate new points of view on reality, this thesis will demonstrate how this “Third Time” affects our perception of reality by modifying the spatial, emotional and temporal perception that we have of public space and the daily landscape that surround us.

## Objectives

The main objective of this thesis is to identify a possible temporal relationship between the work of art in the public space and the architectural artifact on its background. The field of analysis is potentially enormous, so the subject of this thesis will be a selection of contemporary works of art with the architectural objects with which they relate and that own the characteristics useful to the identification of the “*Time of Intersection*”.

Another limitation will be the area of investigation of the pair architectural object – work of art, in fact, we will analyze objects located along the European territory.

The physical relationship between the artistic and the architectural subject, takes place within the dynamics of the urban form, which relates the transformation of the perception of the architectural artifacts in its relationship with the work of art in front of it, creating a new temporal dimension.

Architecture contains time in its own structure. Time is readable from different elements such as the year of the building, the material that composed it, its internal structure. Also in art, time could be readable from different elements such as the year of the artwork, the material or the medium used to realize it. Our hypothesis is that it could be possible to perceive the work of art in public space together with the architecture on its background, from a temporal dimension that comes out as a result of their overlapping.

Another objective of this thesis is to create operational categories, to interpret the relationship between the work of art and the architectural artifact, from the point of view of notion of time.

Eventually these categories will be used by researchers, artists, architects, students, to understand the dynamic of the perception of architecture and art in public space, through a useful tool, as time, to better understand the reality in which we move.

## CHAPTER 1 Literature Review (ONCE)

Once: (wʌns) adv. 1. one time 2. formerly 3. ever –once-over n. inf. quick examination –at once immediately; simultaneously

In this chapter we will specify a definition of Time. The author will always imply this definition when using the word “time” during the dissertation (unless otherwise specified). Later we will analyze some dynamics of the notion of time in philosophy, art and architecture. These dynamics are the basis of the definition of the main theme of this thesis and will be analyzed to present a state of the art of the reflections on how different approaches to the concept of time, has affected the researches in these different disciplines, namely philosophy, art and architecture. Of course, given the vastness of the topics covered, each specific paragraph will be analyzed as a piece of a puzzle, a portion that will serve the reader to understand the general framework within which this research moves, and introduce her/him to the operational section, main body of work of this study, that will be analyzed in the chapter number 2.

## 1. Definition of Time

Time is undoubtedly one of the most complex and debated issues in human history. Every thinker has faced with this theme trying to find definitive answers to questions that are perhaps simply too complex to have definitive answers. Is time something that exists apart from us? Is it part of the matter of the universe? Or is it only could be found within us, in our conscience? Is it a philosophical problem? Religious? Scientific? What is the field that should resolve the questions related to this concept on which all our being and all our doing is ontologically based?

There are some elements of the notion of time that reappear in various theories throughout our history, at least in the western one, for example the idea of the cyclicity of time, or on the contrary that of its linearity; the latest developments in quantum science even theorize that all the time in the universe has already happened both in the past and in the future. It is certainly a fascinating and central theme in our existence, just think of the latest possibilities offered by technology through the creation of parallel and virtual worlds in which time, as we perceive it in our daily lives, is questioned through the possibility, for example, to find ourselves next to our deceased loved ones and talk to them, or to live a life different from the one we are living in the physical world.

What the virtual world is putting into crisis is not only the temporality of our lives, but also the spatiality, it is clear that if we find ourselves in a time, we must necessarily also find ourselves in a space (be it physical or virtual). This makes it clear that the problem of time is also a problem of space; on the other hand, Aristotle had already inextricably linked time to space:

*«When, on the other hand, we perceive and distinguish, then we say that time completes its journey, it is clear, then that there is no time without movement and change... it is necessarily a property of movement».* (Aristotele, [IV century BC] 1995, p. 44)

Considering the problems of time linked to those of space complicates things, if possible, even more, because it widens our reflections to two subjects that must necessarily be considered together. Furthermore, we can also interpret this movement of which Aristotle speaks as an internal movement, the one that makes us perceive the passage of time, and then the space

to be considered beyond the external space becomes an internal space. We have already seen how Augustine finds it difficult to answer a direct question about the nature of time<sup>1</sup>, but what seems clear to the philosopher-theologian and father of the Christian Church is that the passage of time can only exist within us (in our soul):

*«At least this is now limpid and clear: neither future nor past exist, and it is only improperly said that there are three times, past, present and future, but it would perhaps be more correct to say that there are three times in this sense: present of what it is past, present of what is present, and present of what is future».* (Sant'Agostino, [398] 2006, p. 52)

What Augustine is clarifying is that we can perceive the idea of the passage of time only within ourselves, the soul can measure time thanks to the impressions that things leave when they have passed, as Taroni explains well:

*«Time is dis-tensio, distension, passing of the soul, duration of interiority, alongside which there is l'in-tensio, the intention, the attention, the effort, the tension of the present».* (Taroni, 2012, p. 132)

The measurement of time outside of us is an illusory image produced by the measurement of phenomena as they unfold, but the impression is always present. Even Johan Gottlieb Fichte in the eighteenth century develops his philosophy around the concept that it is man who shapes time through his own existence. The ego is in its transformation, because by acting it is never equal to itself, this means that the philosopher creates a separation between the intelligible and the sensible between what we perceive through our intellect and what we experience with our senses, becoming aware of our actions is a temporal process. Consciousness acts in time, because the body acts in space, *through* time. Consciousness and the concept of *duration* are also at the heart of all of Henri Bergson's philosophy. According to the French philosopher, time is only in duration, time measured by scientists through ever more sophisticated machinery, is a *spatialization* of time, a homogeneous repetition of units identical to each other, as Bergson himself clarifies:

*«When I follow the movement of the hand corresponding to the swings of the pendulum with my eyes on the dial of a watch, I am not measuring the duration, as it might seem;*

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<sup>1</sup> See Introduction; paragraph 2: Background

*Instead, I limit myself to counting simultaneities». (Bergson, Saggio sui dati immediati della coscienza, [1889] 2000, p. 63)*

Duration as understood by Bergson is instead what living beings experience in the form of continuous internal flux and transformation, it is consciousness.

*«Inner duration is the continuous life of a memory which prolongs the past into the present». (Bergson, An introduction to Metaphysics, 1903, p. 44)*

Time therefore differs as exterior or spatialized time, namely quantitative, and interior time, or duration, namely qualitative. The latter takes place entirely in our consciousness and therefore escapes the spatialization of external time as Taroni further clarifies:

*«In order for a conscience to perceive change, it must remember what the previous inner states were like, what the experiences were like during life. It must – in a nutshell – be a memory that remembers». (Taroni, 2012, p. 378)*

But memory doesn't make us go back in time to a moment that we couldn't modify anyway because it already happened, but it carries out the opposite process, it positions us in that moment of our life to then re-actualize it, that is to bring it 'forward' in our present flow, transforming it into a new experience. In Deleuze's words about Bergson's work:

*«Not only does the past coexist with the present that has been, but, as it preserves itself in itself (while the present passes), it is the whole, integral past; it is all our past, which coexist with each present». (Deleuze, [1966] 1991, p. 59)*

And the future? According to Bergson, the present also overruns the future because it is towards the future that I tend in my cognitive process, the future fades into the present towards the past without any clear distinction between these three moments, it is the very notion of duration, which pervades the entire essence of the fabric of reality and of the universe. In fact, what we feel flowing and passing in our experience are events, people, things; not time, therefore things are not in time, but it is time that coincides with the flow of things in the universe.

Parallel to Bergson's theories, the German physicist Albert Einstein published his *general theory of relativity* which would forever upset the scientific world and the approach to the very idea of the universe. The element that upsets all the scientific thought of Einstein's theory is that time must be placed within a system of spatial coordinates and which consequently does not exist in itself but depends on the system we have taken as a reference; it is what physicists call a 'field' and it distorts according to the greater or lesser force exerted by gravity, as Wheeler points out: «matter tells Space-Time how to curve, and Space-Time tells matter how to move» (Wheeler, 1973: 75). What derives from Einstein's theory is that time is an integral part of the fabric of the universe, an event among events, Rovelli describes it as follows:

*«There is a structure of reality which is the gravitational field; it is not separate from the rest of physics, it is not the stage on which the world runs: it is a dynamic component of the great dance of the world, similar to all the others». (Rovelli, L'ordine del tempo, 2017, p. 72)*

This introduces the concept of space-time into common use, that is, an object can no longer be considered only through its physical dimensions; length, width, height, but will necessarily need a fourth dimension, that of time. Even if from different premises, Einstein's scientific theory has points in common with Bergson's metaphysical theory, in considering time as a duration, as an event that coincides with the flow of things in the universe. This idea that time is an external and internal flow also influences the field of psychology, William James develops a theory of the continuity of consciousness, in what he called: stream of consciousness:

*«Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits... It is nothing jointed; it flows. A 'river' or a 'stream' are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life». (James, 1918, p. 229)*

James continues describing how within us, no state can repeat itself identical to how it was before, that is, in our consciousness, each past state merges with the next, changing through our present perception. Even in the development of his phenomenology, Edmund Husserl speaks of time as an inner 'measure', considering that in his phenomenological approach he suspends judgment (*epoché*) on questions about an objective time in the world. That is, in

consciousness, time is perceived as a continuum of impressions that do not follow one after the other but refer to one another, extending the duration with each new impression. In the words of Husserl:

«Each actual mental process (we effect this evidence on the ground of clear intuition of an actuality characterizing mental processes) is necessarily an enduring one; and with this duration it finds its place in an infinite continuum of duration — in a fulfilled continuum». (Husserl, [1913] 1983, p. 194)

In our approach to the notion of time, we will finally take into account a sort of synthesis implemented by Dino Formaggio in his description of a cosmic phenomenology or a *post-phenomenological* approach as he himself defines it in which time is seen as:

«So rooted and co-structured with the life of one's body, with the bio-physiological rhythm that constitutes it as well as with the whole psychological life of its experiences (individual and collective), as to suggest that one is (or can be considered) a secretion of the other». (Formaggio, 1990, p. 14)

External time is therefore inextricably linked to internal time, to the time of our body, according to Formaggio following that idea of flow which we have already spoken of previously and which, taking place between internal and external, also determines our way of understanding and perceiving reality. This flow has been called “*duration*” and connects the future, present and past in an essential way, making our perception of reality a sort of “*Thick present*”. In our vision we operate a translation of this thick present in relation to the reality that surrounds us by transporting it from our inner world to the outer world, in our specific case between architecture and work of art in public space, thus arranging a direct connection between all the elements we are observing, in a mutual exchange of external form and internal functioning, which also determines every single temporality. Formaggio himself underlines how art has a “*liberating*” power from reality because:

«It transforms chronometric and spatialized time into an “*other*” time, no longer inexorably real and irreversible, but qualitatively infinitely variable». (Formaggio, 1990, p. 28)

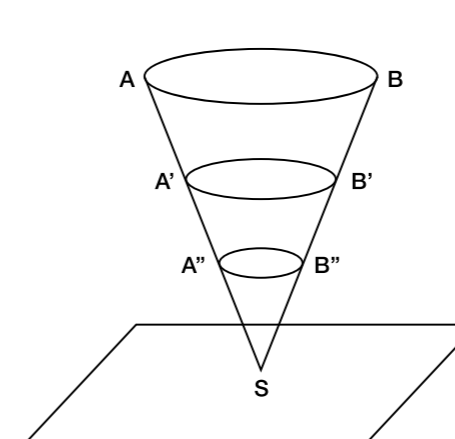
Architecture and work of art in their overlapping in the space of our gaze in different ways (through a distance, juxtaposing one to the other and so on) determine a flow of different temporalities, which becomes the duration of our inner perception; subject of analysis of this thesis. On the other hand, as Merleau-Ponty already underlined:

«The perceptual synthesis [of the perceived world] is a temporal synthesis, and subjectivity, at the level of perception, is nothing but temporality, and this is what enables us to leave to the subject of perception his opacity and historicity». (Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of perception*, 2006, p. 278)

This is the approach that will be used in this thesis in an attempt to define the *Time of Intersection* between art in public space and architecture. A definition that is essentially based on the transformation of the concept of space–time into a becoming that redraws a space–event of the action of art and architecture in our perception of reality.

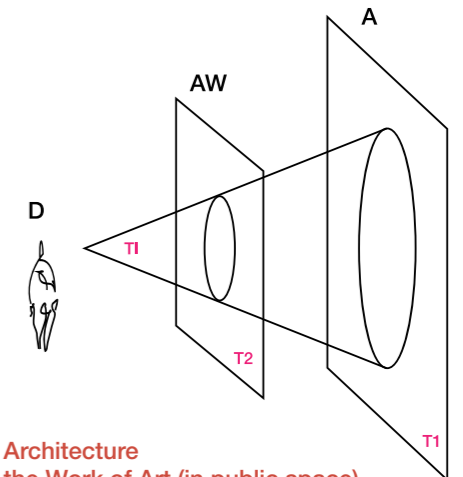
Visualization of the internal temporal structure built by Henri Bergson

AB: Levels of the past in our consciousness  
S: Present time



Interpretation and adaptation of Henri Bergson's time cone in the Time of Intersection

A: Architecture  
AW: Art (in public space)  
D: Duration generated by the viewer



T1: Time of Architecture  
T2: Time of the Work of Art (in public space)  
T1: Time of Intersection

Figure 1 - Author's drawings of Bergson's temporal scheme and interpretation and adaptation of Henri Bergson's time cone. Romano, 2021

## 2. What is your time made of?

(Dynamics of Time in Art)

*«The “origin” indicates that from where and through which a thing is what it is and how it is».* (Heidegger, 2012, p. 3)

We can use this statement by Martin Heidegger to try to understand what the concept of origin means to us, perhaps adding another concept that comes from a feeling, that of the origin as the moment when something begins. A concept that connects us with time, if we think about an origin, a beginning, automatically our mind moves back in time to a moment positioned somewhere in the past. Therefore, we could say that the origin is a time-based concept. In his dissertation, Heidegger continues stating that the origin of the work of art is the artist, but that also the origin of the artist is the artworks, none of them can exist without the other, but they are in themselves because of a third element, which is we would say, the first: the art.

Following this logic, we can state that the art is a time-based concept because gives origin, it generates two other elements, the artist and the artwork. In this time-based triptic, we could read the all history of all human kind cultural developments. Because of its origin, art has always been a temporal discipline.

We will not go through the infinite debates around what it is a work of art, and why/who decide what we call a work of art, we could instead outline the definition of what we will mean in this thesis, all the time we will use the word, artwork or work of art.

The work of art is a product of the intellect, which takes the form of an object<sup>1</sup>, but which, unlike the artisan or industrial object, also contains another value, that of making the other visible. The artwork is therefore part of the real world, but its appearance, its structure serves to make the other, the symbol, visible. The artwork is a symbol.

During centuries, the idea of what we consider and call ‘artwork’ has changed according to new technological discoveries, and artistic practices that widened the possibility of expression for artists. Together with the possible shapes of the artwork, artists always challenged also the idea of the place where to install and exhibit the work. Before the Twentieth century,

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of object in the definition of the work of art, it changes and it expands over the centuries, according to new technology discoveries and according to what we consider a work of art. In the last centuries, we witness the development of art movements, which consider also intangible things as a work of art.

art has always been conceived as part of the image of the cities, as part of the fulfillment and perception of a square or as decoration of the main buildings. However, it is only from the late 1960s that talking about works of art, located in different space of our cities has been used the term ‘art in public space’, or ‘public art’.

These terms generally describe works commissioned for sites of open public access<sup>2</sup> together with the usage and development of artistic practices in public space, comes also the notion of ‘site-specific’ used for artworks specifically produced for a given site. We will see later how this term has different nuances according to the various interpretations of the investigated situation and artist’s approaches.

Of course, the use of the term public, opens questions about what we consider ‘public’ in the space of a city, who commissioned the work, who decide the relation the artwork must have for city dwellers. In fact, when an artwork is sited outside the institutional spaces of museums or art galleries, two different spaces collide. One is the space of the artworks itself, directly connected with the site; the other space is a more psychological rather than physical space, a mutable kind of space that Lefebvre called ‘representational spaces’, a space related with personal values of the people who accidentally encounter the artwork.

At this point, it would be interesting to define what it means public space. The definition of public space given by the UNESCO is:

*«A public space refers to an area or place that is open and accessible to all peoples, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level. These are public gathering spaces such as plazas, squares and parks. Connecting spaces, such as sidewalks and streets, are also public spaces. In the 21st century, some even consider the virtual spaces available through the internet as a new type of public space that develops interaction and social mixing».* (Inclusion Through Access to Public Space | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2021)

What we define “public” is connected with our idea of society and relations among people. The same way what we define as public art as always been controversial in its definition. As controversial is the definition of a public space. In fact, the idea of public brings the notion

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<sup>2</sup> (Miles, Art, Space and the City - Public Art ad Urban Futures, 1997)



of openness and democracy, the definition given by UNESCO stresses this idea when it says that a public space is a space open and accessible to all peoples regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level. However, democracy has Rosalyn Deutsche stated has a difficulty as its core.

*«Power stems from the people but belongs to nobody. Democracy abolishes the external referent of power and refers power to society. But democratic power cannot appeal for its authority to a meaning immanent in the social. Instead, the democratic invention invents something else: the public space».* (Deutsche, 1996, p. 273).

The notion of public space is then, related with the notion of democracy. Contrary to the idea of absolute power, democracy is based on the decision-making power of the people, therefore on an exchange of ideas, opinions and views on a topic that lead to a debate that sees dialectics as its *raison d'être*. With the idea that

*«The presence of the 'Other' prevents me from being totally myself».* (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985, p. 127)

We are witnessing a dislocation of identity that constantly, questions the quality of democracy.

We could extend this characteristic of pluralism also to the concept of art in public space, and this is another conflict point, because since the beginning of its usage to define artworks located outside institutional spaces, the term has been variously defined by different critics, according to their views on the topics described above. These different definitions of art in public space or art in public realm are also a consequence of the different approaches used by artists to develop their works.

This relates us to another problematic we mentioned above, that of the different approaches of the artists to the notion of site. Since the late sixties when the term was used for the first time to describe a work of art specifically thought for a location, the term then took on during the years all the various shades according to the methodologies developed by the artists through time.

Regardless of where the artwork is installed, from a desert, to a square, from a museum room to an architectural space, what makes an artwork specific to a site are its physical charac-

teristics, which uniquely adapt to the chosen site. That is, the artist connects the physical characteristics of the work to the physical characteristics of the space where the work is to be installed. Obviously, there is a difference in the approach depending on the place chosen, that is the place in this case influences the work, or rather the work cannot be thought separately from the place where it will be exhibited; place and work become a one essential from each other.

The importance acquired by the site is linked to a profound change in the idea of reality, which took place at the beginning of the twentieth century, and that changes completely our perception of reality, Einstein's theory of relativity.

*«The site is defined by relations of proximity between points or elements; formally, we can describe these relations as series, trees, or grids».* (Focault, 2006, p. 2)

Thus, Focault defines the idea of the site, linking it to the concept of space, proximity, juxtaposition, space can no longer be neutral and art must take into account all the variables that the space of the intervention allows to trigger. Again, in the words of Focault:

*«We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another».* (Focault, 2006, p. 3)

What changes profoundly in the notion of site-specificity is

*«The pure idealist space of dominant modernism that was radically displaced by the materiality of the natural landscape or the impure and ordinary space of the everyday».* (Kwon, 2004, p. 67)

In this operating mode, art no longer has a neutral space, but space acquires a strength given by its very being 'impure', that is, conditioned by the use and disuse that people make of it every day. In this way the work of art in its specific context acquires a unique value because it needs the physical presence of each person and the unique approach that that person has with the work, at that specific moment, thus acquiring a temporality beyond than to a completely new spatiality. The work of art in itself that is, not linked to a specific place has a different

epiphany in the viewer. Because completed even before being positioned in the place of exhibition, the work already contains its temporality within itself, and the place of display does not affect, it adds nothing to the perception of the work itself, and therefore to its temporal flow. At the opposite to a work of art that shares its structural and formal elements, with the place in which it is exhibited, and whose temporality, therefore, passes through the changes of the space that hosts it. Through the perception that the viewer has of it when crosses it, through a series of variables more or less predictable by the artist as possible events, but almost never predictable in their results, which means that the time of the work changes continuously in accordance with the time of the site in which it is installed. The site-specific work of art is a structural and temporal reorganization of the viewer's aesthetic experience. The work is also rethought from its very definition, which often changes from "work of art" to artistic "project" as also pointed out by Claire Bishop:

*«A project [...] aspires to replace the work of art as a finite object with an open-ended, post-studio, research-based, social process, extending over time and mutable in form».* (Bishop, 2012, p. 194)

Art begins to emerge from institutional spaces, those of museums and art galleries, already in the second post-war period, with the historical avant-gardes. That is the moment when the perception of time and space becomes the material of the work itself. The artistic movements such as Dadaism, Futurism, up to Fluxus, prepares the possibility for the artwork to escapes the frames and the static ideas of representation. However, it was in the sixties that this practice was somehow institutionalized, also thanks to the educational programs named "Public Art" developed in Anglo-Saxon countries. These public art programs were based on the idea that art could be brought closer to people, and educate them through art, making the works available to everyone in the spaces of the city. Therefore, no longer art as an embellishment of the public areas of cities – with works by established artists – but a desire for civic education.

*«The definition of public art and art in the public space, circumscribe and specify a set of values, intentions, objectives, which are enshrined in the statutes of these programs»<sup>3</sup>* However, these programs end up labeling the new methodologies that the artists began to develop in their confrontation with the open spaces of cities and of large natural landscapes

<sup>3</sup> Alessandra Pioselli, Interviews section of this thesis.

– especially in the United States of America – and soon these definitions were challenged by a part of the critics and the artists themselves, since the seventies.

In fact, since the mid-sixties, there has been a proliferation of commissions of works in the public space to the great artists of the Minimalist movement. This led to the creation mostly of big scale models of the sculptures already created by the artists for the spaces of the museums or galleries, installing them in plazas or other public spaces of the cities. In most cases, the artists were not at all interested in creating a relationship with the space surrounding the sculpture, indeed, as Henry Moore quoted about it:

*«To display sculpture to its best advantage outdoors, it must be set so that it relates to the sky, miles away, allows us to contrast infinity with reality, and so we are able to discover the sculptor's inner scale without comparison».* (Seldis, 1973, pp. 14-15)

This choice, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world has provoked a lot of criticism, above all because the site-specific methodology was used for works that were not born, nor designed

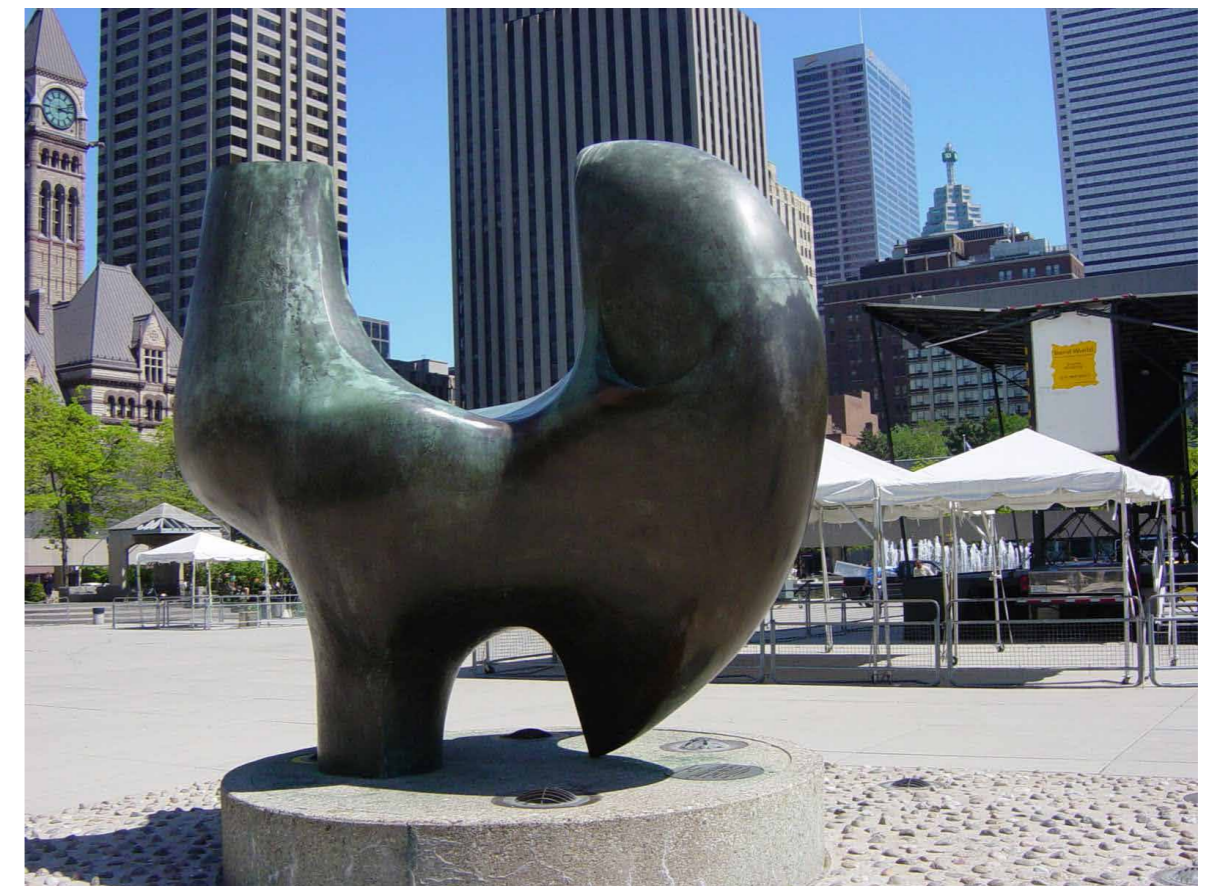


Figure 2 - Henry Moore; *Three Way Piece No 2*. Toronto City Hall Plaza, 1964-1965; Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HenryMooreTorontoCH2.jpg>

specifically for the site. Regardless the free access to the public, guaranteed by their positioning in the spaces of the city (especially squares), they remained conceptually inaccessible to the audience, due to the cryptic language of modern sculpture. The architect James Wines, with a play on words with the big scale of the sculptures, programmatically used by artists of the Pop art movement, defined those sculptures: “*plop art*”.

The criticisms prompted the leaders of the US institutions for art programs in the public space, to reflect and already from the early seventies, specifications were introduced in the

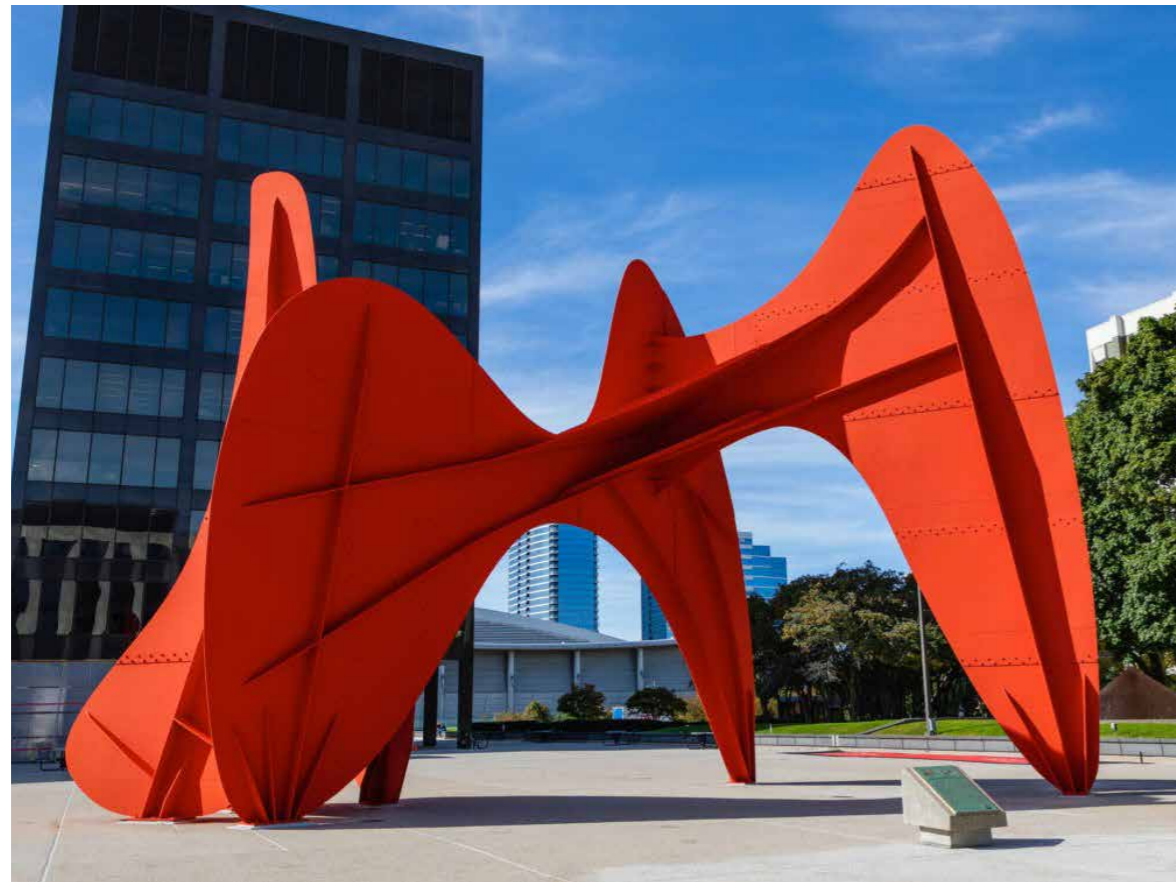


Figure 3 - Alexander Calder; *La Grande Vitesse*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1969; Source <https://calder.org/works/monumental-sculpture/la-grande-vitesse-1969/>

guidelines regarding the fact that the work of art should be appropriate or consistent with the site where it was installed. This because if modern artistic production had produced works that no longer shared an iconography with the audience, now they had to share space with it. Inherent in this reflection are the ideas of physical experience of the work, of active participation in the creative process, of interaction, of relationships, of belonging to a community or a place. All issues that will be extensively investigated and used by artists in site-specific artistic production in urban and rural spaces and which, in some way underlined a new didactic function of art, as indicated by Burnham:

*«The specific function of modern didactic art has been to show that art does not reside in material entities, but in relations between people and between people and the components of their environment».* (Burnham, 1968, p. 31)

This dynamic insists on shifting the structure of the work of art from an object whose experience is based primarily on an aesthetic and visual syntax, to an object whose aesthetic function underlies a perceptual reorganization of the environment in which it is installed. This perceptual reorganization of the environment, therefore, presupposes that the work of art is no longer read as a decoration of the space of the square or of architecture, but rather becomes in some way an interruption of them. A critique of a specific situation, which allows the viewer, through direct experience, to reorganize the perception of that space, adding meaning to already existing meanings.

Hence, the new methodological variables introduced by the artists create new approaches to the usability of the work, distancing themselves from the minimalist sculptures in the public spaces realized in the previous years. The theme of interdependence with the site becomes crucial. The “place” is no longer a physical site but a discursive context, from the “place” to the “public sphere”.

This change comes as a reflection on what until then, until the sixties, was considered as art in the public space. The doubling of artistic production in a programmatic way, in art produced for institutional spaces (museums, galleries) and art produced for outdoor spaces (whether they are an urban or a rural space), consolidated precisely in those years. As explained above, to understand the genesis of this doubling, we must take a step back in time to understand how artistic production in general was previously understood. Although what is considered the first museum in history, the Museum of Alexandria, takes us back to the year 323 BC. (Year of its foundation), the concept of the Museum as a place for the collection and conservation of works of art or archaeological finds, entered the common language of many European languages only from the seventeenth century. Until then, the public function of the work of art, together with its educational function of historical or religious events, was considered a whole in the production of artists. In other words, artists were asked to create works designed to “fill” the interior spaces of churches or noble palaces, as well as squares or city streets, narrating historical enterprises or religious events extrapolated from sacred texts. The public function of art was therefore conceived a priori, together with the space of

the city, as a decorative element, functional to a political, historical and / or religious vision, merging into the context of the city.

Considering the equestrian monument to *Gattamelata*, realized by Donatello in 1453, in bronze and located in Piazza del Santo in Padua, in front of the Basilica del Santo. The ancient classical statuary inspired Donatello. This monument was the first equestrian monument of the celebratory pre-Renaissance period, which resumes the classical model after the Roman examples; the model that inspired the artist was probably the statue of Marco Aurelio in Rome. Usually, the equestrian monuments at the time of Donatello were funeral monuments, in fact even the monument to *Gattamelata* was thought of as a cenotaph, a funerary monument devoid of human remains.

The statue is conceived in a constant dialogue with the surrounding space, it is positioned slightly offset from the center of the facade to position the monument inside a necropolis (at the time of Donatello) and favor its greater visibility, aligning it with the main street access to the Basilica complex. The total view of the monument is from the lateral position, especially on the left side.



Figure 4 - Donatello; Monumento Equestre al Gattamelata. Padova, 1453; Source <https://www.thinkinglink.com/scene/979120745462366210>

The statue is deliberately placed on a very high base to increase the sense of detachment from the people, isolating the protagonist to underline its importance and thus create a view from below for the observer. This location creates a detachment from the passer-by who is in spatial inferiority, thus increasing the sense of monumentality of the work. The statue does not share the same space as the people. The space of the monument is an ideal and timeless space; the statue is locked in its historical dimension that makes the character eternal.

Yet the symbiotic relationship between architecture and the work of art from a spatial point of view is evident in a clear perspective view of time.

This type of approach and vision continued practically until the beginning of the twentieth century, when, with the advent of the historical avant-gardes, the concept of museum, or institutional space, was criticized, and the idea of going out and re-appropriating of public spaces becomes an element of rupture with the unitary vision of the city space. The museum space, also in the definition we inherited and ratified:

*«A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment».* (ICOM Statutes, 2007)

it is read as part of a unique and unidirectional narrative and for this reason it becomes, especially from the middle of the 20th century, a space to rethink. This reflection on institutional spaces, which by definition are “white cube”, aseptic and neutral spaces, takes place - also - through the use of urban or natural spaces, which are the opposite of the neutral space of museums or galleries. They are impure spaces. However, the change of vision that begins at the beginning of the twentieth century occurs not by chance through the historical avant-garde. Up to that moment, in fact, the vision of the world conveyed by painting was a four-hundred-year-old vision of the world, the perspective vision born in the Renaissance, which provides a three-dimensional vision of our reality. That vision was, in fact, put into crisis in the early nineteenth century, with the creation of a new geometry, no longer Euclidean, which included other dimensions beyond the three envisaged by Euclid. The extra dimension was the time dimension. Time, which until then had been treated as a divine measure, a sign of the eternity of God and humanity of men; or as an inner dimension by the spiritualists; or as

an a priori dimension, necessary to understand the very concept of objective reality (Kant); or as a historical dimension; however, always as an intuition. Time becomes a measurable, geometric entity, thanks to the scientific discoveries of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Humanity therefore, began to understand that it was impossible to describe a surface based on a single point of view, even the discoveries of modern physics crumbled the certainties of the Renaissance three-dimensional and perspective point of view, in fact opening the way to a new and necessary worldview as Giedion pointed out

*«A multi-sidedness view, which starts from the very structure of the object, which is now seen from all possible sides, from below, from above, from inside and from outside. The representation of objects from several points of view introduces a principle that is closely linked with modern life - simultaneity».* (Giedion, 1941, p. 436)

The concept of simultaneity is a temporal concept - of two events occurring at the same time, that is, simultaneously - but Einstein, in the theory of relativity, also links the concept of simultaneity to space. According to Einstein, two distant events are to be considered simultaneous in a given reference system if two light signals, starting each other at the instant in which they occur; they arrive at the same instant at an intermediate distance between them. It follows the relativity of simultaneity, according to which the simultaneity of two distant events depends on the reference system in which these events are observed.

*«The idea that there is a well-defined now everywhere in the universe is therefore an illusion, an illegitimate extrapolation of our experience. It's like the point where the rainbow touches the forest: we seem to catch a glimpse of it, but if we go and look it's not there».* (Rovelli, L'ordine del tempo, 2017, p. 44)

If space-time depends on the reference system considered for the observation of events, this means that, by translating these arguments to our discourse, what revolves around the site becomes of fundamental importance for the creation of the work of art. The site is no longer just a physical place other than the museum in which to place the work, but an element of the structure of the work, which interacts with it on different levels, structural, emotional, relational, contradictory; it becomes its system of reference. Appropriating the concept of *heterotopia*, expressed by Foucault as follows:

*«There are also, probably in every culture, in every civilization, real places – places that do exist and that are formed in the very founding of society – which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality».* (Foucault, 2006, pp. 3-4)

We can state that the physical place of execution of the work acquires its specific power in the construction and realization of the work itself, influencing its structure, shape and meaning. The site acquires a sort of function within the narrative of the work itself, be it a natural or man-made place. In Foucault's idea, heterotopias are mirrors, places that reflect reality without being physically inside them, but being themselves part of our physical reality. Also, like theaters, physical places, existing in our reality, but that contains infinite other possible places, each of which can also be in contradiction with the other. Also, like cinemas, in whose darkness absorbing every other space, we are catapulted into other worlds, with their physicality perceived through our eyes. Even in this Merleau-Ponty reminded us how

*«Vision alone teaches us that beings that are different, “exterior”, foreign to one another, are yet absolutely together, are “simultaneity”».* (Merleau-Ponty, Eye and Mind, 1964, p. 187)

The reality in which we live and which we see through our eyes therefore contains, according to these definitions, also other levels of reality, or other worlds, therefore also other times. It is as if our reality, our present, had the power to extend beyond mere physical or visual experience to other realities, equally tangible and possible, starting precisely from the phenomenological experience we make of reality itself. In the expanding universe, the most remote galaxies move away from us at such a fast speed that their light cannot reach us

*«What we perceive as the darkness of the sky, is this light that travels very fast towards us and yet cannot reach us, because the galaxies it comes from are moving away faster than the speed of light. Perceiving in the darkness of the present this light that tries to reach us and cannot do so, this means being contemporary».* (Agamben, 2008, p. 9)

It is in the vision through the phenomenological data that we are able to transform a site and the work of art contained in it, into a space capable of taking us elsewhere, of giving us other interpretations of reality, of the problems we face every day with. Perceiving that site – together with the work contained in it – in Foucault’s words, as a heterotopy. We are simultaneously in a place, which projects us into other possible places or times or in total contradiction with the physical place in which we find ourselves.

Considering *Spiral Jetty*, the Land Art<sup>4</sup> oeuvre realized by the American artist, Robert Smithson. The artist directed the construction of this iconic work in 1970. *Spiral Jetty* is a site-specific work, conceived to interact with changing conditions of the surrounding landscape, and more specifically with water, land, and atmosphere, the ‘material’ of the chosen site, a barren, unpopulated site, the Great Salt Lake in Utah. Smithson chose the site not only because of the surrounding landscape, but also because of the nearby abandoned oilrigs and the «Golden Spike» marking the completion of the transcontinental railway. All of the Smithson’s research is permeated by the ideas of entropy, history and monumentality. The concept of entropy is part of the Second Law of Thermodynamics, postulated by the German physicist, Rudolf Clausius in 1803, stating that there exists a useful thermodynamic variable called entropy:

*«A natural process that starts in one equilibrium state and ends in another will go in the direction that causes the entropy of the system plus the environment to increase for an irreversible process and to remain constant for a reversible process».* (NASA, 2021)

The term come from the Greek word for “*transformation*” and the artist uses it to describe inevitable deterioration of a system or society, Smithson to explain entropy he asks his reader to imagine a sandbox on one side with white sand and on the other with black:

*«A little boy begins around the enclosure in a clockwise direction, kicking up the sand as he goes mixing together dark grains with light. He is then told to reverse his course run counterclockwise. This will certainly do nothing to undo the movement uniformity and re-sort the two colors into separate fields. As his legs continue churn, the process of entropy will, irreversibly, only progress».* (Bois & Krauss, 1996, p. 38)

<sup>4</sup> Art movement developed mainly in the United States of America, especially because of the great desert spaces “available” to American artists.

It is important to notice that the notion of entropy for Smithson was more temporal than spatial. It is through the time stratification of events that a site changes. *Spiral Jetty* contains its own ruins, the site-specific installation it is a 450 meters long spiral made of approximately 6,650 tons of material, earth and rocks, jutting from the shore into Great Salt Lake. Smithson chosen this site also because the great concentration of red algae and salt crystals in that specific point of the lake.

*«As I looked at the site, it reverberated out to the horizons only to suggest an immobile cyclone while flickering light made the entire landscape appear to quake. A dormant earthquake spread into the fluttering stillness, into a spinning sensation without movement. This site was a rotary that enclosed itself in an immense roundness. From that gyrating space emerged the possibility of the Spiral Jetty»<sup>5</sup>.*



Figure 5 - Robert Smithson; *Spiral Jetty*. Great Salt Lake, Utah, 1970; Source <https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/spiral-jetty>

*Spiral Jetty* thus becomes an example of how the site that contains the work becomes an integral part of the work itself, because it contributes to the transformation of the artistic object over time, changing its perception and contributing to the transformation of that physical

<sup>5</sup> Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* documentary, 1972

space into a heterotopy, a physical place that contains within it infinite possible others. The vision is no longer the perspective one, read in the spatial relationship uniquely constructed by the artist in relation to architecture. In this case, the vision is multi-sidedness, because the visitor experiences the object built by the artist, directly walking on it and changing his own vision of the reality that surrounds him. Furthermore, the dimension of the work of art is also multi-temporal, because the direct experience of the work connects it to our biological time, but also to a universal time, which goes beyond us and which branches out to the geological time of rocky material of the sculpture and of the salt crystals contained in the lake waters. The very choice of the place to create *Spiral Jetty* is no longer linked to a logic of perspective vision, but to an experiential and temporal dimension that Smithson wanted to convey to the viewer.

The approach developed by the Land Art artists to place their works in the great desert spaces along the United States had to do with a reaction to the increasingly important commodification of the artistic object. But also, with the great changes in American cities - and throughout the Western world - a consequence of the great building speculations in progress. The idea of «bringing» the viewer physically to these remote places to make him live a direct experience of the work, brings us back to the concept of *hic et nunc* (here and now), that is, a physical, perceptive, sensorial experience that the person could have only in that place and at that precise moment. A temporal experience of the work of art. This type of experience has generated a new idea to what is the approach to the site and the relationship between work and place. Here the word «place» has been used consciously instead of the word «space», because with the acquisition of a meaning by a space – in this case through the installation of a work of art – the space acquires a special connotation, unique, which transforms it into a place.

«“Space” is more abstract than “place”. What begins as undifferentiated space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value». (Tuan, 1977, p. 6)

Between the sixties and seventies, the term public art was used almost entirely to indicate the paradigm of modernist abstract sculpture, inserted in an urban context without any attempt by the artists to create a relationship between the work and the site, therefore art *in* the public space.

Then, as it has been analyzed, the relationship between site, work and audience begins to change and the artists starts to use the public space also with the idea of decentralization, of physical and sensory participation of the viewer, so the paradigm becomes the work *as* a public space. At the same time, the work of art in the public space also acquires social and political themes; the artistic object becomes an object of transition, of interaction, used to highlight social issues or political activism and collaborative practices of communities. This approach sees the work become art of *public interest* and is generally identified with the name of *new genre public art* (Lacy, Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art, 1995)

Considering the work *Consequences of a Gesture* conceived by American artist Daniel Joseph Martinez in collaboration with Vinzula Kara, created within the *Culture in Action* exhibition program conceived and curated by Mary Jane Jacobs in Chicago in 1993.

«An important salvo in the battle to bring socially cooperative art into mainstream art venues (for better or for worse)». (Finkelpearl, 2013, p. 52)

The exhibition was organized in collaboration with a local organization called “*Sculpture Chicago*” stressing its usual way of places sculptures in public plazas of the city. The intent of Culture in Action was, in the words of Daniel Joseph Martinez to

«Brought awareness that some other processes were possible, like rethinking who the public really was, as well as re envisioning how artists worked. It showed the possibility that artists could interact with the public and have a reach beyond what is available with the art object itself; it opened up a new consideration of the efficacy of art as a social practice. What if artwork became more temporal — as opposed to a fixed, secured, permanent object? What if fluidity became the organizational and operating principle?». (Martinez, 2007, p. 54)

The work was a collaboration between the artist and a musician experimental composer, Vinzula Kara. It took the form of a parade that involved 35 different community organizations. The parade developed through different neighborhoods in the city of Chicago, from *Harrison Park* (a.k.a. *Zapata Park*) a predominantly Mexican neighborhood to *Garfield Park*, a predominantly black West Side neighborhood and it created an interaction also with a popular public market, that was removed the following year and with the University of Illinois.

The artist declared that was influenced by another internationally established artist, Joseph Beuys about the idea of “social-sculpture”, so the idea of the project to develop for Culture in Action, was all about the process and the possibility to reorganize the idea of aesthetic through social engagement and responsibility. As also Lefebvre clarify:

*«Every social space is the outcome of a process with many aspects and many contributing currents, signifying and non-signifying, perceived and directly experienced, practical and theoretical».* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 110)

So, every social space depends on its peculiar history, or geographical position. The artist was fascinated by the history of economic development of the city; Chicago was the place where the first factories in the Mid-West were opened, a fact that embodied the worker’s conflicts and fights for rights and a new idea of social coexistence. He was particularly interested in May Day parade<sup>6</sup>.

The city of Chicago has a much-defined neighborhoods structure that seems to divide the city in precise social geographic areas.

*«The question was: What if you cut across some of these invisible boundaries that exist within the demarcations of class and race?».* (Martinez, 2007, p. 56)

120 different groups coming from the three neighborhoods involved in the project composed the final parade. Each group was involved and asked not to represent something specifically, but rather to represent themselves and celebrate their individualities. Each group was responsible to decide how they wanted to represent themselves. Another characteristic of these anarchic parade was to be nomadic, the parade does not follow a precise path; everybody performed in one neighborhood, following a standard parade protocol – police escorts, traffic stopped etc. – then at the end of the parade, everybody jumps on a bus, directed to the second location where everything started again, and so on. The idea to create a nomadic parade was also to challenge the hierarchic geopolitical structure of the neighborhoods. The impact of the parade was to break the daily routine with an absurd, surrealist, anarchic day-long event. More than a thousand people all of a sudden acted as a unique entity, performing

<sup>6</sup> It is the day chosen to celebrate International Workers’ Day, from all over the leftists, anarchists, communists and socialists around the world. The date was chosen because of the proximity to the Haymarket massacre in Chicago, when on May 4, 1886, a bomb blasts during the labor demonstration in support of the workers striking for an eight-hour workday.

together without any purpose, but with a strong meaning, to create a genuine collaboration that through the breaking of the everyday routine, states the idea of people collaboration through the device of an artistic performance, as Martinez explains:

*«In the case of the project in Chicago, it is more about the possibility that ideas, when genuinely integrated into a milieu, can lead people to take action toward an objective of radical democracy, to participate to a degree that their lives and their existence are tested. Not only can people take authorship of ideas, but those ideas can create a momentum that is potentially unstoppable, and there is an inherent beauty contained within the possibility of those ideas».* (Martinez, 2007, p. 62)

The figure of the artist gives people the possibility to enact something that apparently has no purposes, people gain a kind of freedom of act that it seems impossible to share in their routine. These kinds of artistic actions that move towards a non-object artistic practice, questioning the concepts of ephemeral and transitory, enables to widen the notion of what an art object is, and how it functions. They shift the reflection on the ability of art to create formal connections between elements which, apparently, have nothing to do with each other, but that when combined together, redefine the structure of our human experience, from aesthetic, emotional, intellectual and physical point of view.



Figure 6 - Daniel J Martinez, *Vinzula Kara; Consequences of a gesture*. Chicago, 1993; Source <https://teaching.ellenmueller.com/walking/2021/06/12/daniel-j-martinez-vinzula-kara-and-west-side-three-point-marchers-consequences-of-a-gesture-1993/>



In a collaborative artistic practice, there are different entities that come into play, the artist, the institution, the public and, as we began to understand, the site of the intervention. Each of them brings with it an unfathomable aspect that contributes to building all levels of meaning in the project, but none of them could exist if it not challenged by the active participation of the other entities.

In the case of the parade, the artist's vision would be just an intuition without the active participation of the community, without the intervention of "chance", which makes programmatic something incalculable *a priori*. Each of the participants acts according to their expectations and according to the values that he / she decides to transmit and make visible to the rest of the community and the public. This is important to understand that the cultural space produced by the action of all the people involved in it, is not neutral, Ray Lucas clarify it when he wrote that

*«Cultural performances are not neutral: they are produced within a community, are a response to underlying conditions and can be either reinforcements or rejections of accepted norms».* (Lucas, 2020, p. 160)

The work of art becomes, in this case, a sum of different uniqueness, whose union is possible and plausible only within the creative process. The role of the artist is not to resolve the differences within society, but to bring these differences to the point of contradiction. Because the contradiction in a relationship is the moment of maximum comparison of differences, and offers the possibility of creating the vision of a unity that is not constituted by the resolution of these differences, but by their complexity. An artistic vision already theorized by Adorno, according to whom art is the aesthetic space of utopia that has not been created elsewhere, is the representation of the other. The other is also the reversal of the point of view that one usually has of a work of art within museum spaces. In museums, the point of view goes from the observer to the work, which is absorbed in an aseptic space and detached from any particular narrative, if not that of the institution itself. In public space, to understand which social or intellectual space with which the work interacts or questions, it is necessary to reverse this perspective and start from the work of art that moves towards the viewer.

Only by operating in this way, can we contextualize and understand the dynamics that the work puts into action. In *Consequences of a Gesture*, we must start from the object, in this

case ephemeral, and nomadic, such as the parade to understand the social contradictions of the context, the invisible racial and social boundaries, which create divisions in the various neighborhoods of Chicago.



Figure 7 - Daniel J Martinez, *Vinzula Kara; Consequences of a gesture*. Chicago, 1993; Source <https://never-the-same.org/interviews/mary-jane-jacob/>

The movement of the parade participants in the spaces of the city makes these boundaries evident, moving and shifting them continuously. This is one of the characteristics of the aesthetic practice of the ephemeral, of movement, of walking, Careri suggests that:

*«By modifying the sense of the space crossed, walking becomes man's first aesthetic act, penetrating the territories of chaos, constructing an order on which to develop the architecture of situated objects».* (Careri, 2006, p. 26)

Walking we become aware of the surrounding space and of ourselves, the physical movement corresponds to an awareness of reality, while walking we learn to know better ourselves and consequently, the world around us.

*«Walking is a skill, but if I can “see” myself walking and I can hold that picture in mind so that I can analyze how I move and what path I am following, then I also have knowledge».* (Tuan, 1977, p. 68)

So, let's go back to the idea according to which when a space acquires values for us, that space is transformed into a place, that is, it acquires knowledge to us, which is transformed into experience, but also into emotion and subsequently into memory.

Memory is another fundamental tool that continually moves our direct experience of reality; it is the tool that, according to Henri Bergson, builds a fundamental bridge with the present and the future in the flow of our existence. It creates the «duration» of our temporal experience.

*«There is a succession of states, each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. They can, properly speaking, only be said to form multiple states when I have already passed them and turn back to observe their track. Whilst I was experiencing them, they were so solidly organized, so profoundly animated with a common life, that I could not have said where any one of them finished or where another commenced. In reality no one of them begins or ends, but all extend into each other».* (Bergson, An Introduction to Metaphysics, 1912, p. 11)

Memory therefore builds consistency, thickness and gives us awareness of what we are. It is through memory, in fact, that we build our personality and we are able to ensure that the experiences we make of world events are deposited within us, becoming knowledge. But, just as Bergson points out, there is no real beginning and no real end of what we call past, present and future in our consciousness. These three moments are continually recalled by our senses to build and respond to the eventualities we face, creating the flow within which we move and within which we experience our reality.

Cultural experience is also a physical, sensorial and mnemonic experience that helps build our experience of the other:

*«The Russian semiologists of the Tartu school Jurij Lotman and Boris Uspensky define culture as «a non-hereditary memory of the collective». [...] This memory is not perpetu-*

*ated automatically but must always be reshaped, sanctioned, communicated and adapted».* (Asmann, 2002, p. 20)

The images we produce and their repetition build this collective, cultural memory, making it lasting over time. An example of this type of memory are monuments, we analyze two different approaches in the development of a monument through two projects, one created through a delicate and ephemeral action, the other as a result of a scientific process.

In the first case, we consider the work *To Those Born Today* (Ai nati oggi) by the Italian artist, Alberto Garutti. The project it has been repeated several times by the artist and in different cities. The work referred to in this text is the one created for the city of Bergamo in 1998 and located in Piazza Dante in the city center. The artist connected the street lamps in the square with the maternity ward of the Bergamo hospital. Every time a child is born, the parents or the nurses press a button that gradually increases the intensity of the light from the street lamps, reaching a peak of light that returns to normal intensity after about 30 seconds. In the square - and in all the places where the work has been repeated - a marble plaque is installed bearing the following declaration, written by the artist:

*«The streetlights of this place are connected to the maternity ward of the hospital ... Every time the light blinks, it means a child is born. The work is dedicated to that child, and to the children born today in this city».*<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, a plaque bearing this wording is installed also in the maternity ward of the cities where the project is carried out:

*«At this moment in ... square, someone looking at a light will know that a child is born».*<sup>8</sup>

The work is based on different emotional and perceptive levels of the public space and of our being part of a community. It starts from the origin, from birth, as we have seen the idea of birth, of the origin, it contains in itself a mythical, unspecified time, far away in time and memory. The birth, or nativity, is a recurring theme of classical painting, because it is linked

<sup>7</sup> Alberto Garutti; *To Those Born Today* 1998 – 2021 ongoing project.

<sup>8</sup> Alberto Garutti; *To Those Born Today* 1998 – 2021 ongoing project.

to the religious theme of the birth of the Messiah. In general, the birth of a child is the birth of a story, the addition of a new piece within a community, it gives the sense of an expectation, and symbolically the expectation of a life that is born is the expectation *par excellence*, used metaphorically for any type of creation. These reflections shift attention to the value of the work itself, not as an object, the marble plaque is an inscription that has a didactic, cognitive value of something that could happen while we are in that square; but of which we have no certainty about the possibility that the event occurs while we are inside the square. What has value here is therefore precisely the expectation, there is a time aimed at the future rather than the present, yet it is indissolubly linked as a flow, even to the past. To our past as human beings, born and therefore with an experience that is part of our mnemonic archive, it is our origin, the beginning of our consciousness, the beginning of everything.



Figure 8 - Alberto Garutti; *Ai nati oggi*. Bergamo, 1998–2012 ; Source the artist's website



Figure 9 - Alberto Garutti; *Ai nati oggi*. Bergamo, 1998–2012

The work also creates a spatial relationship between two distant places. The people who are in the square and witness the increase in the intensity of the light from the street lamps are not – *ça va sans dire* – in the maternity ward of the hospital, and vice versa. Being in the square and casually witnessing the gradual accentuation of the light from the street lamps, immediately moves the viewer to another physical place, the maternity ward of the hospital. The viewer visualizes in his head, a place different from the one he is in, and in a game of continuous references, he immediately visualizes the idea of birth, the thought that a new life has begun.

*«To Those Born Today it has a strong relation with architecture. [...] It is a work that relates with the city on different scales; it is visible and not visible; it produces a sort of narrative planning. [...] The work is composed of signs that recount “an elsewhere” that can only be imagined: a birth, a mother, an expectation. [...] When I think of this work, I always picture to myself a map of the pulsating city, and a mental map of the city that every passer-by produces... and then the image that I recount is really an invisible nativity, it is a painting».* (Obrist, 2007, p. 118)

The city is no longer just a physical space, but a mental place, which is recalled to memory through a visual stimulus. The work takes on a spatialization that goes beyond the physical site in which it is located and for which it is designed, creating, as described by the artist's words, a pulsating map that changes in the head of every observer who crosses the work on his path. Recalling the concept of heterotopia and simultaneity, the city is no longer composed of a space defined by blocks, streets, squares, roundabouts or ring roads. It becomes an imaginary space that changes according to the ability of everyone to visualize this place in his or her own head and to place it in a spatial context.

*«Looking at the cities can give a special pleasure; however commonplace the sight may be. Like a piece of architecture, the city is a construction in space, but one of a vast scale, a thing perceived only in the course of long spans of time».* (Lynch, 1960, p. 1)

From this point of view, Kevin Lynch's idea that the city is a time machine it gains even more sense, because in this case, two physical places, more or less distant from each other (and perhaps already for their construction), belonging to two different historical periods, become the two temporal extremes of our aesthetic experience. The now represented by the random encounter with the work as it unfolds and the mental reference that the viewer makes, visualizing the maternity ward of the hospital and that original experience that is birth.

*«The work is a light touch of poetry that weaves imperceptible bonds between people who do not know each other».* (Pioselli, 2015, p. 153)

The other approach to the monument we were talking about earlier, the scientific one, is the one developed by the Spanish, New York based artist and preservationist, Jorge Otero-Pailos. The artist uses in his research several materials, that we can consider as the residues of our modernity such as airborne atmospheric dust, waterways, traces of sweat and body sounds, to make visible what usually it is invisible, the signs of our own existences, as he clarifies:

*«Notably, he has used experimental preservation cleaning techniques designed to restore landmarked buildings, as well as reenactment methodologies, as part of his creative process».* (Otero-Pailos, 2021)

Considering his artwork, *The Ethics of Dust*, commissioned by *Artangel*. The artwork is a site-specific project realized in 2016 at *Westminster Hall, Palace of Westminster*, in London. Westminster Hall houses the United Kingdom Parliament; it was design and rebuilt in 1840 by Charles Barry and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin. The original architecture was built in 1016 and the limestone walls survives till today, holding the dust of all the events that have marked our collective memory, such as the World Wars and all the events and public ceremonies in the United Kingdom that took place and are still celebrated today inside Westminster Hall.

Jorge Otero-Pailos uses the technology of latex as a methodology to clean and preserve buildings. This technique allows him to obtain a skin that hold inside the dust and dirt deposited on the architecture over time. The title of the artwork (a series actually) it is the title of an important book by art critic John Ruskin, written in 1908 which laid the foundations of modern conservation.



*Figure 10 - Jorge Otero-Pailos; The Ethics of Dust. Westminster Hall, 2016 ; Source the artist's website*

Gently peeling off latex from the limestone walls, the artist obtains a 50x6 meter latex cast of the east wall that was installed inside Westminster Hall, displaying 900 years of accumulated memories of dust, soot and all kind of molecular dirty that was deposited on the wall. The work contains various dichotomies such as those of permanence - impermanence and absence - presence. Let us start from the color of latex, an ochre yellow that in itself brings us back to the color of an ancient paper, which has undergone the passage of time. Walking along the installation, experiencing it directly as if we were walking along the limestone walls of Westminster, one also distinguishes the smell of latex and one begins to notice all the details of the cast. Molecular elements that come from another time, or rather from many other times that have been added and deposited one to the other along the perimeter of the walls. These object-molecular details have the strength to take us back in time by making

us live again the vicissitudes of this architectural object. We are no longer in the presence of the stone wall, but in front of an ephemeral substance that contains within itself the impermanence of time and also the permanence of the substances that time itself has deposited on the walls. We face with the absence of those events and at the same time with their presence contained in the collective memory, we have of them.

What damages architecture, dust, dirt, soot also becomes, in the work of Otero-Pailos, the evident trace of our own existence, and of the duration, of the permanence of the events of our existence. The trace is obtained from the waste of a conservation technique, used to ensure a future for the architecture on which it was applied.

The artist does not aspire to obtain an exact replica of the architectural object. By exhibiting the dust and soot accumulated over time on architecture, they acquire a double value, that of extending the duration of the architecture's object – now cleaned from them – existence. Moreover, at the same time being themselves an object to be preserved, as a cultural heritage, a witness to the passage of time.

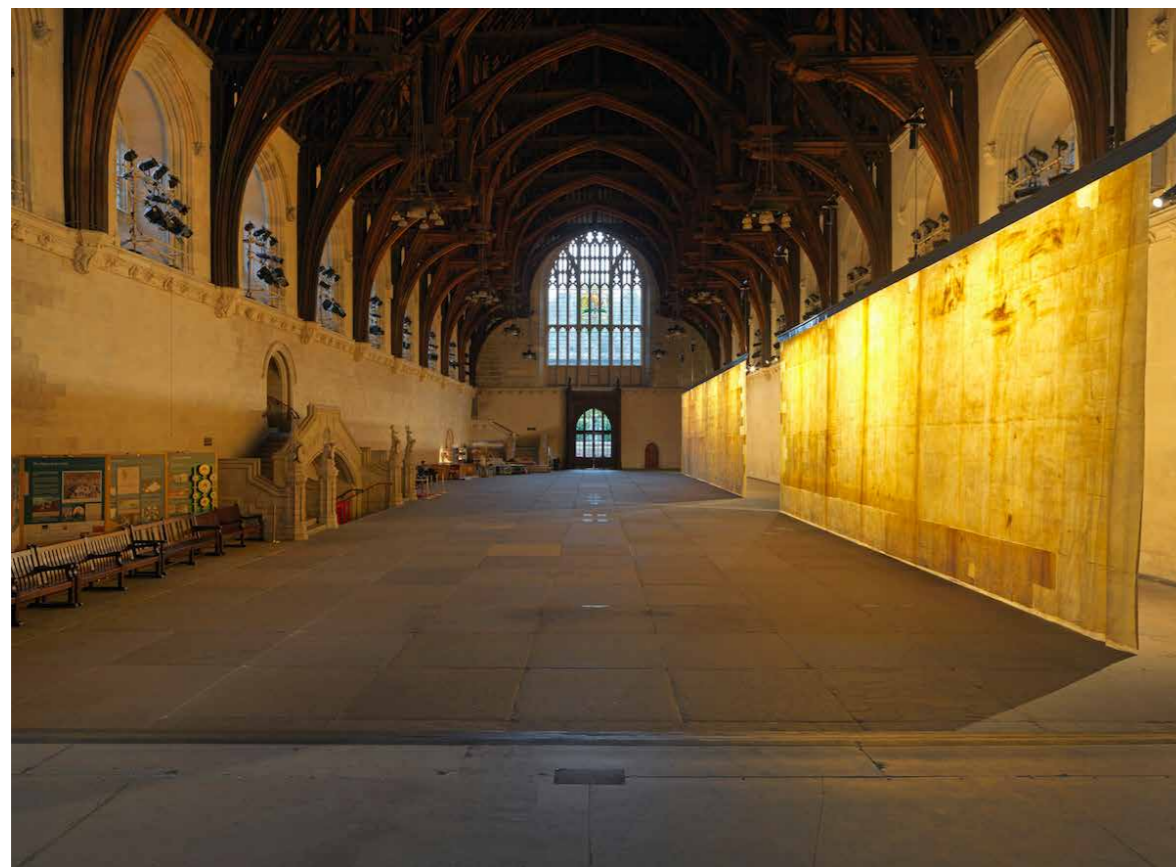


Figure 11 - Jorge Otero-Pailos; *The Ethics of Dust*. Westminster Hall, 2016 ; Source the artist's website

As we have analyzed so far, the concept of a work of art changes and responds to the time to which it belongs, or rather, to the time in which it was created. It is not intended here to make a detailed excursus on how the concept of time has been analyzed and introjected in the works of art over the centuries. It is only taken into account how the dominant thought of each epoch, conditions the cultural expression and therefore the artistic production specifically, dictating in some way the conceptual boundaries in which the artists' works.

*«Time, as well as a structure of rhythm, meets in the work of art, no longer under the formal aspect, but in the phenomenological one, in three different moments, and for any work of art it is. That is, in the first place, as the duration in the expression of the work of art while it is formulated by the artist. Secondly, as an interval between the end of the creative process and the moment in which our consciousness actualizes the work of art in itself. Thirdly, as a moment of this fulguration of the work of art in consciousness».* (Brandt, 2000, p. 21)

What we witnessed at the beginning and that is consolidated during the twentieth century; it is an expansion of methodologies and points of view on the concepts of time and space, which consequently to scientific discoveries were no longer read as two separate elements, but increasingly united in a single concept. The idea of space-time, of the relativity of the reference system, of the simultaneity of events has changed the point of view by crumbling the perspective direction imprinted in the Renaissance in favor of a multi-sidedness vision that has automatically also become multi-temporal.

The multiplicity of points of view consequently leads to a multiplicity of approaches and experiments, which increasingly go beyond the purely technical boundary of the execution of the work of art to invest the space surrounding the work itself. Then continue to expand, reaching the point of affecting the space of the city and the invisible space of interpersonal relationships that derive from having experienced the work.

These new ways of understanding the work and, speaking of art in the public space, the site in which the work itself is placed, make us reflect on how much impact the placement of a work outside institutional spaces, in the urban or landscape fabric at different levels. Architectural, urban, landscape, emotional, conceptual, experiential and how all these elements are not resolved by the installation of the work, but somehow exasperated by the very pres-

ence of the work, which as we have seen previously, increases the dialectic of the elements in question to the point of contradiction.

The *oeuvres* previously analyzed were chosen to outline an operational framework that has developed over the years, and which is representative of some of the most common methodologies used by artists in the exploration of non-institutional spaces, in relation to their artistic research. Topics such as those addressed by Robert Smithson, such as the symbolic representation of the concept of entropy, the geographical transformation of a site through the redefinition of its physical and formal characteristics, have become representative of an entire movement. They became an approach to the extra-urban landscape that has characterized the research of many contemporary artists at Smithson, and which is having a strong echo even today due to the topicality of environmental issues and the impact on the planet of human activities, to the point of defining a new Era, the Anthropocene. From this approach comes the reflection on how a permanent work of art, installed in a non-institutional space can affect the perception of the site in which it is installed and of the environment immediately surrounding the site.

Instead, the approach developed by Daniel Joseph Martinez has, exactly opposite to Smithson, an absolutely ephemeral character. The work is confronted with the spaces of the city, the spaces of human activities, the theater are the neighborhoods of the city, and the echo produced by the work reverberates in the streets and above all, among the communities of people who live in those streets. Can we speak in this case of an impact on the architectural fabric of the city? The question is rhetorical because the answer is obviously yes! We can speak of an impact on architecture, if we consider that architecture defines the space in which we live and in which we move. The connections created by an aesthetic, anarchic act in which people can represent nothing but themselves, changes the perceptual dynamics of the spaces of the city. And makes us reflect on how those same spaces were built, and how a shift in the perception of those streets, of those blocks, of that architectural approach, can change the way we live those same spaces, strengthening the awareness that the very act of walking creates awareness, aesthetic sense, knowledge and memory.

Memory is also at the core of Alberto Garutti's project, in which through an element as ephemeral as light, the visitor builds in his head a mnemonic and pulsating map of the spaces of the city. In this case, the work is permanent, installed in a square, but the approach is very

different from that proposed by Smithson. We cannot walk on the artwork, we cannot have a direct physical experience of it, even if the "experience" of the work remains crucial, but in a different form, in the form of the expectation of an event that potentially could happen, but of which we have no certainty that it can occur. In this case, the square becomes almost a waiting room, a space suspended between the possibility of an event – which in any case would happen in another physical place in the city, the maternity ward – and the time spent by the visitor in the square waiting for the event happen. In this case, architecture itself becomes Time.

Also, in the approach of Jorge Otero-Pailos, as we have seen, architecture becomes in some way Time, but in this case, a stratified time, visualized through molecules of what is normally considered a waste material, such as dust, the dirt, the soot that settles on the architecture, damaging it. The artist's intervention here has a double function, one operates directly on the architectural object, and another one operates on a symbolic level. The artist recovers, like an archaeologist or a geologist, the "cores" of material deposited over time that becomes an index of happened events. Events that show a past existence that relates to the here and now. Quoting Dewey:

*«A work of art, no matter how old and classic, is currently and not just potentially a work of art when it lives in some individualized experience. As a piece of parchment, marble, canvas, it remains (subject, however, to the ravages of time) identical to itself over the years. But as a work of art it is recreated every time it is experimented aesthetically».* (Dewey, *Art as Experience*, 1980, p. 26)

It is in the phenomenological experience of the artwork that it becomes such and it is in its relationship in a dialectical way with the site, that this too changes and becomes a lasting and conscious experience, contributing to the formation of our own idea of reality.

We have seen how art in public space is not just, trivially, the repositioning of an artistic object from a museum space, or from a gallery, to an outdoor space. We saw instead how this change of position involves a radical change in the artist's approach, and a transformation of the space of the site, from a formal, experiential, symbolic point of view. Moreover, we have seen how these changes, reversing the starting point, no longer from the viewer to the work

but vice versa, have a direct impact on the perception that the passer-by has of those spaces and in the use that derives from those spaces.

The work of art therefore has a direct impact on architecture and the environment that surrounds it according to the post-phenomenological approach we are using in this thesis. Is it possible to perceive this impact from a temporal point of view? This is the key question to this thesis, to which we will try to answer in the following chapters.

### 3. When are you?

(Dynamics of Time in Architecture)

In this chapter we will see how the notion of time is an integral and structural part of the discipline of architecture. To do this, we will begin by stating the opposite, that is, that architecture is actually thought to withstand the passage of time, that is, it places itself in a timeless dimension. Let's start from the thought articulated by Salvatore Vitale when he states that:

*«To build in space, is the aim and the end of architecture; but space is anti-spirit; it is pure extension, absolute and complete realization, while spirit is pure and continuous tension, the everlasting condition of becoming. Thus, for modern thought, architecture really seems something too closely tied to the material and is quasi-extraneous and hostile to spirit».* (Vitale, 1928, p. 17)

In freezing time, architects think they can have control over time and its effects on the real world, on our very perception of reality. To prove this claim, many theoretical strategies have been used such as:

*«To deny time is there at all; as Georges Bataille scathingly notes, the presumed essence of architecture is the “cancelling of time”».* (Till, 2009, p. 79)

All in the attempt to unequivocally affirm that architecture is about the eternal, the immutable. The first reflection that appears evident to us to challenge Vitale's position and more in general this idea of architecture as a timeless discipline, is the one proposed by Lynch and already mentioned previously. According to Lynch the city is a construction in space, like architecture but of a vast scale, and the city, and so architecture, can be perceived only in the course of long spans of time. When we walk in our cities, we are actually making a journey through time, because objects made at different times continually surround us. This leads us to think that to be aware of the architectural object we need a fourth dimension, in addition to the three in length, width and height; the time dimension. When we are in front of an architectural object, we cannot perceive it in its entirety if we exclude the temporal dimension, the dimension through which we create a memory of what we experience through our senses.



Figure 12 - A view of Milan, Isola neighborhood. Source: © Riccardo Zaninelli – Google Maps

Without the temporal element, architecture – and anything else created by the making of human beings, but by extension anything that exists – would be too tied to the material, as Vitale indicated. However, we interpret everything from the point of view of our human beings, from our being in a given place and at a given time, within the original idea of flow already expressed by Heraclitus in his theory, through the famous image of the river

*«It is impossible to step in the same river twice».* (Heraclitus, as quoted in Plato, Cratylus)

This means that beyond even the moment of its realization as a material thing, when we experience an architectural object, we can only experience it in time, as well as physically. On the other hand, architecture is absolutely conceptual art, unrelated, unlike visual art, to an iconic or symbolic representation of any idea of reality or object.

Architecture only expresses itself and does not simply do so through the sum of the three vectors that make up its objects, width, length and height. That is, of its manifestation as a material, but also and perhaps above all, through the void that these dimensions define, the

internal space of architecture. The internal space is the space that more than any other characterizes the field of architecture and distinguishes it, for example, from sculpture, whose main feature is the plastic space of the subject.

*«Since every architectural volume, every structure of walls, constitutes a boundary, a pause in the continuity of space, it is clear that every building functions in the creation of two kinds of space: its internal space, completely defined by the building itself, and its external or urban space, defined by the building and others around it».* (Zevi, Architecture as space, 1993, p. 30)

The internal space, together and coherently with the external space of architecture, is the dimension through which we can interpret the different eras of human history and read the time in which the architectural object was created. Each space has its time and each time has its space.

*«Time is the first dimension of space».* (Saggio, 2007, p. 58)

Let's focus on the internal space of the architecture, the void created by the delimitation of the architectural object itself, is an abstract space but it is undoubtedly the space through which we can understand the building, understand its intimate functioning. The plan, that is the horizontal, represents the world of action, so everything that has to do with our actions within the space is revealed by the plan as Arnheim underlines

*«A ground plan, whatever its limitation, has a completeness that no upright section can boast. Although a ground plan withholds information about the superstructure, it covers the total range of the space in which man moves. It depicts the whole story of how the building reaches into the surrounding world and how it can be entered, traversed, and occupied. It enumerates the accesses and the barriers».* (Arnheim, The Dynamics of Architectural Form, 1977, p. 63)

Or as Dino Formaggio notes, we can understand the emptiness of the plan according to the principle of complementarity, because it presupposes spatial continuity:



*«Evidently, a thing, the form, is only the complement of the void, the void is only the complement of the form, and all this in a continuous interconnection, in continuous, unstoppable changes».* (Formaggio, 1990, p. 46)

The same kind of analysis can also be applied to art, especially to art in public space, which we dealt with in the previous chapter. As mentioned, architecture and art differ (among other things) in their internal space, something that is fundamental in architecture and which instead is not considered in the artistic production developed at least until the 1960s, which dealt fundamentally of the plasticity of the treated subjects. However, if we consider the internal and external space that defines the time of architecture and try to associate it with the space that defines the time of the work of art, we can find clear similarities in terms of physical and temporal perception of both architectural and artistic space.

Starting from an analysis on this topic carry on by Bruno Zevi in his book “Architecture as Space”, if we analyze how the internal space of buildings was conceived at different moments in the development of Western civilization, we can understand how architecture is part of the vision of a population at a given moment in history. In our research we have connected to each of the buildings chosen because they represent the style and architectural thought of each era, a work of art from the period considered in this thesis, from the second half of the 20th century. The artworks have been selected in consideration of their conceptual, formal, emotional relevance with the architectural object and even if distant from each other in time and space, a similarity can be observed that makes them part of a flow, of a contingency; after all, as Karatami already underlined:

*«Architecture is thus a form of communication conditioned to occur without common rules-it is a communication with the other, who, by definition, does not follow the same set of rules».* (Karatami, 1995, p. 11)

The fact that, as we have seen, architecture and “the other”, art in our specific case, do not follow the same set of rules (at least some), allows us to compare in this section of the thesis, these two subjects without a pre-established scheme – but no less effective for this – with the stated aim of arriving at the formulation of a concept, which will then be strengthened in the next section of the thesis, the one relating to case studies. The concept we want to formulate, expressed once again unequivocally by Karatami is that:

*«Architecture is an event».* (Karatami, 1995, p. 126)

And for this reason, it is connected to what surrounds it, from the empty urban space to the other buildings, to the flow of people and the use they make of the architectural object, and also, and this is the specific case of this thesis, by the presence of the work of art in the public space. In these examples, the works of art are not in the same physical space of the architecture, but the comparison we propose is a theoretical comparison, to reinforce the parallelism between the architectural object and the work of art and demonstrate how their “overlapping” tends to reinforce a temporal perception common to the two investigated subjects even if they belong to different historical periods. In a temporal crushing that does not remove the subjects from the historical period to which they belong, but shows how there are historical recurrences of certain ways of understanding and perceiving space and time. We find temporality in the space of the action of architecture and art. Precisely for this reason, to reinforce this statement, we examine the plan of the architectural object, because the plan is the space of action, i.e. where the event essentially takes place. We could say that the plans are a declaration of intent of the architectural building, in this sense the comparison with the work of art reveals the mechanisms of functioning and form of both and their comparison gives us the possibility of visualizing the temporary flow they have in common. This will lead us to be able to find the deepest meaning of architecture, which is found in its being a multisensory discipline:

*«Understanding architecture as multisensory allows us to move beyond the purely visual».* (Lucas, 2020, p. 185)

Sight responds to internal or sensation mechanisms, in the case of a work of art, our sensory perception and consequently also our temporal perception is therefore determined by the internal mechanisms of the architectural object and the work of art.

Let's begin from the analysis of the interior space in Ancient Greece, taking as an example the classical building that immediately brings us back to that historical period; the temple. The Greek temple is structured as a rectangular shape surrounded by columns that support an architrave, which supports the roof. The Greeks in any way did not develop the internal space, immediately after the row of columns was in fact the cell, which is a closed space that has no specific function. The internal space of the Greek temple was the impenetrable space

of the Gods. The prayers took place outside, in the space in front of the temple. The mastery of the Greek architects lay in the human scale they had been able to find for the construction of these sacred places and which is evident in the plasticity of the architectural object. In this case, therefore, the internal space is sacrificed in terms of functions and understanding of the architecture, in favor of the external vision, of the vertical dimension of the object.

The best example of this period is the Parthenon, which stands on the acropolis of Athens, built between 447 and 432 BC. by the architects Ictino, Callicrate and Mnesicle, under the supervision of Phidias.

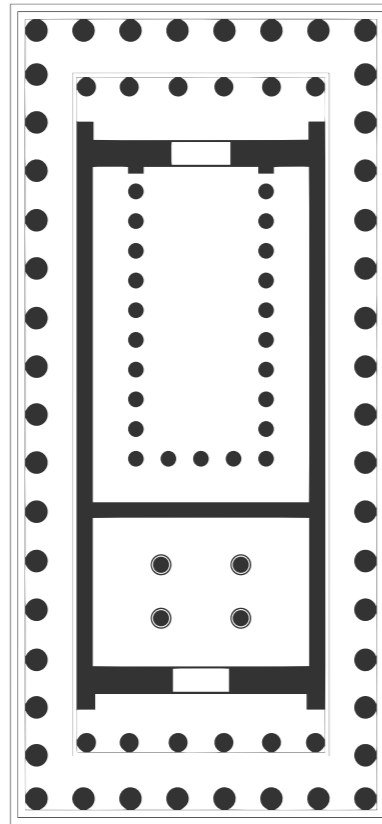


Figure 13 - Author's elaboration of the Parthenon's plan. Ictino, Callicrate, Mnesicle; Athens, V century.

The connection we have made is with the artwork *The London Mastaba* created by Christo & Jeanne-Claude, in the *Serpentine Lake* in *Hyde Park*, in the heart of London, completed in 2018. The artwork is a monumental structure made up of 7,506 barrels stacked horizontally on a floating platform. The structure, anchored to the lake, consisted of a steel scaffolding on which the barrels were fixed. The title of the work refers to the *màstaba*, a particular type of monumental tomb of the ancient Egyptians. This historical reference places the work in a context of architectural monumentality to which the Parthenon also belongs. We see the

similarity with the Parthenon starting from the fact that also in this case the fruition takes place outside, in fact there is no way to enter the work of Christo & Jeanne-Claude, just as the religious receptions took place outside of the Parthenon, which was an object of worship in itself, as mentioned above. The impenetrability unites both objects, just as we can find the rhythm of the columns of the architectural object, in the rhythm of the barrels stacked, in this case horizontally, to form the sculpture.

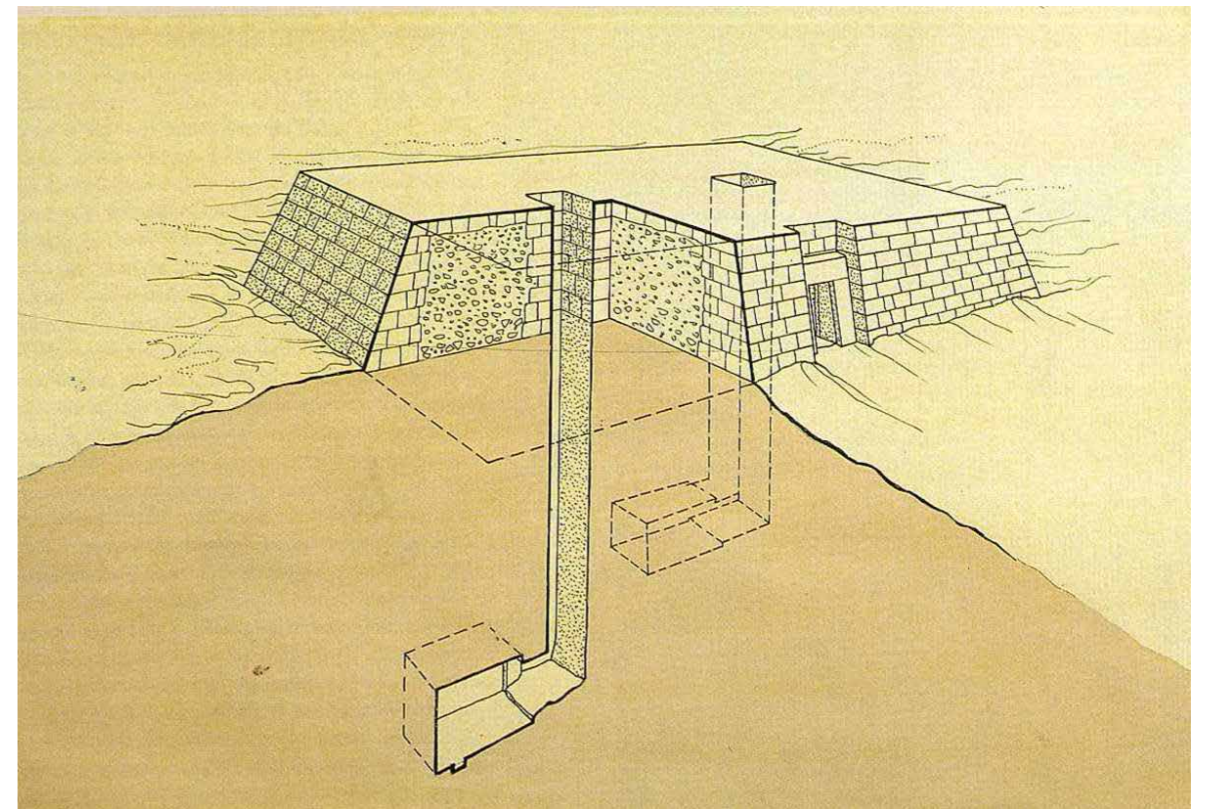


Figure 14 - An example of the structure of an Egyptian Mástaba. Source: <https://www.re-thinkingthefuture.com/2020/08/05/a1455-architecture-of-egyptian-civilization/>.

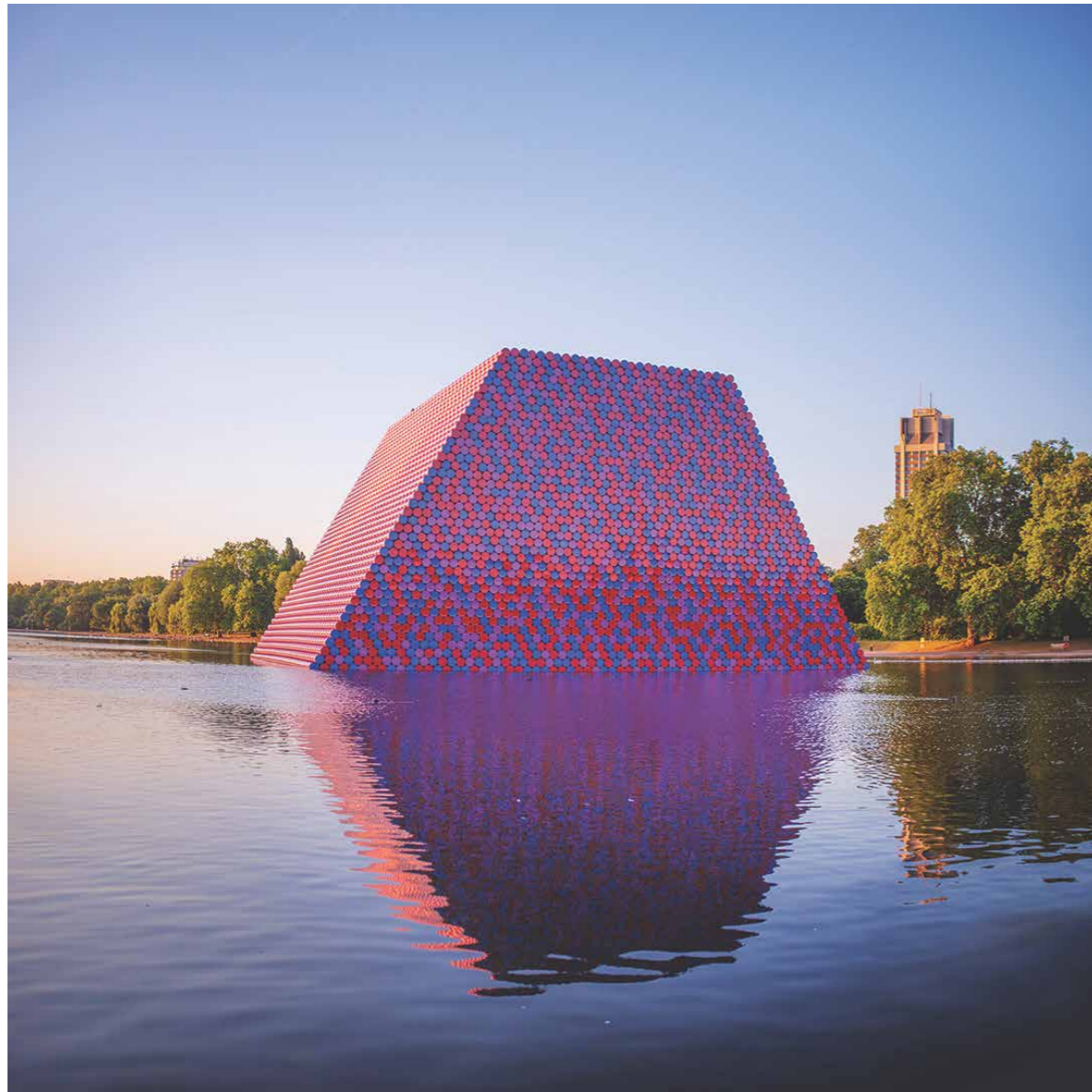


Figure 15 - Christo & Jeanne-Claude, *The London Mastaba*, 2018. Photo: Wolfgang Volz © 2018 Christo and Jeanne-Claude Foundation. Source the artist's website.

The resulting temporality, which is found in both subjects, is the temporality of a path with a quadrangular or rhomboidal geometric shape, circular in the observer's possibility of following the two subjects along their entire perimeter.

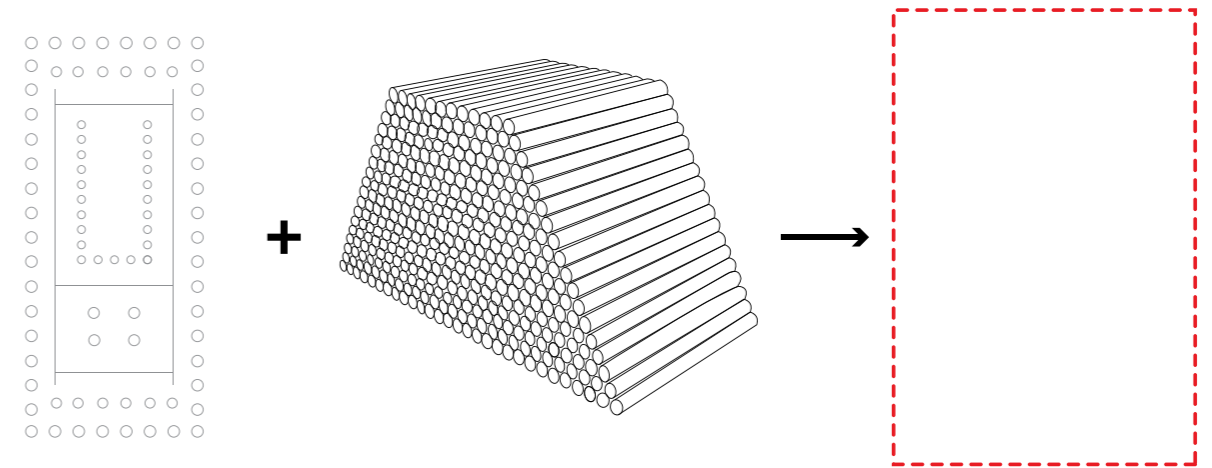


Figure 16 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

Let us proceed by analyzing the architectural space developed during the affirmation of the Christian vision. This new vision deprives monumentality from the Roman basilica, while maintaining the idea of internal practicability. Unlike the symmetrical and static space of the Roman basilica, the interior space of the Christian church has a longitudinal direction, which therefore gives movement to the entire interior space. It is therefore no longer a self-sufficient space in its stately and static symmetry. Rather, it is a space whose dynamism is at the service of the observer's movement *through* the building. A sense of active participation is established between the person and the building, dissolving the austere monumentality of the architecture of the Roman Empire that does not require any participation. The space of the Christian church is, on the contrary, a space designed for a specific function and which without the person who walks through it, has no reason to exist. It is not a question of scale, as in Greek temples, but of the function and direction of space, which in the case of the Christian church is entirely designed for the human being.

As an example of a Catholic Church, we have chosen the *Basilica of Santa Sabina* in Rome. The church was built by the priest Peter of Illyria between 422 and 432 and was chosen as a striking example of the architectural characteristics of this historical period.

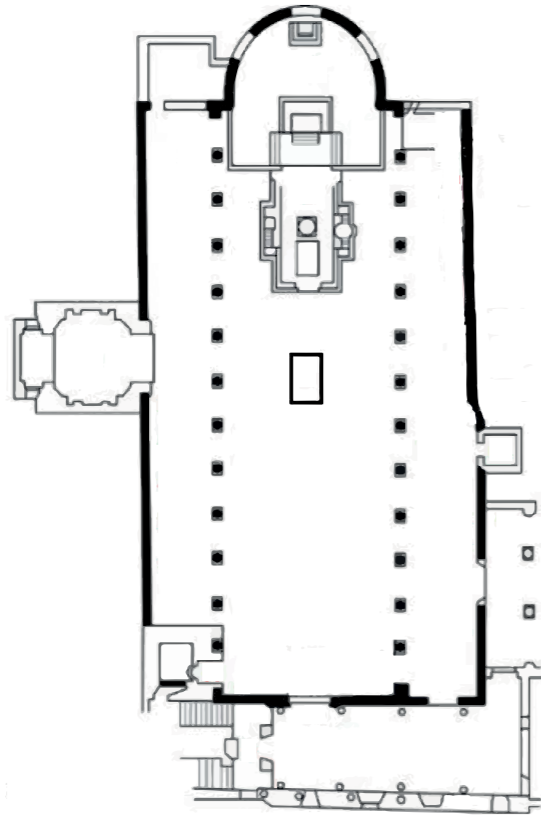


Figure 17 - Author's elaboration of the Santa Sabina's Basilica plan. Pietro of Illyria, Rome, 422-432.

The comparison here takes place with an artwork by Richard Serra, entitled *Tilted Arc* and installed in the *Federal Plaza* in New York in 1981 (later removed in 1989 after an exhausting court case<sup>1</sup>). The sculpture is made of steel and extends like a wall inside the square, cutting it in two. Although, in the words of the author himself:

«... I am interested in sculpture which is non-utilitarian, non-functional... any use is a misuse». (Serra, 1980, p. 128)

However, the work fulfills a function, if we can call it like that, that of changing the direction of the flows of movement within the square. Unlike the shelter and devotion space of the Christian church, Serra's work is a work of rupture with the public space, which somehow forces people to follow a longitudinal itinerary, but in this constraint imposed by the artist, we can rediscover the need of the architectural space for a path that is also longitudinal, towards the altar.

<sup>1</sup> For details on the Richard Serra – Tilted Arc incident, see the book “Evictions” by Rosalyn Deutsche

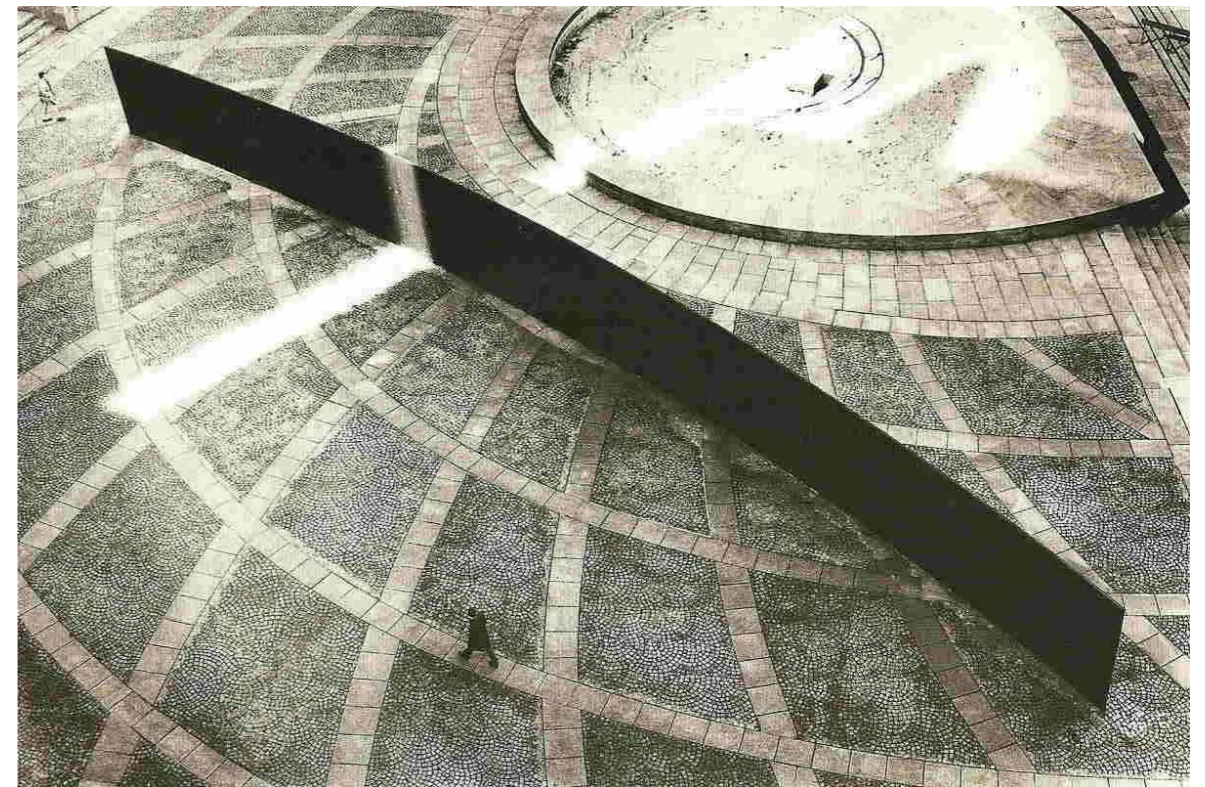


Figure 18 - Richard Serra, *Tilted Arc*, 1981. Source <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/composition-in-art>

In this parallel we can clearly see how the temporality of both subjects develops longitudinally. It takes the form of a linear walkway that tends towards something, even if it is a point at infinity.

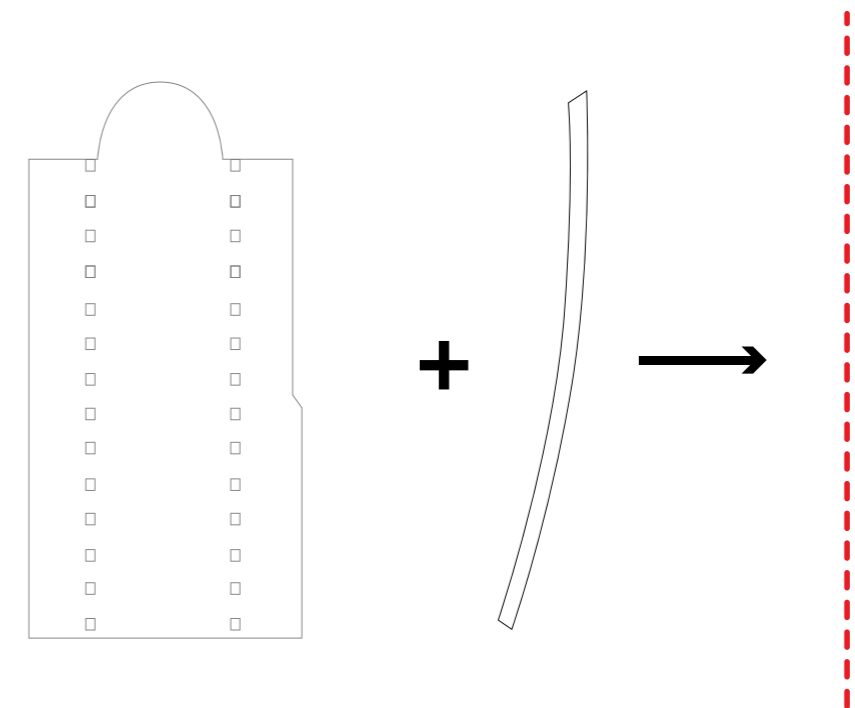


Figure 19 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

In the Byzantine period, we witness an accentuation of dynamism that began with the Christian period that goes beyond the longitudinal dimension by expanding into a rarefied space, through a plant, in its most important examples, with an octagonal base, with huge exedras with semicircular barrel vault. The sturdy columns, the use of mosaic that transforms the walls into a chromatic surface that perceptually increases the interior space, contain the dynamic space of the Christian period and lead it to further spatial expansion. The internal space of the Byzantine period possesses a centrifugal force, which through its constructive elements, determines a space that pushes more and more towards the outside.

«Standing under the apex of the dome, the visitor begins to grasp the huge space. At first glance amorphous, it gradually falls into shapes and the shapes fall into place». (Krautheimer, 1965, p. 156)

The time perceived in the Byzantine architectural space is a time that expands in a centrifugal space that becomes rarefied and expands going beyond the geometric dimension of the architectural space.

*San Vitale* in Ravenna is the architectural object chosen to represent the Byzantine period. Completed in 547, it is one of the greatest Italian examples of early Christian and Byzantine architecture with an octagonal plan.

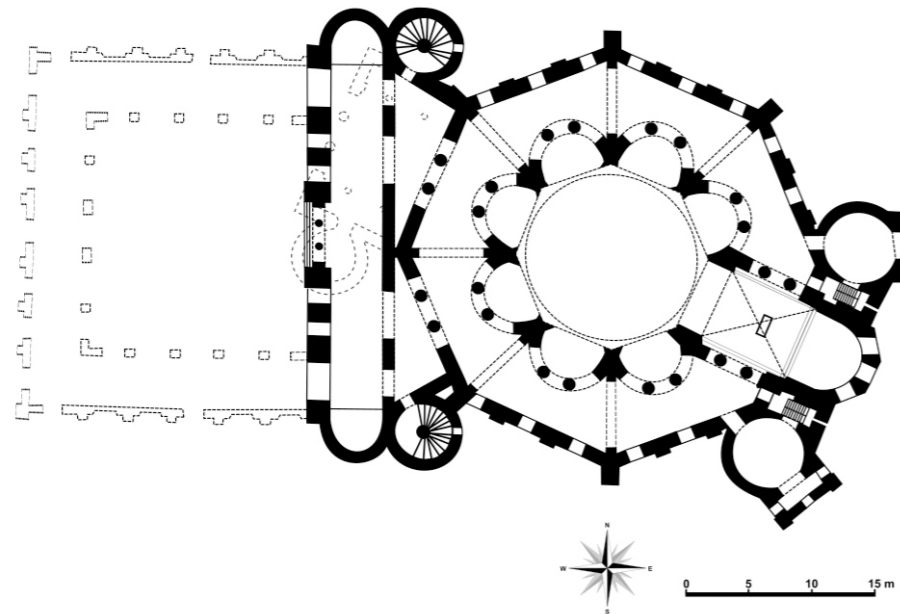


Figure 20 Plan of the Basilica di San Vitale, Ravenna, 577. Source [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bazilika\\_San\\_Vitale.svg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bazilika_San_Vitale.svg)

The work of art that we have chosen as a parallel to this architectural period is the *Cloud Gate*, built between 2004 and 2006 in Chicago, in the *AT&T Plaza*. The work was created by the Indian-born British artist Anish Kapoor and is a curved structure that is convex outwards and concave inwards. The structure is made up of 168 stainless steel plates welded together, from the outside no seams are visible and its surface is highly reflective. This is its most important feature; its sculptural border seems to merge with the surrounding environment thanks to its own reflective surface. In other words, the space of the artwork expands radially towards the outside of the subject itself, incorporating the surrounding space. Even walking under the work, in its concave part one has the same effect of multiplication of the surrounding reflections.



Figure 21 - Anish Kapoor, *Cloud Gate*, 2006. Source the artist's website.

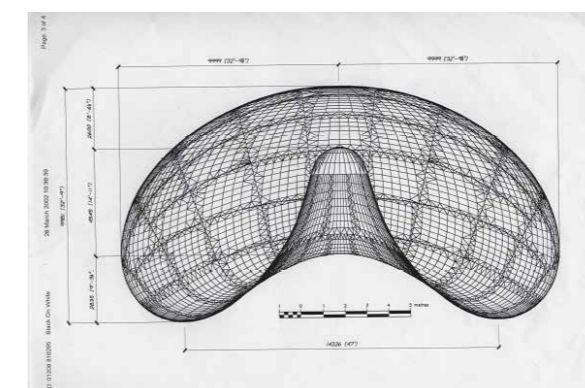


Figure 22 - Anish Kapoor, project for the *Cloud Gate*, 2004-2006. Source the artist's website.

As we can see, the two subjects share a temporality that starts from a center and radiates outwards, multiplying and rarefying the spatiality of both the architectural object and the work of art. Geometry becomes the basis for freeing from the form itself and going beyond, towards the outside.

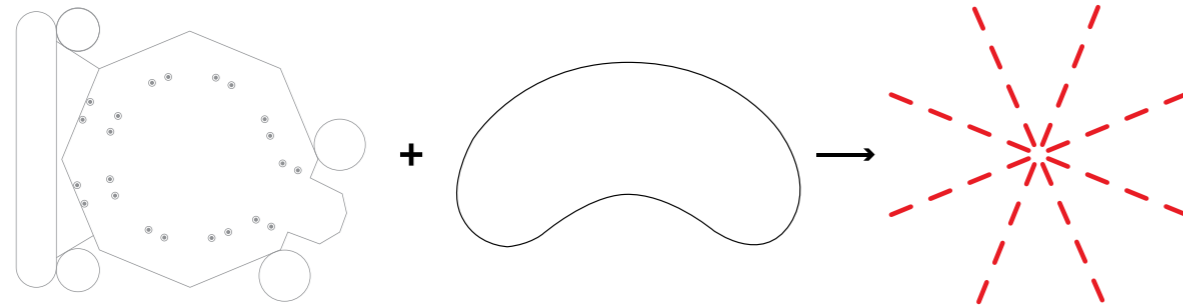


Figure 23 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

The Gothic period, is a moment during which the idea of the building as a unitary organism begun with the Romanesque is exasperated. The building becomes almost a physical body, through the slender structures, with the walls reduced to the minimum functional size and the windows that become spaces to tell stories through the decorations and colors of the glass. The great use of decorative sculptures that are also part of a narrative and the large dimensions of the cathedrals of this period, move the discourse towards a tension of lines that seem to have no ends in their run. The human scale is no longer the reference point of architecture, man has become small and fearful in walking through the interior spaces of the cathedrals, a sense of bewilderment and fear of God is what now marks the walkway along the cathedral's aisles.

In the Gothic, there is another reference scale in addition to that between architecture and man, that between the building and itself, in its spatial proportions, which certainly influence the feeling that the building has on man. In Gothic buildings the two trajectories, horizontal and vertical, exists in a dialectical dimension between them. Inside the cathedrals, the eye tries to move in both directions, attracted by two different types of space.

Example of Gothic style is the *Duomo* of Milan, one of the largest European cathedrals, whose construction began in 1386. The cathedral was consecrated in 1418, it contains all the characterizing elements of the architectural space of the Gothic period.

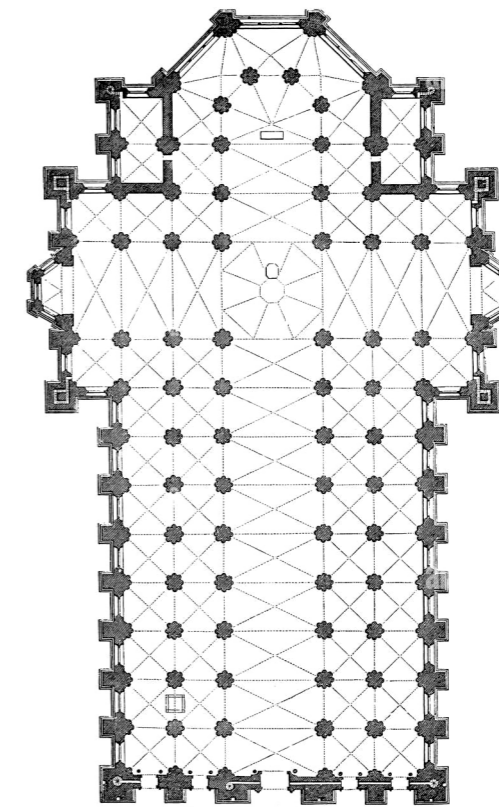


Figure 24 Simone da Orsenigo; plan of the Duomo Cathedral of Milan, begun 1386. Source <http://historyof-architecture.weebly.com/uploads/4/1/8/6/4186116/4360662.jpg?363>

The work analyzed in relation to the Gothic period is the *Merzbau* by Kurt Schwitters, created inside his home-studio in Hanover (Germany) between 1923 and 1937. When he had to leave Germany to flee to Norway following the turmoil of World War II. The work is an almost biological structure, made up of contiguous superimpositions of objects, geometric structures in wood and organic material of the artist and of the people who visited him (hair, urine). The functional space was reduced to a minimum, almost as if it were obtained from the protuberances juxtaposed to the existing architecture. This created an almost mythological environment, like an archaic idea of refuge, where the possibility of rationally controlling space is lost and a dialectic is created between the living space and the visual and emotional space of the structure.

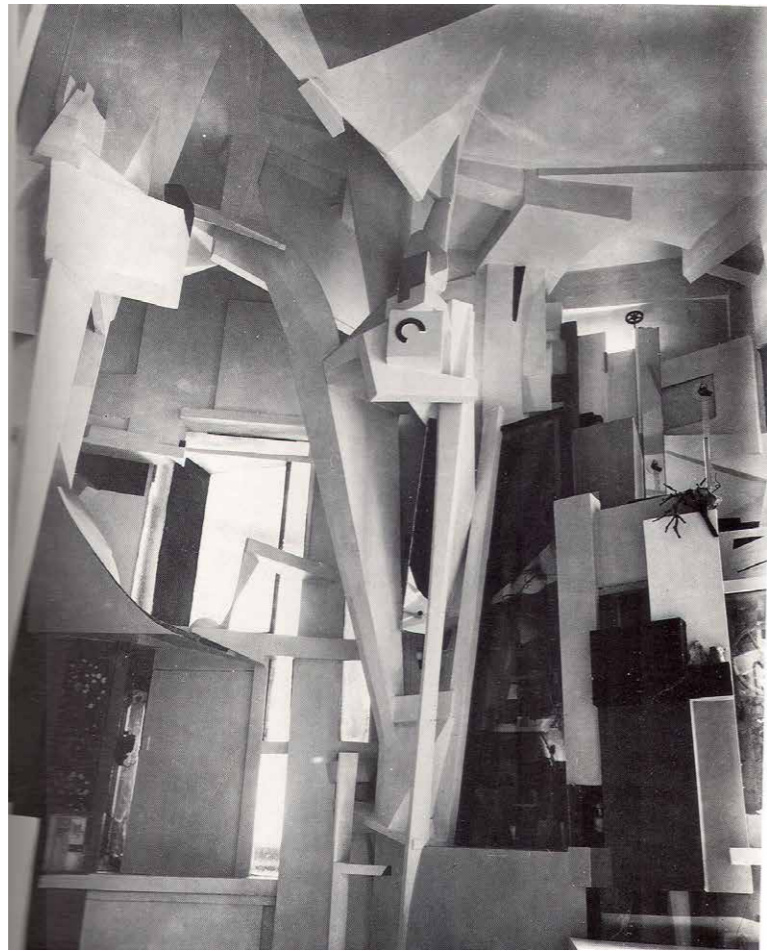


Figure 25 - Kurt Schwitters, Merzbau, 1923-1937, Hannover. Source <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q1922245>

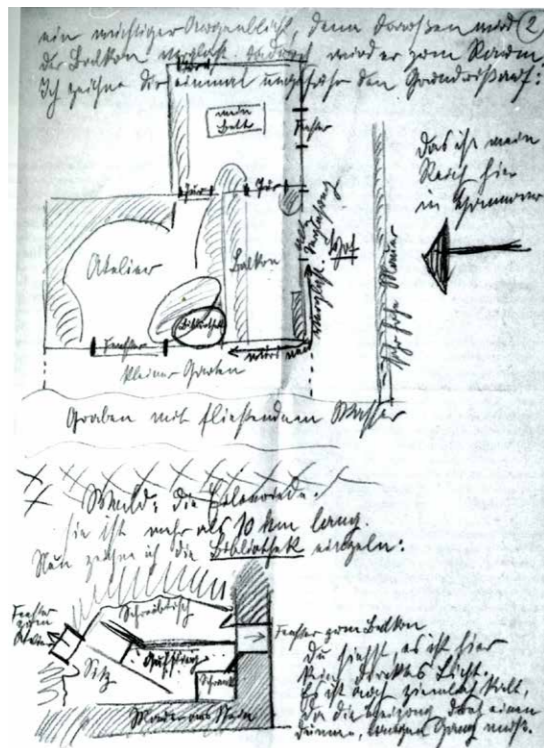


Figure 26 - Kurt Schwitters, preparatory sketches for Merzbau, 1923-1937, Hannover. Source: <https://merzbarnlangdale.wordpress.com/the-merzbarn/merz-barn-in-context/ks-hanover-merzbau-drawing-35/>

The temporality that results from the architectural space of the Gothic period and from Schwitters' Merzbau is a temporality that follows a movement of spatial tension, which tends to go upwards and get lost in our movement within the space. It tends to a climax that seems to be beyond rational comprehension, almost an emotional time.

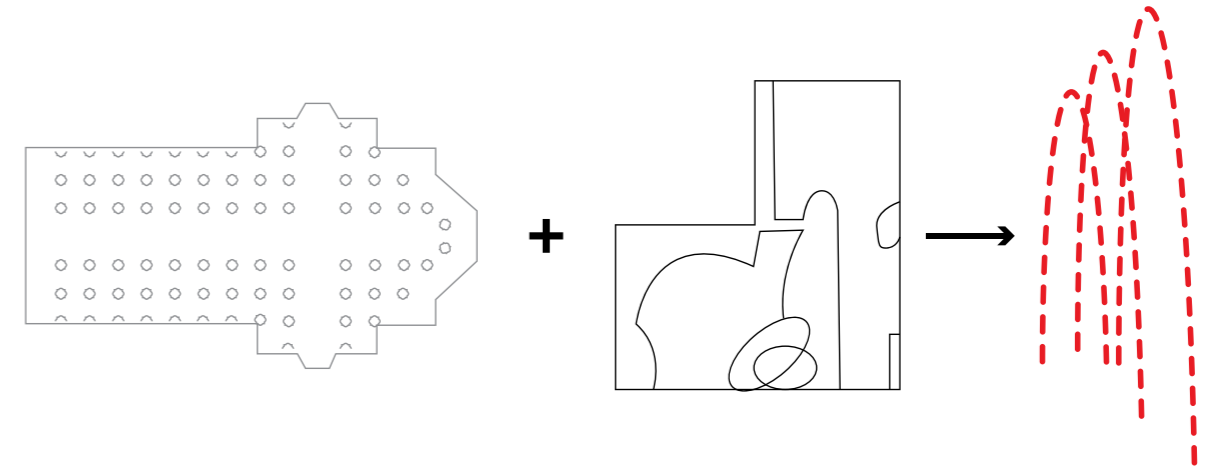


Figure 27 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

After the Gothic period we witness the birth of the Renaissance, which immediately preceding moment, Pre-Renaissance, has its roots in the Gothic. The rupture between the two historical phases, which seems so clear from the point of view of the idea of the spatial relationship, it is not so clear in reality, because the idea of pre-Renaissance interior space derives directly from the different Byzantine, Norman, Gothic influences present along the whole Italian peninsula. The discovery of perspective and the press, the new naval routes directed to America (just discovered), everything contributes to rethinking the idea of man and his place in the world, creating a humanistic attitude that will become the engine of all Renaissance architecture.

The new idea of space is therefore based on a search for an order and a scale that was lost in the Gothic period. The idea of an indefinite and contrasted space that cannot be governed by the human eye, typical of the previous period, is completely overturned. In the 15th century the buildings respected a new law, that of the human scale. Entering a Renaissance building one has the clear and immediate perception of governing the internal law of architectural space with a single glance; man has control over architecture.

Science blends with art to give new importance to man and his position in the time and space of buildings. Following this conception, the direction of the architectural object clearly shifts, there is no longer a dominant axis.

«In the Latin-cross schemes, the long arm is shortened; whenever possible preference is given to Greek-cross plan, where the arms balance each other-the composition does not culminate in a center, but spreads out from the center under the dome, and it is from here that the aisles radiate». (Zevi, *Architecture as space*, 1993, p. 115)

In addition to this element of the interior space, in the moment of maximum splendor of the Renaissance, we also have a plastic development that maintains the same idea of absolute space, symmetry and relationships between the various parts of the building. This new volumetric sense develops throughout the Renaissance, balancing the masses and making them harmonious, the buildings acquire a mass in which the solids dominate the voids. The spatial articulation of the buildings is organized in a rigid and harmonious way at the same time, creating a new spatial and consequently temporal order of the buildings.

An example of Renaissance architecture is the church of *San Sebastiano in Mantua*, built by Leon Battista Alberti between 1460 and 1529 which has a centric plan, in the shape of a Greek cross, articulated around a central cubic space, covered by a cross vault.

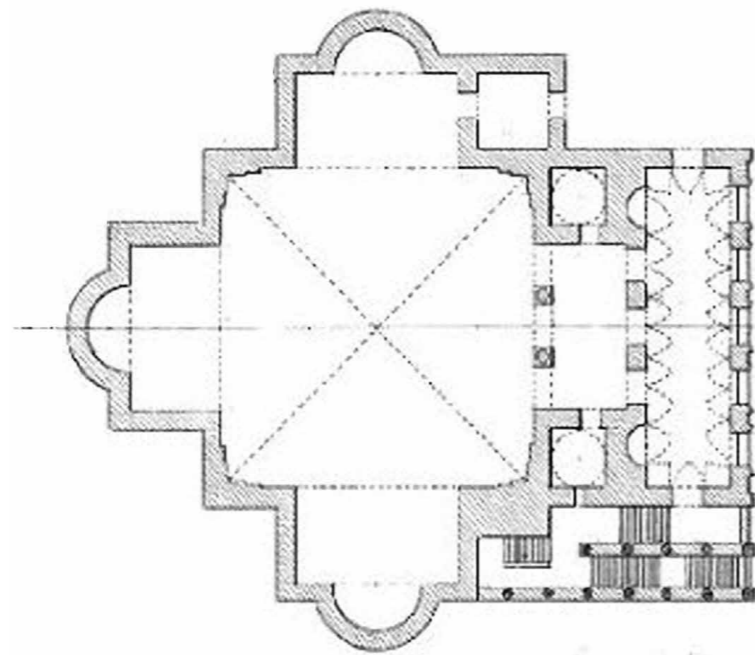


Figure 28 Leon Battista Alberti; plan of the church of San Sebastiano, Mantua, 1529. Source: <https://premodern.tumblr.com/post/184719892509>

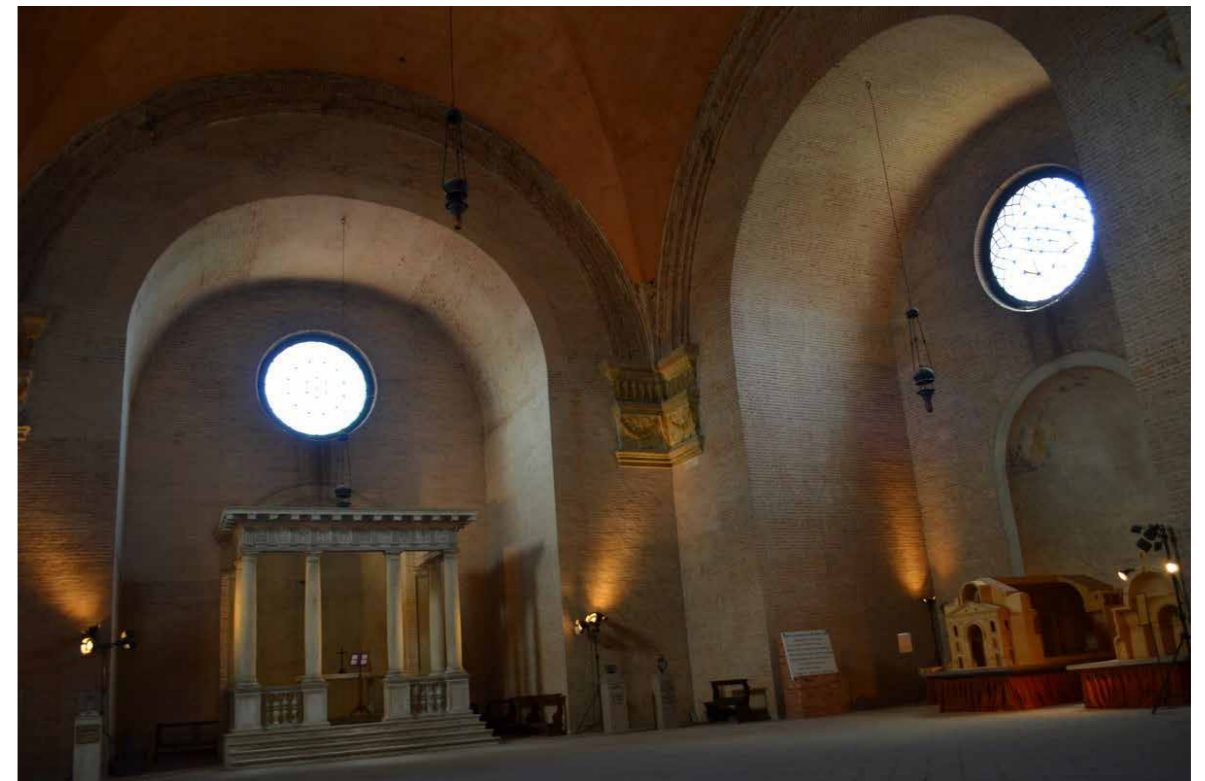


Figure 29 - Leon Battista Alberti; church of San Sebastiano, Mantua, 1529. Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mantova,\\_san\\_sebastiano,\\_interno,\\_01.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mantova,_san_sebastiano,_interno,_01.jpg)

Reflecting on the spatial and temporal themes expressed during the Renaissance period, the artwork we have chosen is *Sun Tunnel* created by the American artist Nancy Holt between 1973 and 1976 at the *Great Basin Desert*, Utah. The installation consists of 4 hollow concrete cylinders measuring 2.8 x 26.2 x 16.2 m positioned in a cross and arranged to follow the rising and setting of the sun during the summer and winter solstices. In the upper half of the cylinders, the artist has realized holes of different sizes according to the relative magnitude of each star to which the hole corresponds. The stars represent four constellations visible in that area, the constellation of Draco, Perseus, Columba and Capricornus. Each cylinder corresponds to a constellation. In this case too, there is a plan that we can equate to the Greek cross scheme, with the four arms of the same size, furthermore there is an absolute and rational control of the space of the work and of the space around it.



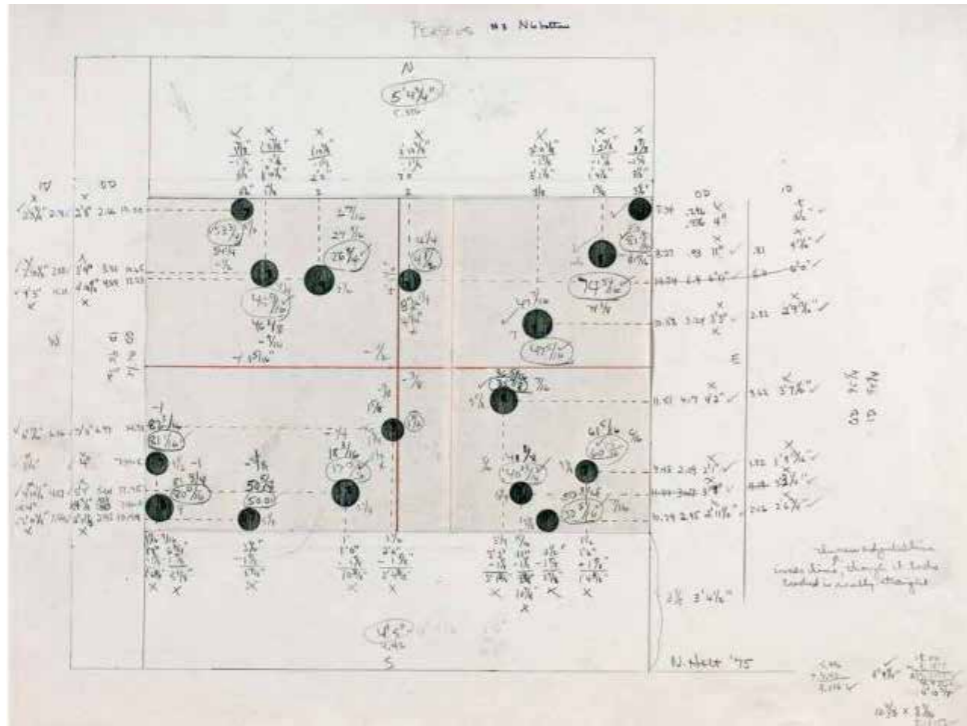


Figure 30 - Nancy Holt, sketches for Sun Tunnels 1973 - 1976. Source the artist's website.



Figure 31 - Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels 1973 - 1976. Source the artist's website.



Figure 32 - Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels 1973 - 1976. Source the artist's website.

The temporality that derives from both subjects is a circular temporality, which harmoniously follows the circularity of the solar movements over the 4 seasons. A time controlled and on a human scale.

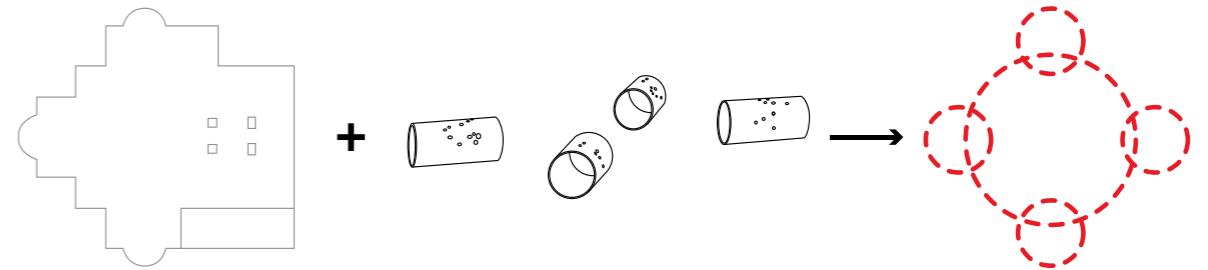


Figure 33 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

Later in the Baroque period, we have a sort of liberation of space, as in reaction to the order previously imposed by the rigid laws of the Renaissance. The building becomes sculptural again, regardless of the strict laws of the central perspective. The Baroque buildings welcome the idea of open space into their internal space through pictorial fictions, creating a new idea of spatial continuity between internal and external space. Obviously, the Baroque spatial dynamic has its origins in the plasticity of the Renaissance, while rejecting its ideals. In fact, the space of the Baroque is not a space reached, but in process; all the architectural and decorative elements concur in this idea of action, in this attempt to create a space that is perpetually in motion. This movement implies the absolute impossibility of a univocal reading of the space of the buildings.

Considered one of the masterpieces of Baroque architecture, the architectural object chosen to represent this historical period is *San Carlo alle quattro fontane*, by Francesco Borromini, built between 1634 and 1644. The church has a mixtilinear plan and the parts corresponding to the vertices on the major axis are concluded by semicircular apses.

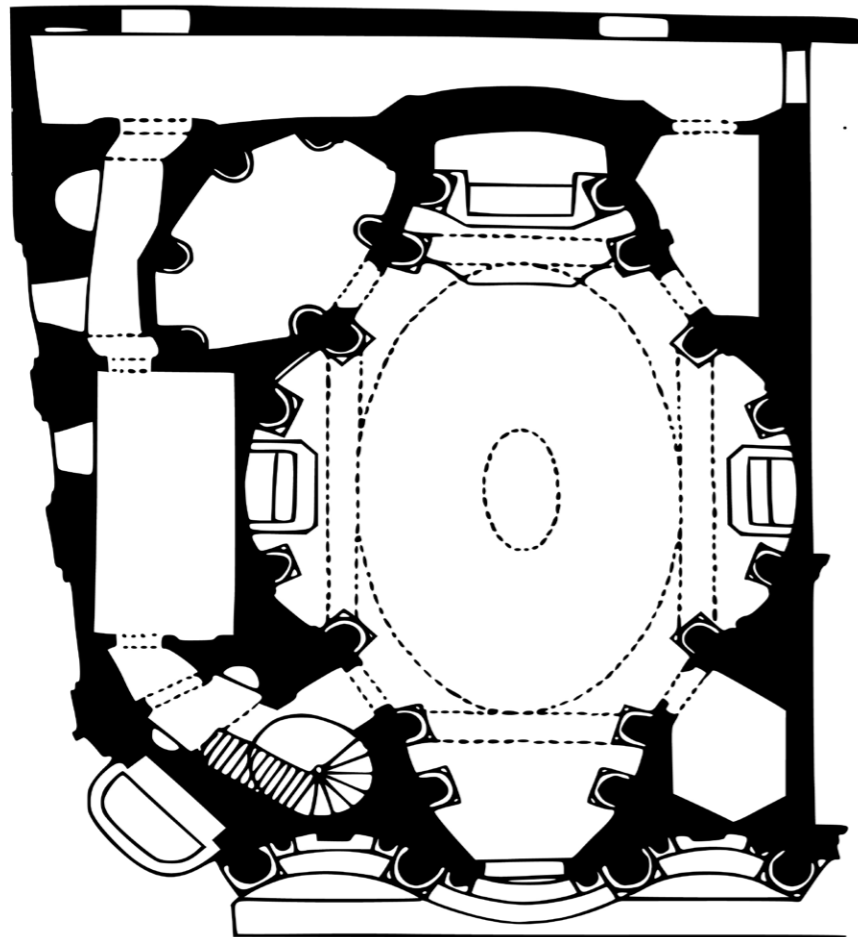


Figure 34 Francesco Borromini; plan of the church of *San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane*, Rome, 1638-1646. Source CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

The artwork selected to create a parallel with this period is Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, a work created in 1970 in the *Great Salt Lake in Utah*, and which we talked about abundantly in the previous chapter on the analysis of the meaning of work of art in the public space. *Spiral Jetty* is an example of how the space of the work merges with the surrounding space, in a sort of fusion of the internal space with the external space, the work extends from the shores of the lake in a spiral shape, like a "curl" which capriciously emerges from the mainland to enter the water, becoming a space in progress.



Figure 35 - Robert Shmithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970. Source: <https://www.artnews.com/feature/essential-works-land-art-1202682741/>

The time that springs from the space of the Baroque period is a dynamic time resulting from the plasticity of the form and in parallel with the *Spiral Jetty* we can find the same idea of dynamism and plasticity that flows into a concept of the universal.

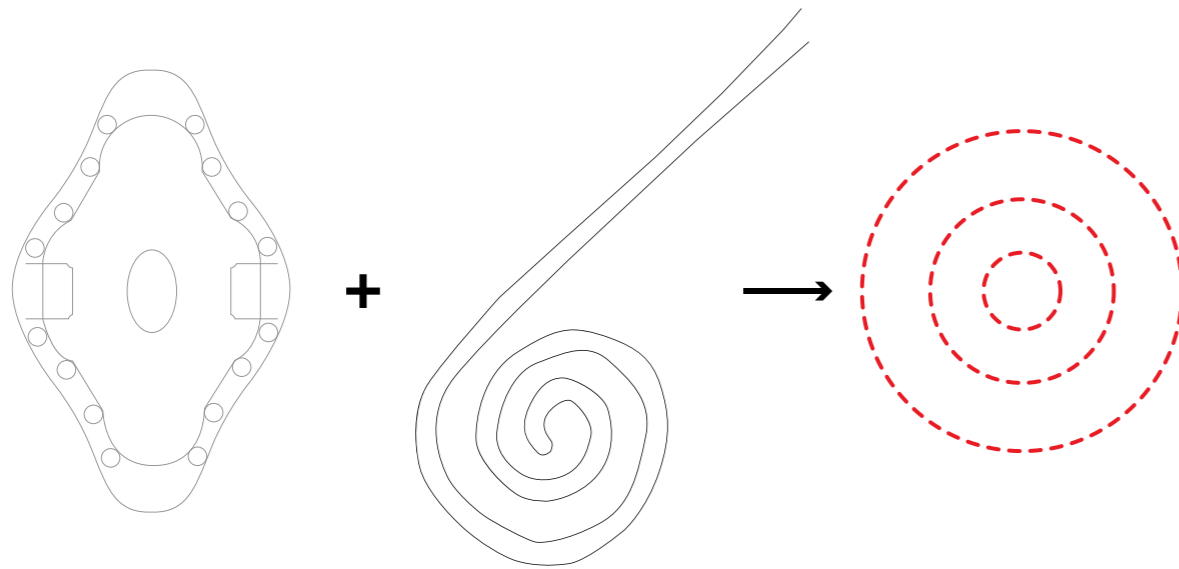


Figure 36 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

The beginning of the twentieth century marks the emergence at an international level of two schools of thought, of two different visions of architecture, Functionalism (or International Style) and the Organic Movement. Both originate in the United States (but rapidly expand into Europe as well). Functionalism in the Chicago school, the Organic Movement as a consequence of the work of some masters including Frank Lloyd Wright.

Both currents are based on the idea of an *open plan*, but with different interpretations of the same basic concept, Functionalism in a strictly rational way, Organic Movement in a fluid way. These two interpretations of space are made possible by the new construction techniques in steel and reinforced concrete that allow a different redistribution of the static supporting elements of the buildings. From a conceptual point of view, the idea of open plan achieves the spatial continuity between the internal spaces of the architectural object and between the internal space and the external space, widely sought in previous centuries. Even if in modern movements the idea of continuity between inside and outside it takes on the contours of a search for new social dynamics, the search for a new organization of forms in space.

The new conception of architectural space and time in the twentieth century is mainly the offspring of an optical revolution that abolishes the unique point of view of perspective, which had influenced the concept of space in the previous six centuries. This optical revolution begins with the revolution of the pictorial space of Cubism which breaks the centrality

of the vision of the unique point of view on architecture and consequently, on the space of the city. This influences the whole perception of reality, a new idea of interpenetration of internal and external spaces is born together with a compulsion towards movement as an essential element of the architectural object as also Giedion underlines:

*«The present space-time conception – the way volumes are placed in space and relate to one another; the way interior space is separated from exterior space or is perforated by it to bring about an interpretation – is a universal attribute which is at the basis of all contemporary architecture».* (Giedion, 1941, p. 37)

The movement implies the idea of a time that inhabits the architectural building and makes it similar to an *event*. From the moment we move our head to look at the building and walk inside the building with our body, we carry out physical actions, we are not statically looking at an object, we are *living* it, in an exact time and place, transforming that object in an event that has an extension, a *duration* in time. We therefore understood how reductive it is to analyze an architectural object based only on its plasticity. Not even in the same way it could be enough to walk through its internal space, which would lead us to understand its internal functioning, and only that. We will instead have to analyze a series of factors that led to the realization of that specific object, with those characteristics, in that place and using precisely those materials, not others, those forms, not others, those ideas of space, and not others. In fact, any object created by man – for man – cannot ignore external factors that influence its shape and function.

It therefore appears clear that the factors that influence the realization of an architectural project have to do with aspects that disregard the idea of an object in and of itself, but which are rather a set of factors that combine to define the concepts of interior and exterior space of the building. These factors are not very different from those that influence the creation of a work of art, although obviously with different specifications; we have social and technical factors, we have intellectual, formal and aesthetics ideals.

Just as the development of an organism is such a complicated matter (as ontogenetic<sup>2</sup> also tells us) that it can only happen by small steps and by mutual influences of the various parts

<sup>2</sup> In biology, the entire development process of an organism.

that make up the organism itself, in the same way the building can be understood only by evaluating the reciprocal influences they generate in and from it.

The notion of organism is the basis of the work of one of the icons and precursors of organic architecture, Frank Lloyd Wright, an American architect, who, in order to think, even before drawing his projects, studied the way nature draws. This methodology ensures that his projects contain the idea of harmony and complexity implicit in the way that nature design and build the organisms that compose it. Wright has always sought the idea of beauty contained in the rhythm of nature and in the different creative phases of his career, he invented ways of designing architecture that contain a precise temporal idea, as part of a biological cycle.

His first projects, which contain concisely the rudiments of his first real creative period, are cruciform or pinwheel extensions of a square base. Wright himself declares that all of his buildings are based on a unit system. The square base is in fact lengthened in a unit that has a relationship with some of the architectural elements of the project. The unit system, together with the invention of the cantilever (as regards the vertical dimension of the project) become the grammar of Wright's organic architecture.

The grid is a tool to synthesize and organize space on the plane, therefore in its horizontal dimension, to think about the way in which that building is crossed and is modified in the two major creative periods of Wright, Prairie and Usonian.

In the grammar of the Praire period, different approaches to the idea of a cruciform or pinwheel space are experimented with in the grid.

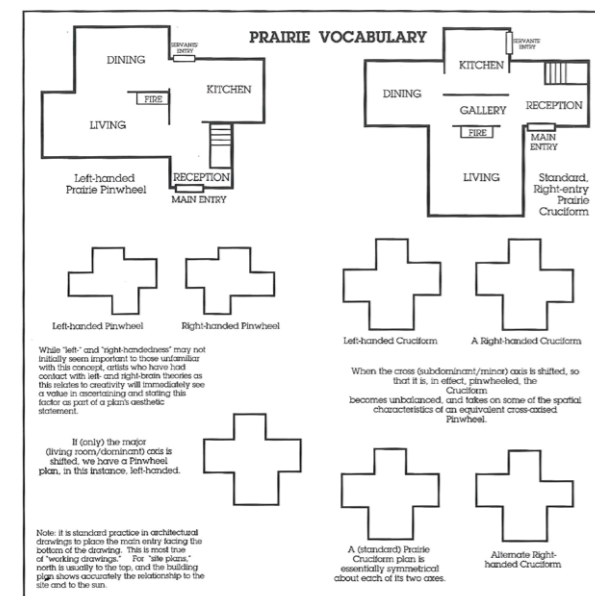


Figure 37 Frank Lloyd Wright; Prairie Vocabulary. Source William Allin Storrer; The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion, The University of Chicago Press, 2006

In the same period Wright also developed his idea of the cantilever that will allow him to free the box of the architectural object, opening it to a new vision of the outside, towards what surrounds it. The columns are cut cantilever the building's roof.

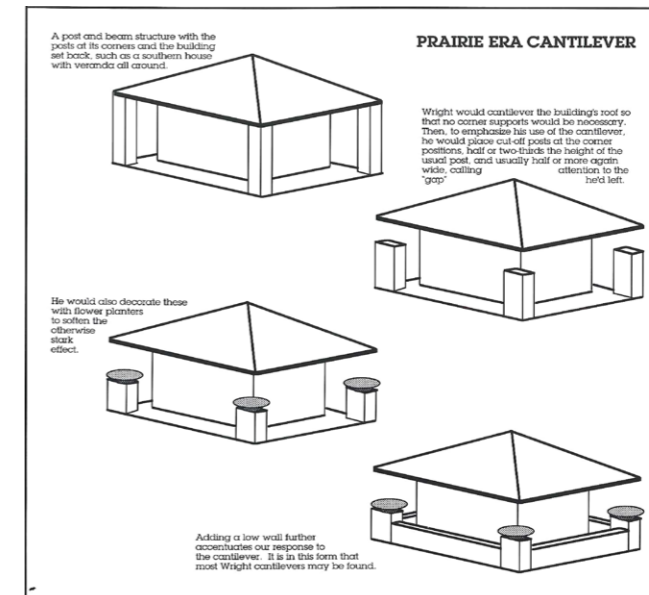


Figure 38 Frank Lloyd Wright; Prairie era Cantilever. Source William Allin Storrer; The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion, The University of Chicago Press, 2006

The passage from the Prairie period to the Usonian period starting from 1913 sees as the main element the transformation of his grammar, trying to standardize his work for the American middle-class. The grid is modified in its internal functioning, visible above all in the idea of a compact workspace that included the kitchen, pantry and bathroom, to give the living area more breath.

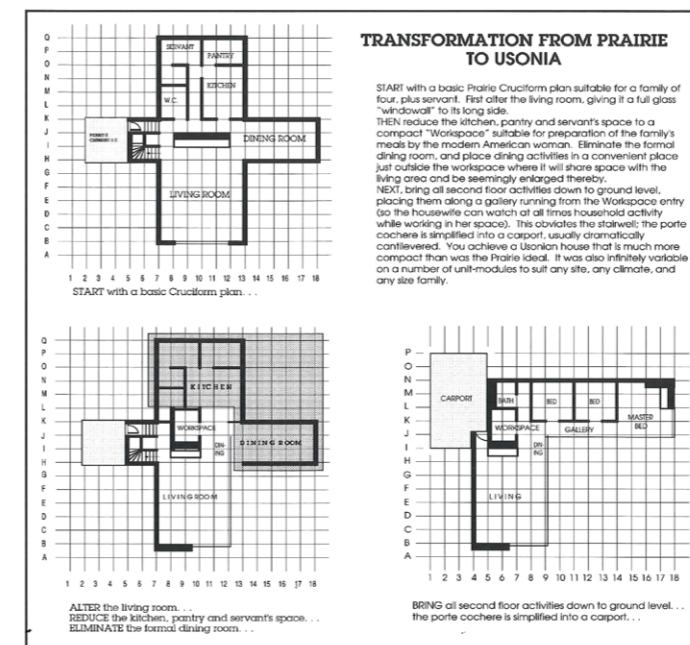


Figure 39 Frank Lloyd Wright; Transformation to Usonia. Source William Allin Storrer; The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion, The University of Chicago Press, 2006

However, in each of the two periods Wright does not lose sight of the idea of an open plan and a horizontal and airy development of the interior space of his buildings.

Considering the Liliane S. and Edgar J. Kaufmann, Sr., *Residence Fallingwater*, realised in 1935.

Fallingwater is located in the mountains of Southwestern Pennsylvania, in Mill Run, Fayette County, which is about 70 miles southeast of Pittsburgh. The house seems to gush directly from the rocks together with the water. Cantilevered reinforced concrete slabs protrude from the rock band to carry the house over the stream. The rocky element also makes up the internal walls. The house has a grandiose horizontal development; the living area is very large and together with the dining room composes a single open space that opens directly to the house entrance. Wright incorporated an outcrop of rock that protruded above the living room floor, further reinforcing the house's relationship with the land it was built upon. The use of large glazed surfaces allows for further exchange between inside and outside and helps to make the house an immersive experience with the nature that surrounds it.

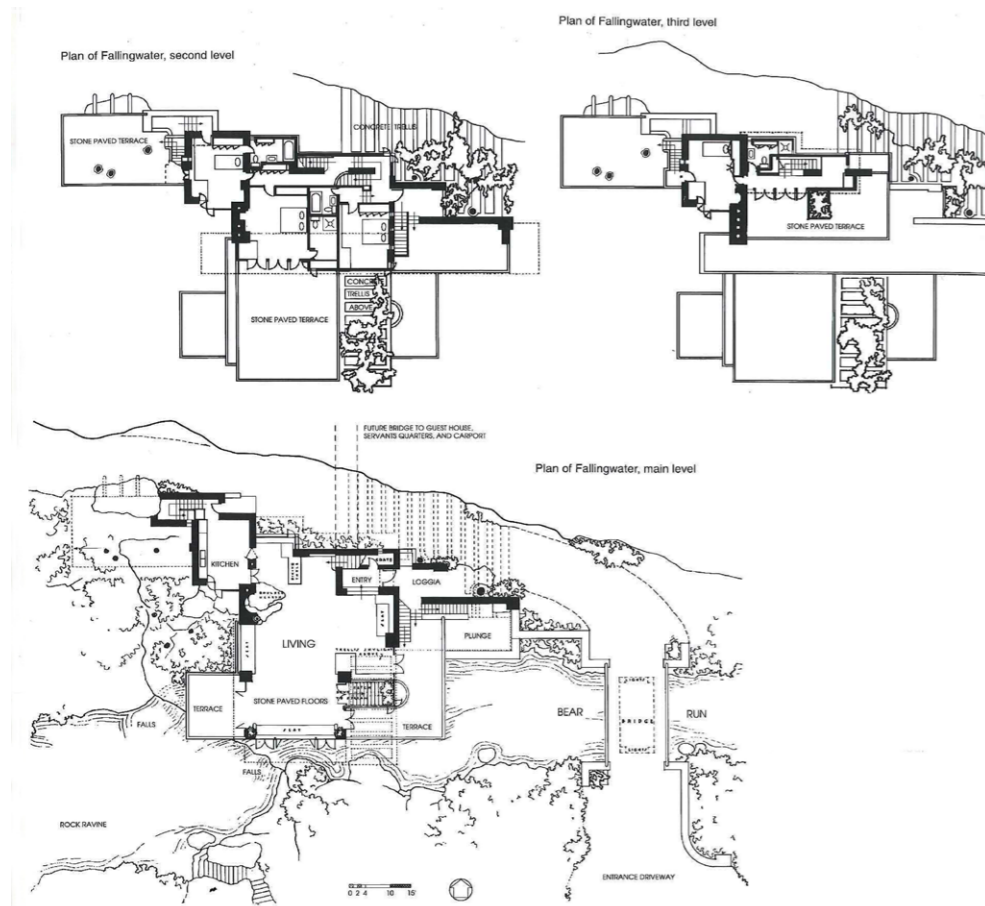


Figure 40 Frank Lloyd Wright; *Theresidence fallingwater*, 1935. Source William Allin Storrer; *The Frank Lloyd Wright Companion*, The University of Chicago Press, 2006

The overhanging protrusions that define the profile of the house itself become one with the rocks in their horizontal development, becoming part of that rocky and angular landscape, almost softening it. The vertical part creates a visual balance with the verticality of the trees surrounding the house and at the bottom with the waterfall, which somehow extends the vertical extension of the house beyond itself. The house becomes an organic element whose structure is intimately connected with that of the surrounding nature becoming

*«An image of Modern man caught up in constant change and flow, holding on...to whatever seems solid but no longer regarding himself as the center of the world».* (Secret, 1992, p. 212)

What the house makes visible is precisely a new humanistic vision that made its way with Organic Architecture. The idea of open plan, which, as we said earlier, had become the basic concept around which the entire development of modern architecture revolves, has in this branch, a vision of man as part of an ecosystem that the cantilever created in space by moving the internal planes, highlight. It is a process of space-time continuity.

*«You catch no sense of enclosure whatever at any angle, top or sides... Space may now go out or come in where life is being lived, space as a component of it».* Frank Lloyd Wright (Zevi, *Il linguaggio moderno dell'architettura*, 1973, p. 40)

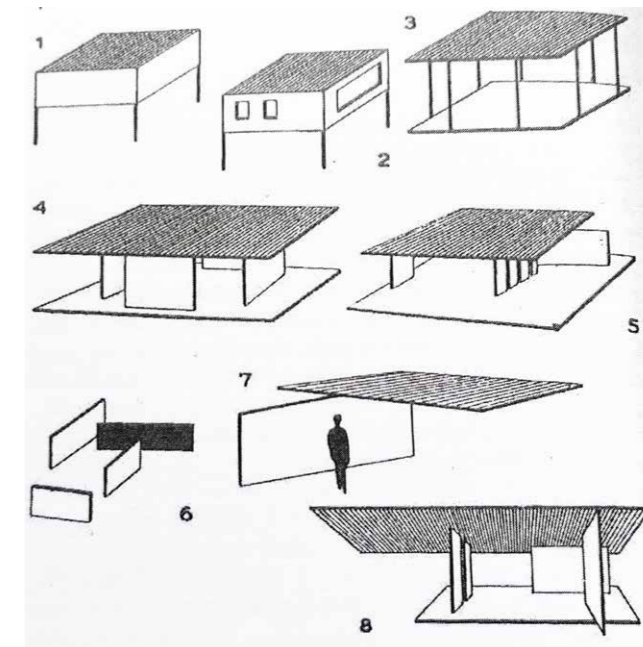


Figure 41 Frank Lloyd Wright; *eight illustrative sketches of a discourse on the involvement of each architectural part in the structural game*

Wright includes lived life as one of the components of his architectural idea and to do so, he uses a grammar made up of contiguous, mobile spaces with a fleeting border, intersections of interiors and exteriors that create a sensation of continuity. A sensation of flow, which transmit the idea of a time in constant change, like biological time, but in the same way also of an overall vision, like an organism that must function through the harmony of all its parts.



Figure 42 Frank Lloyd Wright; Residence Fallingwater, 1935. Source Daderot, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons



Figure 43 Frank Lloyd Wright; Residence Fallingwater, 1935. Source Lykantrop, Copyrighted free use, via Wikimedia Commons

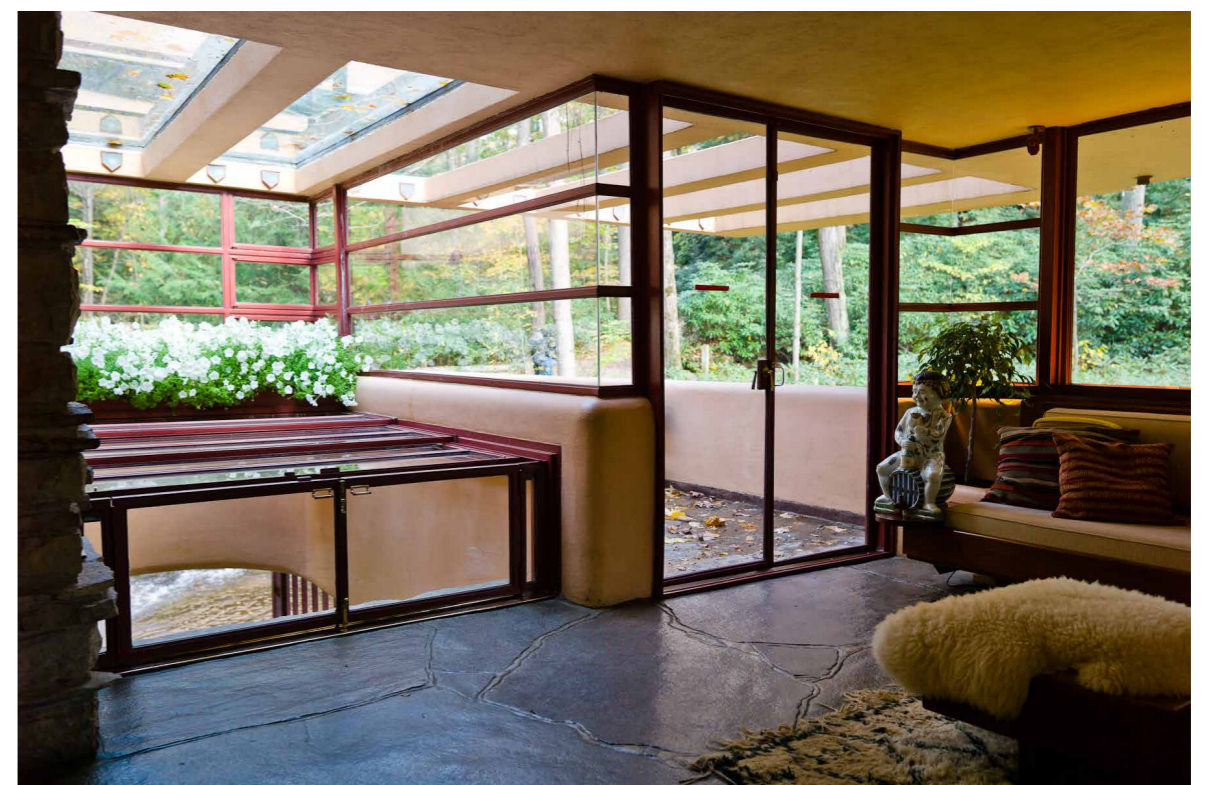


Figure 44 Frank Lloyd Wright; Residence Fallingwater, 1935. Source: <https://www.reddotforum.com/content/2011/10/shooting-the-leica-s2-in-frank-lloyd-wright-s-fallingwater/>

The artwork we examined in relation to the organic architecture developed by Wright is *Waterfall* created in 2004 by the Icelandic artist, Olafur Eliasson.

The installation is made using iron and wood scaffolding inside which water flows to reconstruct the image of a waterfall. The work is designed to be installed both indoors and outdoors. It clearly establishes a link with the idea of nature and open, fluid space. A space that clearly seeks to undermine the border between outside and inside, between artificial or anthropic space and natural space.



Figure 45 - Olafur Eliasson, *Waterfall*, 2004. Hall Art Foundation, Reading, Vermont, 2013. Photo: Jeff Nintzel. Source the artist's website.



Figure 46 - Olafur Eliasson, *Waterfall*, 2004. ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark, 2004. Photo: Poul Pedersen. Source the artist's website.

The temporality that arises from the parallel between the architectural object and the work of art has two main directions, the vertical and the horizontal. The vertical direction follows the trend of the force of gravity from top to bottom, like the movement of the waterfall, common to both subjects. The horizontal direction derives from the idea of open space, of breaking the boundaries between internal space and external space.

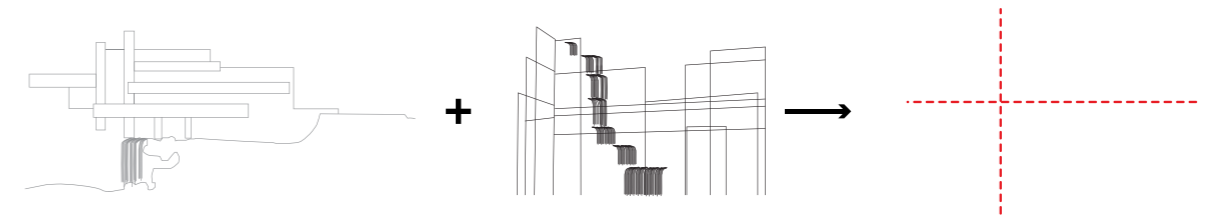


Figure 47 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

Let us now analyze the other interpretation of the concept of *open plan* through the work of Charles-Édouard Jeanneret, known as Le Corbusier. A Swiss born, naturalized French, Le Corbusier firmly believes in the unity of the arts, having started his career as an artist – painter and sculptor – before approaching architecture. Nature, not as an idea of mere reproduction of forms, but as a creator of functional and formal structures, is the basis of his creativity, in this concept he is influenced by the childhood spent in his native country in the Swiss mountains

«In this way I learned, I learned what the flowers were like – inside and outside – the shapes and colors of birds; I understood how a tree grows and how it manages to balance itself in the midst of a storm. The water cycle: rain, evaporation, snow, storm...». (Tentori & De Simone, 2006, p. 8)

His idea of architecture also arises from the notion of organic spaces, but perceptually different from those conceived by Wright. Le Corbusier essentially develops his works around five points: the raised structure supported by *pilotis*; a self-supporting structure consisting of beams and pillars; the use of windows along the external walls; the concept of a flexible open plan that adapts to the specific functions of the building and a roof terrace that also serves as a garden. Le Corbusier also has a palette of colors that recur in his buildings: green, yellow, blue, red; that the architect symbolically uses to strengthen the link between the building's space, nature and man who remains the driving force of his research. So much so that it be-

came a yardstick and rationalized in his famous “*Modulor*”, which became the basis of every work produced by the architect from 1945 onwards.

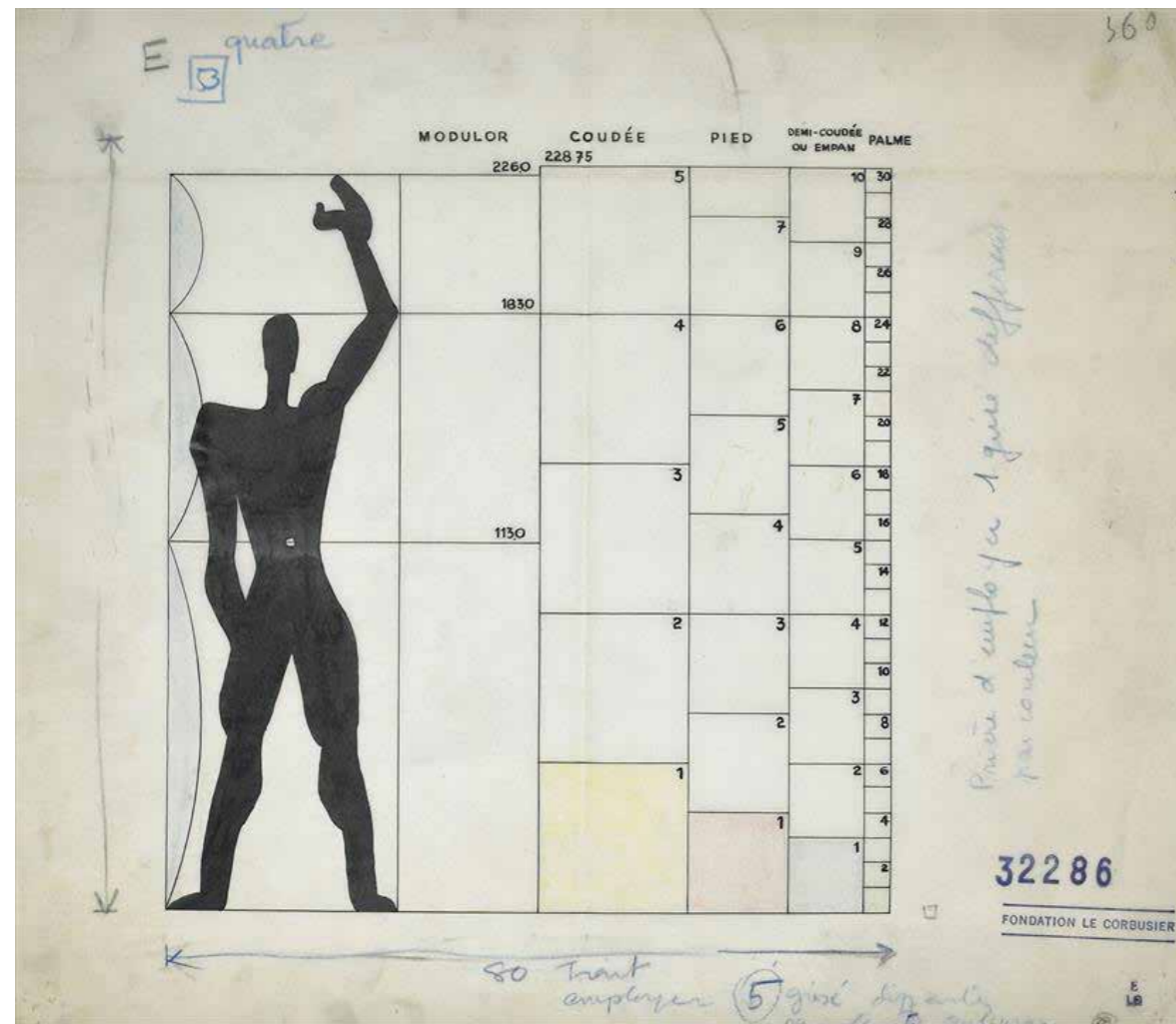


Figure 48 Le Corbusier; Drawing of *The Modulor*; 1945. Source <http://www.fondationlecorbusier.fr>

Considering *Villa Savoye*, built in Poissy between 1929 and 1931.

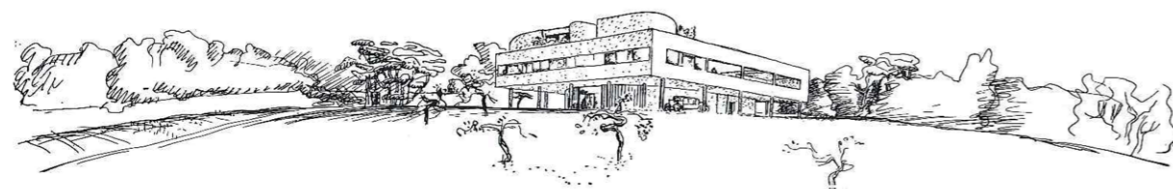


Figure 49 Le Corbusier; *Villa Savoye*, 1929-1931. Source F. Tentori, R. De Simone; *Le Corbusier*, 1987 Editori Laterza

The villa is located on a hill surrounded by trees from which you can see the *valley of the Seine*. The main concept of the house designed by Le Corbusier is that the villa does not have a real front, but opens equally on all four sides of the parallelepiped conceived as a basic

figure for the development of the building. The structure is raised from the ground through the use of pilotis which, in addition to the function of supporting the house, also have the function of making the entire building lighter and slenderer, detached from the ground, moving the architectural center of gravity upwards. Cars and an idea of a journey, a path that works for all the structural elements of the house and for all its floors, inspired Le Corbusier. On the ground floor, in fact, the idea of the route is that for cars, on the upper floors that of people. The plan of the house is organized as two Ls that rotate around the central ramp. Le Corbusier also makes use of large windows that in the case of *Villa Savoye* divide the garden from the living room. The central ramp ends in the solarium, which is derived from the roof of the building. *Villa Savoye* stands out in Le Corbusier’s research for a different relationship between indoor and outdoor spaces. In previous works by the architect, the internal space also “modeled” the external space, making it a consequence of the internal volumes of the building. In the *Villa Savoye* project there is a difference, the external space is a purification of all the volumes and movements of the internal space. A purification process that ideally leads to the clarity of pure geometry, the building is crystallized in its forms; it can be read in its entirety as if it were on a pedestal on display. Also, in this building (as in Wright’s case), the horizontal becomes the main vector that guides our vision, and ideally follows the horizon line, clearly standing out in the sky. The idea of an open plan translates in Le Corbusier into a new articulation of the interior space, which acquires movement through the construction of the paths that rotate around the ramp and the hanging garden.

«It is by marching, moving, that we see the architectural arrangements develop [...] In this house, it is a real architectural journey that offers constantly varied, unexpected, sometimes amazing aspects». (Corbusier, 1935, p. 13)



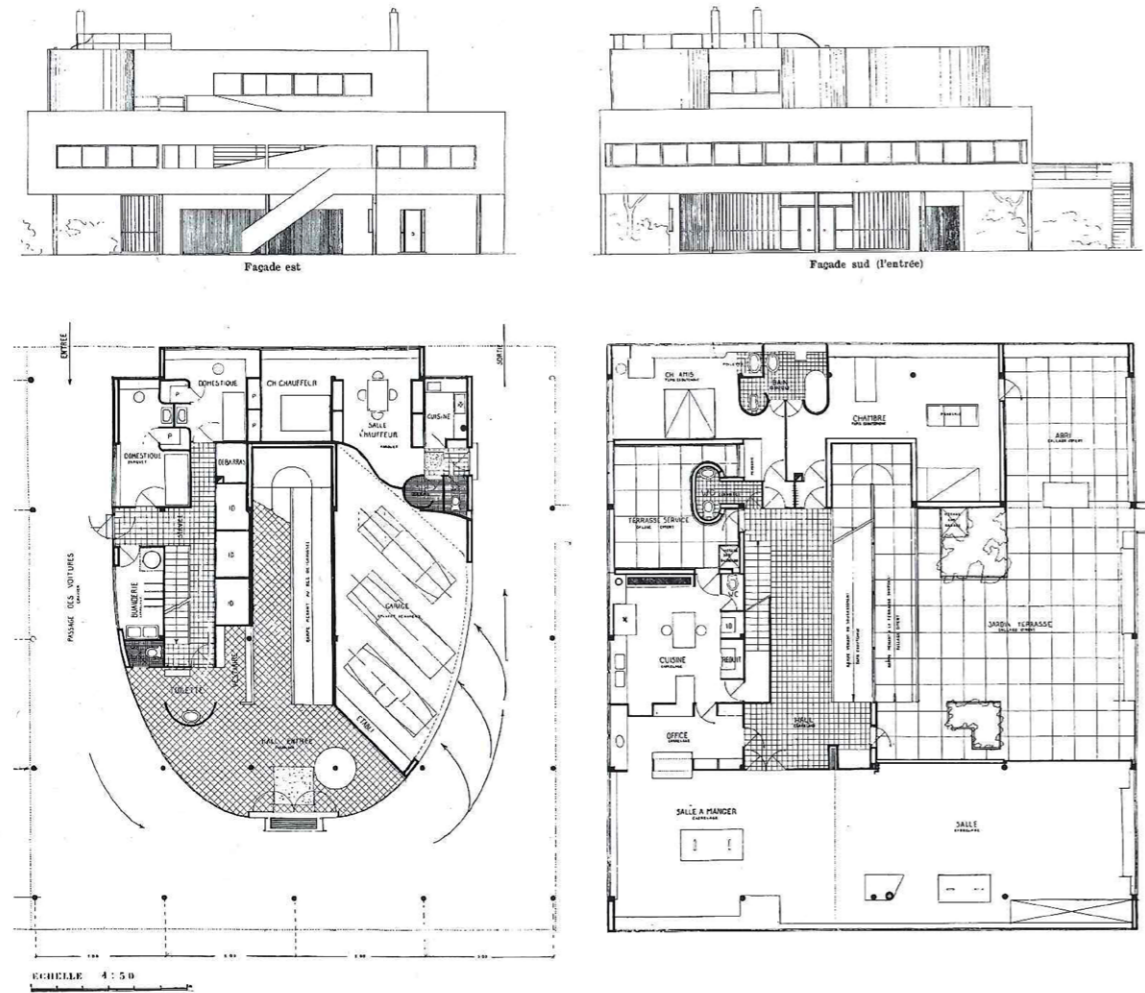


Figure 50 Le Corbusier; Villa Savoye, 1929-1931. Source F. Tentori, R. De Simone; Le Corbusier, 1987 Editori Laterza

The meaning of this building designed by Le Corbusier lies in the contemplation of nature through paths of light and internal movements of the architectural elements.

Both buildings examined therefore share various structural and conceptual aspects. Both projects free up the interior space thanks to the use of the *open plan*; Wright through the gathering of the service area into a single workspace to make room for large open spaces that allow you to perceive all the horizontality of the structure even when you are inside of it. In Le Corbusier's project, the interior space has a more articulated movement, which literally rotates around the vertical development of the central ramp that divides the space into two wings.

Both buildings have an essentially horizontal development, but while in Wright's case, the building follows the development of the surrounding landscape, in Le Corbusier's case this

horizontality draws a clear distinctive trait from the surrounding landscape, making the object stand out in the whole its austerity and geometric purity. Both by observing the plastic masses of the two villas and by walking through their internal spaces, we have two different perceptions of the space-time of objects. One temporal perception is that of an open space that gives us a contemporaneity of events that we can observe from one point of the house to another, a sort of *duration* of the space-time vision. Substantially different from a temporal perception of a space that moves around a central implant that creates a rotating movement, almost as if it worked as a pivot of a gear. Both architects contribute to create a new way of designing architecture that is directly linked to this new optical vision of society. A vision that began with the destruction of perspective by the artistic avant-gardes in the early 1900s and continued into the postwar years with the mass diffusion of televisions, thanks to which a new vision and a new perception of real space and the way to use it have been definitively cleared.

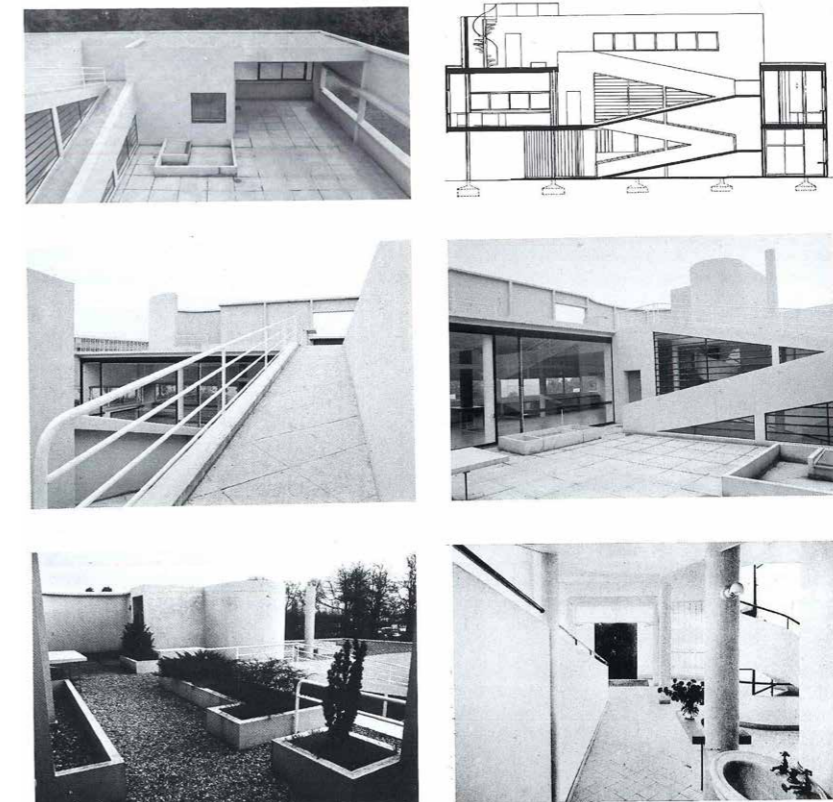


Figure 51 Le Corbusier; Villa Savoye, 1929-1931. Source F. Tentori, R. De Simone; Le Corbusier, 1987 Editori Laterza



Figure 52 Le Corbusier; Villa Savoye, 1929-1931. Photo by Cemal Emden. Source: <https://divisare.com/authors/2144653430-le-corbusier/projects/built?page=3>

*Two Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube* is the work created by Dan Graham between 1981 and 1991 on the roof of the *DIA Center for the Arts* in Manhattan, and which we analyze in parallel with Le Corbusier's building. The work consists of a steel structure that frames semi-transparent mirrored glass walls. Depending on the intensity of light, the walls pass from a reflective state to a transparent one, creating ever new situations of interaction with the surrounding landscape and with visitors. The interaction between the cubic shape that acts as the perimeter of the work and the circular shape placed in the center, creates a fluid movement between environments that are separated only by glass, therefore by a material that allows not losing the spatial continuity of the space, at the same time giving a circular movement to the internal path which seems to rotate around the cylinder as if it were the pivot of the whole installation.



Figure 53 - Dan Graham, *Two Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube*, 1981 - 1991. Source [www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)



Figure 54 - Dan Graham, *Two Way Mirror Cylinder Inside Cube*, 1981 - 1991. Source <https://www.mariangoodman.com/artists/45-dan-graham/works/13574/>.

The temporality that we can derive from both subjects derives directly from their structural form, both are an open plan delimited by an almost cubic quadrangular shape, both have a

structure in the center that facilitates a circular movement as if both subjects revolved around a pivot. Their being in time is therefore a circular temporality that we could define as a cylinder that allows circularity and has a vertical (or horizontal) physical extension.

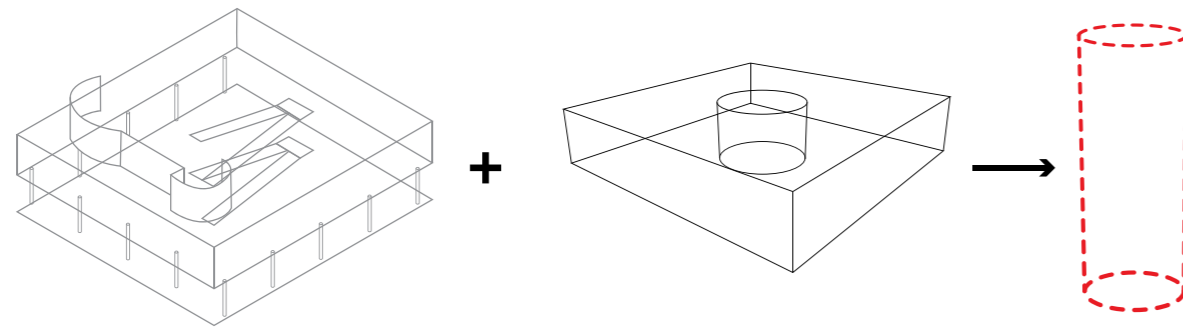


Figure 55 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

The approach to the reality of the world changes according to the vision we have of it, the vision is linked to the whole of our technical, scientific and social knowledge. If our vision of the world changes, it follows that our approach to the way we behave changes, the way we interpret the reality that surrounds us and therefore consequently the way we represent this reality. Architecture, as we have seen, has changed over the centuries and in the twentieth century it acquired a new vision, linked precisely to the change (after 500 years) from the perspective vision to the multi-sidedness vision resulting from the optical revolution.

At this point, given the revolution in the approach and vision of reality, we also need a rethinking of grammar and tools for architectural design. In his reading of the modern language of architecture, Bruno Zevi draws up a sort of working methodology capable of creating, according to the author, the *invariants* of architectural design and which in our view can form the basis of that new grammar on which to build the whole discourse of the methods and approaches of contemporary architecture.

He described this new grammar through 7 *invariants*, or points. The first point is the disintegration of the architectural elements that are transformed into a list, which frees them from their classification by resetting an entire linguistic system in order to re-used it all over again. By building a new grammar that is based on single elements and not on a set of pre-established rules. The list is in fact a necessary premise to rethink the architectural elements as singularities that acquires new meaning.

«Listing, going back to the zero degree, makes you rethink architectural semantics». (Zevi, *Il linguaggio moderno dell'architettura*, 1973, p. 8)

The second point is asymmetry, used as a break in the perceptual security of symmetry. Asymmetry as an opposition to contemplation experienced in front of a symmetrical building. The third point is the anti-perspective three-dimensionality, a direct consequence of the new multi-sidedness vision, as the possibility of continuously shifting the point of view, a possibility that leads directly to the fourth point, the syntax of the four-dimensional decomposition, which invites a reading of the space in four dimensions, including time as an architectural dimension and vector. Zevi underlines how it is no longer possible to contain the volume in a single point of view (perspective); the building must be walked. The fifth point is the involvement of all the elements in the structure of the object, recomposing the building in a new harmonious way. The sixth point, which arises as a direct consequence of the first five points, is the temporalization of space. The last point is reintegration, which in the new four-dimensional architectural vision, includes the internal and the external space of the volume, involving the surrounding space, the urban space in an overall vision in which time is the new protagonist.

«Thus the temporal aspect of architecture no longer resided in its dual nature of light and shadow or in the aging of things; it rather presented itself as a catastrophic moment in which time takes things back». (Rossi A. , *A Scientific Autobiography*, 1981, p. 16)

The temporal dimension links with its action the various surfaces of the building – horizontal and vertical – the various spaces of the building – internal spaces – the internal and external spaces and the building with the surrounding space. Exactly as if they were a whole, an organism whose parts respond to a single body.

«Spatial dimensions such as vertical and horizontal, mass and volume are experiences known intimately to the body». (Tuan, 1977, p. 108)

This idea of temporality in the structure of the building has become the founding idea of *Metabolism*, an architectural movement born and developed in Japan from the late fifties to the late seventies of the twentieth century. Theorized by a group of young architects (all from the school of Kenzo Tange), Metabolism was born primarily as a response to the new

massive urbanization that began with the end of the Second World War. The questions on how to reconstruct the cities bombed during the conflict, opened debates on the very idea of permanence of the architectural object in the urban space and on the visual compatibility of the reconstructed cities. In fact, the reconstruction seemed to produce cities, whose structural complexity made a general overview impossible, making them ambiguous and multivalent. The architects who developed the Metabolism movement, in their Manifesto “*Metabolism 1960 – a Proposal for a New Urbanism*” wrote in a key passage that:

*«We regard human society as a vital process, a continuous development from atom to nebula. The reason why we use the biological word metabolism is that we believe design and technology should denote human vitality We do not believe that metabolism indicates only acceptance of a natural, historical process, but we are trying to encourage the active metabolic development of our society through our proposals».* (Kurokawa, 1970, p. 27)

For these architects, architecture is not a static element, destined to last indefinitely over time, but an organic element, with its own biological time destined to have an end and therefore to be replicated. Their point of view starts from the idea of considering human society as part of a single flow that also includes nature and animals, to arrive at the idea of technology as an extension of humanity. In this vision of continuous flow Kurokawa and all the other architects of Metabolism, integrated architectural and / or social elements of the history of Japan, with elements of their time.

Considering the *Nakagin Capsule Tower*, realized by Kisho Kurokawa in 1972.

The tower was built as a response to the ever-increasing demand for places to sleep, or study or spaces for social activities, for commuters who worked in central Tokyo but lived outside the city. From a structural point of view, the tower is composed of two central reinforced concrete structures, one eleven and the other thirteen floors, which contain the elevators and to which 140 housing capsules rotated at different angles are attached. The idea of a moving capsule recalls the Kago a traditional means of transport used during the feudal and the Meiji period in Japan. Literally a capsule that contained one or more people, which was carried on the shoulder by four men.

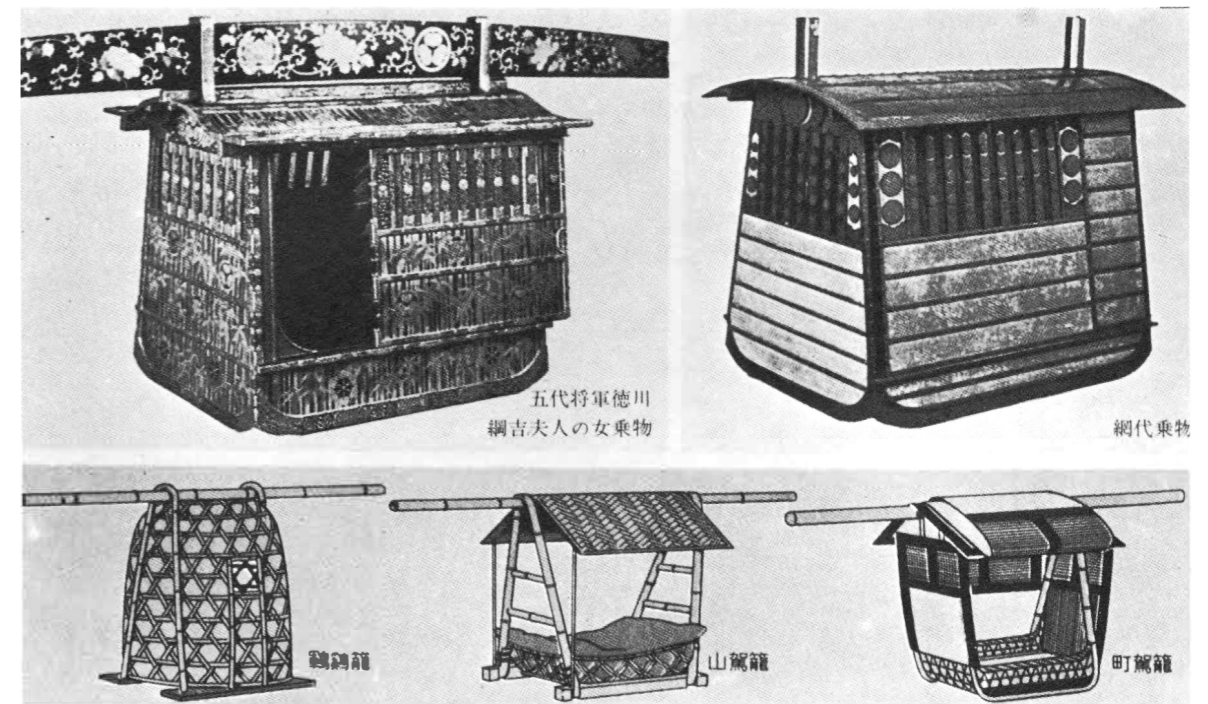


Figure 56 - Kago a traditional means of transport used during the feudal and the Meiji period in Japan. Source Kurokawa, K. (1970). *Metabolism in Architecture*. London: Studio Vista Publisher.

*«The capsule is cyborg architecture. Man, machine and space build a new organic body which transcends confrontation. As a human being equipped with a man-made internal organ becomes a new species which is neither machine nor human, so the capsule transcends man and equipment. Architecture from now on will increasingly take on the character of equipment».* (Kurokawa, 1970, p. 75)

The capsules are hooked to the central structure with four high-tension bolts and can easily be removed and / or repositioned. From a structural point of view, the capsules are boxes in steel trusses, welded and light. All surfaces of the truss are assembled on a jig of the type used in the production of large containers. The exterior is covered with galvanized and reinforced steel panels.

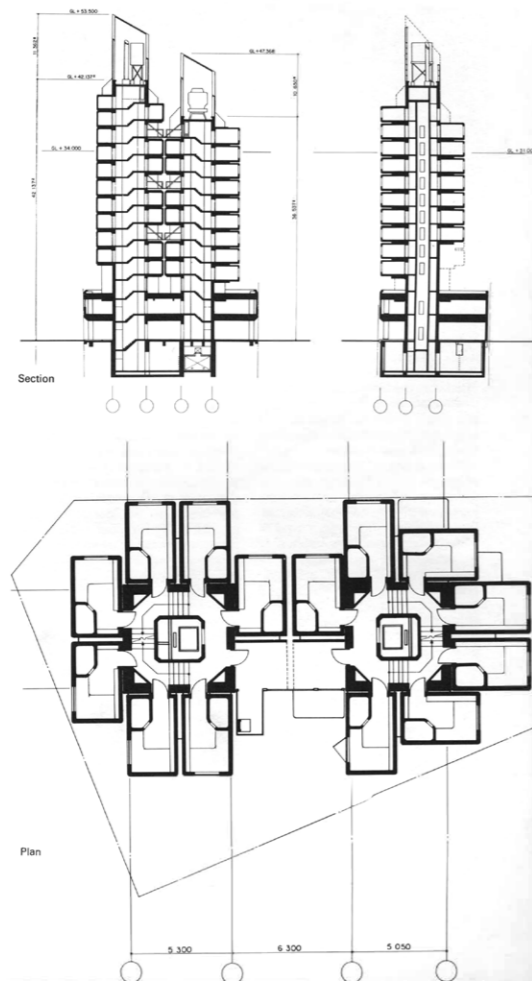


Figure 57 Kisho Kurokawa; Nakagin Capsule Tower, 1972. Source Kurokawa, K. (1970). *Metabolism in Architecture*. London: Studio Vista Publisher.

Conceptually, each capsule is self-sufficient and wants to represent the highly organized and technological society of contemporary man. The vision of the East on man is substantially different from that of the West. In the Western view, man has always seen himself as the main architect of his own destiny, rising above nature, or rather considering nature at his service. The Eastern view, on the other hand, considers man as part of nature and of the biological-natural process. These different approaches are also visible in most architectural productions; in Western buildings, there is a clear hierarchy in the structure, in its parts and in the spaces of the building. Contrary to Eastern architecture and this is where the idea of Metabolism comes in, which has to do precisely with this concept of flow, of biological cycle, of impermanence. In Kurokawa's vision, the idea of flow is realized through a multitude of self, of cells, which the architect translates into capsules.

«Constant change, in terms of time and space, is the law of the universe called *metabolism*». (Kurokawa, 1970, p. 111)

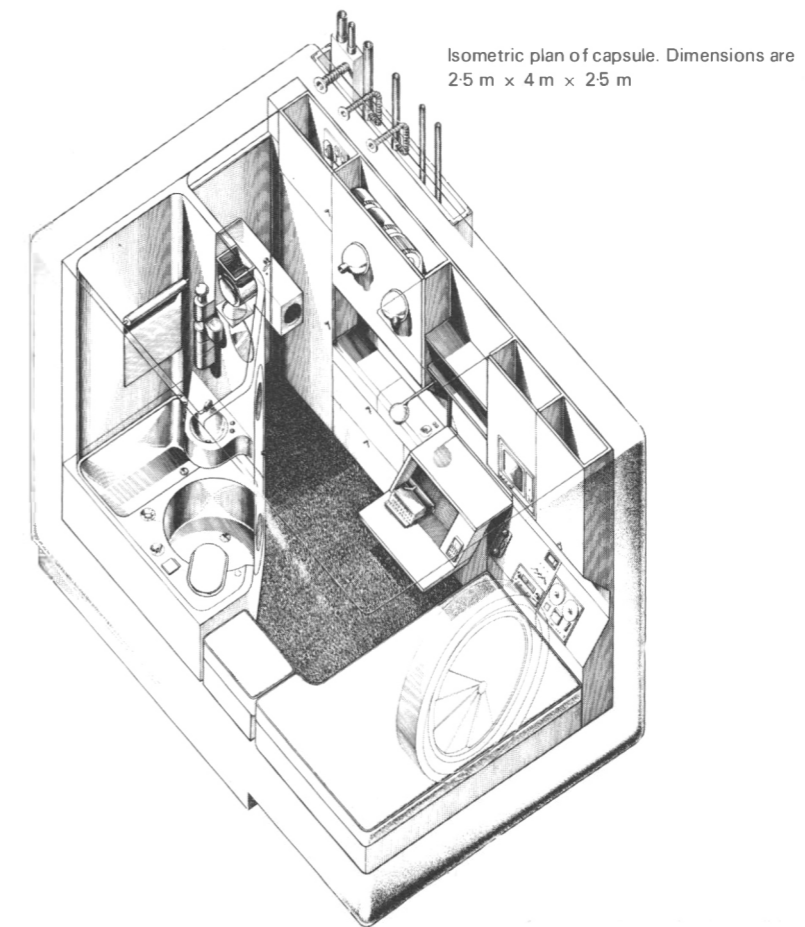


Figure 58 Kishō Kurokawa; Nakagin Tower, Isometria, 1972

The temporal concept here expands to the entire building as well as to the internal space of the capsules, because it must be a mobile, interchangeable space that changes in its plasticity and in its internal paths. Different matter for the plan of the capsules, of which there are 4 types (A - B - C - D) which differ from each other in structural aspects, while the interior space is designed in the same way for all types. The building has been conceived to house commuters or artists or designers, so the interior space is designed in the most functional way possible given the dimensions of each capsule (2.5x4x2.5 meters). An internal space of this kind delineates a compressed time, where everything is at hand, but without the possibility of developing in detail any of the activities that take place inside the capsule. A time limited by space, like the conceptually limited time of the entire building, conceived to be changed, to be part of the biological cycle of nature.



Figure 59 - Kishō Kurokawa; Nakagin Capsule Tower, 1972. Source Jordy Meow, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

The artwork that we have associated with the concept behind the Nakagin Tower is *Repetition-Nineteen-III*, a 1968 work created by Eva Hesse. The work is presented as a series of 19 roughly cylindrical shapes made of fiberglass and polyester resin, each about 50cm high. The work explores serial repetition, a characteristic trait of minimalist production, but as each cylinder is made by hand, it appears to be a non-identical repetition of itself, almost each becoming a unique piece. What is central to this artwork is the idea of a biological cycle, the material is in fact unstable and decomposes over time, creating an interesting parallel with the capsules of the Nakagin Tower which, in Kurokawa's original idea, had to be replaced in time.



Figure 60 - Eva Hesse, *Repetition-Nineteen-III*, 1968. Source <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/81930>



Figure 61 - Eva Hesse, drawing for *Repetition-Nineteen-III*, 1968. Source: <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/37063>



Figure 62 - Eva Hesse, *Repetition-Nineteen-III*, 1968. Source <https://ocula.com/art-galleries/hauser-wirth/artworks/eva-hesse/repetition-nineteen-iii/>

The two subjects share the idea of organicity that comes from the modular structure and material in the artwork. And the concept of cyclicity of time. A biological time therefore, which is consumed but at the same time recreated, following the universal law of energy. A time that has a spiral development that returns to itself but always on different levels.

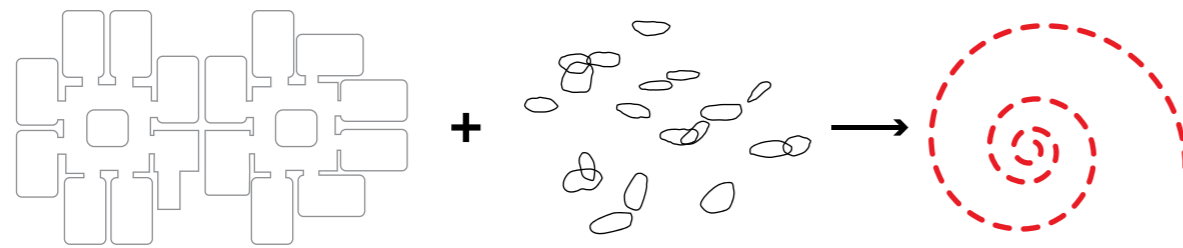


Figure 63 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

In the above-mentioned vision, the time of the architectural object merges with the time of the surrounding space, with the time of society, with the time of materials, and shares the concept of flow with the buildings previously analyzed. Flow that we link to the object here and that has to do with the interpretation and design of spaces and surfaces.

The surfaces that in everyday life we are used to observe, always have two faces, which are divided from each other by a demarcation line, a border or edge. Ideally, we can walk one surface without ever passing the other if we do not cross its delimitation. However, there is a surface that we can walk from one side to the other without ever crossing any delimitation,

this figure is the Möbius strip<sup>3</sup>, in which there is only one side and one edge. An extremely modern figure, which is perfectly connected to the idea of multi-sidedness vision that began with the Cubist revolution, expanded by television and definitively exploded into the new reality born with the development of the internet.



Figure 64 - Möbius strip; illustration by the author, 2022.

Considering the *Möbius House* designed between 1993 and 1998 by Ben Van Berkel and his UNStudio collaborators for a Dutch couple, in the residential neighborhood of *Het Gooi* near Amsterdam. The building is located in a meadow surrounded by beech trees and the clients' specific request was that of a home space that had to revolve around the daily needs of family members.

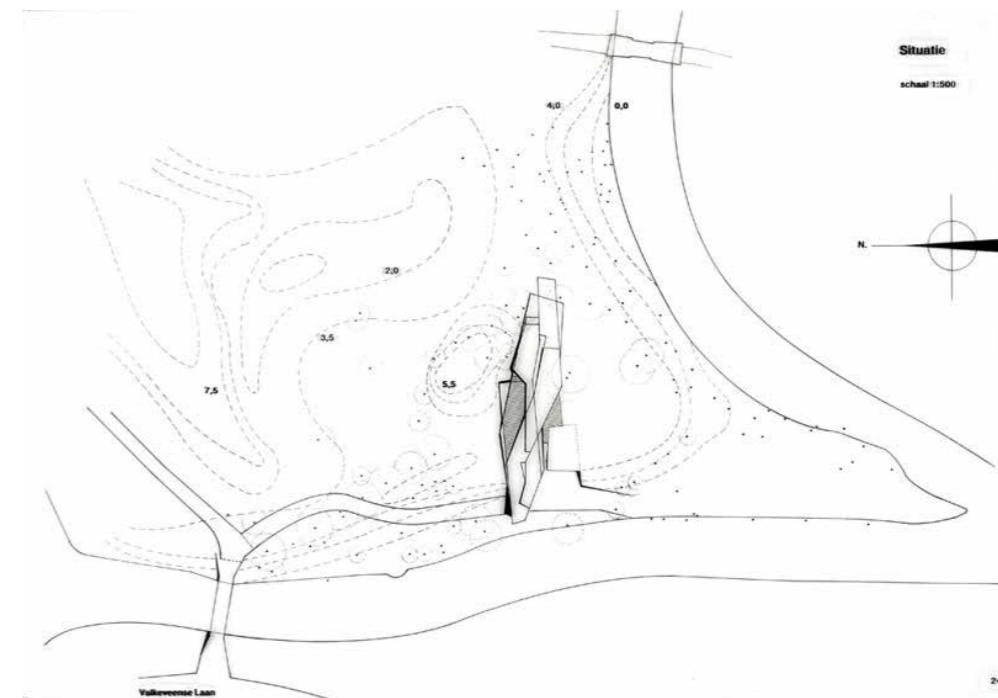


Figure 65 - UNStudio; *Möbius House*, Plan Area, 1993-98. Source: [https://www.frac-centre.fr/\\_en/index-authors/rub/rubprojects-317.html?authID=194&ensembleID=604&oeuvreID=6956](https://www.frac-centre.fr/_en/index-authors/rub/rubprojects-317.html?authID=194&ensembleID=604&oeuvreID=6956)

<sup>3</sup> The Möbius strip is an example of a non-orientable surface. Its name derives directly from the German mathematician August Ferdinand Möbius (1790-1868), who was the first to consider the possibility of constructing non-orientable topological figures.

Starting from the request of the clients, Van Berkel studies an internal-external path starting from the continuous shape of the Möbius strip, a structure that in its planimetry is manifested through a loop of two lines that intersect creating the programs and paths of the house. Paths accentuated also through the use of the two main materials that define the building; concrete and glass which alternate and exchange during the unfolding of the loop, creating the two main axes of the structure. When the ring is reversed, the external concrete parts are transformed into interior furnishings and the large windows become internal partitions.

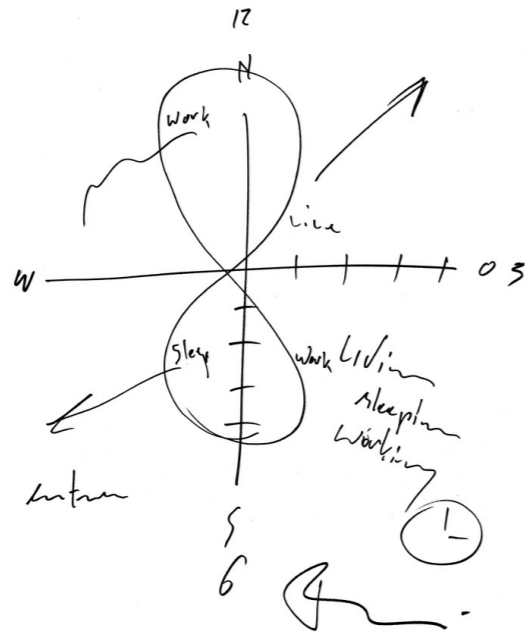


Figure 66 - UNStudio; Möbius House, Sketch, 1993-98. Source UNStudio website

The twisted figure represents the family's 24-hour biological cycle. It acquires a space-time dimension that expands the figure of the Möbius strip in the development of time in the programming of the actions and functions of the house.

In fact, the Möbius House follows an intertwined trajectory that aligns the workspaces with the bedrooms, following two separate directions: one that leads from a living room on the first level on the east side to a bedroom on the second level on the west side; and the other leading from a studio on the first level on the west side, to another studio on the second level on the east side, crossing the collective areas in the middle.

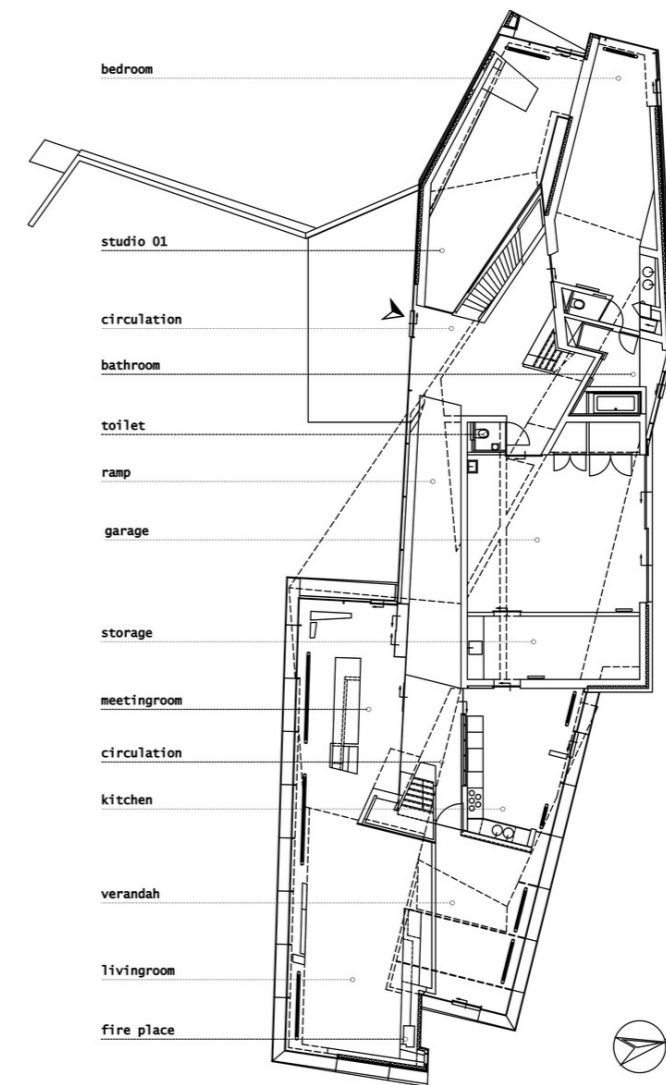


Figure 67 - UNStudio; Möbius House, Plan, 1993-98. Source UNStudio website

The double-curved spatial shape fits into the surrounding landscape by imitating the natural movement of the trees the house is surrounded by, while the large glass surfaces act as a fleeting border with the outside, allowing nature to become a primary element also of the interior space of the house. Not only through the transparency of the glass, but also thanks to the double-curved shape, the house establishes an organic spatial relationship with its surroundings, giving in some moments the sensation of walking into nature. Consequently, the notion of time and duration have had primary importance since the conception of the project and, subsequently, have influenced the way of perceiving the house from different points of view, both external and internal. The infinite movement is the idea around which the whole organization of the house revolves, structured according to the principle of the open plan where the spatial ambiguity drawn by the circular loop determines a temporal perception of the total space, of a building that must be walk thus accentuating the fluidity and space-time



permeability of the internal spaces and at the same time, of the external spaces of the object, which continually intercept and intersect each other.

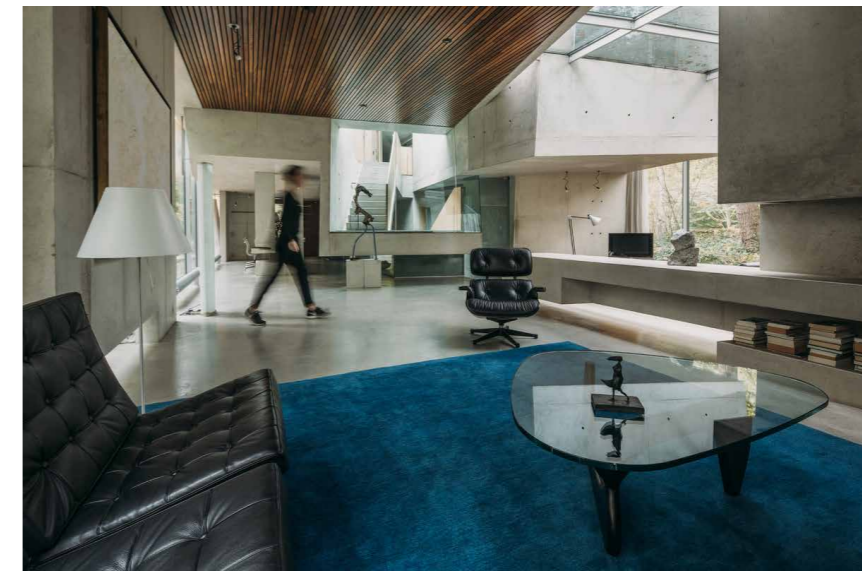


Figure 69 - (A - B) UNStudio; Möbius House, 1993-98. Source UNStudio website

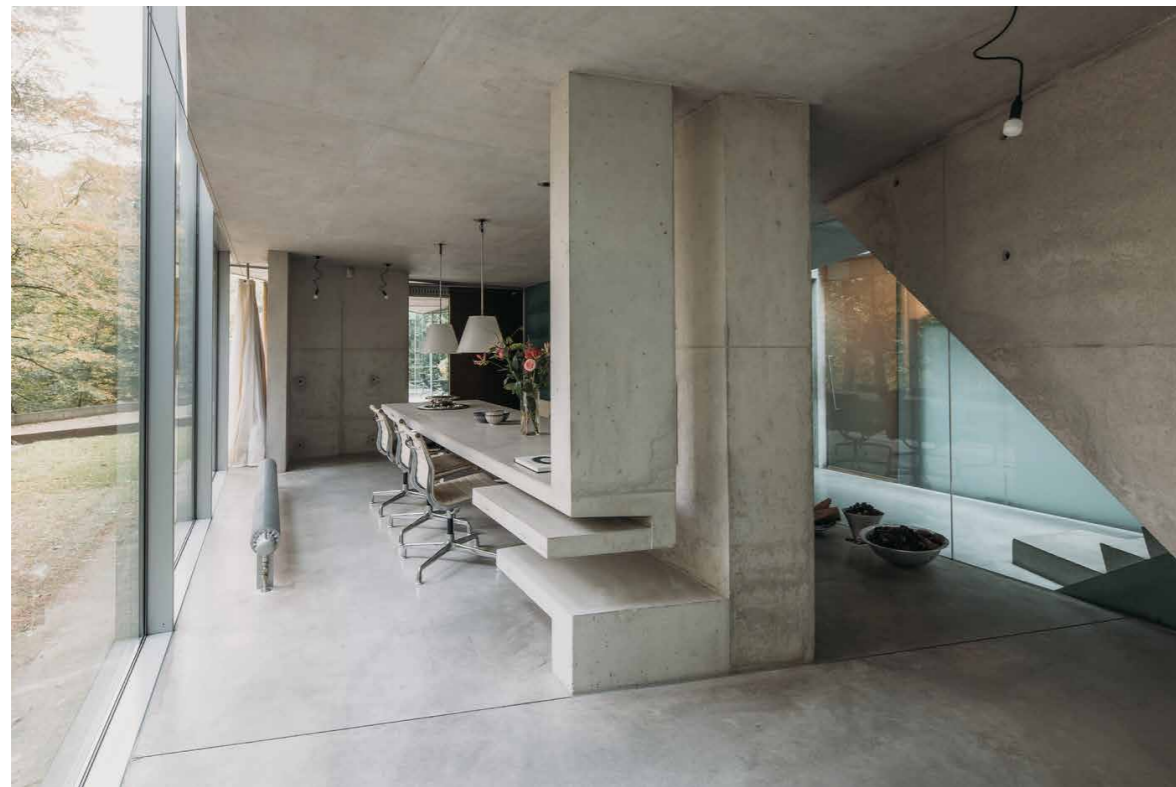


Figure 68 - (A - B) UNStudio; Möbius House, 1993-98. Source UNStudio website

The artwork that we have linked with the analysis of the Möbius House is *Politisch Political no 36* (series begun in 1967) by the German artist Franz Erhard Walther. The artwork is a performance, very simple in its implementation, the public is called to be an active part of the artwork by literally wearing the object produced by the artist, in this case a piece of fabric cut in a cruciform shape with holes at the four ends, so capable of being worn across the head by the participating audience. The cross arrangement of the fabric puts the 4 participants in the performance facing each other, crossing them, thus creating relationships between each of them, visual, crossed relationships. Each of them has to share that vital space with each of the other three participants.

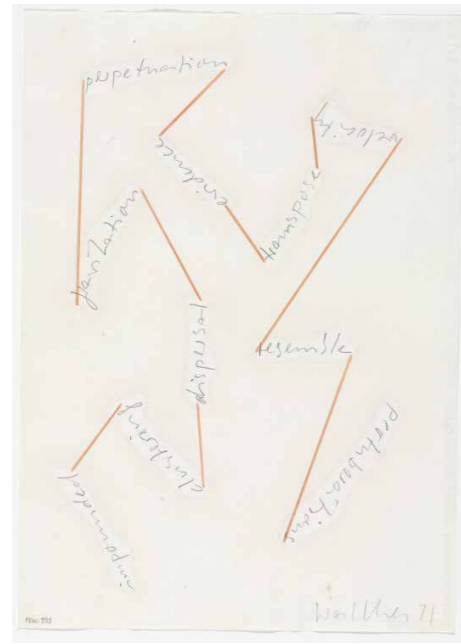


Figure 70 - Franz Erhard Walther, preparatory sketch for Politisch Political no 36, 1967. Source: <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/162325>



Figure 72 - Franz Erhard Walther, Politisch Political no 36, 1967. Source: <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/franz-erhard-walther-zentriert-centered>

The temporality of both subjects is in our opinion very clear, it is a flow formed by two diagonally crossed directions, which have a center, an intersection from which all the possible directions of the architecture and the work of art branch off. Time acquires a centripetal and centrifugal force at the same time, it approaches from the extremities to the center and from the center it starts again towards the extremities.



Figure 71 - Franz Erhard Walther, Politisch Political no 36, 1967. Source: <https://www.wikiart.org/en/franz-erhard-walther/kreuz-bewegungsraum-1967>

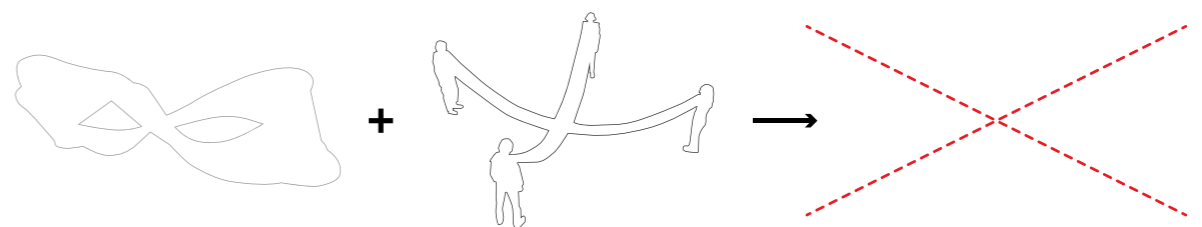


Figure 73 - Diagram of the architecture-work of art relation. Romano 2022

We have shown how beyond even the moment of its realization as a physical object, when we experience architecture, we can only experience it in time. And we also saw how time it is strictly connected with the inner being of man, from his action, from his ability to be imagination.

*«One cannot abolish time within time, but this is the conceit that modernists (and architectural postmodernists as part of the same game) attempt to pull off. It is a game that reduces architecture to an object for which one can absolve oneself of any real responsibility».* (Till, 2009)

It is our direct experience of reality that shapes our consciousness of time, forming a memory that is itself, trace, sign, movement. Following Bergson's thought, this movement of our being in time outlines the concept of *duration*, our experience of architecture has a duration in time as we pass through the spaces of the building, when we experience the event of the architecture. It also has an effect on our perception of the interior spaces that become themselves memory. The duration of our architectural experience is also based on the style and materials – therefore on its being matter – of the building, on the perception we have of them, on our personal and collective memory of those materials. We have seen how the internal space – the void – of architecture contributes to defining the external plasticity (and vice versa) and how in the span of all civilization, the vertical dimension, the facade of the buildings contains within itself the duration of its being in History. But if man's action displays his ability to be imagination, that is, flow over time and consequently into history, this (man's action) is what also creates the architectural object. Therefore, the architectural object, as created by a vision, by an imagination, can only be part of that same flow, and therefore through it, be an organic and indissoluble part of the space-time in which we move, without any possibility of being excluded, to be considered only matter.

## CHAPTER 2 Methodology (AFTER)

After: ('a:ftə) adv. 1. Later 2. Behind –prep. 3. Behind 4. Later than 5. On the model of 6. Pursuing –conj. 7. At a later time than that at which –a. 8. Nearer ship's stern – 'afters pl.n. inf. Course after main course; dessert – 'afterwards of 'afterward adv. Later

For this thesis we will mainly use a post-phenomenological approach based on the definition of Dino Formaggio, the phenomenological approach is no longer naturalistic or spiritualistic, but has as its founding principle that of intentionality, that is, of the dynamic aggregations of meaning and the consequent temporal flows. As Formaggio clarify:

*«To broaden the phenomenological method, held firm in its fundamental structures of highlighting and description, to the point of giving a more concrete relief to natural, cultural and social objects in their historical dynamics of different and multi-layered, temporalized and temporalizing practices, finally of a time "external" or, better, of a temporal objectivity as temporally acting intersubjectivity».* (Formaggio, 1990, p. 14-15)

Through our dissertation, we will also base ontologically on the theories of Henri Bergson, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Heinrich Wölfflin, Jacques Derrida, Paul Ricœur and Ludwig Wittgenstein to broaden as much as possible our approach to the topics. We will proceed choosing some architectural key-concepts circumscribed by thematic areas, which will become the framework of the comparative study of artwork in relation to architecture.

Thinking about the structure to follow in this research, we imagined six ways of experiencing space in the relationship between architecture and the work of art in public space. These ways of experiencing space represent six key concepts recurring in both architecture and art, also in different historical periods and ways of understanding the two disciplines. The idea of crossing the space in the middle, the idea of defining the shape or rhythm and therefore of the persistence of the vision, the idea of ephemeral, the addition or subtraction from the architectural space and the notion of re-writing an architectural space through an artistic intervention. Concepts that intersect each other in various architectural and artistic theories, in this thesis, become the perimeter to outline some of the possible categories for reading the *Time of Intersection*. The analysis of the case studies will be done using different media in order to better define their relation and to describe the subjects through a multifaceted point of view because as underlined by Till:

«However, time in all its complexity cannot be summoned up in a single system of representation, so one has to resort to multiple modes of communication: drawn, made, photographed, told, enumerated, enacted». (Till, 2009, p. 113)

Through this approach we will analyze how these key concepts are revealed through a physical relationship between the artistic object and the architectural object capable of transforming our perception of space. The selected case studies represent examples of the above-mentioned key concepts, each representative of a definite physical relationship. The key concepts will then become single categories that will allow us to explore the characteristics of the architectural object and the work of art from the point of view of Time, in order to understand how their overlap can generate the *Time of Intersection* subject of this thesis.

## 1. The perception of time as distance.

(The Space in Between)

In this section, we will analyze what kind of relationship is established between architecture and artwork in public space when there is a physical distance between the two subjects. First, we will have to define what it means that there is “space” between two objects. Instinctively when we think of an empty space, we think of it with nothing inside it, but we will have to make an effort and change our mental perspective to conceive an empty space and start from the fact that it is still defined by two (or more) objects that delimit this same space. Arnheim defines empty space like this:

«... it is the mutual influences of material things that determine the space between them: distance can be described by the amount of light energy that reaches an object from a light source, or by the strength of the gravitational attraction exerted by one body upon another, or by the time it takes for one thing to travel to the next». (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of the Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 10)

If we think of it this way, we will have to think of the extremes, the boundaries that delimit empty space, that is, the objects that define it. What therefore becomes crucial in this type of relationship is what we could define as the force of attraction between the two extremes of the vector that crosses space. In fact, the balance between full and empty spaces is fundamental in architecture and the distance between the former and the latter affects our perception of them.

The distance between two objects therefore becomes fundamental for building our perception of the relationship between the two objects and of the empty space that is created between them. A greater or lesser distance between the objects determines their greater or lesser mutual dependence. Only if the distance becomes such that we no longer feel any relationship between the two objects, in that case we could say that the space between them is empty. Given this extreme distance, the closer we bring the two objects together, the more we create a tension between them that leads us to perceive them as “dependent” on each other.

All this discourse leads us to a third element which is man, who by positioning himself in space also determines the relationship of forces existing between the two objects, moving in

space until he finds the right distance between himself and the others or between himself and the objects, that is the “proxemics”<sup>1</sup> of his being in space. What is generated between these three elements, the two objects that determine an empty space, which in the case examined by us will be an architectural object and a work of art positioned in the public space at a certain distance from the building; and the observer is a set of force fields. The space generated between the architecture and the work of art and the observer’s point of view generate space – and consequently an anisotropic time –, namely its very size on a perceptual level, depends on the position from which it is considered.

These reflections are also valid if we consider the notion of distance in art. It is enough to think of how a viewer approaches or moves away from a work of art depending on the physical and stylistic characteristics that compose it. Let us consider a painting hanging on a wall in a museum, its size already “forces” us to move forward or backward to get closer to or away from it. The same type of dynamic is activated by the style used to create it, if a painting is made with a realist or hyper-realistic technique, or on the contrary if it is an abstract or informal painting. Obviously, this reasoning also applies to sculpture and installation and consequently applies to works installed in a public space. The force field visually generated by the artwork makes us move in space to try to perceive it correctly.

In defining a relationship that implies a distance between the architectural object and the work of art in the public space, we must take into account the force field that each of the subjects generates and consider the force field relative to the point of view of the observer. Even given what Rasmussen points out about the possibility of our eye perceiving the reality around us in a flat way:

«We do not perceive everything as either mass or void. Very distant objects often seem completely flat [...] You see the outlines but have no impression of depth». (Rasmussen, 1959, p. 83)

<sup>1</sup> Part of semiology that studies the meaning assumed, in man’s social behavior, by the distance that the individual places between himself and others and between himself and objects, and therefore, more generally, the value attributed by different social groups culturally or historically, to the way of placing oneself in space and the way of organizing it. (“prossèmica in Vocabolario - Treccani”, 2022 accessed 2022, July, 25. URL: <https://www.treccani.it/vocabolario/prossemica>)

It becomes clear, therefore, that in this kind of approach, the position of the three elements we take into consideration, work of art, architectural object and observer, is crucial. The first case study that we will analyze as an example of this type of physical relationship between architecture and artwork is *Beso* by Cuban artist Wilfredo Prieto and the complex of three skyscrapers that shape its background. The buildings are the *Allianz Tower* designed by Andrea Maffei and Arata Isozaki, the *Generali Tower* designed by Zaha Hadid and the *PwC Tower* or *Libeskind Tower*, designed by Daniel Libeskind.

Both the skyscrapers and the artwork are part of *CityLife*, the major regeneration project of the *FieraMilanoCity* area in the Portello district in Milan. An area of 366,000 square meters that has been redesigned and which is made up of residential buildings, offices, shops and a park with an open-air collection of works of art created especially for this space<sup>2</sup>.



Figure 74 – The Three Towers. Photo by the author. 2022

The three buildings could be included in the current of *Deconstructivism*, which made its first appearance in 1988 in an exhibition curated at the MoMA in New York by Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, entitled precisely “*Deconstructivist Architecture*”, in which 7 architects had been invited in Johnson’s words:

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the project: <https://www.city-life.it/en/> e <https://www.artlinemilano.com/>

«Shows a similar approach with very similar forms as an outcome. It is a concatenation of similar strains from various parts of the world. Since no forms come out of nowhere, but are inevitably related to previous forms, it is perhaps not strange that the new forms of deconstructivist architecture hark back to Russian Constructivism». (Johnson & Wigley, p. 7)

Deconstructivist architecture is based on forms that wrap around themselves in a composition that challenges all the canons of aesthetic and formal cleanliness at the basis of Modernism. The deconstructivist architectural works have a sort of unstable geometry, which results in the plasticity of the volumes. What is deconstructed is the formal purity expressed by Modernism, as Wigley points out:

«The dream of pure form has been disturbed. Forms has become contaminated. The dream has become a kind of nightmare». (Johnson & Wigley, p. 10)

In any case, when it is officially born as a term and as an architectural trend, it wants to be a moment of break with the past, as almost always happens when a new movement or a new vision of society imposes itself on the previous one. What is interesting in our opinion is the idea of unstable geometry and contamination of forms, which bring the discourse back to the value of contingency in architecture that we have already talked about in the previous chapters.

Let us analyze the *Allianz Tower* by Andrea Maffei and Arata Isozaki (also known as “*the straight*”), completed in 2015. The tower is 209.2 meters high (reaching 260 with the antenna), distributed over 50 floors. The building is very narrow and both facades are punctuated by slightly outward curved triple-glazed panels which divide the whole building into 8 sections, with a two-storey structural break exactly in the center of the tower, giving it the appearance of a mainmast on a ship with sails set in the wind. Furthermore, the curved glasses give the building the appearance of a module that could potentially extend to infinity, recalling in Maffei’s words, the infinite column of Constantin Brancusi:

«The idea of endless tower can be compared to previous ambitions of other artists as Constantin Brancusi, for example, who in 1937-38 installed one of his endless columns of *Targu-Jiu in the park to create repeatable systems indefinitely*». (Architects, Andrea Maffei, 2015)

Isozaki himself speaks of architecture as a metaphysical experience, as a space of tension between generic and specific design needs, between what is unique and what can be repeated:

«Each building should exist as a unique metaphysical experience. Discussions are mostly about the tension between ‘general’ and ‘specific’ design solutions, between what could be repeated and what is unique». (Isozaki, 2016)

The building stands out against the surrounding landscape as an undulating segment, an imposing presence in its verticality, accentuated even more by its being a very narrow building laterally. Furthermore, its glass-covered facades reflect the surrounding environment, essentially the sky and the other two skyscrapers positioned on its sides. On the two facades, 4 diagonal external supports are installed which help to unload the weight of the building, reducing, among other things, the encumbrance of the load-bearing structures on the internal space. According to the tradition of the city of Milan a copy of the *Madonnina*, located on the top of the Milan Cathedral, was installed on the top of the building. It is in fact customary to bring the *Madonnina* to the highest point of the city: it was first on the *Duomo* (in 1774), then on the roof of the *Pirellone* (in 1960), on *Palazzo Lombardia* (in 2010) and finally on the *Isozaki Tower* (in 2015).



Figure 75 – Andrea Maffei-Arata Isozaki, *Allianz Tower*. Photo by the author. 2022

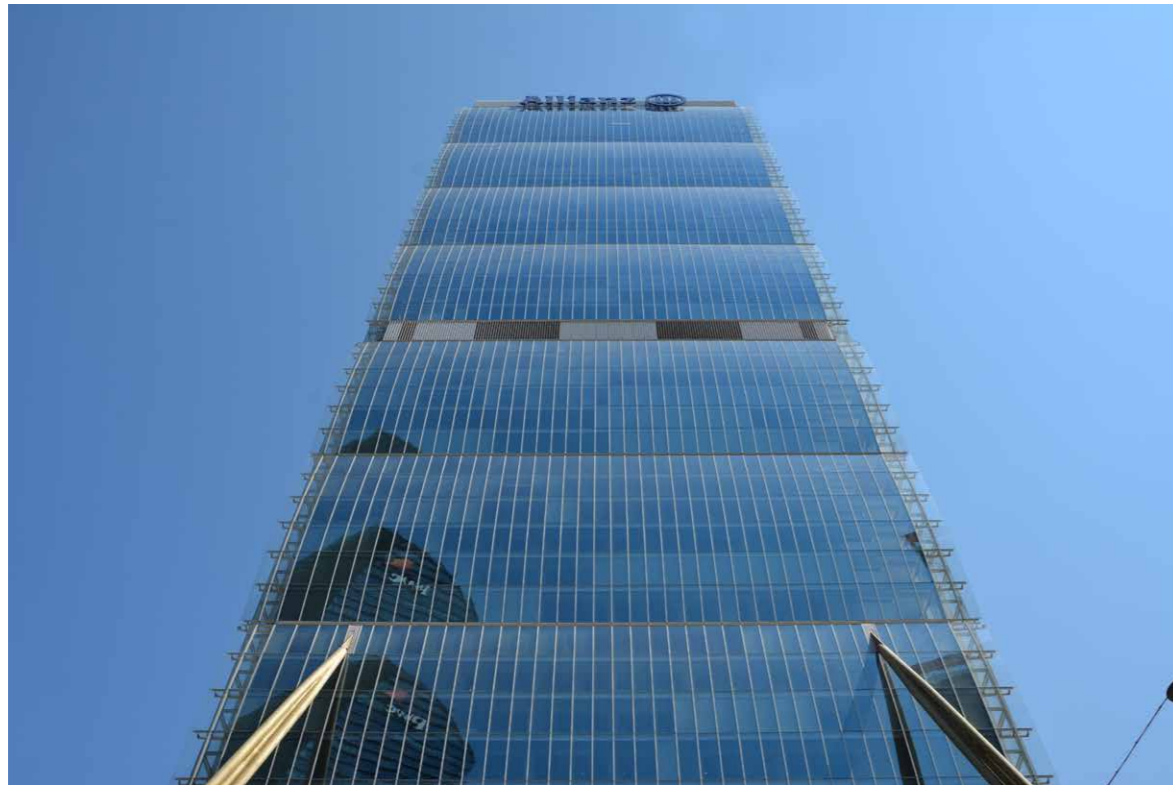


Figure 76 – Andrea Maffei-Arata Isozaki, Allianz Tower. Photo by the author. 2022

What kind of temporal experience can we have with this building? Although internally developed according to the idea of open-space to allow maximum visibility from the glass facades, the whole building develops around the concept of verticality and modular repetition that pushes our eye upwards. Even the panoramic lifts placed along the side facades insist on this sense of verticality that the building develops. What we experience is a vertical space-time as a sort of connection between earth and sky that makes us feel smaller and smaller the closer we get to the building.

Let us now consider the *Generali Tower* by Zaha Hadid (also known as “*the crooked*”) and completed in 2017. The tower extends for 177 meters (192 if we consider the 15 meters of the Generali sign) across 44 floors mostly used for offices. The building develops on a rhomboidal plan that rotates on its vertical axis. The twist decreases incrementally with the height of each floor, giving a fractionally different relationship to each floor to the lower and upper floors. The tower formally develops coherently also horizontally on the ground floor, following the tortuous geometry of the building, also extending below ground level to maximize the space to be used.

The entire building is made with “double skin” glass that scans the facade, following the rhythm of the twist, almost as if the building were turning on itself:

*«As the tower rises offering broader views across Milan, the twist orientates the tower’s higher floors to the primary southeast axis leading to Bramante’s 15th Century tribune of Santa Maria della Grazie, and beyond to the centre of the city».* (Architects, Zaha Hadid, 2017)

Eighteen inclined concrete pillars arranged along its perimeter form the structure of the tower. The torsion effect in Hadid’s tower reduces the vertical push, making the building less austere, its sinuosity makes our gaze rotate together with the axis of the building. Furthermore, the sinuous horizontal development on the ground floor helps to anchor the entire building to the ground, almost as if it were the train of a cloak.

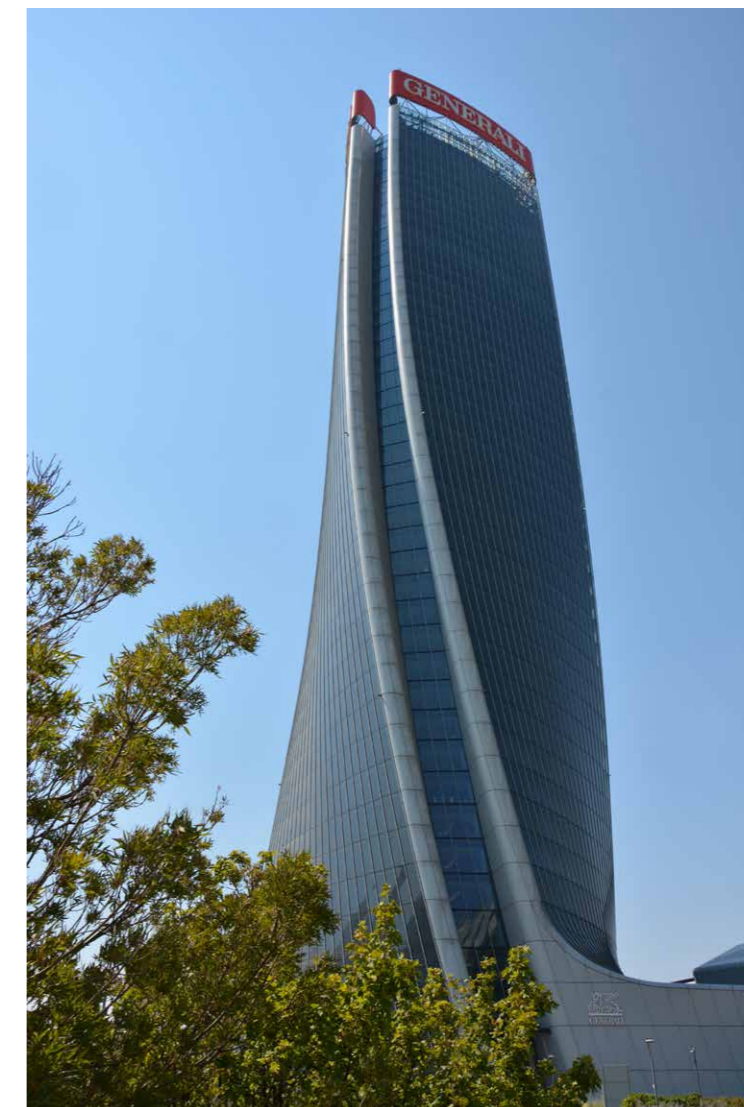


Figure 77 – Zaha Hadid, Generali Tower. Photo by the author. 2022

The rhomboidal plan and the push of the torsion along the entire building shows a temporality which, unlike the skyscraper by Maffei and Isozaki, is not vertical, our gaze that glides over the sinuous surface tends to make our whole body move according to a rotary motion almost helical. The push is always upwards, but following a soft shape.



Figure 78 – Zaha Hadid, Generali Tower. Photo by the author. 2022

The last tower of the complex built at CityLife is the *PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Tower* by Daniel Libeskind (also called “*the curved*”) and completed in 2020.

The building has a quadrangular plan of 65x35 meters and develops vertically as if it followed the perimeter of a sphere; it is 175 meters high divided into 30 floors. The whole building is covered in glass for each of its floors, as to reflect the surrounding landscape; a very important visual element is the final part of the tower defined as “the crown”, a 40-metre-high structure that contains the maintenance systems of the building, becoming in fact the most vital part of the building. The tower is oriented with the concave facade facing south and the convex facade facing north. Libeskind inspired by Renaissance domes to ideally embrace the entire square in front designed the idea of the curved facade.



Figure 79 – Daniel Libeskind, Torre PwC. Photo by the author. 2022

The curved shape of the tower restores a temporal dimension that does not have an upward push, despite being a few meters lower than the tower designed by Hadid, its shape generates a force that closes on itself by balancing the building. Looking at it in profile it almost seems to want to invite us to shift our gaze towards the inside of the square and towards the other two buildings that stand next to it.



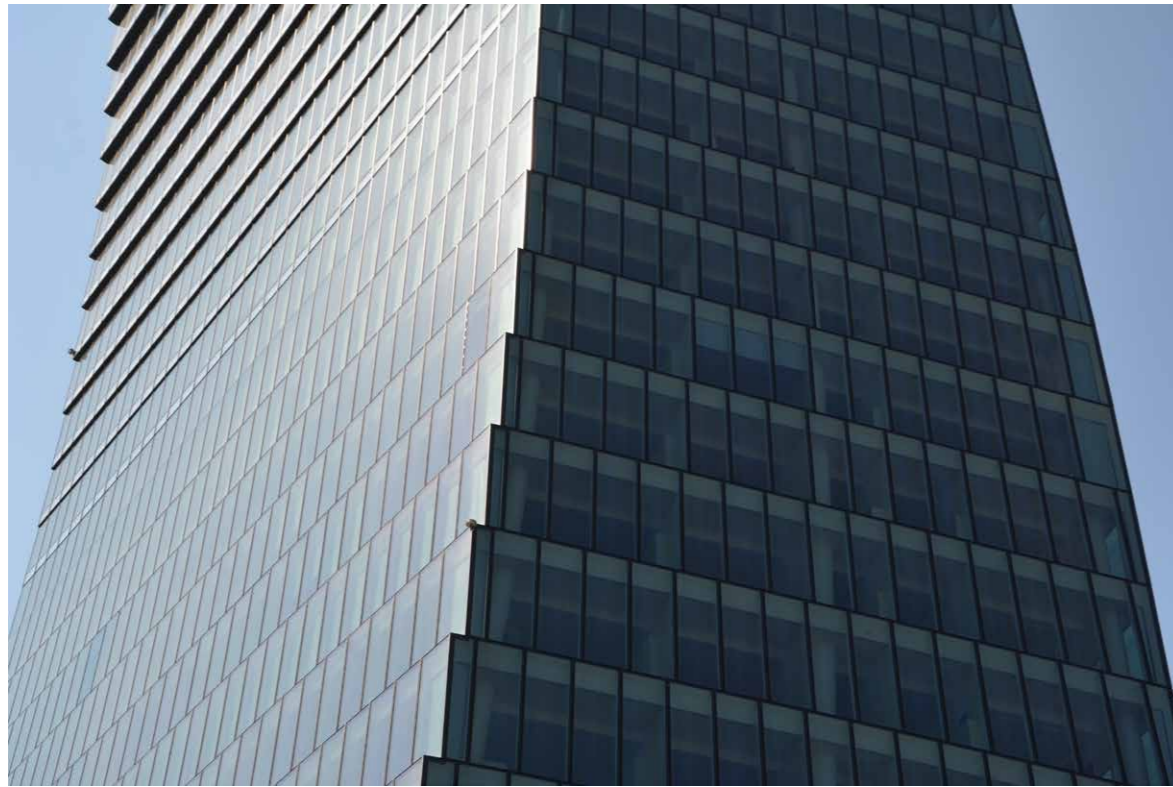


Figure 80 – Daniel Libeskind, Torre PWC. Photo by the author. 2022

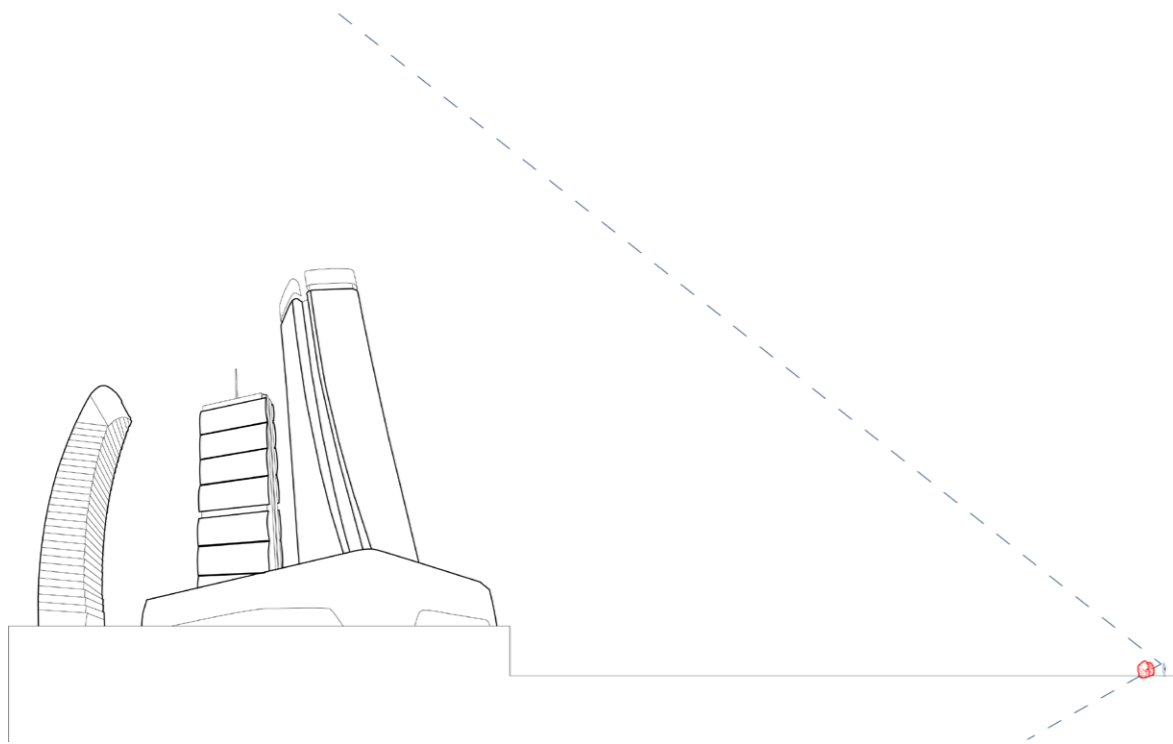


Figure 81 – The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork Beso. Romano 2022

Taken together, the three skyscrapers built within CityLife, the major regeneration project of the FieraMilanoCity area in Milan, develop three different visual tensions that, as we have seen, confront us with as many temporal perceptions.

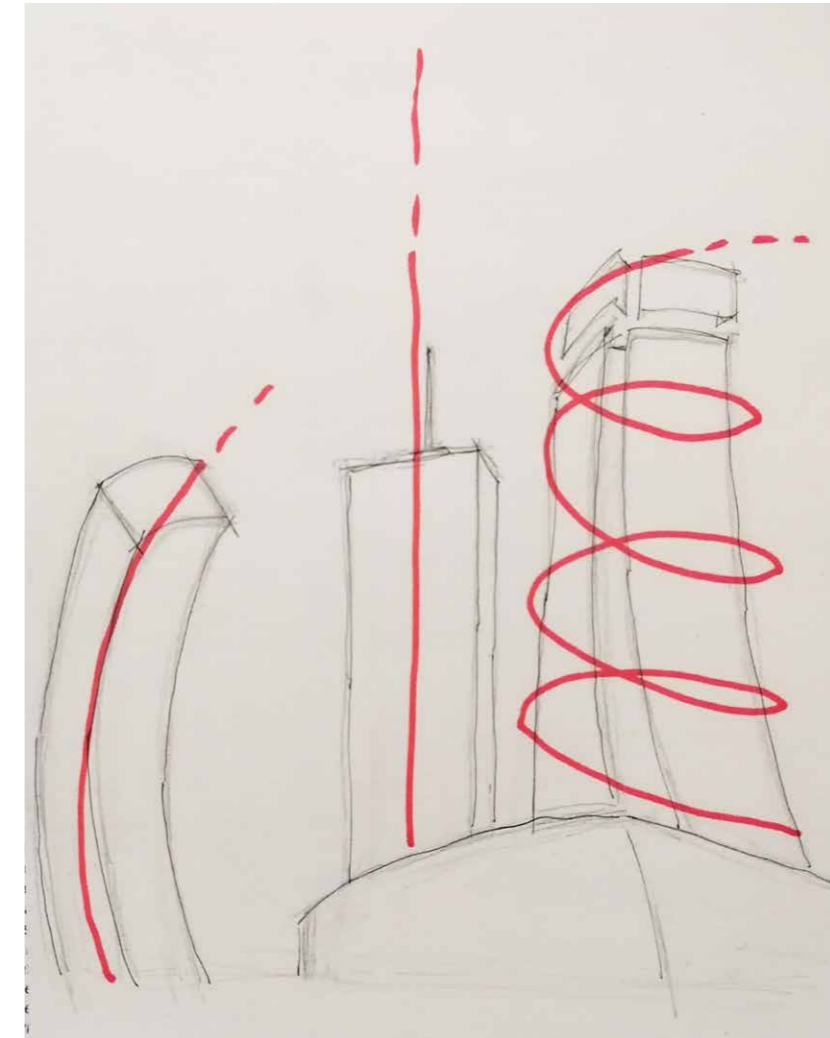


Figure 82 – Time push visualization of the Three Towers. Romano 2022

Let us now consider the element of the artwork that has been installed into the *CityLife* art park and positioned in a straight line in front of the just analyzed group of buildings.

As previously mentioned, the artwork is the sculpture entitled *Beso* created by the Cuban artist Wilfredo Prieto in 2020. The artwork consists of two large boulders of rock from Trentino and almost spherical in shape that touch in a single point mimicking a kiss, as the title of the sculpture suggests. The artwork, like most of the artist's production, is part of a post-Minimalism style in which many contemporary artists could be included. Minimalism as an international style has now become an integral part of the way of producing art and design, meaning the reduction to the minimum of the compositional, structural and formal elements of the works.



Figure 83 – Wilfredo Prieto, *Beso*, 2020. Photo by the author, 2022

Contemporary researches have used the compositional dictates of Minimalism to go further, creating a sort of fusion with Conceptualism to try to undermine the same rigid dictates of classic Minimalism. The basic idea of classical Minimalism, that is that the artworks had to signify only themselves in a sort of reflective self-referentiality, was undermined with the addition of references of contamination with the outside world, therefore social, political, economic references. Irony is one of the interpretations that artists often use in the creation of their works to recall the social and/or political reality they want to talk about.

This type of research has developed a lot in Latin America, almost as a sort of “protection” from the various regimes in order to speak indirectly of the difficult socio-political situations in which the artists lived. Moreover, Wilfredo Prieto was one of the artists who achieved very interesting results by following this operating method, that of minimalist synthesis to which he added elements of irony and poetry to give the viewer other levels of meaning in his work.

*«Wilfredo Prieto's work is a way of producing critical knowledge by reorganizing what we call reality».* (Mosquera, 2004, p. 7)

In practical terms it almost seems as if the artist did not want to add anything to the reality of the objects, but through small changes, or with the addition of a title which itself becomes an integral part of the work (as in the tradition of Conceptual art), he is able to create new visions of reality. The subject of Prieto's research is convertibility:

*«Convertibility of matter and forms, of styles and signs: from heaviness to lightness, from the extraordinary to the banal, from the trivial to the precious».* (Désanges, 2004, p. 9)

In any case, Prieto's sculptures always offer new areas of contact and friction, creating a continuous speculative tension with the viewer, as in the case of *Beso*.

The title of the work literally shifts our gaze towards a transfiguration of the sense of what we have in front of us, the two rocks touch only in one point, as happens between two human lips in the act of kissing, one seems to stretch out more “courageous” towards the other who seems almost waiting. Obviously, as previously described, the title of the work becomes an integral part of it because it allows us to transform this touch between two rocks into a touch with anthropomorphic features. A natural gesture that we have imprinted on the internal mechanics of our being, we know it even before we explain it to ourselves, we feel the need for it even before we understand it. It is an archaic gesture that refers to a sort of origin of humankind (and not only) somewhere in a very distant time behind us; just as archaic is the rock, the material chosen by the artist to stage this kiss. A bare, unworked rock, also a reference to a remote, archaic time that is indefinable for our immediate perception, but if we focus only on the rocks, everything is projected into this suspended time, an indefinite and indefinable past that refers to our most intimate belonging to this planet and to our being as living organisms.



Figure 84 – Wilfredo Prieto, *Beso*, 2020. Photo by the author, 2022

We broaden our gaze and perceive the overall picture, the sculpture and the three towers behind it. The sculpture is positioned along an axis that starts right from the square in front of the skyscrapers and extends until it touches the external perimeter of the CityLife area. Its positioning is important because it determines the type of spatial relationship that the work will establish with the architectural object<sup>3</sup>. The dimensions of the towers vary from 260 to 175 meters in height, the dimensions of the Prieto boulders are approximately 2.50 meters, a colossal difference, if the sculpture had been placed too close to the architectural object, it would have been canceled visually. Conversely, if the sculpture were positioned too far from the architectural object, there would be no visual relationship between them. What becomes essential therefore, to establish a visual relationship in which the two subjects, the work of art and the architectural object, attract each other while both remaining readable in their relationship, is the right distance, the right positioning between them, we have to find what Arnheim calls the “*interspace*”

<sup>3</sup> In this particular case study, there are three architectural objects, but for ease of discussion, we will refer to them as a whole, therefore in the singular.

*«The interspace, then, establishes a particular ratio of remoteness and connectedness, which affects the architectural complex as a whole».* (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of the Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 18)

To which we add the relationship with the work of art, because to obtain a visual relationship, all the subjects involved must be in the same visual field, that is to say in the same image produced by the point of view of the viewer. Our point of view is in fact fundamental for defining the visual field in front of which we are, turning the head, or moving physically is equivalent to continuously including and excluding compositional elements of our visual framework, or equivalent to provide what is in front of us with the quality of an *event*. If we consider that ours is a perspective vision, we will also have confirmation in Arnheim’s words of the possible quality of our vision:

*«Perspective removes the building from the stable repose of the frontal plane and conveys it into the dimension of depth. Because depth is the realm of coming and going, when a building’s shapes conform to perspective, the building partakes in a movement».* (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of the Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 142-143)

As we have seen previously, an event has to do with time; it translates formal and physical elements into a temporal structure as thick as our vision lasts.

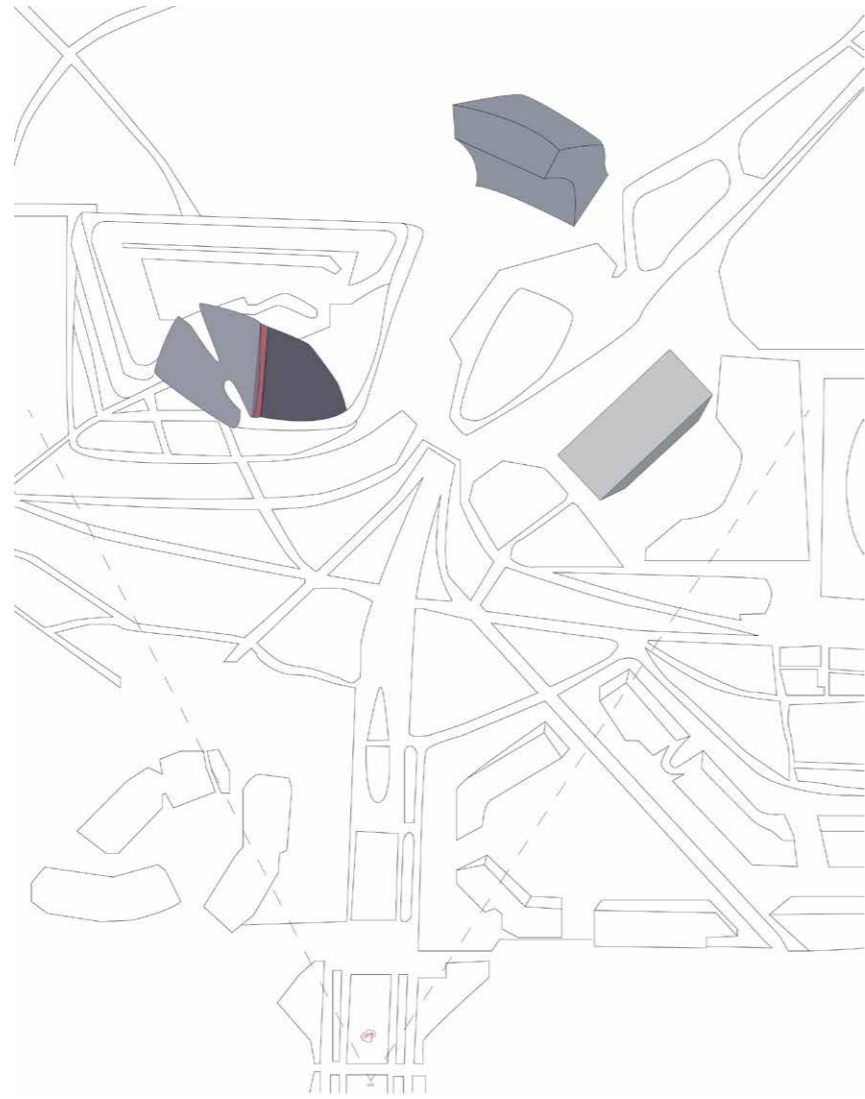


Figure 85 – The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork Beso. Romano 2022

In this sense, what Arnheim defines as an “interspace” we could translate into a temporal dimension and speak of “intertime” or, as we have stated since the beginning of this thesis, of *Time of Intersection*. By physically positioning ourselves in front of the work of art, we simultaneously see the rocks and, visually moving along the segment of the path, our gaze perceives the complex of the three towers whose upward push is as if arrested by the presence of the boulders. The distance chosen between the work and the architecture turns out to be “right”, namely it creates a force of magnetic attraction between the subjects which remains in balance between repulsion and attraction, giving us the possibility of perceiving them both and feeling how their visual overlap also overlaps their temporalities. From Prieto’s sculpture we are pervaded by this time suspended back in the past which overlaps the three types of temporalities analyzed for the towers, a vertical one (the Maffei-Isozaki tower), a helical rotary one (the Hadid tower) and a spherical one (the Libeskind tower).

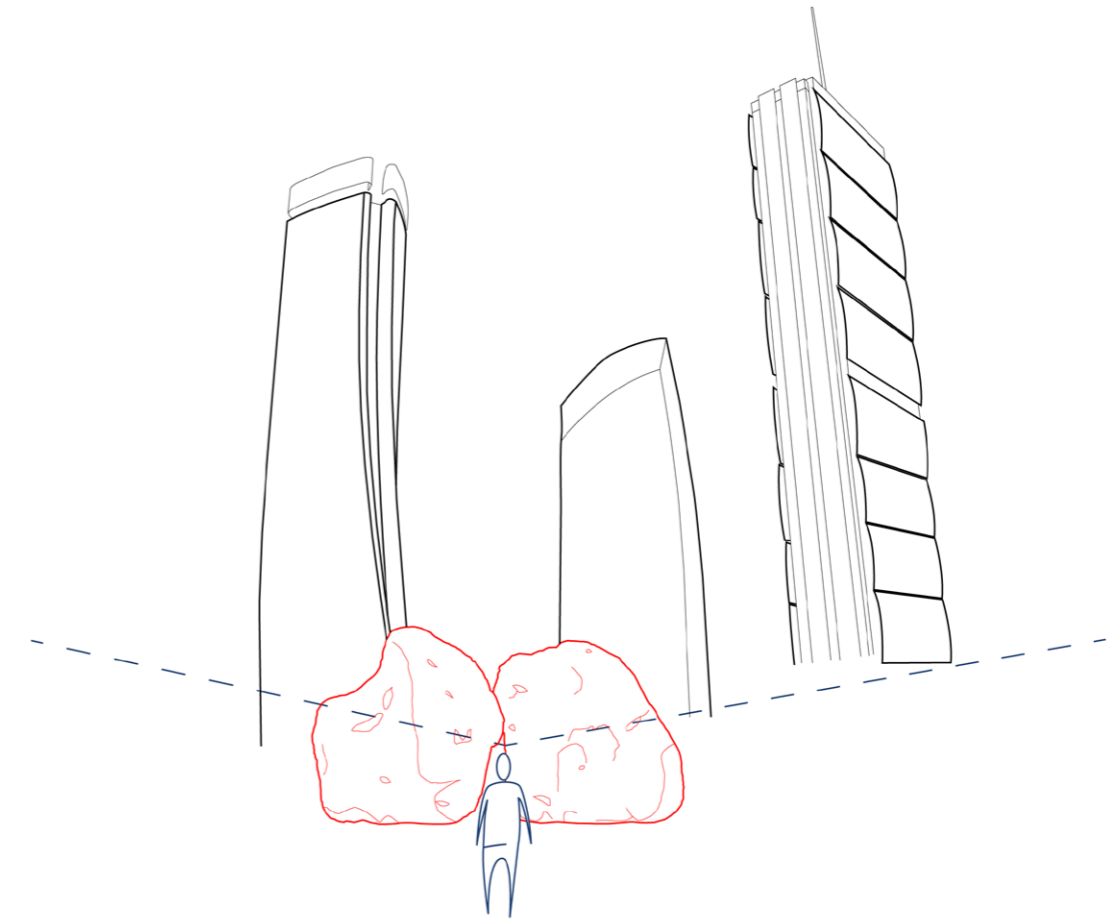


Figure 86 – The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork Beso. Romano 2022

What follows is a temporality that projects this suspended time into the sculpture's past, into an indefinite future, an archaic future, where what seems to be passing are precisely the elements that formally speak to the future, namely the architectural complex. The boulders instill their archaic temporality by fusing it with the perception and push towards the future, which we always tend to indicate in front of or above where we are. It is an almost melancholy sensation, of ineluctability, of the transience of our biologically finite being, almost a sort of *memento mori*, in which, however, is contained all of our salvation, in that mimesis of a kiss, an inner, physical and visceral gesture.

Another example of this type of relationship between a work of art and architecture is the case of the *Teatro Continuo* by Alberto Burri, built inside the *Parco Sempione* in Milan.

The work has a troubled history that begins with an invitation to Burri to think up a project for the 15th edition of the *International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts and Modern Architecture*, commonly known as the *Triennale*, held in 1973.

The work was to be inserted within the *Parco Sempione*, which arises from an urban reorganization of the space behind the *Castello Sforzesco*, used as a parade ground and redesigned as a green belt of the metropolitan area of Milan in 1884 in the implementation of the urban plan prepared by the engineer Cesare Beruto. The park was designed by the architect Emilio Alemagna and was conceived to reinforce an ideal axis that highlighted the alignment of the Castle with the *Torre del Filarete* and with the *Arco della Pace*.

The park envisaged a large green area structured through tree-lined paths, paths and bodies of water, incorporating within it some pre-existing buildings including, in addition to the *Castello Sforzesco* and the *Arco della Pace*, there was also the *Arena*. Subsequently, the *Civic Aquarium of Milan* and the *Palazzo dell'Arte* were also built inside the park by the architect Giovanni Muzio, the latter building destined to become the seat of the *Triennale*.

As we have said, at the two ideal extremes of the park are located the *Arco della Pace* and the *Castello Sforzesco*.

The *Arco della Pace* it was erected between 1807 and 1838 to celebrate the peace achieved between the European nations and sanctioned with the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The

building is one of the major monuments in the neoclassical style of the city of Milan; its structure is shaped with 3 arches with 4 columns which enclose the two lateral minor arches. A bronze sculptural group representing the chariot of peace that enters the city joyfully, to which are added 2 other lateral sculptural groups representing 4 victories on horseback, surmounts the whole arch.

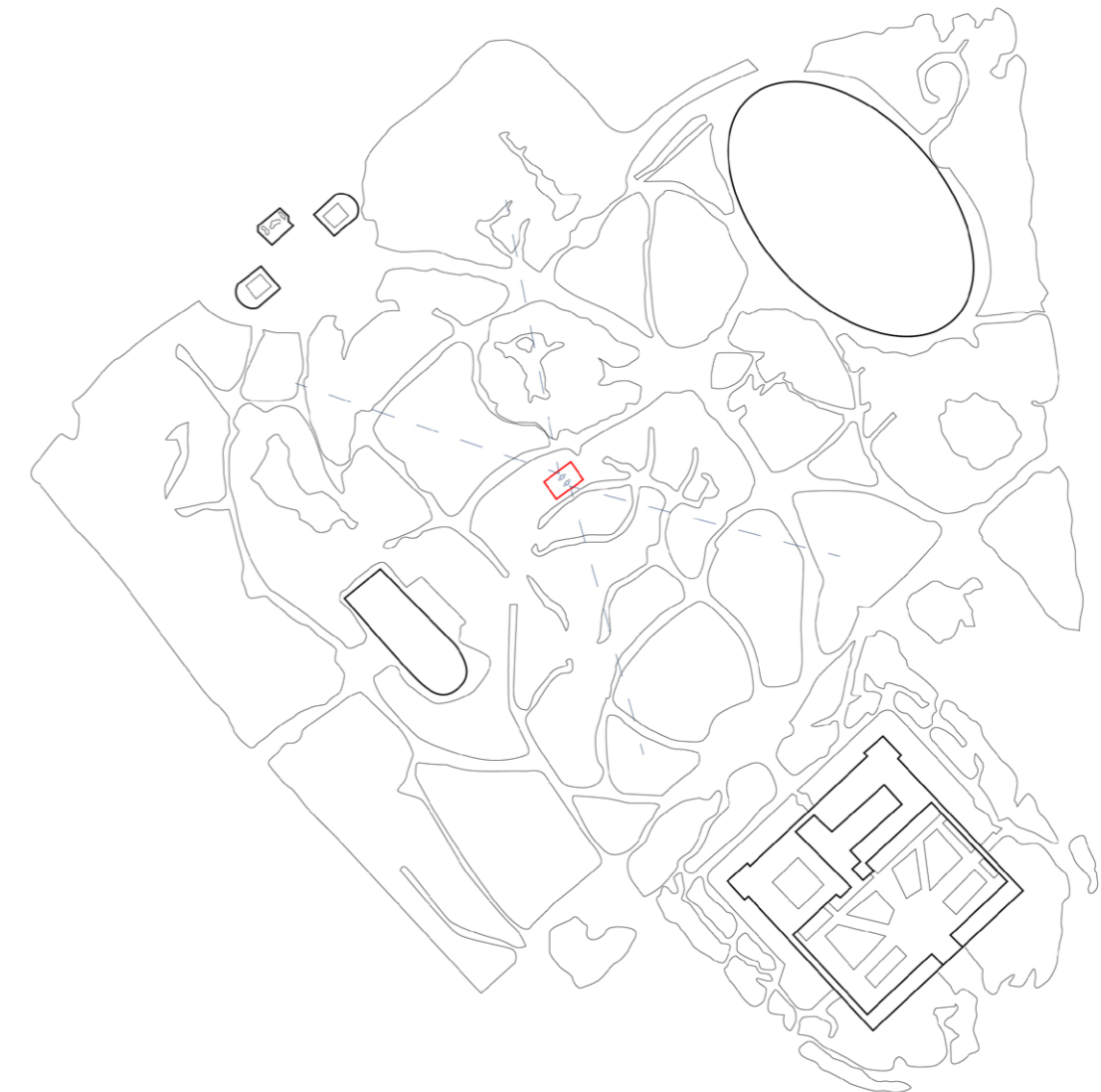


Figure 87 – The Arco della Pace and the Castello Sforzesco in their physical relation with the artwork Teatro Continuo. Romano 2022

At the other end of this ideal axis is the *Castello Sforzesco* with the *Torre del Filarete*. Francesco Sforza (later duke of Milan) built the castle in the 15th century, during the Renaissance and 17th century it was one of the main fortified buildings in Europe. During the 19th century it was heavily restored in an “*historicist*” style. The structure of the castle has a square plan with sides 200 meters long ending with 4 towers at the corners, 2 of which, particularly

robust, are oriented towards the city. At the center of the length of the plan, a tower was erected in 1452, later called *Torre del Filarete*, from the name of the architect who designed it (Antonio di Pietro Averlino, known as Filarete). The original tower was destroyed by an accidental explosion at the beginning of the 16th century and was rebuilt only in the early 1900s. The tower also has a square base made up of 3 bodies ending with battlements. On each crenellation there is a roof that forms the basis for the next body, smaller than the previous one. Above the third body there is an octagonal loggia surmounted by a rounded dome. The 70-metre-high tower is the tallest of those that make up the plan of the castle.



Figure 88 – Castello Sforzesco, Milano. Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Castello\\_sforzesco,\\_milano.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Castello_sforzesco,_milano.JPG)

Both buildings, which are therefore located at the two extremes of this ideal line within *Parco Sempione*, have a temporality that takes us back to the centuries in which they were built. Not only for the construction materials, but above all for the architectural style of both, neoclassical for the Arco della Pace and Renaissance (originally) and later “*historicist*” for the castle. When we observe them, we are catapulted into the atmosphere of the historical period they represent, time moves backwards towards a past that does not belong to us bio-

logically but we can feel that we are somehow a consequence of that historical moment that emanates from architecture itself.

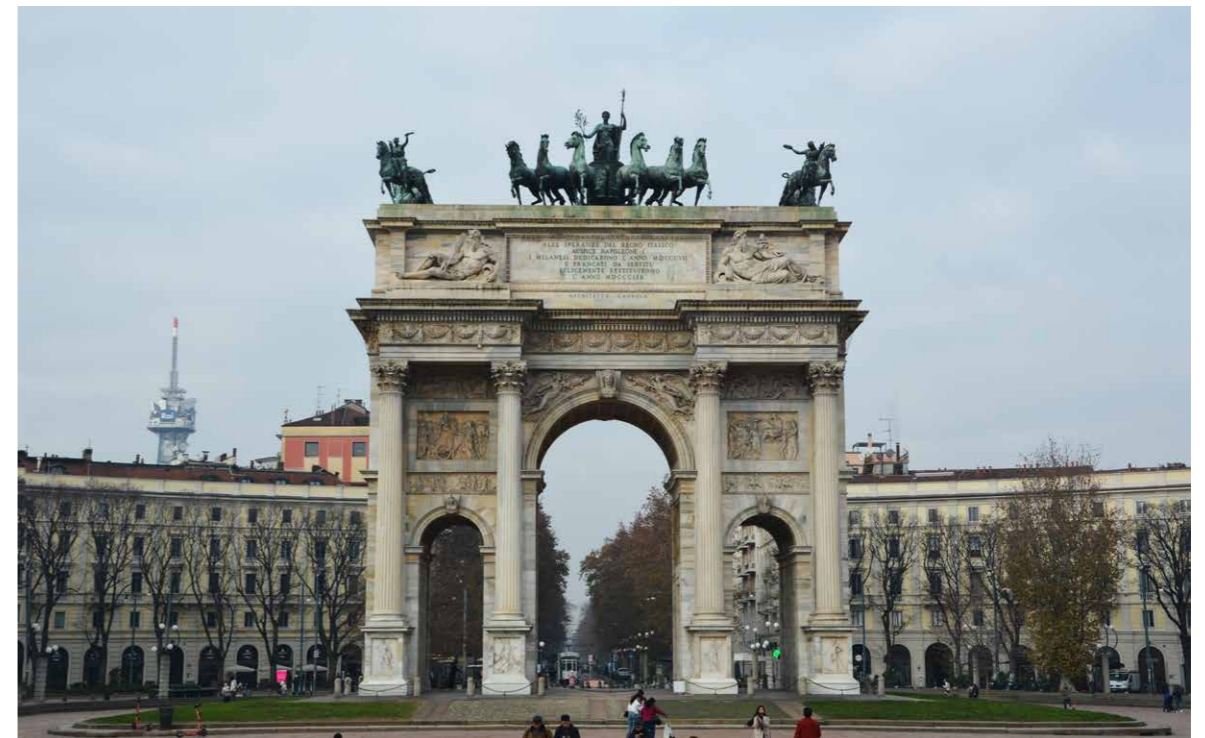


Figure 89 – Giacomo Brogi (1822-1881) Milano, Arco della Pace, Photo by the author, 2022

We were saying that Burri’s *Teatro Continuo* has a troubled history; in fact, the artwork is positioned, as specific indication of the artist, exactly along the line that connects the *Castello Sforzesco*, and the *Torre del Filarete* in particular, with the *Arco della Pace* from south-east to north-west. The artwork is donated to the city of Milan by the artist (together with other works created specifically for that edition of the Milan Triennale), with the obligation to take care of it and provide the necessary maintenance so that the artwork is not lost. Precisely the lack of maintenance of the artwork leads the Municipality of Milan to the decision to demolish it in 1989. Only on the centenary of the birth of Alberto Burri (coinciding with the Milan EXPO) in 2015, the artwork is returned to the city, in its position and in its original structure, reconnecting a discourse interrupted 35 years earlier<sup>4</sup>. Back to the moment of its original creation, Burri responded to the invitation to participate in the exhibition and sent a preparatory drawing accompanied by this description:

<sup>4</sup> The reconstruction of the *Teatro Continuo* by Alberto Burri it was possible thanks to the patronage of the professional association NCTM, based in Milan. For more information visit: <https://www.nctmelarte.it/en/portfolio-type/il-teatro-continuo/> accessed: 13 November 2022

«Here is my design for a Teatro Continuo. The concrete platform, the iron curtains, which will be the natural colour of sheet metal on one side and painted white and the other (the colour can be changed if required), rotate by remote control and are self-contained. [...] It is just a skeleton of a theatre, but I think the basics are all there». (Scardi, 2015, p. 71)

Burri himself declares in this description that his project is «essential» that is, it has been stripped of everything that the artist considered superfluous in the original conception of “theatre”. In fact, the artwork consists of a horizontal, quadrangular, concrete surface measuring 17x10.5 meters, raised off the ground so as to appear suspended, and six rectangular metal panels, 6 meters high and 2.50 wide, rotating on themselves with a mechanical mechanism, placed on the sides of the stage.



Figure 90 – Alberto Burri, Teatro Continuo, Milano. Photo by the author, 2022

The artwork is minimal in its formal components yet it has a great visual impact, it is an artwork that offers itself to the viewer, making the viewer a fundamental part of the development and existence of the work itself, as Umberto Eco suggests:

«A shape is a successful artwork, the point of arrival of a production and the starting point of a consummation which – by articulating itself – gives life again and again, from different perspectives, to the initial shape». (Eco, 2006 [1962], p. 50)

In other words, it constitutes an invitation for the spectator to become the “subject” of the artwork, actively participating in it by placing himself on the stage and in his being “action”, he contributes to restoring the initial shape of the artwork, enriching it with ever new perspectives and perceptions. The artwork fits into the environmental scenario of Parco Sempione as a visual fulcrum between the two extremes, binding them together through the affirmation of its presence.

We referred at the beginning of this paragraph to the necessary distance between two or more objects located in space to determine an influence on each other. By staying on Burri’s Teatro Continuo – activating it in this way – we can see both end points of the straight line that crosses Parco Sempione, establishing a particular relationship with one or the other end. By rotating our body by 180°, a field of forces is thus generated which connects directly through our gaze, 2 of the 3 elements of this straight line – the fulcrum + one of the two extremes and by extension the relationship continues behind us with the other end of the straight line. Burri titled his theater “continuous” not by chance, in fact, his theater is continuous because:

«It was continuous itself but also altered in accordance with what was being staged; capable of enduring despite the transitory nature of the purposes it served; and it was in synch with the flow of life in all its transience and incessant regeneration». (Scardi, 2015, p. 73)

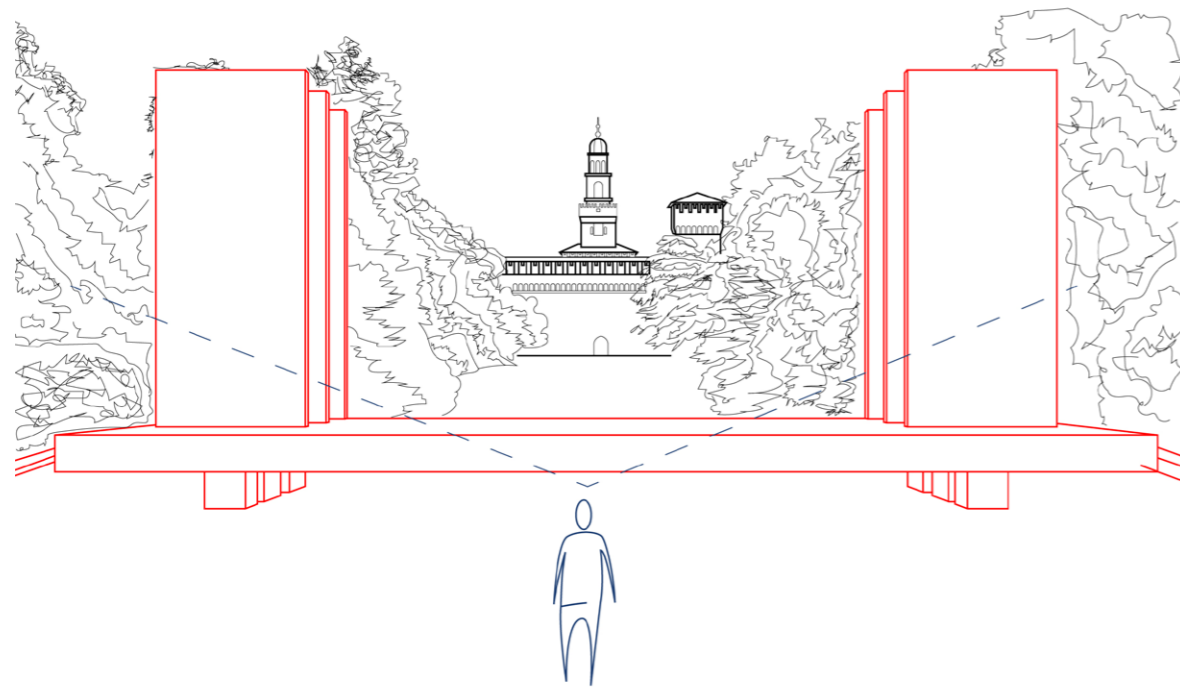


Figure 91 – The Castello Sforzesco in its physical relation with the artwork Teatro Continuo. Romano 2022

The temporality that derives from the spatial positioning of Burri's intervention is inextricably linked to its function as a "duration" device that extends into the spontaneous or organized representations that take place above it. Nonetheless, it also becomes a device of duration in its relationship with the surrounding space and in its prospective positioning at the center of this spatial axis. As we have seen, perspective is part of a motion because it positions objects on the plane of depth. Therefore, our presence in the fulcrum of this relationship transforms our perception of the objects placed at the two ends into an event, re-enacting them in the duration of our gaze, of our being also the biological fulcrum of an encounter between art and architecture.

## 2. The continuous flow of two close shapes.

(The definition of the Form by Superimposition or Juxtaposition)

In this section, we will analyze what kind of relationship is established between architecture and artwork in public space when the artwork is superimposed or juxtaposed on the building. The two subjects of the analysis are physically one on the other. In this kind of relation, it becomes crucial the spatial order that the two subjects create between them. The visual forces that work on the building and on the artwork must be reorganized to create a new visual order that will be the sum of the visual forces of both the subjects of the composition.

In architecture the simplest way to conceive a visual order that starts from a superimposition or juxtaposition, is the idea of simple modular units. These modules are geometrical figures that define sections of the subject that superimposed or juxtaposed, shapes the edifice. So, these elements are visually independent one from the other but if well used, they can create a visual order, or a symmetry. The visual fusion of all the elements, in this case is comparable to that of an organic body, in which all the different organs collaborate to the function of the body as a whole. From a perceptive point of view, the visual knowledge of an object (of all kind of nature) that is the result of different materials and styles – that thus works as a body – is related to the knowledge of our own body, and our spatial experience of it, in the world.

*«Relating the parts, recognizing them in detail, retracing their transformations and evolutions, measuring their differences and waste means recognizing the value of time».*  
(Pierini, 2021, p. 11)

The final order of the object must answer in any case, to different functions, so the use of different modules, styles, materials is somehow dependent also from the different functions that the building will have. All the parts of an architectural object must have a functional relationship between them. This will generate a hierarchical structure in the object that will also generate a dynamic visual perception of it.

In the definition of an artwork too, especially starting from the Twentieth century, the final form is often the result of the superimposition or juxtaposition of different materials that contributes to the definition of the visual equilibrium of all the forces working on the art object. The aesthetical rules are more or less the same both for an architectonic object and



for an art object, the visual order, the symmetry, the proportions between the different parts. What is different is the function. Usually, what define the function in an architectonic project is the plan, the horizontal dimension of the project, a building is something that it born to offer a function. Art objects also have functions but the function of an artwork is a symbolic one, moreover it is a kind of function that is not inextricably connected to a specific dimension of the object itself. This consequently changes the perception of the visual fusion of all the different elements used in the realization of the work of art. In any case both for architecture and art, the final form of the object does not represent its function, rather the form translates the functions of the object in its visual expression.

The first case study analysed in this section is that composed by the artwork *Marquee*, realised in 2015 by the French artist Philippe Parreno, installed on the external façade of the *Prime Minister Building* in Tirana (Albania).

Originally intended to house the Lieutenantcy of the Italian army during the occupation of Albania by the Kingdom of Italy, the building was designed by the Italian architect Gherardo Bosio in 1939. It is located along the main boulevard that cut the city on the North-South axes. The style of the building is that of the Neo-Classical, monumental architecture named "*Fascist Architecture*", developed in Italy and in other Countries in Europe with different names, during the two World Wars, that was based on the use of elements taken from the Modern Movement combined with elements of local architecture, to underline a certain natural lineage.



Figure 92 - Gherardo Bosio, drawing of the Lieutenantcy of the Italian army, 1939; source: AQTN

The body of the Prime Minister building is composed by two rotated elements in the shape of a "C" reaching a maximum height of fourteen meters from the ground. The first element, the one directly positioned along the main boulevard, it had 3 levels, the second element, rotated ninety degrees in relation to the first one, had one level less and its façade was simply plastered. The idea of the architect was to create a mutual relation between the body of the building and the open space around it, visible from all the sides of the composition.

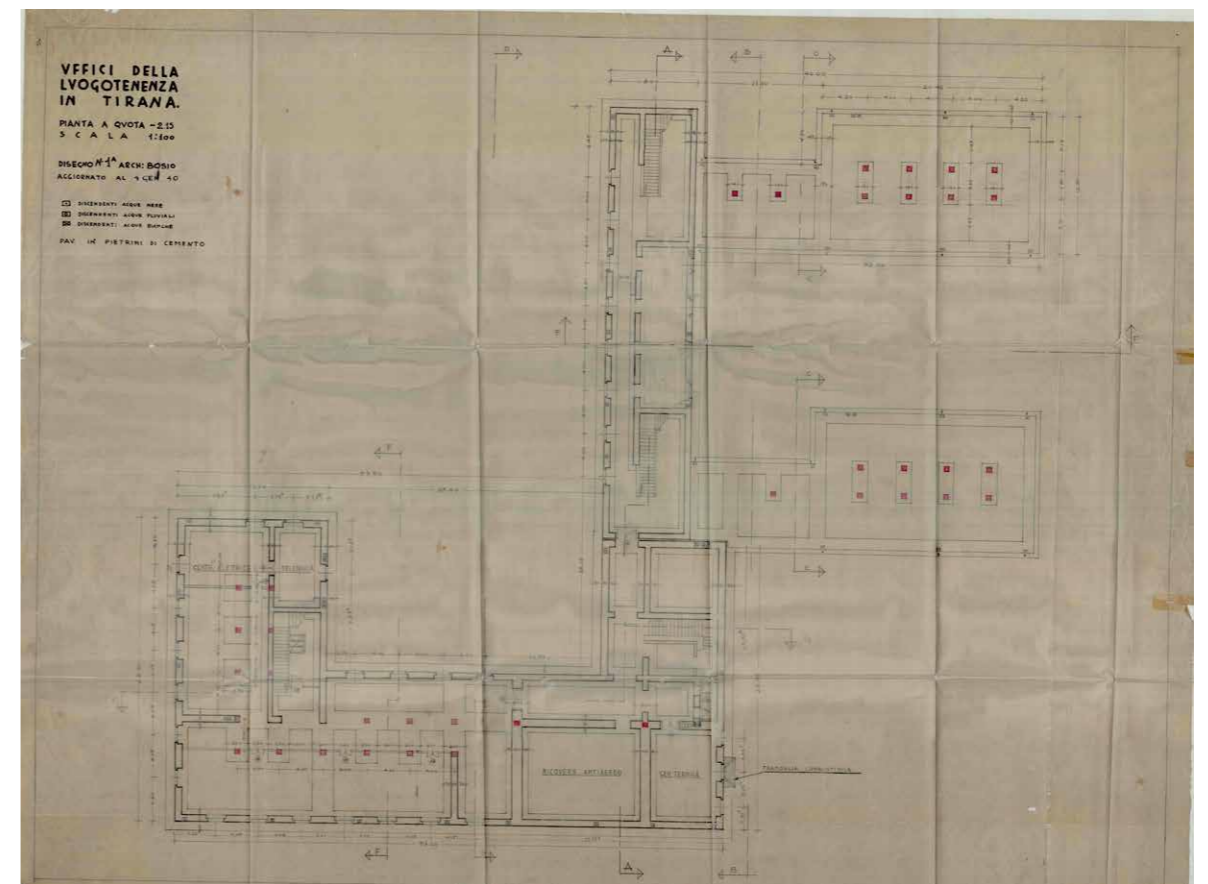


Figure 93 - Gherardo Bosio, plan of the Lieutenantcy of the Italian army, 1939; source: AQTN

At the end of the Italian Occupation, with the beginning of the new Albanian Communist Regime, the building changed its destination and became the seat of the Council of Ministers, of course it needs to be expanded in order to hosts all the new functions and employees. The Albanian Architects P. Luarasi and F. Pashko designed the project of the architectural extension in 1980, and it basically consists in the closing of the open areas of the originally "C" shaped elements and in the adding of a level in the lower side element of the composition. This intervention changed completely the original project, turning the body of the composition into a building with two independent inner courtyards, losing the relation with the open spaces around it, because the all composition it had now 4 façades without any hierarchical

relation between the heights of the four sides of it. Changing the plan, it is equal to changing the phenomenology of a building and as a consequence also its perception and, as we will also see its time. Every edifice started with the drawing of the plan, as a primary idea of action, different from vision, as Rudolf Arnheim noticed:

«*The paradox derives from a fundamental difference between the world of action and the world of vision. The principal dimension of action is the horizontal surface, and whatever is relevant to action tends to be revealed by the plan. The principal terrain of vision, however, is the vertical*». (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 54)

Therefore, the dimension of action was changed in the object and so it was that of vision, because every visual object it is a consequence of a configuration of forces, and the equilibrium of these visual forces is the object itself. Among all the directions of the three-dimensional spaces, one force acts as axes and visual reference for all the others: the vertical, a force that is directly connected to the gravitational force. Although the monumentality of a building is given from the horizontal, the vertical is, as we seen, the dimension of vision and the main façade of the *Prime Minister Building*, the one that is located along the main boulevard, is monumental because of the equilibrium between its horizontal rhythm and its vertical development.

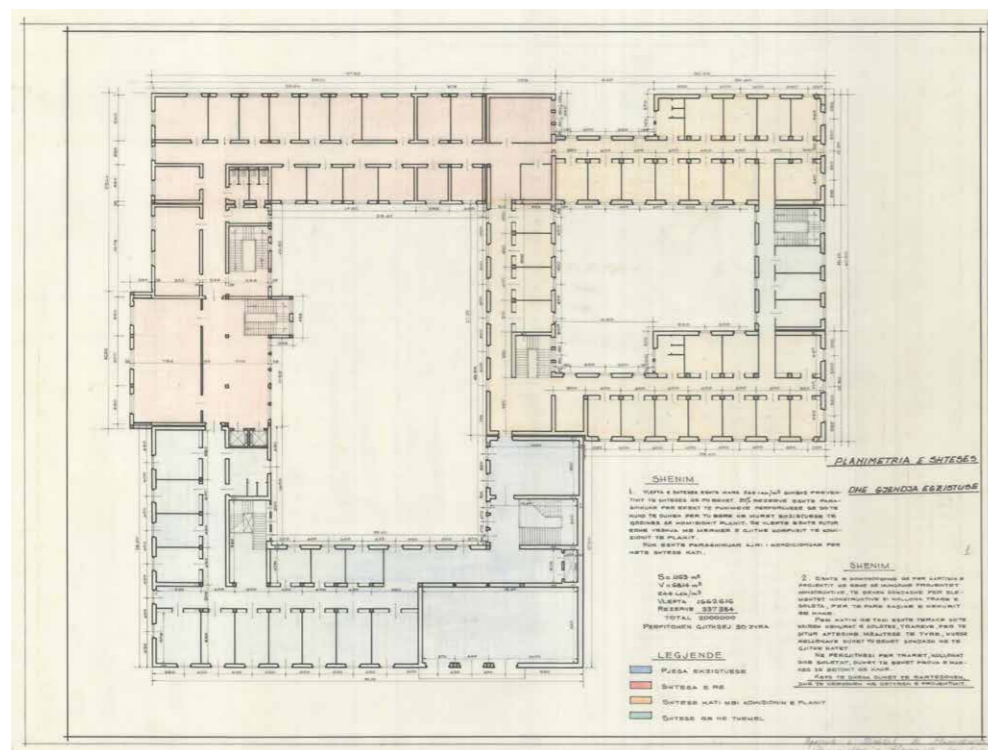


Figure 94 – P. Luarasi, F. Pashko, plan of the Council of Ministers Building, 1980; source: AQTN

Half of the wall is scanned by a series of 21 rectangular openings (windows) with an interaxle spacing of four meters from every opening, divided in 3 levels with 7 openings each. This rhythm is broken by the main access to the building with three longilineal openings running vertically (that makes the viewer understand that in that part of the building, the space is twice as high) separated from the entrance – also conceived with three different doors – by a little balcony extended horizontally along the three opens and the entrance below. A low relief located on the last quarter of the façade it helps the perspective effect of the entire edifice on the Boulevard. The entire façade is covered with rose travertine from Italy and the dimensions of the travertine tiles, dictate also the harmonic module of the edifice in a continuous movement through the rectangular openings, the vertical openings and the travertine tiles, that mutually changes the rhythmic module.

As we said before, the object is the result of all the visual forces that works on it, and action is perceived by the horizontal, that is to say, its plan, in opposition to vision, which is given by the vertical. All of these forces and dimensions contribute also to perceive the time that arise from the building. In this specific case, because of the particular relation of superimposition between the architectural object and the artwork, we will focus more on the vertical force that is visible on the façades of the edifice, and in particular, we will focus on the main façade of the Prime Minister Building. The structural analysis that we did, faces us with the phenomenological consequence that the time that arises from the edifice brings the viewer back at those years, the years of the construction of the building. Its architectonic style, the materials used, the rhythmic module, the use of the low relief, everything contributes to carry the viewer back in that historical period, once in front of this building one can feel the propaganda of a political idea, the strength of an ideology, the monumentality of the political power.



Figure 95 - Prime Minister Building, photo by Dritan Mardodaj, 2014; Source: <https://sq.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kryeministria>

In 2014 The Albanian Prime Minister, Edi Rama<sup>1</sup> decided to transform the boardroom of the Prime Minister Building, along with all the ground floor of that part of the edifice, into an exhibition space, named *COD* (Center for Openness and Dialogue). Asking some internationally established artists, to donate one of their artworks to be permanent installed in the area of the *COD*, one of them was Philippe Parreno, who donated one of his works from the series *Marquee*.

Since the beginning of his artistic research, Parreno investigates the borders between the real and the images we produce from it, trying to create autonomous situations able to determine new, not predetermines, identities both of the subjects and the objects taking part in the situations he creates. It is more difficult to find a precise style for the production of an artist or for a work of contemporary art, since after Postmodernism the idea of “style” in art has been dissolved into the myriad of narrations originates all over the world, in a pre-configuration of the multi-temporal reality we’re living today. Anyway, the *oeuvre* of Philippe Parreno, could be originally related to the relational aesthetics, developing subsequently into what the artist defines as belonging to a humanistic philosophy of proximity. His research is a production

<sup>1</sup> At that time Edi Rama was in the second year of his first term as Prime Minister, today (June 2023) Rama is in his third term.

of artworks that founds their *raison d’être* in the creation and organization of environments, where the author overturns the hierarchy between the artist (producer) and the viewer (consumer).

Often these environments are an exhibition, which the artist consider as a whole big artwork. Parreno underline that an exhibition is a temporal structure more than a spatial structure, the main question for him is related to “when” an artwork appears or disappears and his exhibitions are often related to the idea of appearing and disappearing, expanding the

«Perception of duration by inviting viewers to re-evaluate the nature of reality, memory and the passage of time». (Lissoni, 2016, p. 25)

Especially from this point of view we can read his series of works *Marquee*, the artist started in 2006, creating a growing number of them, every time related to a specific site or exhibition. They are lights installations inspired by the luminous signs hanged out the entrance to cinemas and theatres during the Fifties to announce a film or a theater performance. The *Marquees* acts as an expectation for an event to come, with their intermittent light, an event that in the mechanism built by the artist, it could be a film, or an action, or an interaction in the space of the exhibition. This mechanism pushes the borders between a sculpture and an architectonic object, the inside and the outside of an exhibition, the real and the imaginary.



Figure 96 - Philippe Parreno: *Marquee*, 2015; photo by the author, 2020

The sculpture donated to the COD is a metal structure, with opalescent white Plexiglas and 216 neon lights, of the dimensions of 594x119x396 cm; anchored to the facades of the building through 4 LED stripes.

Of course, as the architectural object, also the artwork is a result of all the visual forces that works on it and that contributes also to read the time that arises from it. The artist's *Marquees* combine lighting techniques that are clearly something of the past (such as incandescent bulbs and neon tubes) that are shaped according to the newest lights fabrication methods. There is a dimension of the action in the work that somehow heralds the action we could experience inside the building. Just as the lights had the function of attracting the attention of passers-by and "accompanying" them inside the cinemas or theatres, Parreno's *Marquee* "activates" the viewer when he is under the work, making him become part of the event, or rather the viewer becomes part of the expectation of the event to come. The intermittent lights represent the rhythmic pulse of life in its incessant cycle of appearing and disappearing.

Philippe Parreno's *Marquee* was installed on the main façade of the Prime Minister Building, right beyond the little balcony that separates the three-longilineal openings from the three doors of the main entrance, becoming a prominent element of the composition.

An artwork can interact several ways with a specific site, especially if this site is outside the "white cube" of galleries or museums. And there are several ways an artwork can interact with the landscape or the architecture that is already present in the site. In the analyzed case, this interaction is developed through a superimposition of the artwork on the architectural object. There is no distance between the two subjects of the composition, the artwork is literally on the architecture becoming part of it – of course maintaining its own characteristics – but in any case, breaking some compositional rules of the architectural object and establishing new ones at the same time. We perceive a completely new understanding of the composition, from a visual point of view, and consequently from an emotional point of view, and this changes also our temporal perception of the composition, is not possible anymore to read the time of the architecture, separate from the time of the artwork installed on it.

As we previously saw through the structural analysis of the edifice, the time that arises from the building brings the viewer back to the Thirties of the Twentieth century. Because of its

architectonic style, the materials used, the use of the low relief on the front of the building. The wall scanned by a series of rectangular openings (the windows of the façade), dictates the harmonic module of the edifice, creating a continuous movement of the eyes through the rectangular openings, the vertical openings and the travertine tiles, that mutually changes the rhythmic module. The superimposition of the artwork on the façade, right in between of the three doors that forms the main entrance of the building and the longilineal windows that stops the run of the rectangular openings, suddenly shift the perception of the time arises from the building to a different moment in history. The sculpture stands there shifting our imaginary to the Fifties, because it reminded us of those luminous signs hanged out cinemas and theatres to announce a film or a theater performance. In this new composition, the intermittent lights become part of that harmonic module originated from the travertine tiles, multiplying the pixel effect of the façade. The continuous flashing of the lights, moreover, underline the three doors of the entrance, giving them a different compositional balance weight. The Philippe Parreno's sculpture is horizontal, breaking the vertical run of the right half of the façade, creating a new relation with the horizontal movement of the three lines of openings along the left half of the front wall.



Figure 97 - Philippe Parreno: *Marquee*, 2015; photo by the author, 2020

The light installation mitigates the original austerity of the building, the monumentality of the political power. Making us read space in relation to time, which is now common in quantum physics where time and space are no longer spoken of as two separate factors, but they are always considered as a single one, scientists always refer to space-time, we have to treat space the same way we are treating time, like a flow. Aristotle already underlined this parallel:

«Space and time also belong to this class of quantities. Time, past, present, and future, forms a continuous whole. Space, likewise, is a continuous quantity: for the parts of a solid occupy a certain space, and these have a common boundary; it follows that the parts of a space also, which are occupied by the parts of the solid, have the same common boundary as the part of the solid. Thus, not only time, but space also, it is a continuous quantity, for its parts have a common boundary». (Aristotle, IV cent. b.C. (November 1, 2000), p. 18)

Aristotle is referring to the solids and hollows and to the relations of forces between an object and the environment around it, but he also considers time and space as a unique flow. In the approach to the notion of Time that we take into consideration in this thesis, we have to think past, present and future as a flow as well as in Aristotle's vision, we have to consider the different parts of an object as elements of a common limit. The interaction of the architectural object and the artwork, in this case through a superimposition of the work of art on the architecture, creates thus a new composition, a new object that in its flow, in its unique new shape founds a new equilibrium of forces. As we already saw before, the object is the result of all the visual forces that works on it, all of these forces and dimensions contribute also to perceive the time that arise from the building.

Thus, the new object in front of us is a consequence of all the visual forces that works on it from a spatial point of view, and of the two different times that works on it and that we now can perceive as one, as their *Time of Intersection*.

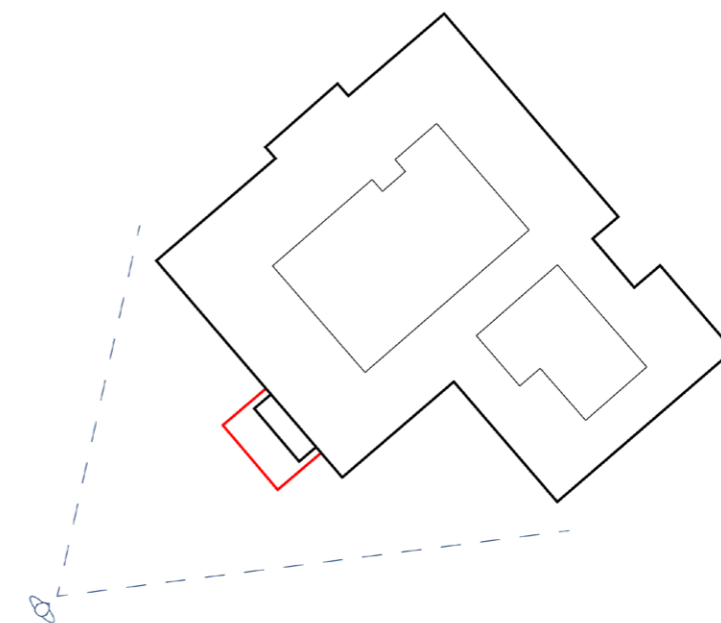
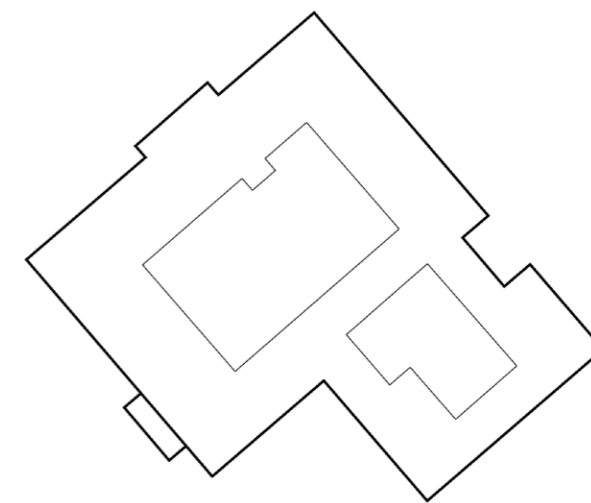


Figure 98 - The Prime Minister building in its physical relation with the artwork *Marquee*. Romano 2020

Because the *Marquee* series, embodies the expectation for an event to happen, the superimposition of the work on the building, shift our temporal perception to the future, to something we are waiting to happen, something that is not yet there. As we stated before we have to keep past, present and future together in a unique flow to perceive the movement of time as real. It is the infra temporal, the time in between the three – before separated – periods of past, present and future, and the two – before separated – times, that one of the architectural object, and that one of the artwork, which gives us the possibility to now, finally see the *Time of Intersection* derived from this juxtaposition. A building conceived and built in the Thirties, with a superimposed installation realized in 2015, but that bring us back to the Fifties if we refer to its shape. They embody a third time in their new unique shape, that comes as a

consequence of their structural relation, a third dimension that guide our perception through the future, the future of the expectation of an event to come. The flow of the time is real, because its organicity is built again through our new perception. This unique flow makes this Third Time real and perceptible, and gives us the possibility to *gaudere*, to rejoice the composition in a new and unique way, that did not exist before.

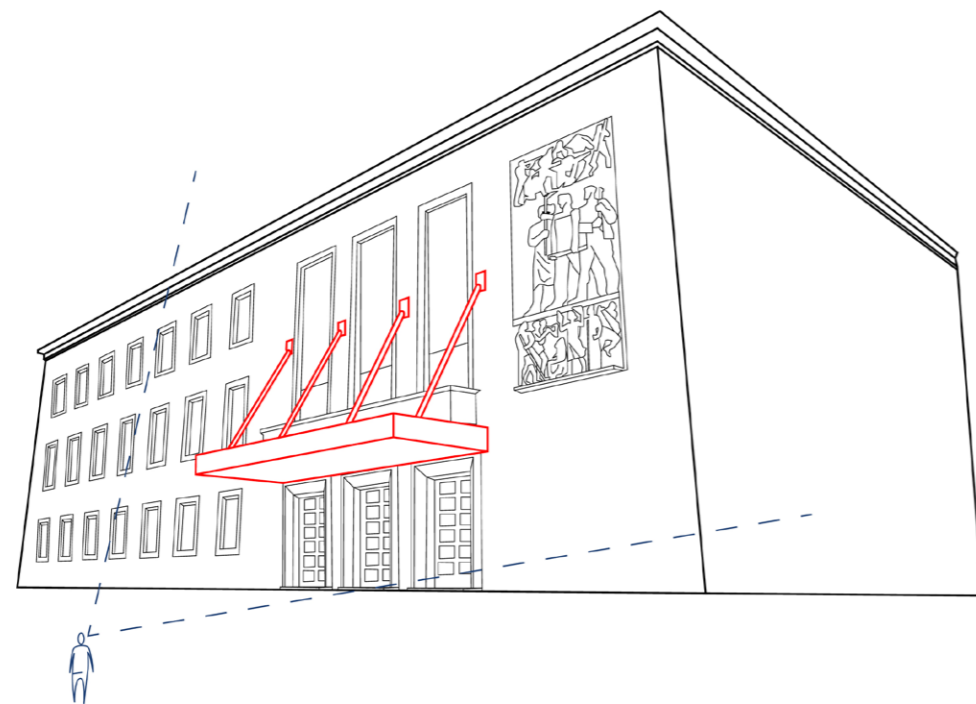


Figure 99 - The Prime Minister building in its physical relation with the artwork *Marquee*. Romano 2020

Let us now consider another example of the physical relationship that is established between architecture and artwork in public space when the two objects are superimposed or juxtaposed. In the specific case we will analyze the artwork titled *Three huts* by Tadashi Kawamata, composed of three distinct elements installed respectively on the external facade, in the internal courtyard and in one of the exhibition halls of *Palazzo Strozzi* in Florence, in 2013<sup>2</sup>. We will consider the two elements installed on the external facade and in the internal courtyard of the building.

*Palazzo Strozzi* is one of the largest and most majestic Renaissance palaces in Florence. It was built at the behest of Filippo Strozzi whose family was at war with the Medici family and precisely to challenge the Medici in grandeur, for its construction were demolished 15 buildings erected around the area where the residence owned by Filippo Strozzi once stood. Work began in 1489 and nothing was left to chance, even the day the first stone was laid was astronomically studied to ensure it was an auspicious day. The construction of the palace became a real obsession for Filippo Strozzi, who died 2 years after the beginning of the works. His heirs carried out the costly project, which, after various vicissitudes, was completed in 1538. The Medici family who accused the Strozzi of treason immediately confiscated the building. Only in 1568 the palace was returned to Strozzi family, precisely to Cardinal Lorenzo Strozzi, who proceeded with the expansion works. In 1907 Piero Strozzi died without heirs and the building became the property of the National Insurance Institute. Today it also houses the *G. P. Vieusseux Cabinet* (a Florentine cultural association), the *Institute of Renaissance Studies*, as well as the *Institute of Humanistic Studies* and the *Palazzo Strozzi Foundation*. The architecture of the building refers to that of *Palazzo Medici*, with a quadrangular shape, developed on three floors with an internal courtyard. Rectangular windows on the first floor and mullioned windows on the second and third floors complete the facade built with the ashlar technique to give it majesty. On three of the four sides, that form the plan of the building there are arched doors. Inside, the courtyard is surrounded on all four sides by arches resting on columns ending in Corinthian capitals. The building has a “weight” that seems to anchor it to the ground, a characteristic of many Renaissance buildings, as Zevi points out:

<sup>2</sup> The installation was created as part of the exhibition “*Unstable territories*” curated by Walter Guadagnini and Franziska Nori at the Center for Contemporary Culture Strozzi, Palazzo Strozzi, Florence. For more info: <http://www.strozzina.org/en/exhibitions/territori-instabili/> accessed November 16, 2022

«The 16th-century architect emphasized unitary volume and massive gravity in a palace, either with the prominence of solids over voids, or with superimposed orders, a translation into plastic terms of those linear pilasters». (Zevi, *Architecture as Space - how to look at architecture*, 1993, p. 132)



Figure 100 - Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze; source: <http://www.palazzomediciriccardi.it/mediateca/palazzo-strozzi-2/>

The space acquires a plasticity derived from its massive physical presence; its spatial relationship is configured in its geometry and in the materials used for its construction, creating a plastic relationship that also constitutes its visual impact. As Moretti points out:

«An architecture can be read through the various aspects of its figure, that is, in the terms with which it is expressed: chiaroscuro, constructive fabric, plasticity, structure of the internal spaces, density and quality of the materials, geometric relationships of the surfaces and other more alien ones, such as the color». (Moretti, 2019, p. 123)

Reading the architecture of Palazzo Strozzi according to these qualities, we can perceive the fidelity to the construction canons of the Renaissance, to those mathematical laws so essential for the architects of the time that inextricably linked the laws of architecture to the proportions of the human body, as it reminds us also Piero Ostilio Rossi:

«The construction of a lattice or a basic geometric system that regulates the arrangement of the individual parts and their mutual relationships is one of the tools most frequently used to sketch up the construction of a drawing or a sculpture». (Rossi P. O., 1996, p. 133-134)

In this sense, the temporality that this object sends back to us is directly connected to the human being, to the possibility of dominating space already with one's gaze, even before having a direct physical experience of it, according to the philosophy that permeated the entire Renaissance period. A temporality that is affected by the gravitational force operated by the architectural object, which pushes our perception towards an idea of eternity, towards a time that does not flow, but is eternally immobile, as Taroni clarifies, explaining Plato's approach to eternity:

«While the "was" and the "will be", the past and the future, which indicates movement and ageing, refer to time, only the "is" it refers to eternity, an eternal present that never ages». (Taroni, 2012, p. 63)

An element that becomes permanent and that if we think of the theory of persistence developed by Poète in Rossi's re-reading, we will be able to understand how:

«These persistences are revealed through monuments, the physical sign of the past, as well as through the persistence of a city's basic layout and plans». (Rossi A. , *The Architecture of the City*, 1982, p. 59)

This architectural object thus becomes a «persistence» in the public space and consequently in our perception of it.

The work of Tadashi Kawamata insinuates onto this philosophical idea visualized through architecture, through an artwork that stands at the conceptual and philosophical opposite of

what we have analyzed so far. The shelters built by the artist are inspired by the urban landscape of 1980s New York where the artist notices the constant presence of homeless shelters along the streets of the city.



Figure 101 - Tadashi Kawamata, *Three Huts*, 2013; photo courtesy Palazzo Strozzi

These shelters, already from the title, are something that reminds us to a precarious and poverty dimension. The installation is made with recycled material found *in situ* that the artist assembles directly on the facade of the building, eliciting an image of transience and housing emergency. *Three huts* is a series that Kawamata has been carrying on since the mid-1980s and which falls within a concept of cyclicity that we find in the architectural philosophy of his country of origin, Japan. This series can be read as a flow that contains within itself the creation and destruction that alternate seamlessly from one installation to another, from one place to another where the artist is invited. In the words of Kawamata himself:

*«My project is never complete. It prolongs itself indefinitely. It is pure action».*  
(Strozzina, 2013)



Figure 102 - Tadashi Kawamata, *Three Huts*, 2013; photo courtesy Palazzo Strozzi





Figure 103 - Tadashi Kawamata, *Three Huts*, 2013; photo courtesy Palazzo Strozzi

As we have seen, the idea of “*duration*” of the object is an integral part of the project. This duration is not only physical but also, or especially, perceptive, and it derives by the always equal and always different repetition of the project in time and space. The installation suggests a feeling of existential precariousness that seems to undermine the architecture on which it is installed. In fact, the idea of a shelter is epistemologically different from that of a palace. Ontologically they have the same origin, which we find in an attempt to find shelter from the dangers of the outside world, but the two concepts then follow two completely different paths and developments. Arnheim suggests that the refuge or nest has a physical approach, derived from an action:

«*The opposite kind of building is the burrow, which, taken again as a pure abstract type, is simply the result of the inhabitant's physical penetration*». (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 149)



Figure 104 - Palazzo Pitti in its physical relation with the artwork *Three Huts*. Romano 2022

While the building, in this case stands out aristocratically behind it. Yet this ephemeral structure superimposes the architectural object with a visual force capable of semantically re-designing their union. If, as we have analyzed previously, the spatial relationship of an architectural object can be read through the relationship between its geometry and its plasticity, also in the case of the Kawamata's shelter the relationship between geometry and plasticity outlines a visual synthesis that elicits a precise perception. A feeling of total decadence that somehow leads us to the crisis of the human race with respect to the impact left by its own signs on the environment where it lives.

The temporality produced by the juxtaposition between this work and the architectural object is therefore unsettling because it interrupts the static nature of the infinite towards which the building tends to bring it back to a precise moment in the timeline, to reinsert it in the present of our being in time and in the space.

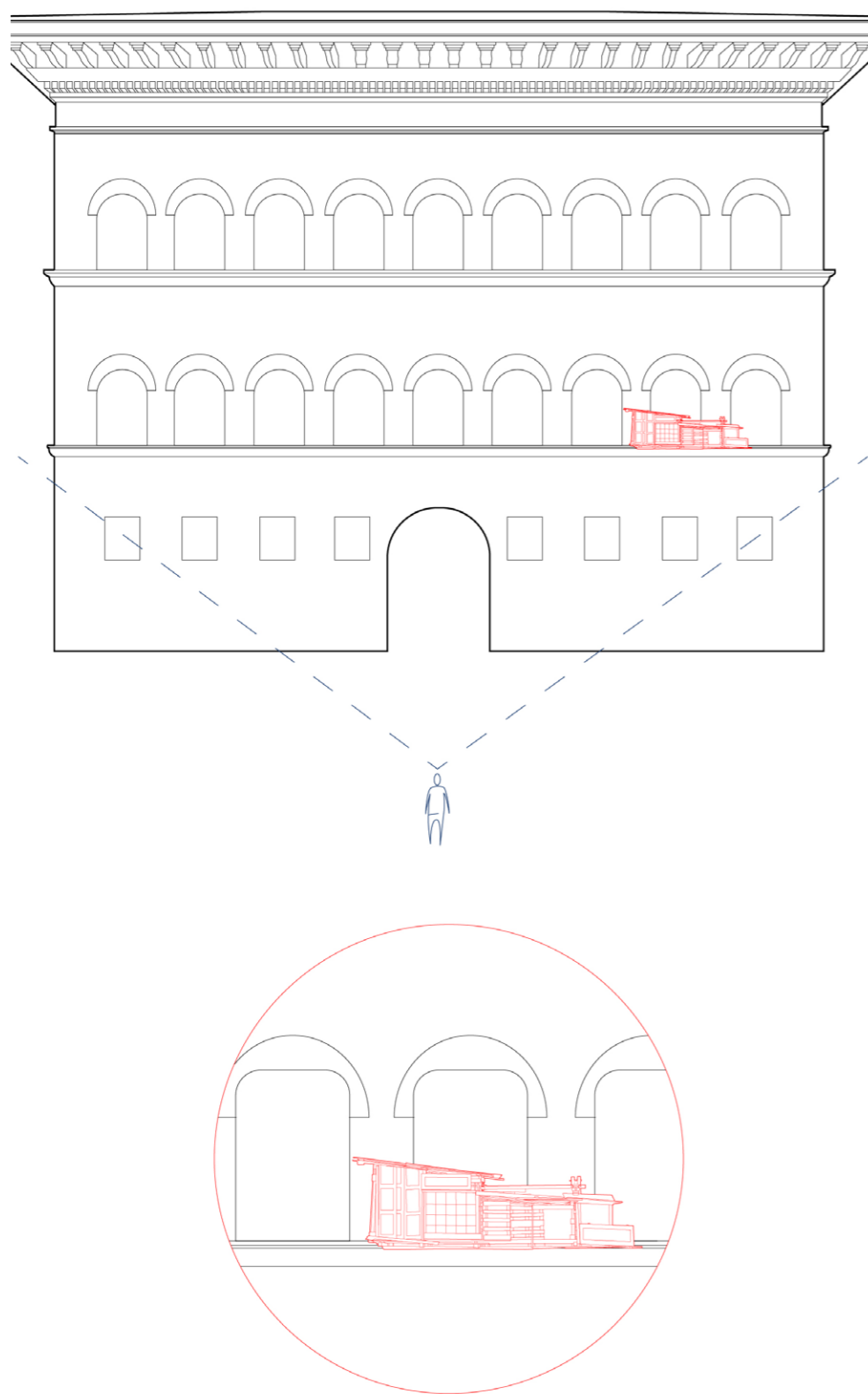


Figure 105 - Palazzo Pitti in its physical relation with the artwork *Three Huts*. Romano 2022

### 3. Single and collective memory.

(Of the rhythm, or of the continuity of the impression)

In this section, we will analyze what kind of relationship is established between architecture and the work of art in public space when there is a rhythm between them, that is, an element that refers to their spatial assonance. Let us start by defining what we mean when we talk about “rhythm”. According to the Treccani dictionary:

*«The orderly succession in time of forms of movement, and the frequency with which the various phases of the movement follow one another. This succession can be perceived by the ear (with alternating sounds and pauses, more intense and less intense sounds, etc.), or by the eye (as an alternation of moments of light and moments of shadow, of actions and pauses, of similar actions and actions of different types, etc.), or conceived in memory and thought».* (Treccani, s.d.)

What is immediately clear is that the rhythm is formed by an alternation, a succession, therefore by an idea of movement, flow, physical, and perceptive. This leads us to clarify that therefore to obtain a rhythm, we need of a memory, we need an internal trace that makes one element last until the next one appears, be it a sound or an image. In other words, rhythm is composed of an element in relation to the element that precedes it, it exists in the decomposition of the elements in their temporal succession. So, we could summarize that rhythm is made up of two perceptual moments, one external and one internal.

There are various ways of perceiving rhythm, in an active-dynamic way, in case the succession of elements takes place in their temporal succession, as for example in the movement of bodies, or in singing, or in music. Similarly, rhythm is also present in elements that we could define as static in their form, such as a visual element, or for example an architectural object. In this case, also, the formulation of the rhythm does not change, it is a matter of observing the development of a shape by reading the position of the points that compose it in their spatial succession. As Ginzburg also clarifies:

*«Under certain conditions we can simultaneously perceive and conceive all the elements of a given artwork. The concept of time is here replaced by the concept of the extension of each constituent element, which is however always a function of time. The temporal*

*correlation is replaced by the introduction of elements into space, by their different coexistence in each individual case». (Ginzburg, 1977, p. 8)*

We therefore speak of the *extension* of the constituent elements, or in the temporal parallel that we have already explained in the previous chapters, of *duration*. The vocabulary of the possible relationships between architecture and artwork that we present in this thesis therefore also includes the relationship through rhythm. Let us consider as a first example of this type of physical relationship between architecture and work of art, a static rhythm that we can observe in Vienna between the Judenplatz, and the memorial designed by the British artist Rachel Whiteread.



*Figure 106 - Judenplatz without Rachel Whiteread's memorial; photo source the internet.  
Digital intervention by the author, 2021*

The *Judenplatz* is located in the heart of the old city of Vienna, in the *Innere Stadt* district. The square took its present name only around 1437 after the pogrom of 1421 against the Jews who had already settled there around 1150. The ghetto took on the elongated shape that we can still see today, with the buildings forming a kind of boundary walls with their rear facades. About 800 people lived inside and there were various structures, a synagogue,

a hospital, banks, commercial buildings. The campaign against the Jews that began in 1420 led to the uprooting of the inhabitants and forced conversion, the synagogue was destroyed and the square redesigned architecturally, without losing the shape or the name it has kept to this day.

The buildings that shape the *Judenplatz* range from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century grouping different architectural styles from Gothic, of which we have an example in the *Haus zum Grossen Jordan*, up to the Neo-Classical.

At number 8 of the square stands the *Misrachi-Haus*. A building built in 1694 and now home to the Jewish Museum of Vienna. In the space in front of this building, during the construction of the Rachel Whiteread memorial, were found the remains of the synagogue that previously stood in the square and destroyed by the pogroms that took place in the 1400s.



*Figure 107 - Judenplatz, Misrachi-Haus; photo by Ines Çela, 2022*

One of the main buildings on the square, as an administrative building, is the former *Böhmische Hofkanzlei* (the Bohemian Court Chancellery), now the seat of the Supreme Administrative Court. Originally, the entrance was facing away from the square, and only the modifications made to the building during the 20th century reversed the orientation, bringing the entrance inside the square. The building was the seat of the Nazi administration during the Second World War and is one of the examples of Austrian Baroque architecture, built between 1710 and 1714.

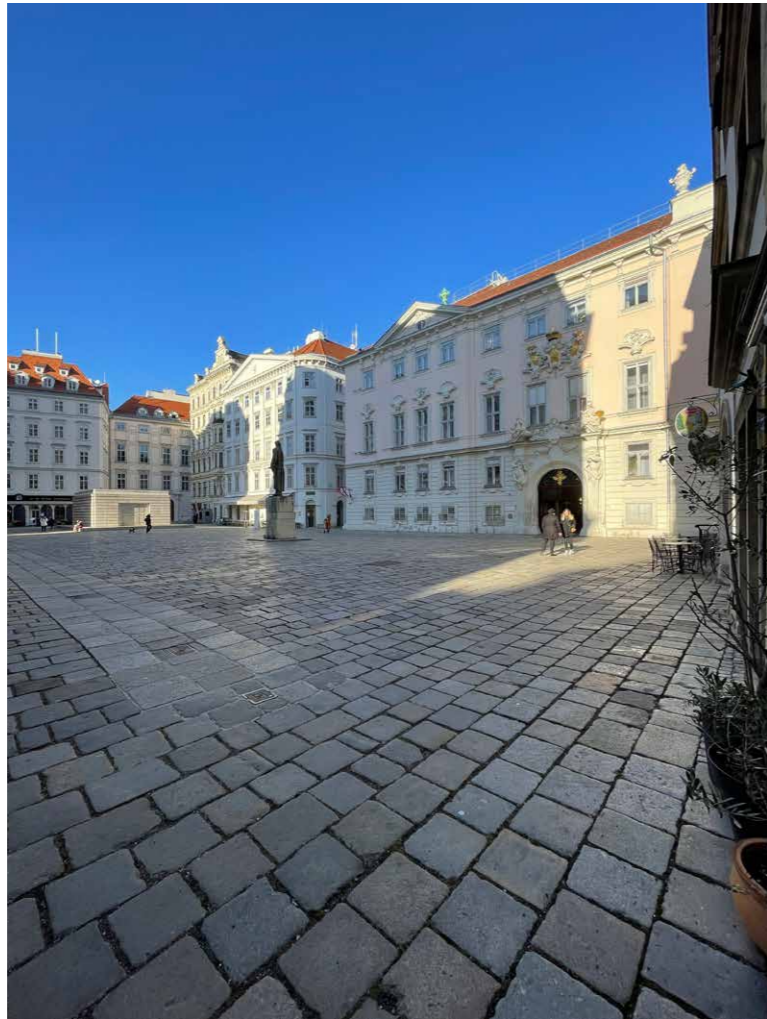


Figure 108 - Judenplatz, Böhmisches Hofkanzlei; photo by Ines Çela, 2022

In the evolution of architectural styles, rhythm has always been sought, generally, in the relationship between the forms of the building's fundamental masses. One of the historical moments where this relationship is somehow violated is the Baroque, where fluid shapes that make the boundaries between the various visual elements less stable, creating a complex interweaving of lines and planes, invade the building.

This visual result was determined by various changes taking place in that period that had changed man's perception of himself. The new scientific discoveries which consequently had imposed a different approach on the Church which led to various reforms and counter-reforms, the geographical discoveries which changed the vision of the world, the new philosophical ideas. This approach to reality was also reflected in architecture, as we have seen the development of Baroque architecture, it returned this new complexity expressed by the "pluralistic" world. The alteration of proportions and mass relationships, the tension of plastic forms, the predilection for curved forms, often also in the plans of buildings, the complex spatial construction that was almost theatrical. In Austria the Baroque arrived relatively late, when it was internationally changing into what will be called late Baroque and later, Rococo style which is distinguished by the rich decoration of the facades and a clearer demarcation between outside and inside.

The *Judenplatz* therefore takes the form of a scenography from which, we are completely surrounded. Moving around the square, observing the architecture around us, we are pervaded by the sensation of still being in Baroque Vienna. The experience of architecture takes us back to a time that we have not experienced directly, but which is stratified in our memory and known through the history of the development of European civilization. At the south end of the square there is also a statue dedicated to the German poet Gotthold Ephraim Lessing<sup>1</sup>.

The artwork we are dealing with, positioned in the northern end of the *Judenplatz*, was designed by the British artist Rachel Witheread, who won a public competition for the construction of a memorial for the Jewish victims of the Nazi Fascism, organized in 1996. The title of the sculpture is *Memorial for the 65.000 Murdered Austrian Jews*. The sculpture, 10x7 meters in size, looks like a concrete cuboid with a double door carved and sealed along the facade that opens into the square. The walls of the memorial are sculpted in the shape of books placed next to each other and perfectly anonymous, the spine of the books facing the interior of the sculpture. The books appear to be multiple copies of the same edition, since they are all the same size, becoming a sort of repeating module as far as the eye can see. It is not known which book it is, nor its content, the artist probably uses the book, as a metaphor for the personal story of each person who was killed in the name of the Nazi-Fascist nation-

<sup>1</sup> Siegfried Charoux made the statue, originally in 1935, later it was melted down to produce war material during the Second World War. In 1968, Charoux finished a second sculpture dedicated to Lessing, which was originally erected on *Ruprechtsplatz* and later moved to *Judenplatz* in 1981.

alist ideology, as well as the modular repetition of this element is linked to the large number of people killed (65,000 the official number).

The memorial was originally to be inaugurated on November 9, 1996, on the 58th anniversary of the “Night of Broken Glass”<sup>2</sup>. During the works for the construction of the memorial, as mentioned above, archaeological remains were found under the square, which (together with some political and aesthetic controversies about the sculpture) delayed its completion by postponing the inauguration of the memorial of 4 years, on October 25, 2000.

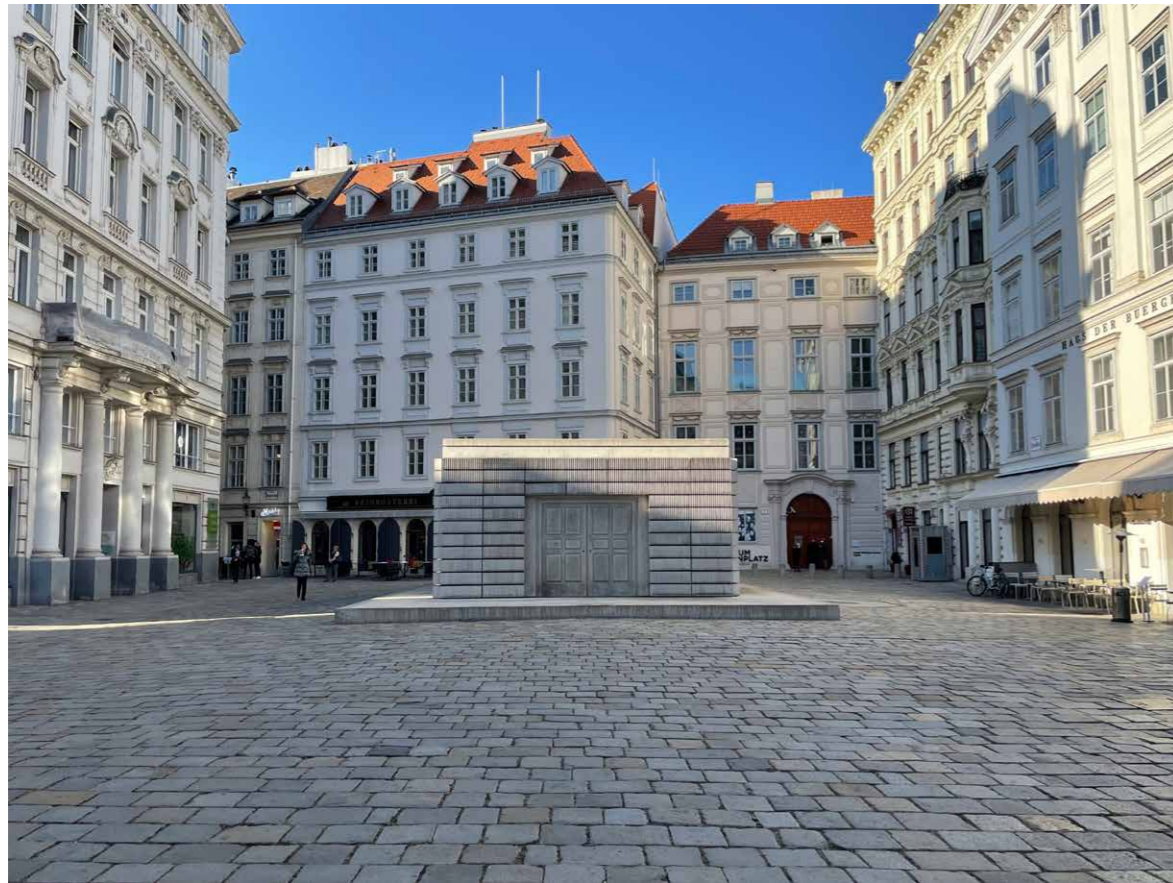


Figure 109 - Rachel Whiteread, Memorial for the 65.000 Murdered Austrian Jews; photo by Ines Çela, 2022

The archaeological remains of the medieval synagogue have been symbolically integrated into the Whiteread memorial, via a parallel underground path, which can be accessed from the museum housed in the *Misrachi-Haus*, behind the memorial.

Visually, the artwork is in perfect symbiosis with the previous production of the British artist, who has become famous for her casts of architectural voids (one of her most famous

<sup>2</sup> It has been a pogrom against Jews committed by the Nazi's paramilitary forces together with civilians, the night between November 9 and 10, 1938 throughout all German territory.

sculptures is entitled *House* from 1993, which earned her the victory of the Turner Prize<sup>3</sup> in the same year). In the specific case of the memorial for the Judenplatz, it is not a cast, but the concrete block recalls a lot from a formal point of view, the previous methodology used by the artist as in the creation of the aforementioned work *House*:

*«Its shape hovers, a ghostly negative version, around the finished object. In Whiteread's project the original house is the mold, and its absence is used as a metonym for the disappearance of those who had lived there».* (Adamson & Wilson, 2016, p. 100)

From the moment of its inauguration, the work becomes an imposing presence within the square. A sort of interruption in the practicability of the void created by the internal space of the square. Although the work is massive and visually compact, it speaks of absence, being dedicated to people who disappeared during a massacre. It interrogates the collective memory of a people, and it does so inside a square that seems to have been built like a theater stage where the pride of a Nation can be staged, through the display of the plasticity of the Baroque and the Neo-Classical of the architecture that encloses it.

Whiteread's work problematizes the idea of memory on different levels, first by asking which visual form memory must acquire, which internal mechanisms must trigger the vision of the work, what is its role in reactivating our consciences with respect to themes and human tragedies, whose memory is sometimes overwhelming.

Precisely between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the value of memory was reformulated by separating it from the technical capacity of memory or mnemonics and introducing the idea of personal memory, or remembrance. As Assmann points out:

*«The concept of “memory” is linked to those of “tradition” and “rhetoric”; that of “remembrance” instead is traced back to “subjectivity” and “writing”».* (Assmann, 2002, p. 100)

<sup>3</sup> The Turner Prize it is an annual prize presented to a British visual artist. For more information about the prize: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/turner-prize>

Value is given to personal remembrance, so the very idea of a temporal continuity of memory becomes a task to be fulfilled during one's personal existence. On the other hand, Bergson also relies on the inner world in his definition of *duration*:

*«I cannot escape the objection that there is no state of mind, however simple, which does not change every moment, since there is no consciousness without memory, and no continuation of a state without the addition, to the present feeling, of the memory of the past moments. It is this which constitutes duration».* (Bergson, *An introduction to Metaphysics*, 1912, p. 44)

The time that the artwork confronts us with is a time of collective memory that becomes personal memory. Just think of the formal structure chosen by the artist, the module that repeats itself is that of books, all identical to themselves repeating without any possible information, if not their own presence which creates a sort of archive of the absent, of those that are no longer there, whose presence can only be recovered through our memory. What memory if we who observe it today have not been witnesses of the facts to which the memorial refers?

What is required of us is precisely a shift from a collective memory to a personal one, starting from the visual archive prepared by Whiteread. The archive is by definition a memory builder, Assmann points out to us by stating that:

*«The archive is not only the place where the documents of the past are kept but also the place where the past is built and created. This operation depends both on social, political and cultural interests, and, above all, on the means of communication and the coding systems in force».* (Assmann, 2002, p. 23)

Obviously, if we change the coding systems, the creation and management of the archive itself changes, and consequently also our historical memory. The fact that the artist has chosen not to give us references to the visual archive in front of which we are, turning the backs of the books towards the inaccessible interior of the sculpture, faces us once again with an absence and with the necessity to build our own personal archive. An archive to be built through our physical experience together with our knowledge of the events and in contrast with another visual archive that one proposed by the surrounding architecture.

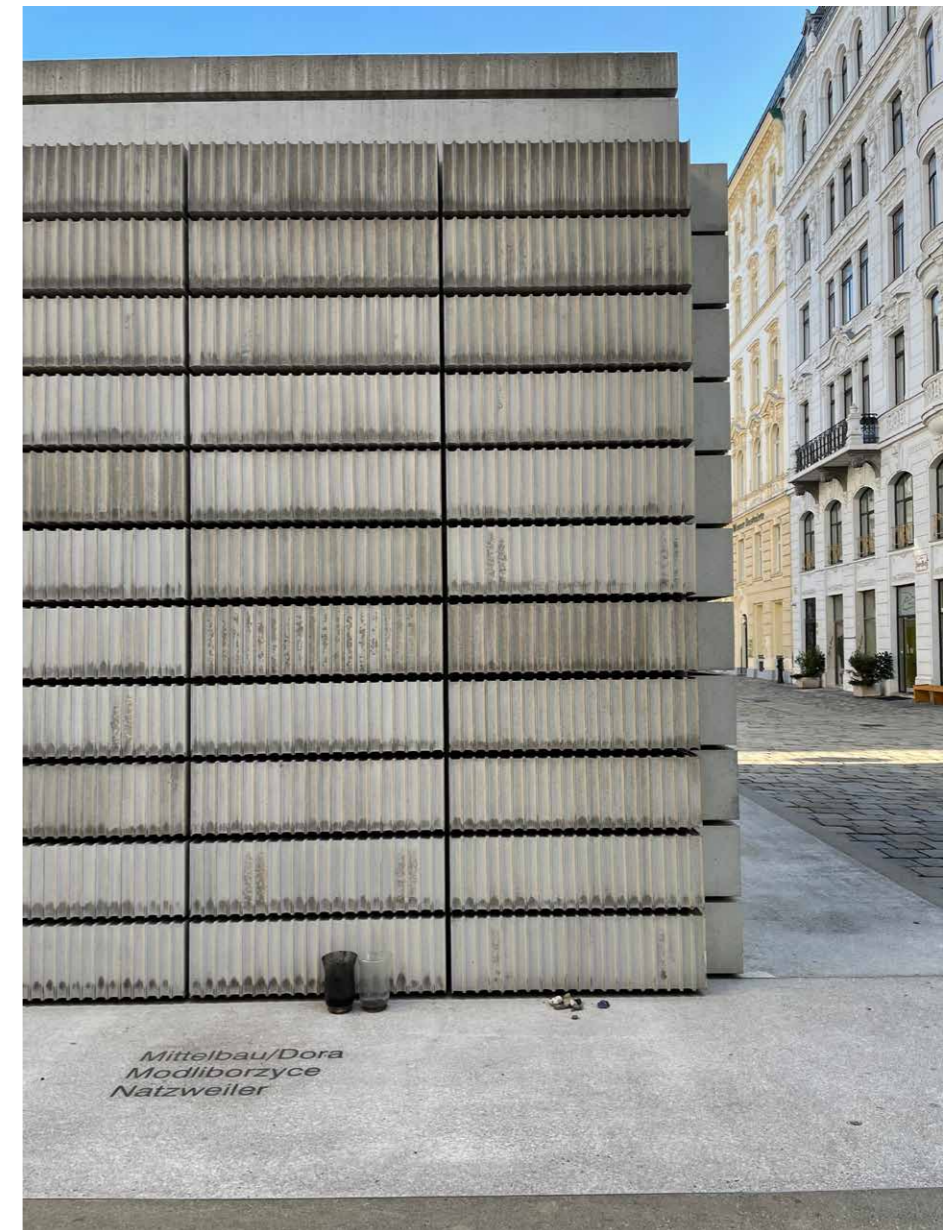


Figure 110 - Rachel Whiteread, *Memorial for the 65.000 Murdered Austrian Jews (detail)*; photo by Ines Çela, 2022

The fact that the memorial can be perceived as an internal space – its structure visually takes us to the shelves of a library, which in turn contains another inaccessible internal space – contributes to building a further gap in the perception of the public space of the square. Consequently, in our temporal perception of the two subjects analyzed in their visual overlapping in the space of the square.

The temporal element in this type of visual relationship goes in parallel with the shape of the subjects, who have in common a module that is clearly repeated in both. That of the windows of the buildings in the northern part of the square and that of the sculpted book-form that marks the surface of the memorial.

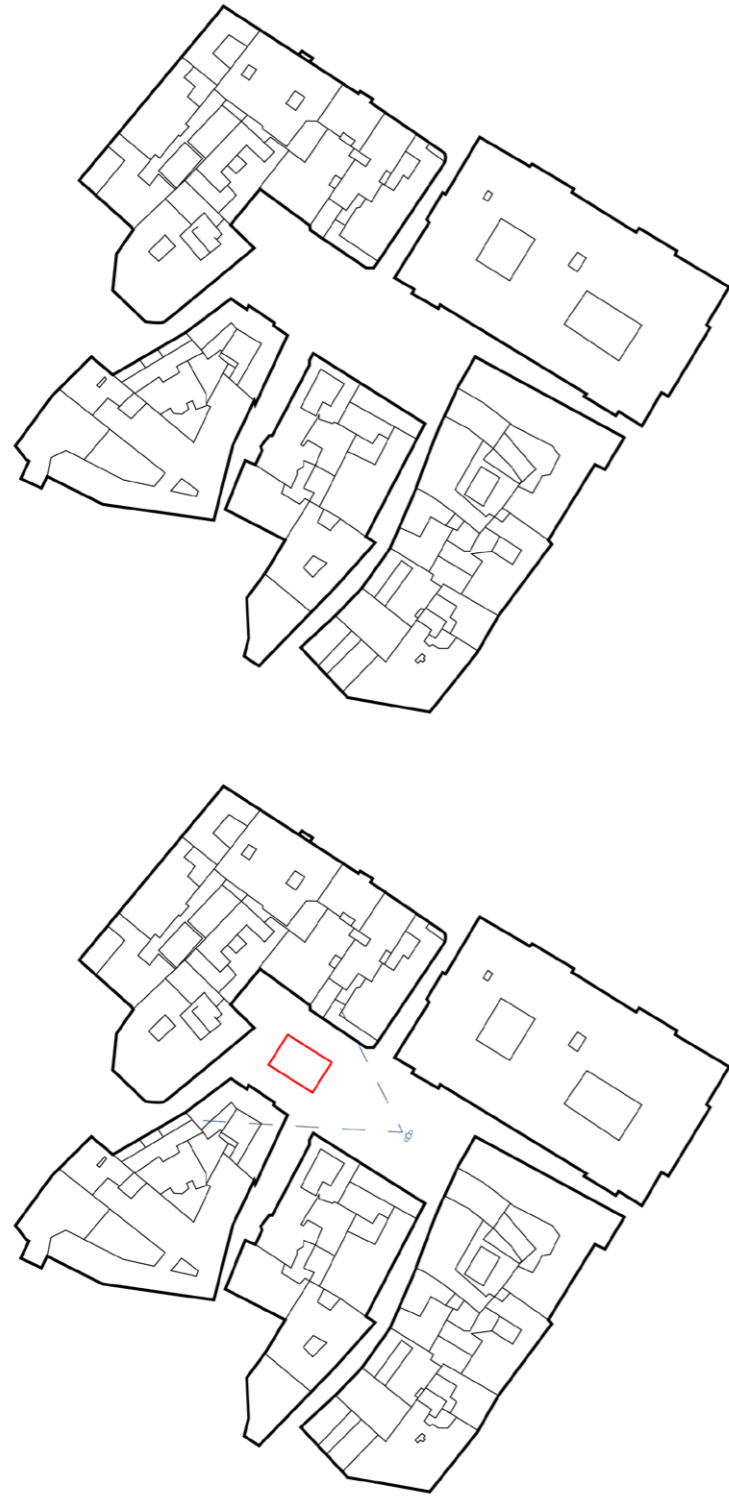


Figure 111 - Judenplatz in its physical relation with the artwork Memorial for the 65.000 Murdered Austrian Jews. Romano 2021

Both have a rectangular shape, the windows with a vertical development, the book-module with a double development: vertical (each single book-module) and horizontal (in the organization of 20 book-modules next to each other). This type of shape, the rectangular one, is perhaps the most classic example of static rhythm. How can we detect rhythm in this spatial form? Ginzburg explains it to us as follow:

«...The point, moving in a given direction, has made an equal movement twice with its trajectory; it then precisely repeated its movement, the first time horizontally, the second vertically, thus creating the parallelism of the two lines». (Ginzburg, 1977, p. 9)

The rhythm in this type of form is therefore found in the perceptual sensation of repetition. If, therefore, the time perceived in the square (without considering the monument) is a time that takes us back to another era, the time projected by the memorial is an equally historical time, but more “precise” it makes us perceive an exact moment in history, putting it in contradiction with the time of the square. The element of continuity is precisely the rhythmic element between the formal elements of the two subjects (the architecture and the work of art), which in their visual intersection create a bridge between the two temporalities, allowing both not to cancel each other, but to overlap generating a visual reverberation. Given that rhythm is *extension* or *duration*, it is a succession of elements that repeat themselves in sequence, whether they are active (such as musical notes, or body movements) or passive, part of a visual form, such as buildings in the square or the book-module of the memorial. They are, as we have seen, in themselves a temporal element, which develops or extends in their spatial repetition. The alternation of these compositional elements of the visual rhythm makes us perceptually move between these two overlapping temporalities, creating lighter moments such as the windows, alternating with tighter moments the book-modules, which with their visual movement connect our gaze at the collective history of the surrounding space, transforming it into a personal memory.

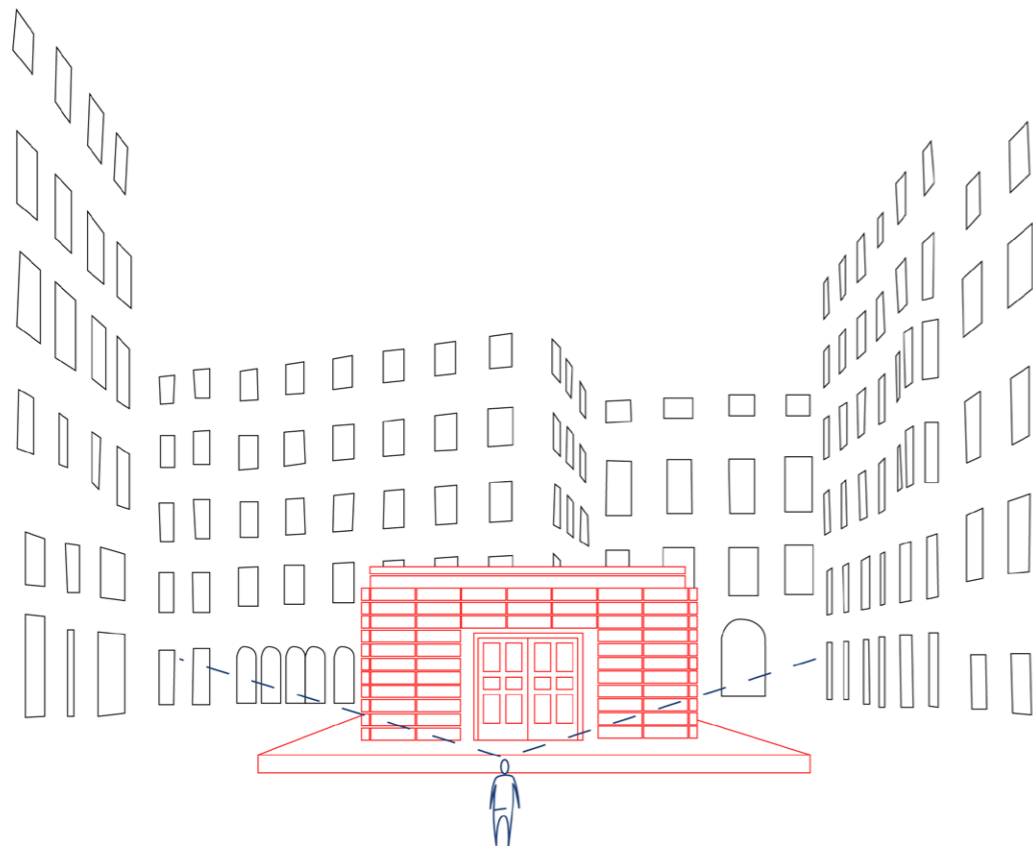


Figure 112 - Judenplatz in its physical relation with the artwork *Memorial for the 65.000 Murdered Austrian Jews*. Romano 2021

Let us now consider another example of the physical relationship between architecture and artwork in public space when a rhythm, in this case a dynamic type of rhythm, is created between them. The example we analyze is located in Milan specifically in the *FieraMilanoCity* area subject to a major redevelopment project, we will analyze the complex of three skyscrapers built within the area of *CityLife*, and the artwork titled *Daily Desiderio* by the Italian artist Riccardo Benassi created in 2018.

The skyscraper complex, the *Allianz Tower* designed by Andrea Maffei and Arata Isozaki, the *Generali Tower* designed by Zaha Hadid and the *PwC Tower* or *Libeskind Tower*, designed by Daniel Libeskind, have already been examined in the paragraph<sup>4</sup>.

Here we report only the conclusions about the three temporalities that arise from the buildings, the vertical space-time we experience with the *Allianz Tower*, a sort of link between earth and sky that makes us feel smaller and smaller the closer we get to the building. Ob-

<sup>4</sup> Please refer to Chapter 2: Methodology (After); paragraph 1: The perception of time as distance (The Space in Between).

serving the *Generali Tower*, our gaze glides over the sinuous surface and tends to make our whole body move according to a rotating, almost helical motion. The push is always upwards, but following a soft shape. The curved shape of the *PwC Tower* generates a force that closes on itself, centering the building, which almost seems to invite us to move our gaze towards the interior of the square.



Figure 113 - The Three Towers. Photo of the author. 2022

Benassi's work is formally presented as an installation that takes the form of a minimal structure in painted aluminum with a luminous LED display, of those that we can find for example at bus stops, and which carry information for travelers.

The LED display is the part of the work on which the artist intervenes, every day from the date of the inauguration until the day of his death, thanks to a remote broadcasting system, the artist will send a text message to the display. When he will die, the messages will start over and continue in a loop.





Figure 114 - Riccardo Benassi, *Daily Desiderio*, 2018; photo by Clara Scola, 2021

In this case, we can observe three types of rhythm that develop in parallel in the work in its relationship with the surrounding architecture. The first rhythm has to do with the installation in relation to the architecture, the second rhythm has to do with the biological cycle of the artist, and the third has to do with the viewer and his “task” to return cyclically, possibly every day, in front of the installation.

Let us analyze the first type of rhythm; the complex of the three skyscrapers has three temporalities that overlap each other. From this point of view, positioned towards the southeast, the *PwC Tower* is on our left and with its curved shape it pushes our gaze towards the other two towers, the *Allianz Tower*, in the center. The latter, breaks this curved movement by pushing upwards and the *Generali Tower* to the right, encloses the complex with the sinuous push of its almost helical rotary motion. Benassi’s installation functions as an interruption of these

movements and consequently of these temporalities, the frame of the LED display in painted aluminum creates a visual frame that is positioned right “in the middle” of the buildings, as if it were a post-it visually placed on the architecture.



Figure 115 - Riccardo Benassi, *Daily Desiderio*, 2018; photo by the author 2022

Text messages function as an unsettling element in relation to the surrounding environment, they are always out of context, abstract, some days almost indecipherable. These text messages transform our perception of architecture, visually superimposing themselves on the movement of buildings, also questioning them from the point of view of their temporality. Furthermore, creating a parallel with the lifetime of the observer who adds his own inner dynamics to this relationship. On the other hand, Lucy Lippard also points out how:

*«The inclusion of the public connects theories of art to the broader population: what exists in the space between the words public and art is an unknown relationship between artist and audience, a relationship that may itself become the artwork».* (Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, 1996, p. 20)

The second type of rhythm has to do with the biological cycle of the artist and consequently with the structure of the work itself. Since its genesis, the artwork structurally contains the

artist's life time, we could object that it is always like this, that each artwork naturally contains the life time of the artist who created it. However, in this case, the duration of the artist's life is an integral part of the work project because it determines the number of messages that will be sent to the display and stored in the device's memory. Thus, the artist's *lifetime extends* visually into the artwork.

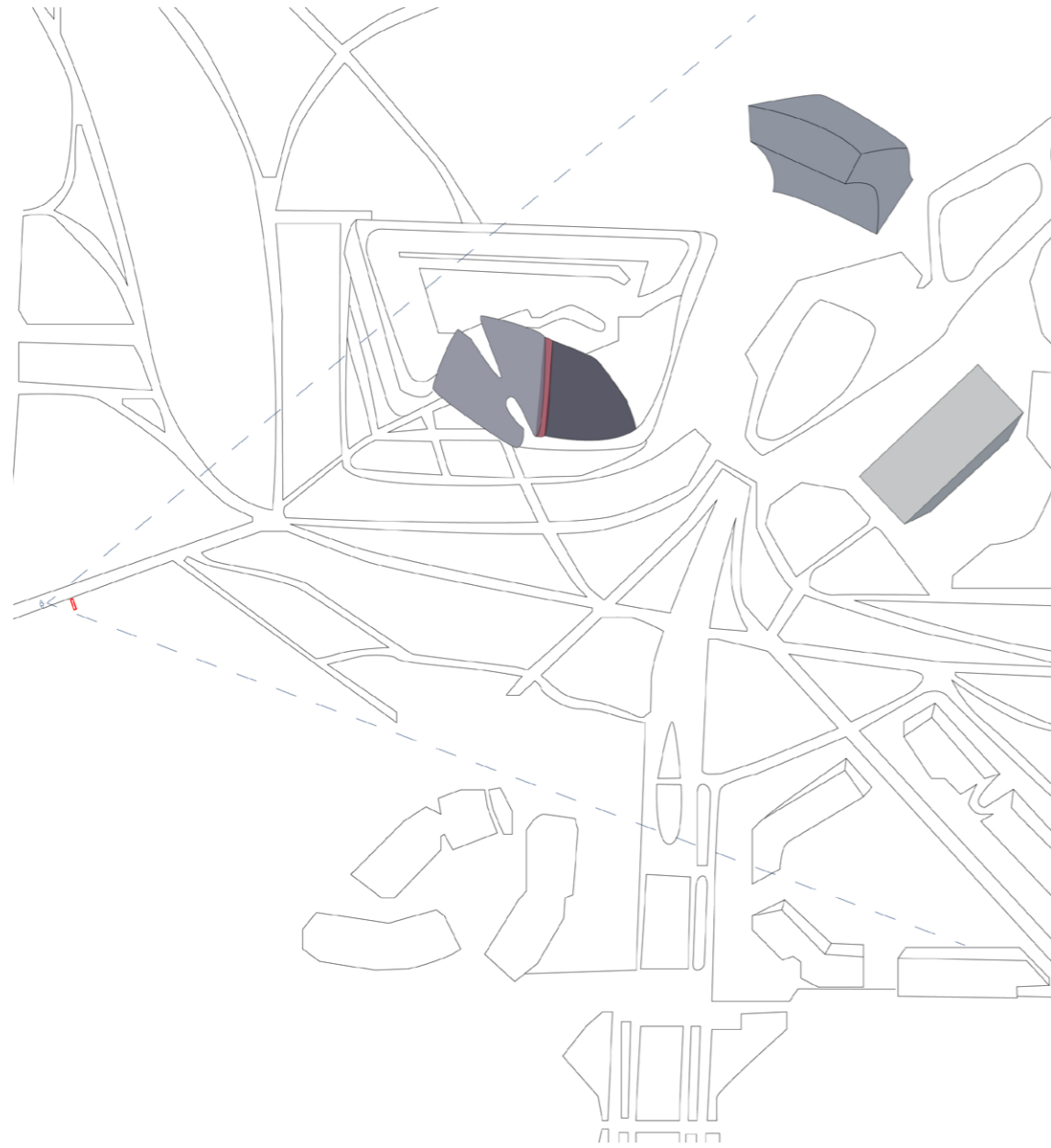


Figure 116 - The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork *Daily Desiderio*. Romano 2021

The third type of rhythm has to do with the viewer. The rhythm with which the messages are sent to the LED display is linked to the circadian rhythm, the sleep-wake cycle that develops during the alternation of day and night. The content of the messages varies according to the emotional – factual – accidental events that happens in the artist's life every day. This means

that every new day, a new message appears in the installation, modifying the first rhythm (the one relating to the relationship between the work of art and the architecture). The viewer is invited to come back to see the installation, participating as clarified above, in the modification of the first rhythm, nevertheless exercising and superimposing the rhythm of his physically returning in front of the installation to read the text message sent that day. What the artist asks of the viewer is an “effort” of daily presence, because if this appointment is missed, the message of that day will only return in a loop, after the artist's death. It would be necessary to calculate the day on which it was sent, in relation to the date of the inauguration of the work and to count the years since the artist's death, to understand when that precise message will be visible again on the LED, always only for 24 hours.

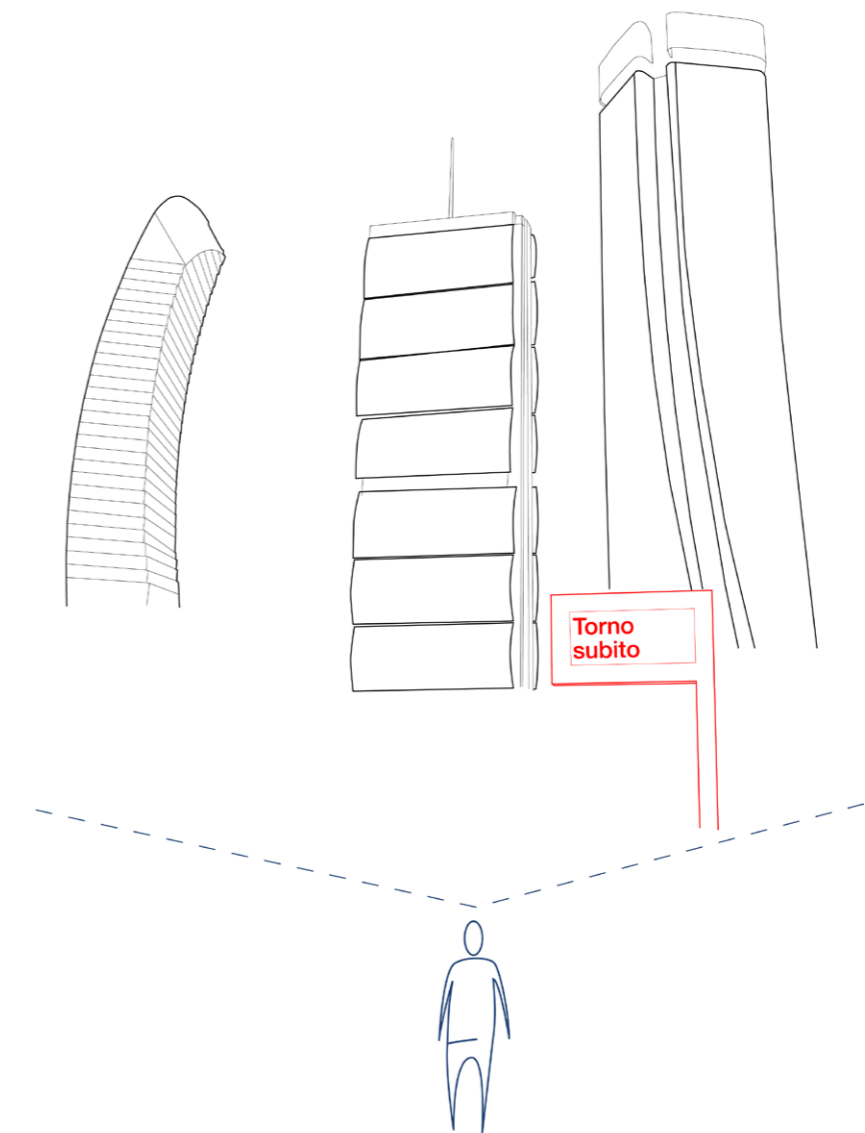


Figure 117 - The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork *Daily Desiderio*. Romano 2021

So in Benassi's work these three types of rhythms overlap. We explained earlier how rhythm is composed of an element in relation to the element that precedes it, that is, it exists in the decomposition of the elements in their temporal succession, but it is difficult to make it objective, as Rasmussen also points out, one must experience it:

«There is something mysterious about the stimulating effect of rhythm. You can explain what it is that creates rhythm but you have to experience it yourself to know what it is like». (Rasmussen, 1959, p. 134)

Here are three temporal sequences that overlap and visually extend into the daily succession of text messages. Each of these temporal successions is primary in the overall reading because they are marked by the three precise and defined rhythms that we have analyzed, the work of art visually superimposed on the architecture, the biological time of the artist, the daily scansion of messages through the time of the visitor. Taken as a whole, this example presents a temporality that has a rhythm that changes every day, because it is linked to three elements that change their rhythmic relationship on a daily basis.

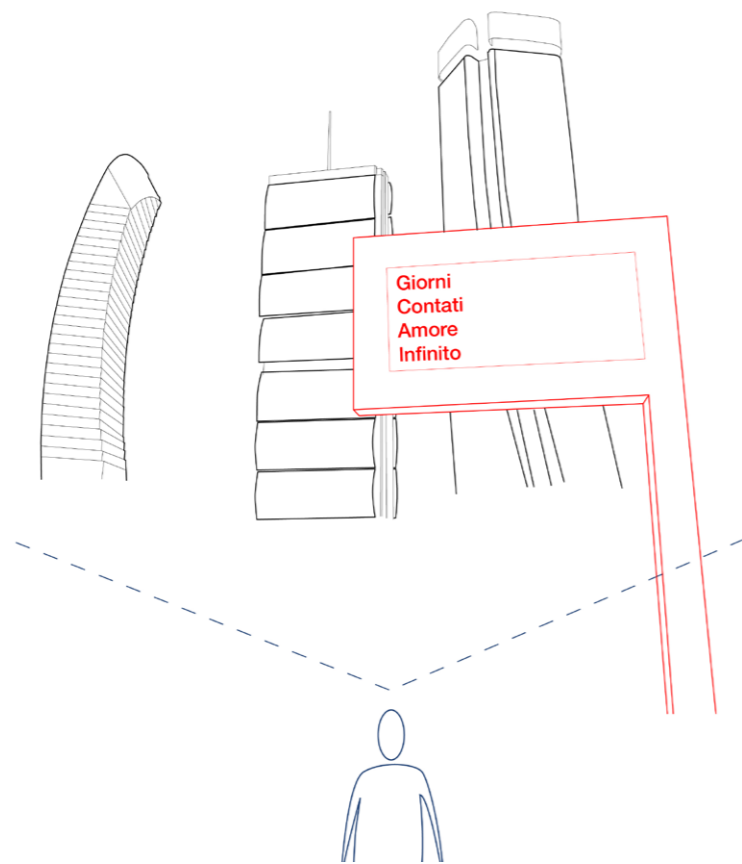


Figure 118 - The Three Towers in their physical relation with the artwork Daily Desiderio. Romano 2021

#### 4. The instant impression.

(The estrangement in the practice of the ephemeral)

In this section we will analyze what kind of relationship is established between architecture and the work of art in the public space when the work of art is ephemeral, that is to say it develops in a limited time span.

The concept of ephemeral began to establish in artistic production since the beginning of the 20th century, with the public readings of Futurist manifestos, and with Surrealist urban drifts. Moreover, through the experience of the *Cabaret Voltaire* founded in Zurich on February 5, 1916 by theater director Hugo Ball and by Emmy Hennings and which hosted readings, musical performances, meetings and which was considered the cradle of Dadaism.

Indeed, we can find the need to go beyond the dimension offered by canvas and paint in some historical avant-gardes such as Cubism, already mentioned above, with the attempt to see the subject from several points of view at the same time, which therefore presupposes the ability to rotate, to move around the subject. Alternatively, through the practices of collage that involve the integration of everyday materials on the pictorial surface, or in the creation of what were baptized *objet-trouvé* (ready made) by Marcel Duchamp and the Dadaists in general. This shifts the artists' attention to an ontological and epistemological dimension of making art, to the possibility that the work is directly combined with reality, becoming more and more actively present in our daily lives as a symbolic representative object. Subsequently, the use of the body as a means to take part in the construction or creation of a work of art becomes a method, through the expressive strategies of the international Fluxus movement, or in happenings and in performances. As we saw in the previous chapter<sup>1</sup>, different paths and different approaches to artistic production open up, many of which go in the direction of spaces that Lefebvre defines as "representational spaces":

«Representational spaces, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art». (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 33)

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1 Literature Review (ONCE), paragraph 2 What is your time made of

That is, a representative or symbolic space that literally forms around the body of the people who participate in the public space of the city, a space that is always in motion and in a continuous process of semantic reconstruction. Something that could hardly be defined only through purely spatial categories, as Till also points when he defines modern time as something that has exactly to do with the idea of movement:

«*The time of modernity is therefore typified by qualities that are the antithesis of the weight of tradition – fluidity, speed, and the instant*». (Till, 2009, p. 81)

If the category of space becomes fluid, this certainly poses a challenge for architecture, that of integrating the notions of flow, movement, contingency in its practice; and to integrate these notions through the spatial categories that we know, the discriminant therefore becomes the category of time. Can the public space of our cities be influenced by events that take place in it in an ephemeral way, therefore limited in time? Certainly yes, but how can an event that happened in a limited period create a *lasting* impact that *extends* over time? This has to do with the symbolic strength of the event in question and its ability to be remembered.

There are different methodologies used by artists to operate in the public space of the city, we have analyzed some of them, one in particular challenges one of the most deeply rooted categories in the history of art in public spaces, that of the monument. Monuments, regardless of their nature whether they are art or architecture; they are built within the dominant values in a given society and contribute to the construction of a collective memory, a certain national history and the transmission of certain social or political values, as Miles states:

«*Monuments stands in a complex relation to time: they state a past or its imitation, but are erected to impress contemporary publics with the relation to history of those who hold power and durability of that relation expressed in stone or bronze*». (Miles, *Art, Space and the City - Public Art and Urban Futures*, 1997, p. 37)

This looking to the past for the benefit of the present could be complicated if we thought of time as separate moments or categories; the past, the present, the future, above all in relation to the new qualities that the architectural and art spaces are acquiring. As clarified above<sup>2</sup>, we understand time as a flow in which these categories are not clearly separated, but continue

to influence each other creating a single concept; that of Time, in which for convenience of speech we indicate the three moments of past, present and future to position the occurrence of certain events.

Considering the above, let us consider as a first example of this type of physical relationship between architecture and artwork, the artwork entitled *Monument Against Fascism*, created in 1986 by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev Gerz in Harburg, a suburb of Hamburg.

Harburg became a town in 1297, in 1927 it merged with the neighboring town of Wilhelmsburg to form the town of Harburg-Wilhelmsburg and remained independent until 1937 when it was administratively linked to Hamburg. Today the district of Harburg contains 17 city districts, is located south of the river *Elbe* and is well connected to the part of Hamburg that has developed on the other side of the river. The center of Harburg still retains the castle and historic city walls.

Hamburg in general is a booming city, one of the main ports in Europe, after Allied bombing destroyed it during the Second World War.



Figure 119 - View of Harburg. Source: <https://www.hamburg.com/residents/neighbourhoods/11750322/eims-buettel/>

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 1 Literature Review (ONCE), paragraph 1 Definition of Time

The monument was commissioned by the municipality of Harburg-Hamburg, through an international competition and after several public debates in which the artists participating in the competition were also present, the project by Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev Gerz was approved. Initially the municipality had offered a space inside a park in Hamburg; instead, the monument was erected in Harburg in the area around the *S-Bahn* Station, in a small public area, almost an inlet overlooking the square below, a commercial area with a high density but without any space evocative of the history of the city. The site was chosen directly by the artists who wanted a place that was as representative as possible of the daily life of the inhabitants of Hamburg-Harburg. Moreover, the square below the place where the monument stands is practically an empty space surrounded by shops and services, all around the station, almost a waiting space, with people waiting for a departure or an arrival, partly used for car parking. The perception of this place is that it is a place of passage and the temporal dimension is representative of a moment of passage.

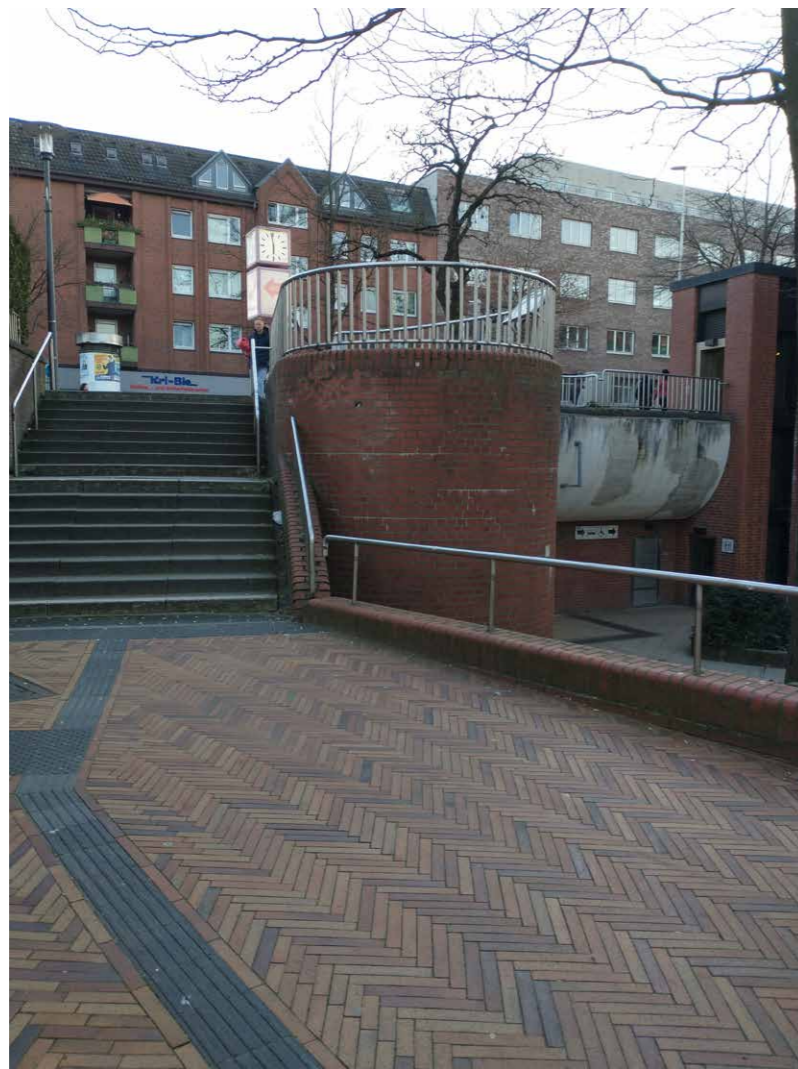


Figure 120 - Harburg, place chosen for the realization of the artwork; photo by Daniel Ruppert. 2022

The work was inaugurated in 1986 in this architectural context, three years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, to frame the historical period where we are and what the wall meant from both sides, the western one, and the eastern one as Miles points out:

*«The West face of the Wall became almost a monument by other means, appropriated in the political framework of the West».* (Miles, Remembering the Unrememberable – The Harburg Monument Against Fascism, 2010, p. 65)

A West grappling with a crisis of the public space and a redefinition of its own borders, tried not to forget the bloody past and the danger of its return.



Figure 121 - Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev Gerz, Monument Against Fascism; photo credits: Atelier-Shalev-Gerz

The monument is formally presented as a parallelepiped with a square base of one square meter, twelve meters high, covered in lead sheeting. A sculpture with Minimalist formal roots, but whose surface covered in lead completely shifts its aesthetics into another dimension. In fact, two steel styluses were also installed next to the column, and used by the audience to leave their sign directly on the lead surface of it. In this case, the minimalist aesthetic has the dual purpose of not falling into the temptation to visualize the celebration of anti-fascism in some symbolic form, and of preparing a space that is as neutral as possible so as not to unconsciously influence the action of the public. We are in the field of what Nicolas Bourriaud would later define as “relational aesthetics”, a type of aesthetic where the work presented to the viewer is somehow incomplete without the participation of the viewer itself. A plaque with the following inscription is installed next to the monument:

*«We invite the citizens of Harburg, and visitors to the town, to add their names here to ours. In doing so we commit ourselves to remain vigilant. As more and more names cover this 12 metre-high lead column, it will gradually be lowered into the ground. One day it will have disappeared completely and the site of the Harburg monument against fascism will be empty. In the long run, it is only we ourselves who can stand up against injustice».* (Gerz & Gerz, 1986)

As the artists themselves explain, public participation implies a responsibility to prevent the return of fascism, signing the column means taking responsibility for preventing, through one’s own behavior, the return of the darkest periods in the history of modern Europe. Once all the available space has been used up, the filled part of the column is lowered below ground level, leaving new space available to people, and at the same time making the visible part of the column smaller. This operation was performed 8 times from 1986 to 1993, the year in which the column disappears entirely below ground level, becoming invisible to the eye, except for a small vertical crack in the column housing, visible from the square below that shows a part of it. An undesired and uncalculated effect was that almost immediately swastikas and hateful phrases against Jews also appeared.



Figure 122 - Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*; photo by Daniel Ruppert, 2022

An unexpected turning point that from our point of view has given further value to the artistic operation. Reality cannot be clearly divided between black and white, and artistic operations in public space attracts not only people predisposed towards art and with a certain sociopolitical leaning, but anyone who happens to pass by that place. On the other hand, the artists themselves strongly wanted that spot for the monument, because it would have safeguarded the work from that sense of self-celebration that certain monuments assume also by virtue of their positioning in iconic spaces of the city. People have appropriated the monument by writing on it, first following the indications of the artists, through their own signatures, then writing sentences and thoughts, positive and negative, of pride and hatred, and through their gesture, reopening the debate on the founding values of our society. Furthermore, the action of the audience contributed at the same time to the disappearance of the column itself, transforming the monument into what James E. Young defines as a “counter-monument”. An artwork that challenges the very idea of a monument by shifting the values the work embeds from the object to the audience; shifting also memory that from collective becomes personal. As Pietro Gaglianò also clarifies:

*«In the often empty space of the counter-monument, the memory of crimes and tacit connivance is cultivated, and the aim of this work is not consolation nor, much less, the remission of guilt but the possibility of keeping attention alive, to let all this not happen again, in known or unheard ways, either here or elsewhere».* (Gaglianò, 2022, p. 23)

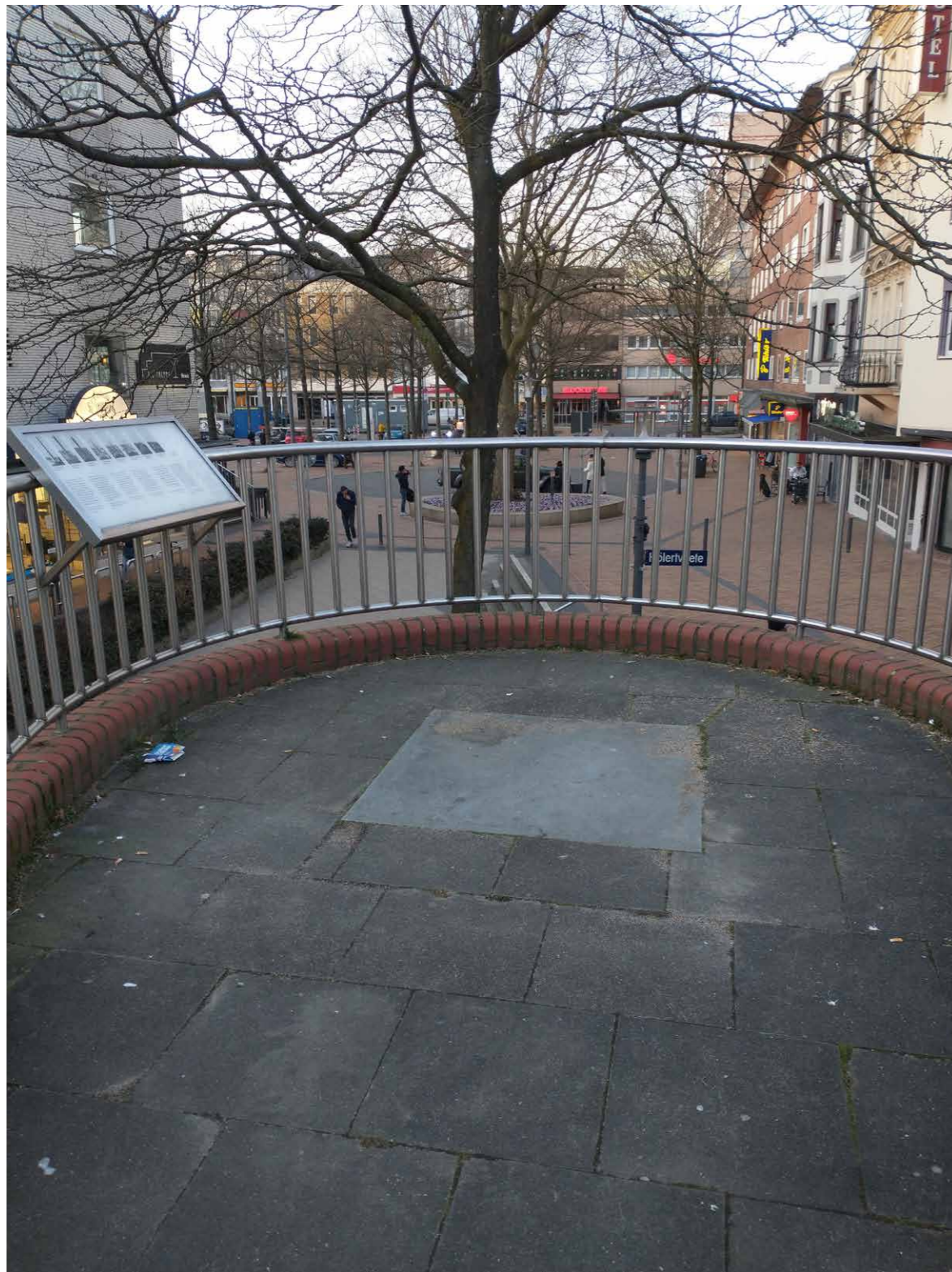


Figure 123 - Jochen Gerz and Esther Shalev Gerz, *Monument Against Fascism*; photo by Daniel Ruppert, 2022

The *Monument Against Fascism* is not a vehicle of memory, but a performative and ephemeral work that conveys the idea of absence as monument. If we go back to the questions posed earlier, how can an event that happened in a limited period create a *lasting* impact that *extends* over time? We can feel how the reverberation of the work of Jochen and Esther

Shalev Gerz is still present in the square. The downward movement of the column as a result of the action of the people reveals the landscape in front, charged with a new meaning. The time proposed by the monument has a downward movement, this is the direction of movement towards the past, and it is always behind or below us. It is the time of personal responsibility for the events of history, it is a suspended time because it concerns each of us and all together collectively. When the column lowers, it loses its monumentality; the action almost seems like a requiem to accompany the object to its underground housing, still visible only by going around the inlet where it once stood, going down to the square below, through an open window between the bricks of the housing.



Figure 124 - The neighborhood in its physical relation with the artwork *Monument Against Fascism*. Romano 2021

The *Time of Intersection* is clearly perceptible standing on the inlet, in front of the square of one meter by one meter at ground level; the column is below, with all the signs produced by the action of the public. Signs that we can equate to the architectural signs of the square in front that extends below us, and which are undoubtedly affected by the signs left by people along the perimeter of the column. Our perception of the square has changed, from a place of passage to a place of memory, kept not in our eyes but in our inner space-time and projected onto the surrounding architecture. The architecture that encloses the square, the space of the

square itself contain the time of the work, which in eight years of regression (from 1986 to 1993) constantly changed the perception of passers-by towards the square and which from 1993 onwards remains as memory of itself, leaving its perceptive presence on the architecture.

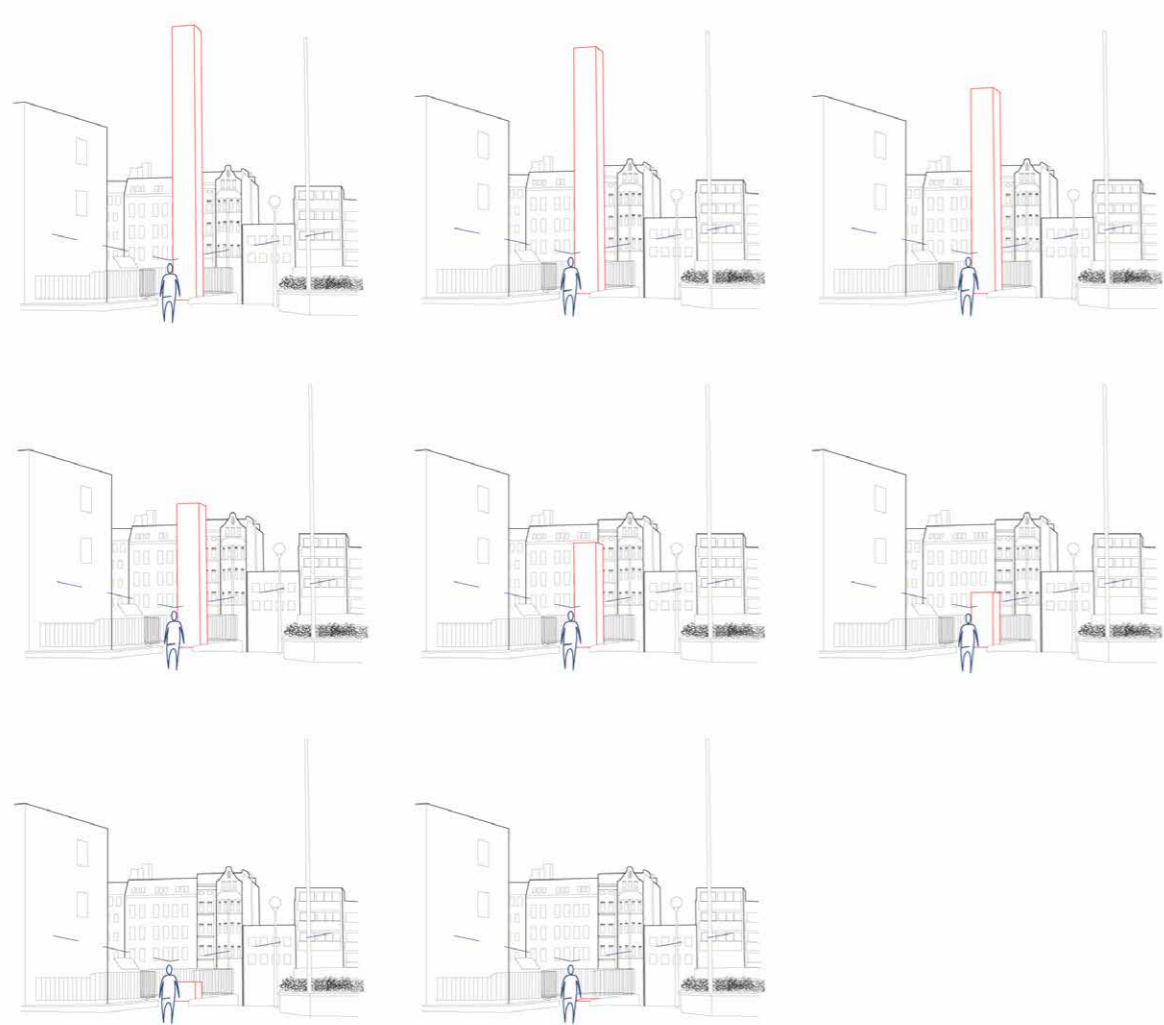


Figure 125 - The neighborhood in its physical relation with the artwork Monument Against Fascism. Romano 2021

The second example of an ephemeral relationship between architecture and artwork that we have considered is a performance entitled *We're here because we're here* designed by artist Jeremy Deller and Rufus Norris (director of the National Theater of London) in collaboration with 26 theaters and arts organizations across the UK. The project was realized in response to an invitation to participate in the celebrations of the events of the First World War (1914-1918) and carried out simultaneously in different places throughout England, in 2016.

The scope and type of artwork is very different from the monument analyzed previously, but the idea of the ephemeral is absolutely at the basis of the relationship that is established

between architecture and the artwork, when the latter “appears” in the form of action in the public space. In this sense, our perception of space changes completely, as John Dewey points out:

«Space thus becomes something more than a void in which to roam about dotted here and there with dangerous things and things that satisfy the appetite. It becomes a comprehensive and enclosed scene within which are ordered the multiplicity of doings and undergoings in which man engages». (Dewey, *Art as experience*, 1980, p. 23)

Space becomes “alive” not as a spatial container, but as an active place in which we are emotionally connected to other people and to the objects that delimit our being and our feelings. In the specific case examined, on the morning of July 1, 2016 at Glasgow Central Station, the people who were there waiting for a train, found themselves in the company of a handful of soldiers, dressed in the British army uniforms of the First World War. The group of soldiers stood there, as if they too were waiting for a train, under the departures and arrivals board, in silence, waiting. They looked like they were taken from a historical document, but in color. Someone smoked; someone looked around proudly. At one point, the group of soldiers begins to sing the melody of an old song *Auld Lang Syne*<sup>3</sup> using as lyrics the title of the performance *We're here because we're here*. None of the soldiers verbally answers to passers-by if they ask them questions, their answer is formalized in a gesture, the soldier hands a kind of business card to the person with whom he has established direct contact. On the business card, there are the soldier's name, surname, rank and battalion, his date of death in battle and his age at the time of his death. A sort of tombstone inscription that puts the viewer in front of a ghost.

<sup>3</sup> “Auld Lang Syne” is a popular song, mostly used in the English-speaking world. Traditionally, it is sung on the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve. By extension, it is often sung in ceremonies from funerals to graduations and other occasions.





Figure 126 - Glasgow Central Station; Source: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Main\\_Concourse\\_at\\_Glasgow\\_Central\\_Station.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Main_Concourse_at_Glasgow_Central_Station.JPG)

*«It bound the personal, symbolised by the gift of a card with a single name, to the group, as individual experience was shared. Like the telegrams that came back from the Front, the soldiers' cards returned the unimaginable to a human scale».* (Matarasso, 2018, p. 6)

Bringing a historical event back to a human dimension means contextualizing it, giving it a perimeter and personal information serves precisely this purpose, to re-contextualize an event that otherwise would remain without any footholds, other than the general ones of numerical data, how many people took part in the war, how many they came back, how many lost their lives. This is why the physical and at the same time ethereal presence of the soldiers, who were able to establish a relationship only through their being there and the card they gifted, is so important in the structure of the project. It creates a sort of seam between the diegetic space and the extra-diegetic space, as Lucas explains:

*«Diegetic space refers to the space of the performance, whilst extra-diegetic space is a territory outside of that action, implied by some cues within the drama».* (Lucas, 2020, p. 162)

The extra-diegetic space is therefore essential to validate the diegetic space; it suggests that there are real spaces and people interacting with the performance space thus transporting it into the real space.



Figure 127 - Jeremy Deller, *We're here because we're here*, Glasgow Central Station, 2016. Photo taken from the website of the event. Credits: Eoin Carey

The meeting place of departure of the approximately 2,000 soldiers / performers, was Glasgow Central Station, today part of the protected historic buildings of England, it is one of the main railway junctions in the North of England. Inaugurated in 1879, it soon had to deal with an ever-increasing traffic of people until it was completely redesigned between 1901 and 1905, in the latest statistics provided by Network Rail<sup>4</sup> the flow of people who use the station annually was of almost 38 million people in 2018/2019<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> For further info: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/> and <https://www.scotrail.co.uk/performance-and-reliability> accessed November 14th, 2022

<sup>5</sup> Data prior to the COVID-19 outbreak.

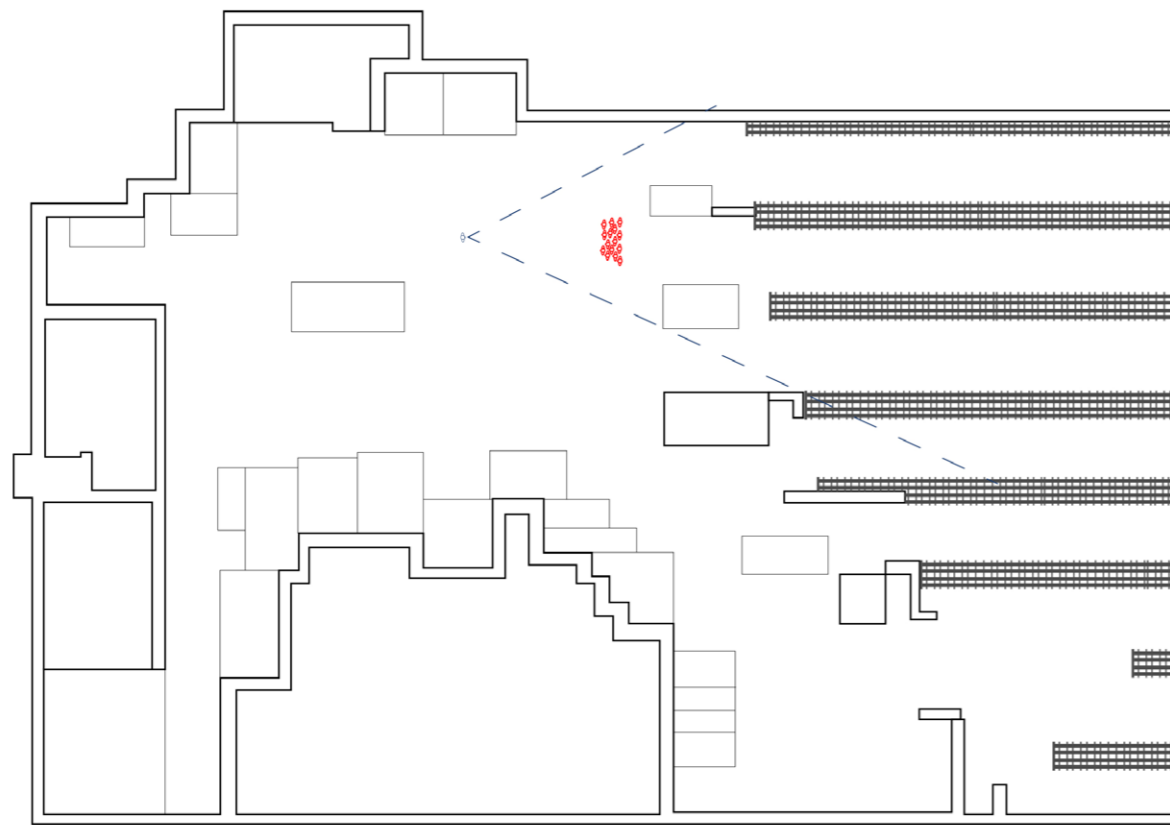


Figure 128 - The spot in the Glasgow Central Station in its physical relation with the artwork *We're here because we're here*. Romano 2021

The soldiers who arrived at Glasgow Central Station that morning numbered around 1,600 and from the station they left by bus, train, and any means of transport directed towards various cities in England and Northern Ireland. From Belfast to London, passing through Birmingham and Leeds and Cardiff... soldiers appeared almost everywhere, creating a feeling of estrangement in all the people who met them in public places in the cities. Through mobile phones and social media, the event was documented in real time, posts and reposts made it go viral in a few hours, testifying to the contemporaneity of these soldiers in different cities. The impact of the presence of the soldiers/performers was massive and contributed to the “*duration*” of this alienating moment in people’s perception. From the square in front of the Europa Hotel in Belfast – often bombed during the war – to the Chester bus station, up to the London Underground.



Figure 129 - Jeremy Deller, *We're here because we're here*, Bullring shopping centre, Birmingham, 2016. Photo credit: “we're here because we're here” by Jeremy Deller with Rufus Norris

To carry out the project, months of trials were necessary with the volunteers who arrived in the various theaters collaborating on the project. None of them knew exactly what kind of performance they were joining, everything was kept as secret as possible so as not to anticipate the estrangement effect for the audience. Each volunteer was “entrusted” with a soldier; the performer had to read the soldier’s biography to identify himself as much as possible with his story. Deller talked about his project claiming that:

*«Importantly there's no one alive who fought in the First World War, it's possible now that there's no one left who can even remember living through it. So, we've lost the human connection to it, and that is an interesting moment, and potentially a difficult moment, because that's when there is a tendency to romanticise things».* (Deller & Norris, 2016, p. 61)

In the Battle of the *Somme*, 19,240 soldiers were killed and another 40,000 injured. The loss of human contact with a part of history, this temporal distance that exists between events and whoever recounts them today in public space, has the potential danger – as the artist himself suggests – that events are read in a “romantic way” extrapolating them from the real context in which they developed. For this reason, the performers were asked not to interact verbally with the audience, but to let their alienating presence and the gifted card speak for them. Cer-

tainly, the card that declares the circumstances of that person's death, even if we are faced with a performer, does not make the identification less strong. In our opinion, the strength of Deller and Norris' project lies in this temporal translation, in this "inter-time" that creates a short circuit between the present landscape of our daily life in the city and a past that arrived as a glimpse from a remote moment over time not well contextualized except in the history books. Jane Rendell reinforces this thesis by talking about the work of Jeremy Deller and underlining this temporal short circuit:

*«By drawing on the importance of history in our understanding of certain sites, Deller's work shows how an act of remembering the past can reconfigure a particular place as a critical space in the present; for me, this act of reconfiguring could be described as a critical spatial practice».* (Rendell, 2006, p. 62)

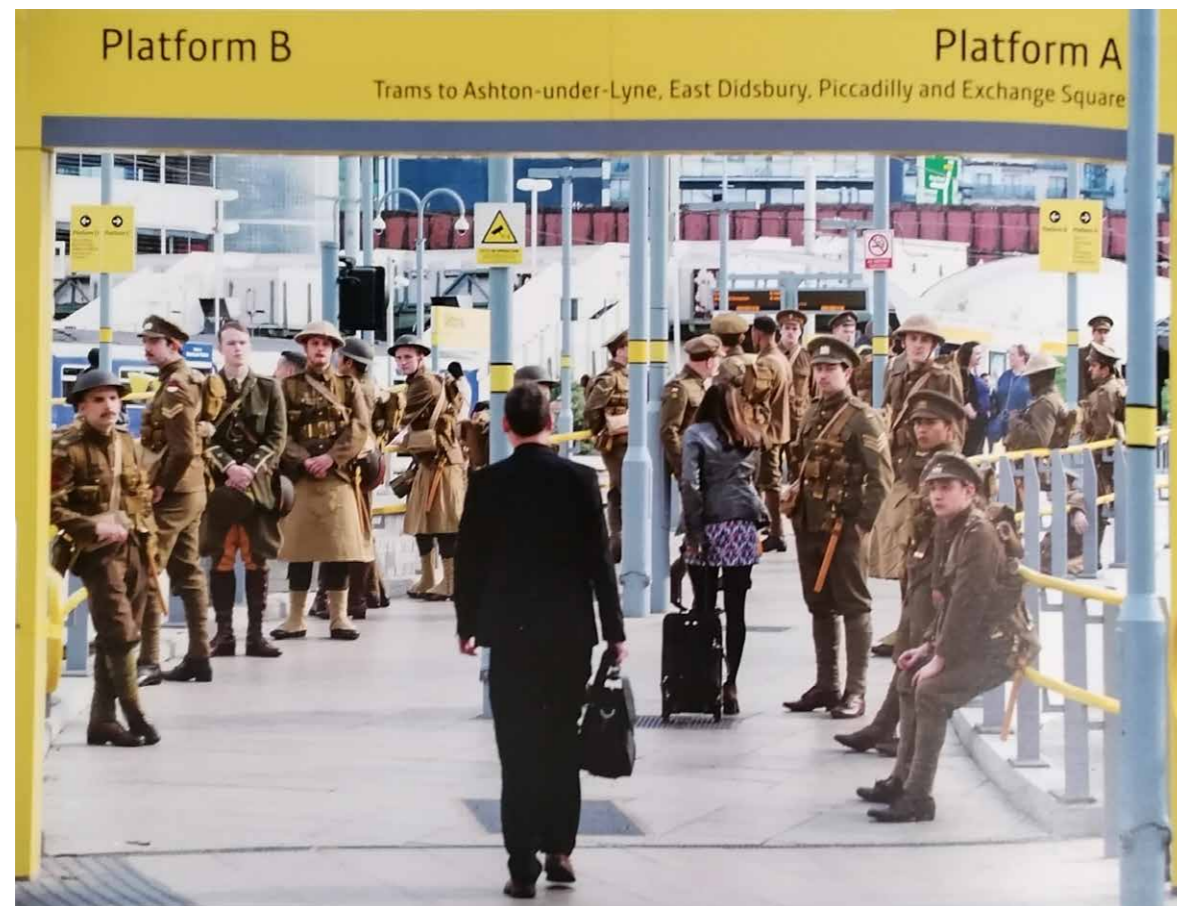


Figure 130 - Jeremy Deller, *We're here because we're here*, Manchester Victoria Station, 2016. Photo credit: "we're here because we're here" by Jeremy Deller with Rufus Norris

The emotional reactions in front of the soldiers/performers and the card that was donated demonstrate how the performance has implemented a perceptive shift in the space of experience. Of what we have defined as a space-event and which changes our temporal perception of that same space, let us think of John Dewey's definition of time perceived in architectural space:

*«Time ceases to be either the endless and uniform flow or the succession of instantaneous points which some philosophers have asserted it to be. It, too, is the organizing medium of the rhythmic ebb and flow of expectant impulse, forward and retracted movement, resistance and suspense, fulfillment and consummation».* (Dewey, *Art as experience*, 1980, p. 23)

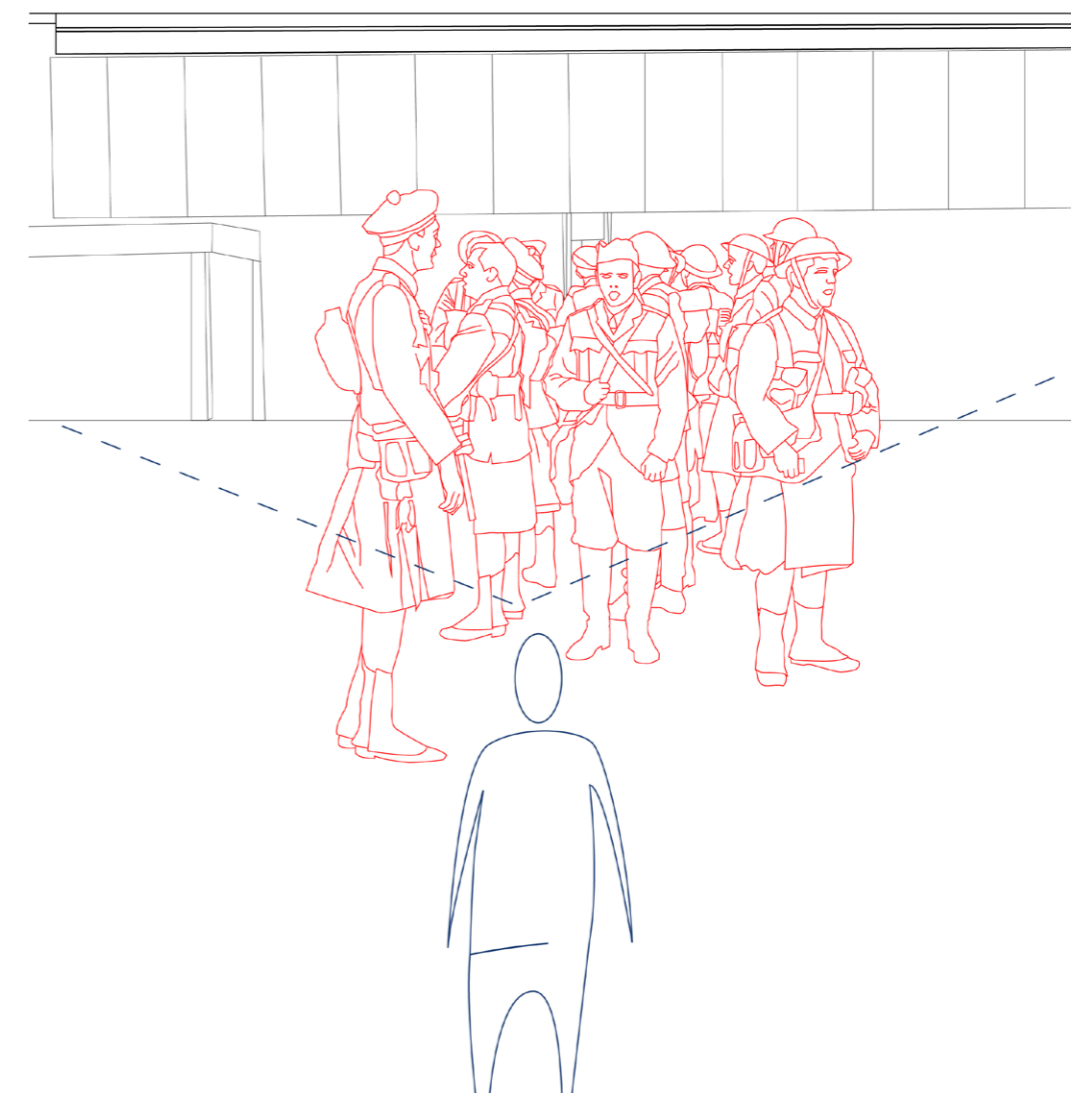


Figure 131 - The spot in the Glasgow Central Station in its physical relation with the artwork *We're here because we're here*. Romano 2021

The shift in the perception of space creates a “*duration*” in our gaze that transfers to the architecture of the place even after the performance is over. There is a transformation of the genuine idea of artwork as stated by Miwon Kwon:

*«The “work” no longer seeks to be a noun/object but a verb/process, provoking the viewers’ critical (not just physical) acuity regarding the ideological conditions of their viewing».* (Kwon, 2004, p. 24)

Going back to our approach on the notion of time adopted for the drafting of this thesis, this idea of flow that John Dewey also talks about, time acts in this case as a real organizational medium that moves between “resistance and suspense”. Between our habits given by the daily use of those spaces and the experience that the performance made us live, changing the perception and reorganizing the temporality of those places. If, as we have seen, the past coexists with our present, this concept is strengthened in this case by the experience of space which re-enacts a historical moment that we have not experienced firsthand, re-contextualizing it in a precise moment of our lives. A fortuitous and ephemeral encounter that remains present in the space even when it is finished through the work done by our memory, by the internal time that overlaps with the external, linear time that the objects around us project onto us.

## **5. Modify the shape to modify its time.**

(Space and Time by Addition or Subtraction)

In this section we will analyze what kind of relationship establishes between architecture and the work of art in public space, when the work of art is physically added to the building or subtracts parts of the architecture from the building itself.

Architecture is a science that relies on geometry for the coordination of single elements and the whole. This working method has always been the basis of architectural design and we can perceive it as the foundation of the Modern Movement as well, as Piero Ostilio Rossi also reminds us:

*«[geometry]... remains as a constant even within the architecture of the Modern Movement, in which indeed it is possible to identify a very precise line of research, which is based on the preventive reduction to simple and formally autonomous elements of the different parts of the architectural organism and to a subsequent reorganization of these elements through structuring of a geometric order».* (Rossi P. O., 1996, p. 121)

This reduction to pure geometric elements helps us understand the meaning of addition and subtraction in architecture. Let’s think precisely of these geometric elements that are at the origin of architectural design, any other element or any other shape that is “added” or “subtracted” from the original geometric shapes becomes an addition or a subtraction with respect to that shape. By extension of this method, therefore, any element that I add to a starting shape becomes an addition, and obviously, any element that I subtract from a starting shape becomes a subtraction. This compositional technique allows us to grow the project freely. Like an organism that develops from its basic cells.

We further extend this technique to the relationship between the architectural object (read as a whole) and the artistic object when the latter is added to the building or subtracts parts from it. In this case, architecture and artwork have a different physical bond between them than the one established through the overlapping or juxtaposition analyzed previously<sup>1</sup>. The spatial order that the two subjects create is not a sum of the two, but a new uniqueness, a

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 2 Methodology; paragraph 2: The continuous flow of two close shapes. (The Definition of the Form by Superimposition or Juxtaposition).

crisis that arises as a consequence of the physical action that the artistic object operates on the architectural object, modeling the architecture in a different way from the original project. The geometry of the building therefore changes; the addition or subtraction made by the artistic intervention is added to the additions and subtractions thought out in the design phase by the architect.

As a first example of this type of physical relationship between architecture and artwork, let us consider the work entitled *Conical Intersect*, created in 1975 by Gordon Matta-Clark in Paris, in the *Beaubourg* district. In this case, there is a subtraction relationship between the architectural object and the work of art.

The *Beaubourg* district together with the *Les Halles* district, in those years were at the center of major urban rethinking which led to the demolition of the fresh food market in the *Les Halle* district and a series of 17th century buildings in the *Beaubourg* district. The site of the old parking lot of *Les Halles* was chosen to host the construction of the new museum of modern art, the *Centre Georges Pompidou* (designed by architects Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers). Some of the buildings that were demolished following the new urban plan of the area were located right next to the area chosen for the construction of the *Center Pompidou* and were chosen by Matta-Clark – also – for their location, adding a political value to the intervention of the artist.



Figure 132 - Aerial view of the Beaubourg district, 1970. Highlighting of the area by the author.

The buildings chosen by the artist were part of a complex built at the end of the 17th century, therefore in the middle of the Baroque era, when Paris was full of public buildings decorated with sinuous Baroque lines that dominated the facades, making them opulent, majestic and ornamental. The residential architecture was less striking, with smooth facades of rectangular shape, stretched upwards, punctuated by large windows with vertical cut. The buildings culminated with a trapezoidal roof interspersed with dormers also with windows.



Figure 133 - Housing typology of the Beaubourg district, 1975. Source: <https://www.centrepompidou.fr/es/ressources/oeuvre/c6bdkB>

The temporality produced by this type of building, reading them in the context of the 1970s, in the years of urban transformation, is a temporality that immediately takes us back to France at the end of the 1700s. The stylistic impact and the shape are very strong so as not to perceive its constructive origin. The buildings in question are private homes, so they are

internally affected by the time of the intimacy of the house. A time made up of intimate, private habits and gestures, separated from the outside world thanks to the walls of the house, also separated from each other by the different functions of the various rooms of the house. A biological time therefore that also influences and directs our perception from outside the house, towards what Tuan defines as a «place», that is, a space defined by the experience that we project onto it.



Figure 134 - Gordon Matta Clark, *Conical Intersect*, Paris 1975. Source: <https://loeildelaphotographie.com/en/marc-petitjean-la-construction-du-centre-pompidou/>

It is significant that most of Gordon Matta-Clark's production developed on buildings that had a residential function. His work was structured around the idea of multi-faceted understanding of architectural space, as Corinne Diserens points out:

*«Overcoming the environment very physically, Matta-Clark constantly reminded us that space is apprehended by movements of the viewer's eyes and by the body's place in time».* (Diserens, 2003, p. 6)



Figure 135 - Gordon Matta Clark, *Conical Intersect*, Paris 1975. Source: <https://artmap.com/culturgestlisbon/exhibition/splitting-cutting-writing-drawing-eating-gordon-matta-clark-2017>

The artist puts into play the movement of the spectator in the space of the artistic intervention, his gaze that moves, changing the point of view and the perception of the space itself. Matta-Clark's research starts from a critique of architecture as a socio-politically codified space, towards a search for alternative thoughts and actions to empty and generic statements, designed for an indistinct mass of people. The very concept of "re-action" contains

the genesis of a targeted, therefore personal, response to a situation, which is a fundamental characteristic of art, as a field that is expressed through “signs” that must be valid in a specific situation according to well-defined ratios and cannot be transported into another ratio system. Dino Formaggio, starting from the concepts expressed by Lyotard, clarifies it well when he states that:

*«The signs are multi-significant, that is, they have several layers of value, according to a use that is however always mono-situational».* (Formaggio, 1990, p. 42)

The signs created by Gordon Matta-Clark intersect architecture, physically and metaphorically, creating spaces where they were not foreseen, allowing new completely personal and non-standardized, mono-situational points of view, but capable of generating different levels of interpretations and efficacy to the artistic intervention. In one of his texts Germano Celant underlines how:

*«The system of relations is overturned, the abstract signs, such as door or wall, ceiling or corner, opening or closing, are transformed into material quantity, no longer geometrically rational».* (Celant, 1974, p. 26-28)

Further signs add or subtracts to the initial geometric signs, in order to extrapolate them from the geometric generalization and to transport them to a specific moment and reality, unique and unrepeatable in a standardized way.

Specifically, the artwork was created within the framework of the 6th edition of the Paris Biennale in which Matta-Clark was invited to participate and it was inspired by Anthony McCall’s experimental film, *Line Describing a Cone* (1973)<sup>2</sup>.



Figure 136 - Gordon Matta Clark, *Conical Intersect*, Paris 1975. Source: <https://publicdelivery.org/matta-clark-conical-intersect/>

Initially the artist wanted to adapt in Paris a project that had come to his mind after a trip to Latin America, which involved creating cuts in a series of buildings in a row, transforming the cut from linear into the first building to circular in the last building in the series. Initially the director of the Biennale rejected his project, but the opportunity to realize it came from the disputed redevelopment project of the *Les Halles* district and the demolition of the covered central market of Paris. The artist was offered two adjacent buildings, built in 1699, which abutted the site of the then under construction Georges Pompidou Center. The buildings were 27 and 29 *rue Beaubourg*, which belonged to Mr. and Mrs. Leiseville, an officer of the Paris court of appeal (at number 27) and his wife (at number 29). The artist kept the original idea of the cut that crosses the buildings, but reversing the perspective somewhat by imagining a large conical space carved at an upward angle that crosses the two houses. With the larger circle positioned on *rue Beaubourg* that connected through other openings created in the houses to a smaller circle, that allows a portion of the Center Pompidou to be seen. Matta-Clark himself described his project in this way in an interview:

<sup>2</sup> For more information about this project, please refer to: <https://whitney.org/collection/works/15286>

«[It is like] throwing a ball in space and being able to pass through surfaces... It's basically mental projections or projectiles, and you spend all that grimy time trying to realize them». (Crow, 2003, p. 93-95)

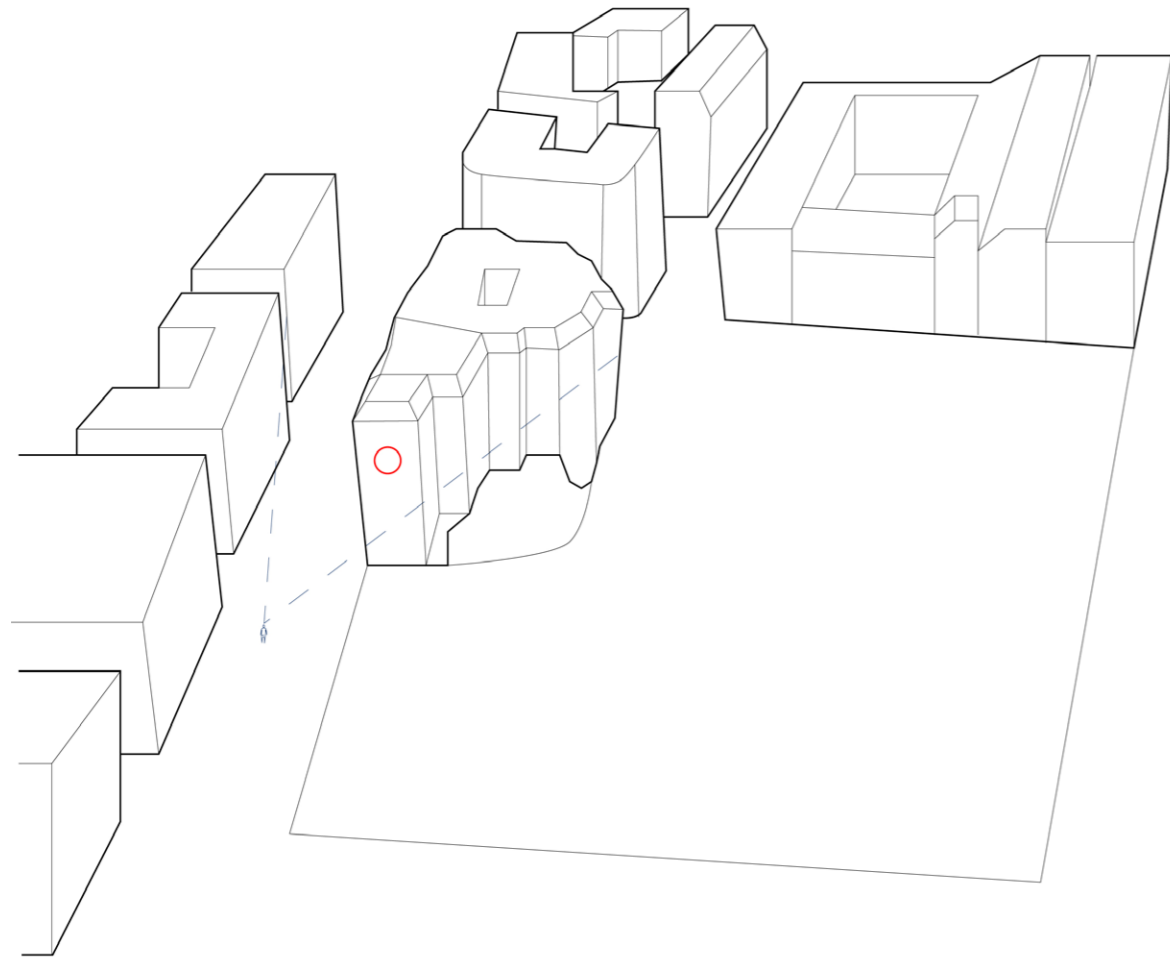


Figure 137 - The Beaubourg district in its physical relation with the artwork *Conical Intersect*. Romano 2022

The work creates a gigantic monocular vision that crosses the internal space of the buildings towards the outside and vice versa, suggesting the movement of the viewer in a new almost “cubist” dimension of reality. In fact, the cuts made by the artist allow different portions of the two apartments to be seen at the same time as far as the street and the surrounding urban landscape. There is a performative dimension in Matta-Clark’s interventions, which is also underlined through the video and photographic documentation that the artist produces for each of his interventions. Arnheim also talks about the relationship between the whole and the parts of a building, underlining how:

«It will by now be evident that in dealing with architecture we must constantly shuttle back and forth between the building as an object seen as a whole in space by a contemplating mind, and the building as an event in time experienced by man in action». (Arnheim, *The Dynamics of Architectural Form*, 1977, p. 130)

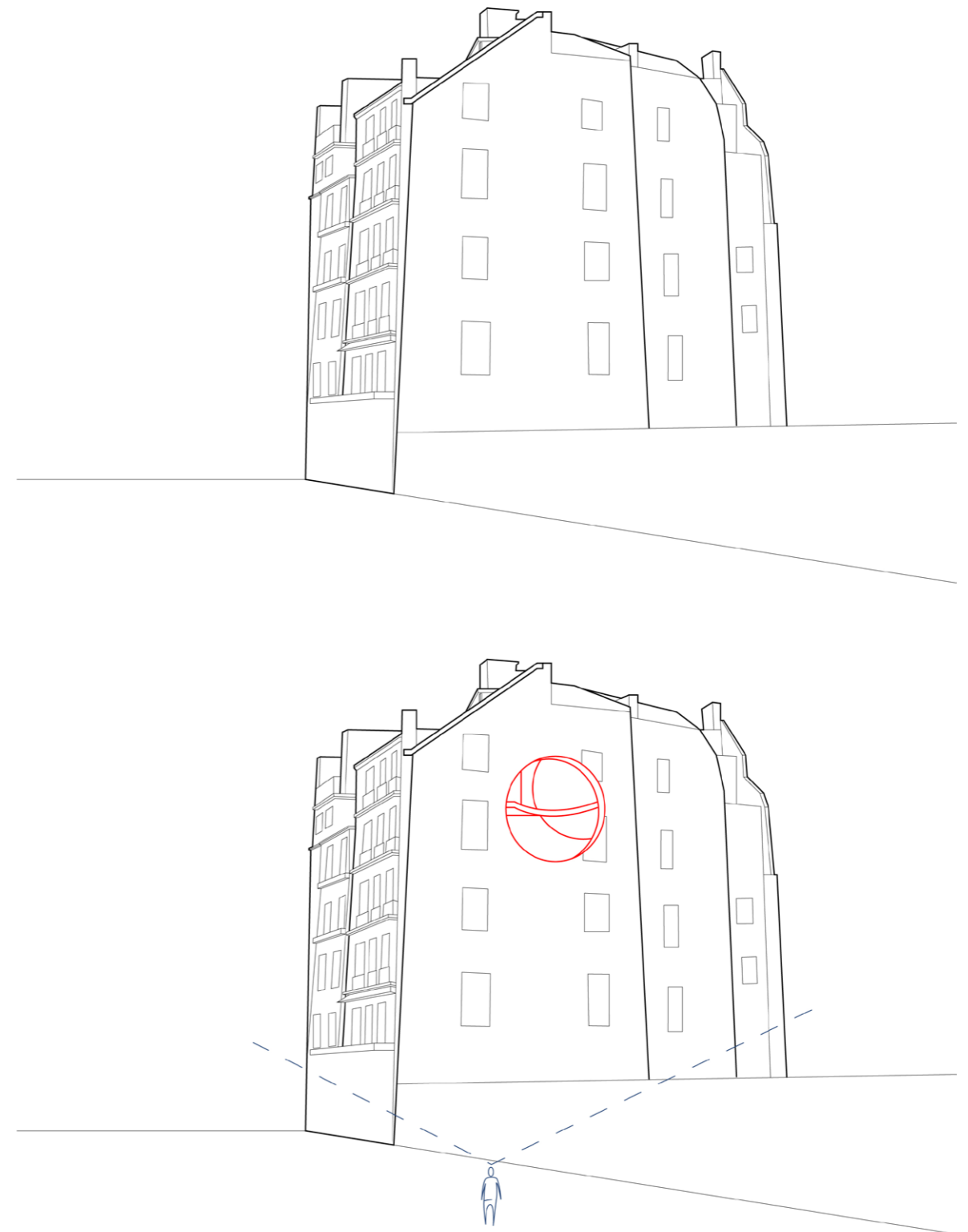


Figure 138 - The apartments in 27 and 29 rue Beaubourg in their physical relation with the artwork *Conical Intersect*. Romano 2022



The conception of the building as a space–event in time is also central to the architectural transformation intervention operated by Matta-Clark. The time generated by the work is inextricably linked to that generated by the architecture, becoming a single temporal flow. In this case, the artistic intervention generates the Time of Intersection with the architecture in such a way that it is no longer possible to separate them, because the artistic intervention acts directly on the structure of the architecture.



Figure 139 - The apartments in 27 and 29 rue Beaubourg in their physical relation with the artwork *Conical Intersect*. Romano 2022

The viewer's gaze is the pivot of this temporality; it crosses the space with its structural characteristics and its original functions bypassing them to create a new space–event through “impossible” points of view. A time dilated in the architectural space, which starting from the multi–sidedness gaze made possible by the gashes opened-up by the artist's action it becomes a multi–time that opens the intimacy of the house to a public vision. A space–event in which the new geometric shapes designed by the artist do not act as standardized formulas of architectural functions, but become specific narratives of a multiplied point of view, linking the internal space and time of the architecture to the external space and time of the surrounding landscape. Inside and outside, outside and inside, biological time and architectural time united uninterruptedly by the signs of artistic intervention.

The second example of additive or subtractive relationship between artwork in public space and architecture that we examine is between the *Cat Cairn* and the *Skyspace* created by James Turrell. In this case, a relationship of *addition* is established between the architectural object and the work of art. The *Cat Cairn* is a rocky outcrop on *Tullos Hill* overlooking *Kielder Water* and *Forest Park* in the *Northumberland* region of northeast England. *Tullos Hill* was subject to industrial sprawl in the post-World War II years and used as a landfill; but despite this, it is rich in evidences of the past. There has been evidence of human activity for over 1,000 years, the most tangible remains of human presence dating back to the Mesolithic period, around 8000-6000 BC.

Among the various artifacts found in the hill area is a group of Bronze Age burial mounds including *Tullos Cairn*, *Cat Cairn* and *Baron's Cairn* among others. *Cat Cairn* is among the best-preserved examples and boasts far-reaching views over the *Tullos Valley* as well as *Forest Park*. Probably over time its structure became more flattened, which is not surprising given its proximity to a densely populated area and the documented use of the area during the Second World War. Its construction probably dates back to the beginning of the second millennium BC. These structures marked the location of burials, sometimes in very elaborate stone-faced tombs. Although the original structure is damaged, this mound is approximately 2.5m high, the roughly circular plan measuring approximately 20m in diameter. Furthermore, along the North – South axis there is a sort of raised platform about 3 m wide, which could be an original feature of this site because it was not found in the other burial mounds in the area. It is on the Scottish Government's List of Scheduled Monuments. Scheduling, established in the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, is the process of identifying, designating and providing legal protection for monuments and archaeological sites of national significance.



Figure 140 - Kielder Waterside. Photo from the kielderwaterside website

*Cat Cairn*, as previously mentioned, is located close to the *Forest Park*, one of the largest man-made forests in Europe with its 650 km<sup>2</sup> of land. The tree planting process began in the 1920s, within the park there is also *Kielder Water*, the largest reservoir in all of England with its 200 billion liters of water capacity and built in 1975 to meet the country's growing need for electricity.

As we have seen, the archaeological find is immersed in nature, yet this nature is somehow "artificial" because it was organized and created by man. We wonder if this somehow influences the perception of the object, whether the design of the planting, the shape of the reservoir has been designed to create a picturesque nature, somehow fine-tuned for the use and consumption of man himself. Lefebvre points out how

*«Nature is also becoming lost to thought. For what is nature? How can we form a picture of it as it was before the intervention of humans with their ravaging tools? Even the powerful myth of nature is being transformed into a mere fiction».* (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 31)

If this were the case, the perception of the landscape that one would have from the mound would be that of a humanized nature, brought to a human dimension to be controlled and dominated by man himself. If we take this interpretation for granted, the temporality of the site is somehow conditioned by this orderly nature and this shifts our perception of architecture, which, by its origin and due to the fact that it enjoys a government protection status,

is still that of 2,000 years ago. Therefore, in reading the temporality of the site, there is a double perception, that of the architectural object itself, which takes us back to an idea of man's origin, a time that, is not well specified because it is really too far from us, an archaic world that it has to do with the origins of our species. Moreover, a second perception, that of the object inserted in the surrounding landscape, which is a natural landscape, controlled and ordered on a human scale, much more current.



Figure 141 - Cat Cairn, Tullos Hill. Photo from *A Guide to the History, Archaeology and Natural History of Tullos Hill*

In 2000, James Turrell designed his *Skyspace* for the *Cat Cairn* site. The artwork is a permanent environmental installation, conceived as a circular space adjacent to the burial mound, which leads directly into the installation. Inside the installation, a single bench follows the perimeter of the space, and viewers can sit to observe the sky through an oval cut in the ceiling. The experience of that part of the sky that the oval cut in the ceiling makes available to us is not the experience of an empty space, but of a space defined by the very boundaries of the circular shape of the cut. What we experience is the movement of the "sky vault", that is the phenomenon whereby we perceive the sky as a vault that covers us from one horizon to another rather than a boundless void. In the framing dictated by the artist, the sky moves fast, the clouds, the movement of daylight, everything that passes within the framing of the ceiling, assumes a different speed compared to the speed it would have if we were looking at it in a space open. The *Skyspace* acts as an underline. Turrell already began in the late 1960s to use light and cuts in architecture as structural elements of his artistic research; the artist manipulates space and light to provide sensory experiences to the audience, he himself defines

his works, as perceptive artworks. In fact, in his environmental sculptures, the boundaries of the room are dissolved through a physical transformation that leads to a transformation of light and space itself. Nonetheless, this series of artworks that Turrell created in different parts of the world has a relationship with the external environment during both day and night; as Barbara Haskell explains well:

*«The Skyspaces have both a day and a night aspect, and the greatest change over time is noticed at the juncture of day and night. Vision into the sky in twilight seems nearly impossible, since the opening appears as an opaquely painted surface on the ceiling».* (Haskell, 1981, p. 33)

This feeling of a painted space above us, a reference to painted Baroque vaults that tried to introduce the external space through “pictorial gashes”, in this case the gash is real, the space we see above us is the sky that through the cut in the architecture it flattens above our heads, bringing it close. Furthermore, the feeling of perceptive estrangement is accentuated by the LED lights, which combine to create a new notion of the space in the room.



Figure 142 - James Turrell, Kielder Skyspace, 2000. Photo from <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/kielder-skyspace-28127>

For the creation of the Skyspace at Cat Cairn, Turrell collaborated with lighting designer Eleanor Bell. Turrell and Bell studied a series of LED lights that switch on when sunset begins and vary in intensity according to the intensity of the external light, adding to the experience of the light that comes from the external environment, that of the light of the internal space in a delicate play of chromatic contrasts between exterior and interior.

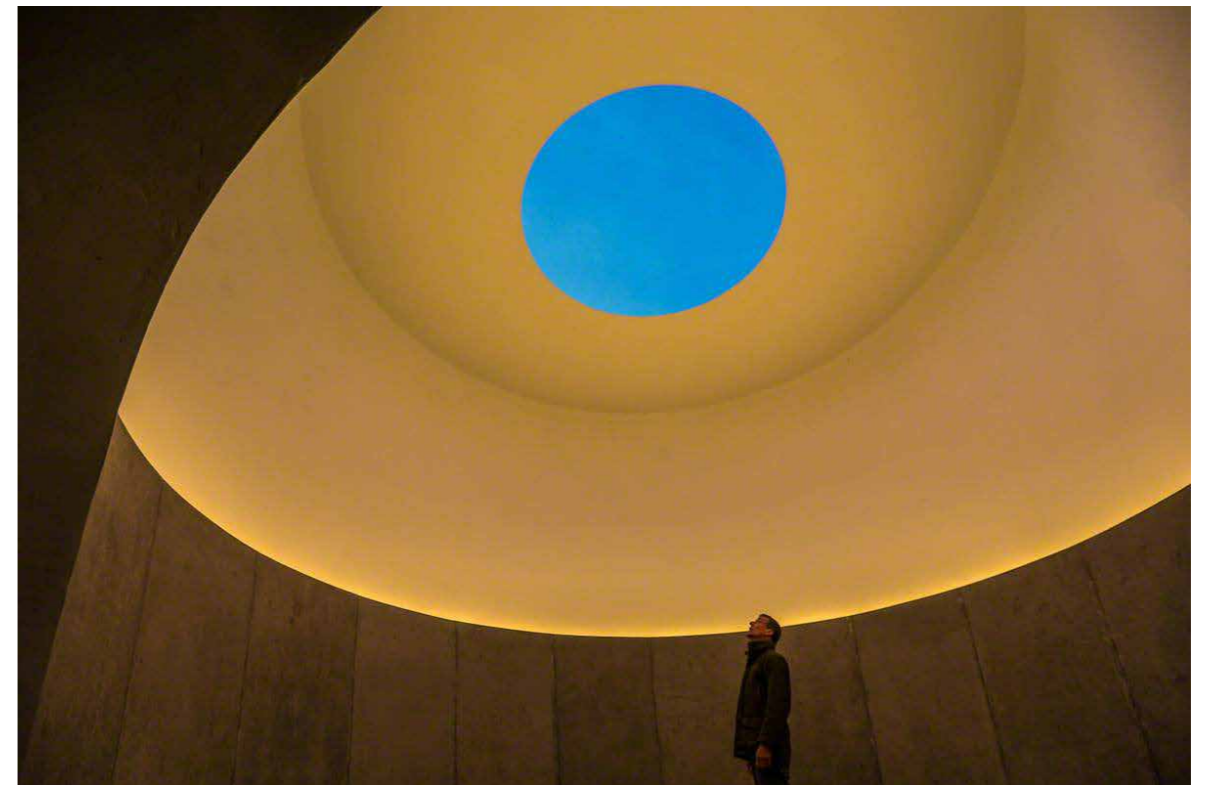


Figure 143 - James Turrell, Kielder Skyspace, 2000. Photo from <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/kielder-skyspace-28127>

The temporality of Turrell’s work has to do with that of the alternation of day and night, with the rotational movement of the Earth on its own axis. The time of the artwork is regulated by astronomical time and consequently it is linked to our circadian rhythm. To the alternation of light and dark that in the artwork dictate a different chromatic relationship between external space and internal space, alternating the natural light coming from the sky in the room during the day, and the night light with LED lights on during the night.



Figure 144 - Cat Cairn in its physical relation with the artwork Kielder Skyspace. Romano 2022

The installation of Turrell's artwork on the archaeological find of *Cat Cairn* works like a star-gate, a passage from the Neolithic to a universal time dictated by the movement of the planet around itself. There is no division between the archaeological finds and the space conceived by the artist because the find functions as a passage to the sky, which, as we have said, is not an empty space, but a physical feeling of presence, but what else is this presence if not the very essence of time? The movement of the planet on which we were born that generates different shades of color, as the position of the sun varies with respect to the geographical point where we are.

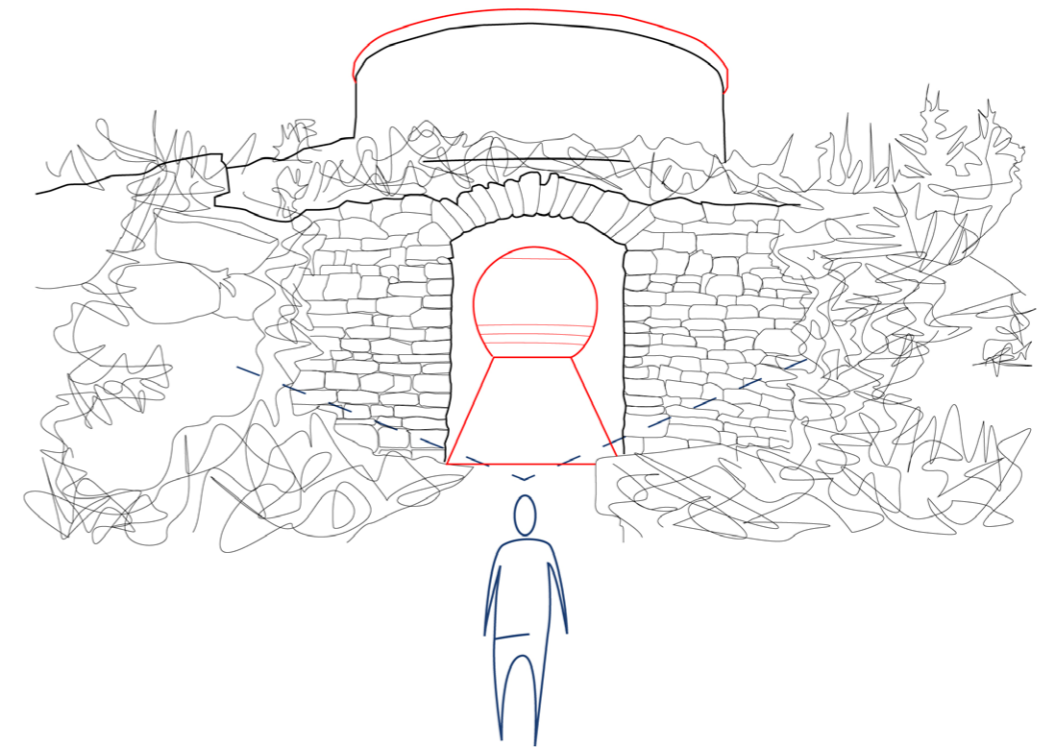
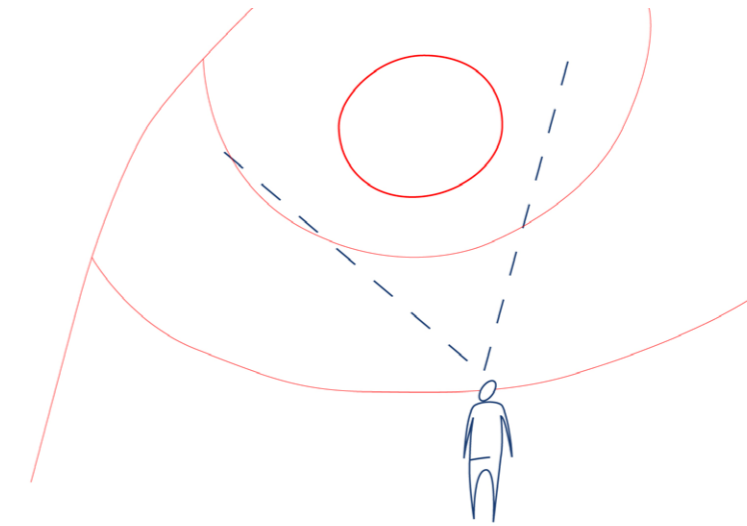


Figure 145 - Cat Cairn in its physical relation with the artwork Kielder Skyspace. Romano 2022

The addition of the *Skyspace* to the *Cat Cairn* finds, therefore shifts the temporality of the find towards a universal temporality, which makes us reflect on the very essence of the nature of time and space, of our being part of a spatial event of which, as a matter of fact we know only an infinitesimal part.

## 6. The definition of a new layer.

(To rewrite our perception)

Michel De Certeau defines the city as a text that can be rewritten, as can be done with literature. In the act of rewriting, not only the grammar of the text, but also its logical sense is completely transformed. In this section, we will analyze the relationship established between architecture and the work of art in the public space when the work of art implements a rewriting of the architectural object.

This technique is often used in reading the layout of a city, its urban conception, to rethink its parts or the very nature of its urban layout. The city is in fact a complex set of events stratified over time, as brilliantly summarized by Lynch<sup>1</sup> and the continuous manipulation of the space of the city is an operation that unites different tools in an indivisible way, planning, economy, identity, creativity, and memory, all to interact with the architectural space. As Assan reminds us:

*«The core of the ars memorativa are the imagines, which encode memory data in the form of meaningful images, and the loci, which order these images within a space structured in a specific position. The step is short between the representation of memory according to this topographical quality and as an architectural complex: it is the passage from space as a mediator of mnemonics to the building as a symbol of memory».* (Assmann, 2002, p. 175)

Permanence overlaps discontinuity in a continuous cross-reference between persistence and contingency, between static elements and formal and consequently semantic transformation. The architecture of the city is reworked, transformed in its passage from one condition to another, in this passage in order to fully understand the transformation carried out, we must necessarily frame it in a wider historical and cultural context. Because rewriting means giving new meaning to the subject that must undoubtedly be considered not only in its formal essence, but also in its being a set of different elements that vary from the concept, to memory, to culture, to art; in short, elements that vary from the physical to the emotional sphere of the subject. The transformation takes place according to an all-encompassing mental configuration. As Rossi reminds us:

*«To configure means to imagine according to a certain form».* (Rossi P. O., 1996, p. 36)

Only by reasoning in terms of an all-encompassing re-configuration of the project will the rewriting technique be able to generate an aesthetic and conceptual transformation, that is, it will be able to generate an architecture that underlines the continuous evolution of the city in its being an “event”, becoming a narrative of the urban fabric.

In the context described in this thesis, the rewriting of the architectural – urban planning process is framed in the relationship between art in public space and architecture. More precisely in the ability of art to generate a new semantic content for the architectural object. This is due to the quality inherent in the work of art of subverting schemes and canons, of re-reading reality through a different filter than the one, necessarily more adherent to a function, which is typical of architecture.

Given these premises, the first example of a work of art and architecture that we will analyze and which have a rewriting relationship between them is that between the *Cretto di Gibellina*, commonly known as the *Grande Cretto* built by Alberto Burri and the town of old Gibellina.

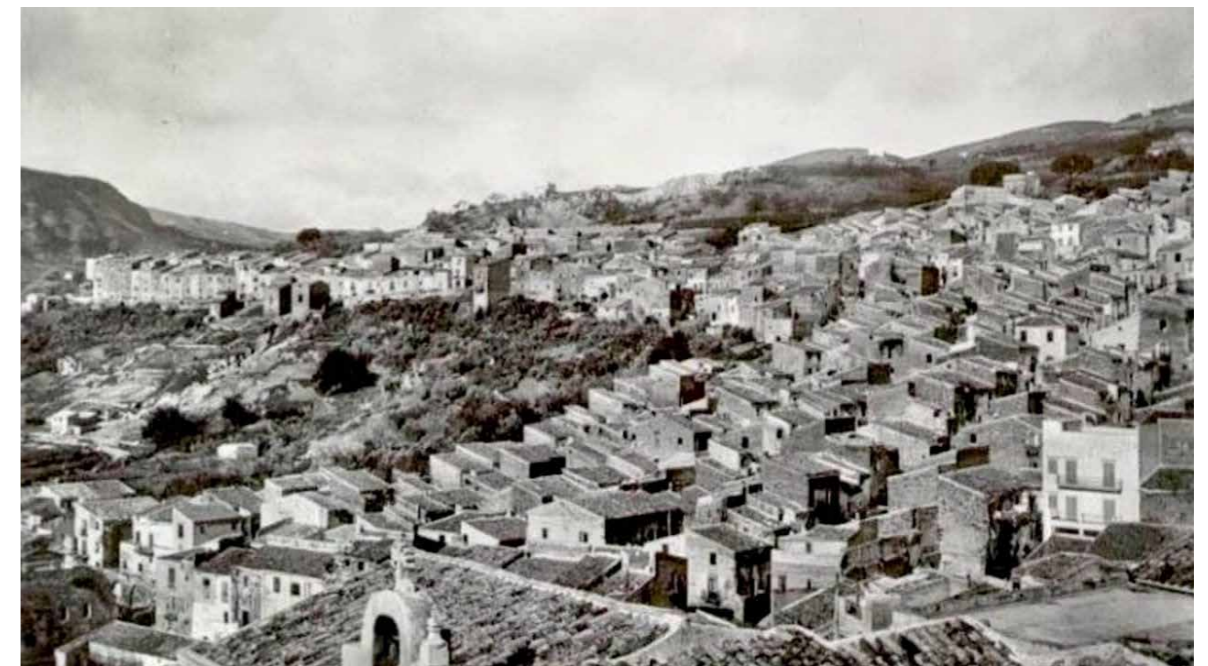


Figure 146 - Gibellina (before 1968). Source: <https://www.primapaginamazara.it/46-anniversario-del-terremoto-del-belice-gibellina-seconda-parte>

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 1 Literature Review, paragraph: What is your time made of?

The *Grande Cretto* was partially built between 1984 and 1989, and then definitively finished in 2015 on the centenary of the birth of Alberto Burri. To analyze the artwork, we must start from the place of the installation, because the place has become (in spite of itself) the origin, meaning and form of the work.

Gibellina has in the origin of its name, the indication of its topography. Gibellina in fact derives from the union of the two Arabic words *Gebel* (mountain) and *Zghir* (small), therefore its name means “small hill” which is exactly the position of the town, at least the original one. The so-called *Gibellina nuova* was built about twenty kilometers further downstream from the position in which it was located, following the Belice<sup>2</sup> earthquake that completely razed it to the ground in the night between 14 and 15 January. The tremors were felt from the early afternoon of January 14th and continued until a strong earthquake at 2.33am on January 15th, which razed a large part of the Municipalities of that area to the ground. At 3.01 there was an even stronger earthquake, measured 5.5 on the moment magnitude scale, which destroyed what remained of several towns in the area, including Gibellina. The confirmed dead were over 300 (the number remained quite low due to the numerous previous tremors, which convinced the local administrators to evacuate the areas) and the displaced people were 70,000. Between January and September of that year, 345 earthquakes were recorded instrumentally in that area. Gibellina was a town that at the material time, and largely still today, was economically based on agriculture, which was practiced along the surrounding hills. The buildings were mainly built in tufa stone, an extrusive magmatic rock which has among the characteristics that of being a light stone, of medium hardness and easily workable. Particularly present in Southern Italy, a volcanic territory throughout its extension, even if the stones commonly called tuffs present in Sicily, especially in the Trapani area, are in reality limestones. In any case, a type of stone that by its very nature is not particularly resistant, above all to the destructive action of an earthquake as intense as the one recorded in 1968. Gibellina was somehow condemned by the structure of its own buildings, to collapse under the force of the earth that moved beneath it, only a few walls remained standing after the last very strong earthquake on the morning of January 15th.

<sup>2</sup> The *Valle del Belice* is the valley formed by the hydrographic basin within which the course of the Belice River extends. It is located in western Sicily in the area between the provinces of Palermo, Agrigento and Trapani.



Figure 147 - The ruins of Gibellina, after the 1968 earthquake; Source: <https://www.ilpost.it/2021/03/29/la-storia-di-gibellina/>

What kind of temporality can we associate not with an architectural object but with an organized set of buildings, streets and squares? Without a doubt, it is a complicated task and if we think of the size of a city, it is even impossible. However, in the case of Gibellina we are talking about a town which, in the years preceding the earthquake that destroyed it, had a population of around 6,000 people and whose architectural structure was that of a country of farmers mostly. These data give back the image of a typical town in the hinterland of Southern Italy, one of those places for which the famous popular phrase is used: “a place where it seems that time has stopped” to describe its atmosphere. Precisely this common saying can help us in our definition of the type of temporality that a place like (Old) Gibellina could have. A place that we can try to conceive through a conceptual effort, if it still existed today, would most likely be the same as it was before the earthquake, where the few changes would have developed over the 54 years that separate us from those tragic events that instead decreed its end. The time of a place like Gibellina is therefore a time that passes slowly, apparently slower than in a big city, because what does not change is precisely the architecture that defines its image.

As mentioned, Gibellina was rebuilt in the following years, further downstream and the promoter of its reconstruction was the then mayor Ludovico Corrao, who invited internationally renowned architects and artists, from Pietro Consagra to Alberto Burri, from Ludovico Quaroni to Franco Purini, to rethink the town to make it a sort of ideal city, between art and

culture. In particular, Burri decided not to concentrate on the new city, but on the ruins of Gibellina that no longer existed.

Therefore, he decided to dedicate a huge monument to the memory of a place whose time had suddenly stopped in such a dramatic way. The *Grande Cretto* looks like a large expanse of white concrete blocks measuring 160×35000×28000cm. The artist decided to compact the rubble of Gibellina, which were still all in their place, and to close them in concrete blocks about 160cm high. The artwork ideally retraces the streets and alleys of the town, the cracks are two to three meters wide, giving the visitor the possibility of walking among the blocks as if he were walking in the middle of *Gibellina Vecchia*. A work that has been defined as Land Art, even if the similarities with the American artistic movement in our view end with the fact that it is a work that develops on the territory.



Figure 148 - Alberto Burri, *Il grande Cretto*, 1984-2015. Photo by Leo Merati - Alice Ruggero

The aesthetics of the work recalls the technique of color cracks that the artist had been experimenting with for years, and which he had entitled *cretti*<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, the origin of the *Cretto di Gibellina* and its size display a completely different emotional value compared to the rest of the artist's pictorial production. The concrete blocks built on the rubble of the city

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of the word is precisely fissure, crack

take on the symbolic role of the shroud, they hit our emotion because we know their genesis, and we know that they contain the ruins of a town that had a tragic end. If we think of the role that memory plays in the construction of our identity, as Assmann points out:

*«Redefining identity always also means building a new memory. This applies, as we know, to both the individual and the community and is reflected in the rewriting of history books, in the demolition of monuments and in the renaming of buildings and public places».* (Assmann, 2002, p. 68)



Figure 149 - Alberto Burri, *Il grande Cretto*, 1984-2015. Photo by Leo Merati - Alice Ruggero

In the construction of the new identity of Gibellina – which coincided with the construction of *Gibellina Nuova* – Burri's work functions as a rewriting of the architecture and empty space of *Gibellina Vecchia*, in a sort of visualization of an affective memory of the lived space. Gibellina was no longer there, but just as one remembers the life of a person in front of a tombstone, in the same way walking through the white concrete blocks, one celebrates a community that had to rebuild its identity elsewhere. Burri's work creates a new semantic content by transforming a place into an event, time in the *Grande Cretto* is not imprisoned within the concrete blocks, together with the rubble of the earthquake, but it is constantly evolving, it becomes memory and image of the present; as Assmann writes, the architecture

that becomes a «symbol of memory» has become one with the work of art that rewrites it in an abstract form, returning it to us in the physical experience of a walkway.

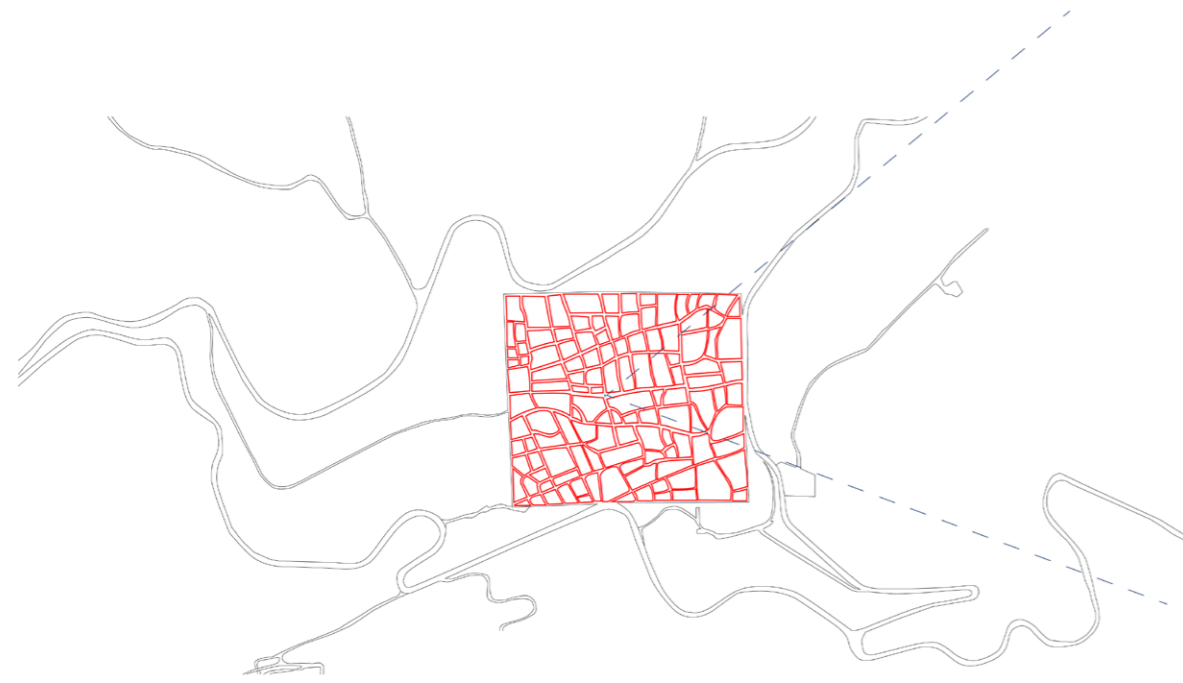


Figure 150 - The surrounding landscape in its physical relation with the artwork Grande Cretto. Romano 2022

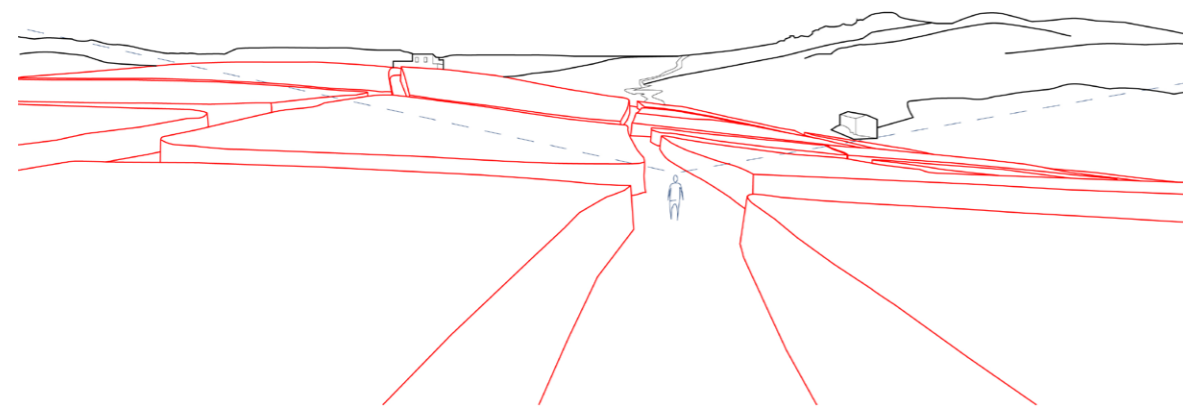


Figure 151 - The surrounding landscape in its physical relation with the artwork Grande Cretto. Romano 2022

The Time of Intersection that derives from the rewriting made by art on architecture is therefore a time that starts from a specific event located in time, January 15, 1968 but which then floats, becoming itself the material of the work, becomes an event experienced through the action of walking in the “streets” and “alleys” in which one can get lost because the white concrete blocks have no distinctive sign – unlike the architectural signs. The anti-monumental attitude of Burri’s work transforms singularities into communities, transforming a place that no longer exists into a place that exists in an abstract form and which takes shape visu-

ally as we walk through it. Time becomes the implied subject of this relationship between art and architecture.

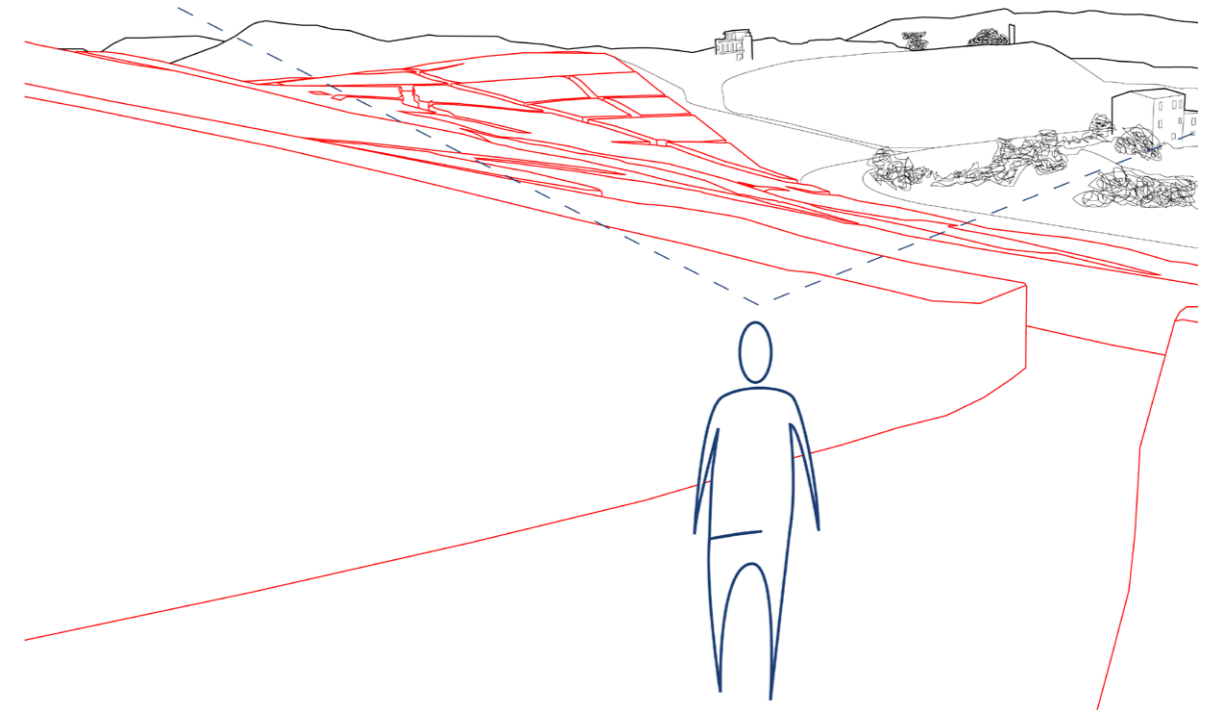


Figure 152 - The surrounding landscape in its physical relation with the artwork Grande Cretto. Romano 2022

The second example we will analyze of the rewriting relationship between architecture and artwork is that of the former Church of *San Tiburzio* in Parma and the artwork *Florilegium* by the English artist Rebecca Louise Law.

The Church, now deconsecrated, was built in the 5th century on the site of an ancient pagan temple dedicated to Juno. The church erected in its place was dedicated to *Maria Santissima*. In 1230 the church became part of the assets of the Benedictine monastery of *San Giovanni Evangelista* and subsequently became the property of the Franciscan contemplative nuns who dedicated it to *San Tiburzio*. In 1386 the nuns ordered the construction of a convent next to the church and began a first reconstruction of the church structure in 1564. In 1720 the church was redesigned into its current structure, an example of Parma Baroque, by the architect Alberto Dalla Nave. The building has a Greek cross plan and culminates with a dome surmounted by an octagonal lantern. The dome was frescoed by Giovanni Gaibazzi between 1883 and 1885 with paintings depicting the *Assumption of Mary* and the four evangelists which are illuminated by four large skylights added a century and a half later by another architect Pancrazio Soncini. Inside the church there are also four allegorical statues



depicting the cardinal virtues, by the sculptor Agostino Ferrarini to whom we also owe the six statues positioned along the facade of the building. The altar was rebuilt after 1882 with Carrara marble also used for the walls and floor. The facade consists of two levels, the lower one marked by four semi-columns with Ionic capitals, the upper one marked by half pilasters which ideally continue the rhythm created by the semi-columns on the lower level.



Figure 153 - Chiesa di San Tiburzio, Parma. Source: [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:San\\_Tiburzio\\_-\\_Parma.jpg](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:San_Tiburzio_-_Parma.jpg)

This building has gone through various vicissitudes throughout its history. In 1805, Napoleon Bonaparte confiscated the oratory and the adjacent convent, ordering the nuns to move to another location. The oratory was deconsecrated and changed various properties (it even became a farrier's workshop). Then in 1875 *San Tiburzio* was bought by the *Congregation of Charity*, an organization born in the very first years of the sixteenth century and since then dedicated to the care of needy people in Parma, which added other statues and frescoes and reconsecrated it in 1885. The church was deconsecrated again in 1913 becoming the deposit of the *Palatine library*. It then passed to the Diocese for a few years, it became a university chapel, later the seat of the Fuci (Italian Catholic University Federation), until it changed cult and became the first Orthodox church in the city of Parma. The church definitively returned to the property of the Congregation which in the last century became a public body, changing its name to *Iraia* and then assuming the name of *Asp Ad Personam*. *San Tiburzio* hosted exhibitions and conferences until the decision to install a permanent work of art inside, precisely *Florilegium* by Rebecca Louise Law.



Figure 154 - Rebecca Louise Law, *Florilegium*, 2020. Photo from the artist's website

If we think of the temporality that can arise from such a place, when we are inside of it, regardless of the fact that today – and for various moments in its history – this place is no longer a place of worship, it is difficult to remain indifferent to what architecture tells. The statues, the paintings and the altar are in fact still where they were originally placed. The plan, the walls, the decorations, all the architectural elements tell us about a place of worship and this naturally affects our perception of that space and our physical relationship with it. As Tuan points out:

*«The human body is a hierarchically organized schema; it is infused with values that are the results of emotion-laden physiological functions and of intimate social experiences».* (Tuan, 1977, p. 89)

These values derived from social experiences and inner emotions precisely determine our physical approach to a place, they influence our movements in space and consequently our temporal approach to that space. We were saying that the architectural space in which we are is a space designed for a place of worship and which retains all its structural and decorative characteristics, this is also decisive in the temporal reading of that place which remains intimately what it was designed for, a sacred place. A place in which to seek the mystery of the divine, of spirituality, Tuan again underlines the importance of similar places:

*«This unperceived field is every man's irreducible mythical space, the fuzzy ambience of the known which gives man confidence in the known».* (Tuan, 1977, p. 87)

An architectural space that binds us to the divine, with a mystery, which makes man's relationship with the rest of the environment in which he lives safer; paradoxically, faith in something that is not rational makes the space of experience more understandable. So, the temporality that springs from such a place is a temporality linked to the world of the divine, to an idea of origin and ultimate aim, according to the linearity of time marked by the Catholic faith, which has the reunion with the Divine as its ultimate ending.

In 2020 Rebecca Louise Law installed the environmental installation *Florilegium* inside *San Tiburzio*, an installation made up of 200,000 dehydrated flowers<sup>4</sup> and installed in the space using copper wire.



Figure 155 - Rebecca Louise Law, *Florilegium*, 2020. Photo from the artist's website

Louise Law's research was born, as often occurs, from the artist's family background. Daughter of a gardener, she grew up in a village near Cambridge where she learned to love nature and her elements. Right from the start the natural element became the main subject of her research, which very soon passed from painting to large environmental installations.

<sup>4</sup> The complete list of flowers used in the installation: Achillea millefolium - (Yarrow), Achillea ptarmica - (Sneezewort), Albi flora, Amaranthus, Ammi majus, Ammobium, Anaphalus triplinervis (Summer Snow), Asparagus, Brachyciton, Broom, Brunia, Carline acaulis, Carthamus tinctorius - (Safflower), Carvi, Celosia, Chamaethelum nobile - (Roman Camomile), Chardon, Clematis, Delphinium, Drycree, Echinops ritro - (Globe Thistle), Eryngium alpinum - (Alpine Sea I-Jolly), Eryngium planum - (Sea Holly), Eucalypcus, Fagus, Gomphrena globosa - (Globe Amaranth), Gypsophila, Helichrysum bracteatum - (Strawflower), Helichrysum subulifolium - (Neon Yellow), Helipterum sanfordii - (Golden Clusrers), Hydrangea, Larkspur, Leather Fern, Lepidium, Limonium sinensis, Limonium sinuatum - (Statice), Lonus inodora - (Yellow Agerarum), Nigella sativa, Physalis alkekengi, Plaryspermum, Protea, Pumosum, Rhodanthe chlorocephala - (Acroclinium), Rhodanthe manglesii - (Strawflower), Rice Flower, Roses, Salignum, Schinus molle - (Pemvian Pink Peppercorn), Stachys byzantina - (Lamb's ear), Statice Tatarica, Strelizia, Tfifra, Tortum.



Figure 156 - Rebecca Louise Law, *Florilegium*, 2020. Photo from the artist's website

These installations are very often site-specific due to their structure and also in the case of *Florilegium*, the installation was conceived and created specifically for the *San Tiburzio* space. In fact, one of the flowers chosen by the artist and most representative from a visual point of view, of the place of the exhibition, is the *violet of Parma*, which is linked to the history of the city as the favorite flower of Maria Luisa of Hapsburg, Duchess of Parma, Piacenza and Guastalla from 1814 to 1847, and second wife of Napoleon Bonaparte. Due to the preference expressed by the Duchess, the violet became a real symbol of the city, binding itself to all the political, social and cultural events that have accompanied the history of the city. Therefore, as we have seen, flowers are used by the artist, not only as an element of strong visual impact, but as an element capable of speaking of the history of a place. Furthermore, the flower is also a recurring subject in one of the most frequently treated themes in the history of art, the still life, a contradictory term in itself given that nature is an expression of life, even if it contains within itself the idea of its own caducity. As the curator of the exhibition Elisabetta Rastelli points out:

*«From the contradictory dichotomy associated with the term, Rebecca Louise Law extracts the symbolic value of vanitas: its link with the magic of representation for which the super temporal character of the artistic image, brings her to an invasion of the physical space, a positioning “on the other side” of the mortal world»<sup>5</sup>*

As repeatedly reiterated in this thesis, the artistic image (or object) cannot be defined as «super temporal» because this would mean removing the work of art from time and therefore excluding it from the possibility of being analyzed and read in its own context. In our view, on the contrary, it is precisely its being an integral part of the temporality of our phenomenological or rather post-phenomenological perception following the vision of Dino Formaggio, which allows us to read the work of Rebecca Louise Law as an element capable of rewrite the space in which it is installed.

<sup>5</sup> Essay by Elisabetta Rastelli from the artist's website: [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f92abbe2012787ac98a84c7/t/602fa60a451d3248834f310d/1613735434703/9922ce\\_6a499648e3714a4fa1d3481142c9337f.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5f92abbe2012787ac98a84c7/t/602fa60a451d3248834f310d/1613735434703/9922ce_6a499648e3714a4fa1d3481142c9337f.pdf)

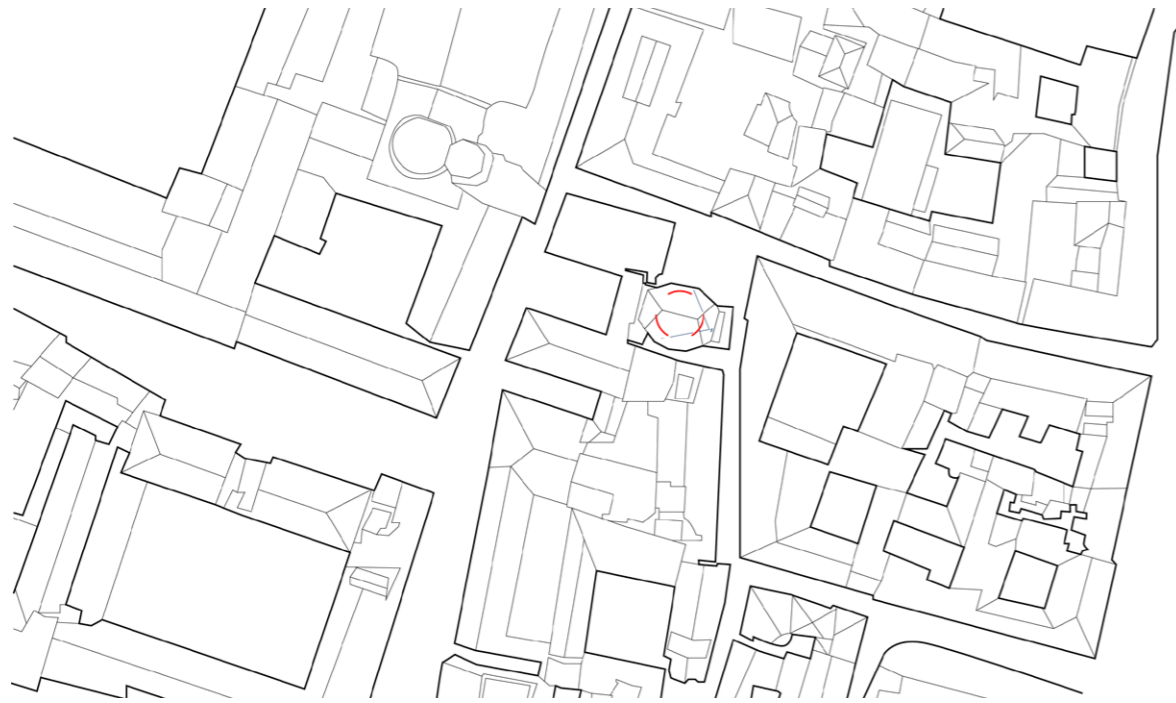


Figure 157 - San Tiburzio in its physical relation with the artwork Florilegium. Romano 2022

The artist herself defines her installations as «larger-than-life» as extensions of life, something we can only perceive when we include the work into the temporality of our perception, relating it to the space in which we find ourselves. In this way art becomes a vector of inclusion of different temporalities, that of the architectural space, that of the work of art and that of the “duration” of the vision activated by the spectator. In this regard, we recall what John Berger wrote about the gaze:

«We never look at just one thing; what we look at is, always, the relationship that exists between us and things». (Berger, 2022 [1972], p. 11)

*Florilegium* is a work that foresees its own consumption over time because it is composed of natural elements and therefore the idea of metamorphosis, of transformation of its own structure, is an integral part of its being an event over time. Nonetheless, the fact of being an installation of flowers in an architectural space such as a former church helps to build a liminal space that links our perception of space with the sacred architecture that surrounds it, bringing our sensation back to a mystical moment where the spectator’s biological time is expanded, extended, through the time of the work of art and that of architecture. Effectively becoming a single time that is no longer divisible because, as we wrote at the beginning of this paragraph referring to reconfiguration of a space, rewriting means giving new meaning

to the subject not only in its formal essence, but in its perceptive structure by overwriting different elements of the physical and emotional spheres of the subject.

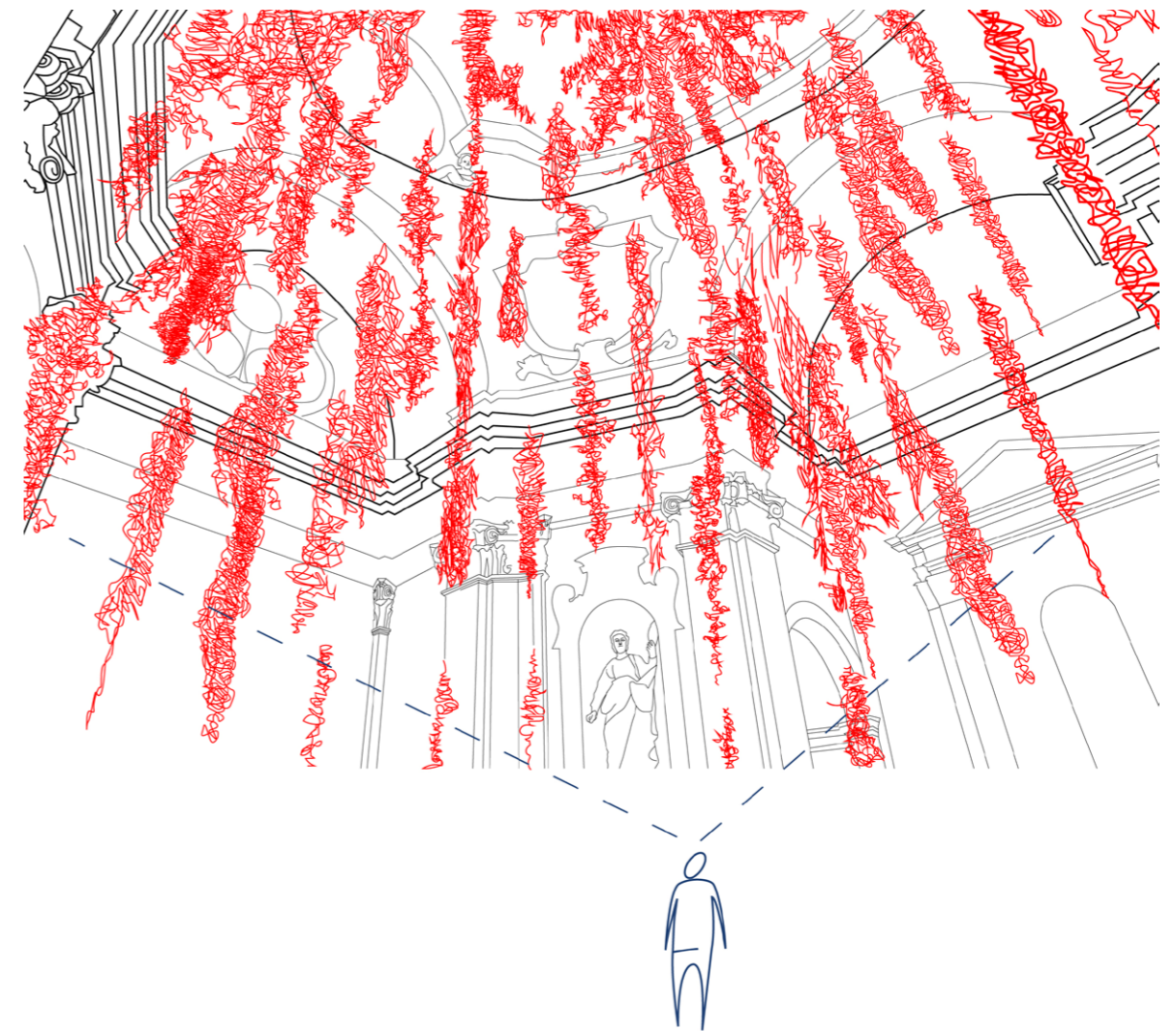


Figure 158 - San Tiburzio in its physical relation with the artwork Florilegium. Romano 2022

### CHAPTER 3 Conclusions: Studies and Obsessions (NOW)

Now: (nau) adv. 1. At the present time 2. Immediately 3. Recently (oft. With just) –conj. 4. Seeing that, since – ‘nowadays adv. In these times, at present.

#### 1. Categories

In this chapter, we will highlight and explain in detail the categories born from the analysis of the six thematic areas developed in chapter number 2. This is the paragraph where will be presented the results of the research.

In the previous chapter we analyzed six different possible relationships between the work of art in public space and architecture. We decided to focus on these two subjects in particular, due to the high symbolic value they possess in our definition of reality and at the same time in our idea of spirituality. Indeed, when we speak of reality, we refer to our phenomenological experience of the space that surrounds us and, in this space, man has built his objects. The objects that more than any other give meaning and shape to our landscape are architectural objects and artistic objects (realized in public space). In fact, to describe the city in which we live, we would use elements of the architecture that composes it, or of its streets, or of a monument in a square or of a particular event that has characterized this or another spot of it. These objects that fill the environment in which we move therefore have the dual function of building our real, physical, phenomenological landscape and at the same time become symbolic spaces, linked to our actions in and around them. The objects that compose the spaces of the city are in different physical relationships with each other, compositional relationships of the various buildings and spatial relationships that are built in urban development. In our thesis we have seen how some keywords of the compositional vocabulary of architecture can describe, using a broader post-phenomenological approach, the relationship of architecture with other physical elements of the reality that surrounds it, in our specific case, with the work of art in public space and how these keywords, describing this broader relationship between architecture and the work of art, can be transformed into actual categories for reading the perceptive space around us. In our thesis we have also seen how the notion of space is inseparable from that of time, we are referring to the discoveries of physics that have made these two concepts indivisible and in a metaphysical vision, to the philosophy of Henri Bergson who sees time as an uninterrupted flow that unites past, present and future so that what we feel flowing in our lives are the elements that are part of it, people, objects and

not time. There is an inversion of roles such that things are not in time, rather it is time that coincides with the flow of things in the universe. This definition is based on the transformation of the concept of space–time into a becoming that redesigns a space–event of the action of art and architecture in our perception of reality. The *Time of Intersection* that is generated by this relationship changes dynamics precisely according to the different articulations that the work of art creates with the architecture and the point of view of the beholder. As can be read from the analysis of the case studies, the relationship between artworks and architectural objects has interchangeable boundaries between the six key words identified, and their division serves to study and read them more precisely for our purpose, that is to demonstrate that both objects function according to their own distinct temporality and that in their superimposition, our approach to the surrounding reality is influenced by them.

On the other hand, our perception of reality is defined in the first place through the images that are formed in our memory through our experience, that is, our action in the space of reality, therefore in a double exchange, what happens in reality builds my imagination and my perception of reality itself, and vice versa my imagination contributes to my way of placing myself and acting in the space of reality. In a world that asks us to be ever more present through our actions, through an action that causes a direct impact on reality, talking about our perception of it may seem like a limitation, a step backwards. We will answer that following the argument indicated above, perception is itself an action capable of building a link between the various objects and the various actions with which we are confronted, capable of actively influencing the reading of reality.

Let us therefore analyze this passage from a keyword to a perceptive category, that is to say a determination of reality and the form through which this reality is thought of, according to the six keywords analyzed in the previous chapter. This relationship has been visually exemplified in the form of diagrams to better understand and read the physical relationship between the architecture, the artwork and the viewer.

#### **The perception of time as distance. (The Space in Between)**

In the description of this general idea, we have established that there is a distance within which a force of mutual dependence is created between the architectural object and the work of art. In this type of physical relationship between the architecture and the work of art, the

position of the viewer is also important; with his physical movement in space, he determines the point of view from which he will be able to grasp the two subjects simultaneously. The viewer's physical position in this relationship transforms his perception of objects into an event. The *Time of Intersection* of this category is therefore a time closely linked to the viewer's position with respect to the work of art and the architectural object, namely to his or her point of view. Consequently, also to the position of the work of art with respect to the architectural object and the physical distance between the two. As follows from the results of our research, the *Time of Intersection* of this category is the result of this equation.

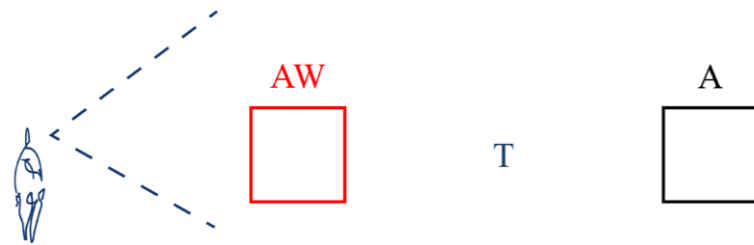


Figure 159 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

**The continuous flow of two close shapes. (The definition of the Form by Superimposition or Juxtaposition)**

We have seen how in architecture the simplest way to conceive a visual order that starts from an overlap or a juxtaposition is the idea of simple modular units. These modules are geometric figures that define sections of the subject which, superimposed or juxtaposed, shape the building. These elements are visually independent of each other but create a visual order when used to create a composition. In this general idea, the work of art is physically located above the architecture, but the two objects maintain their identity visually detached; the work of art is easily recognizable with respect to the architecture. The visual order created by the superimposition of the two objects, the architectural and the artistic one, also determines their temporality. The two subjects influence each other, without either of them having the upper hand over the other. In this case the observer's point of view does not decisively influence the duration of the event as in the previous category. It can therefore be inferred that the *Time of Intersection* of this category is derived from the relationship of the shape and materials of the two objects.

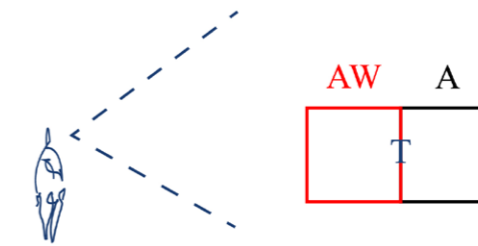


Figure 160 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

**Single and collective memory. (Of the rhythm, or of the continuity of the impression)**

Rhythm is composed of an element in relation to the element that precedes it, that is, it exists in the decomposition of the elements in their temporal succession. To obtain a rhythm, we need a memory capable of recording a trace and making it last until the next element appears, be it a sound or an image. The rhythm is therefore formed by an alternation that reproduces the idea of movement, of flow. In this general idea, the relationship between architecture and work of art can be defined as a relationship that extends over the duration of the viewer's gaze which creates a temporal continuity in the visual elements. The *Time of Intersection* of this category, consequently, lies in this visual relationship, in the continuity of the impression of the elements that compose the architectural object and the artistic object that alternate and repeat in the viewer's gaze.

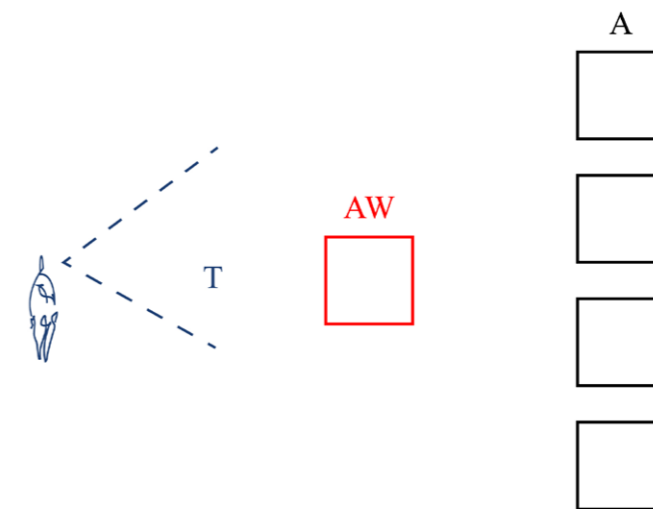


Figure 161 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

**The instant impression. (The estrangement in the practice of the ephemeral)**

If the notion of space becomes fluid, this certainly poses a challenge for architecture, that of integrating within itself the concepts of flow, movement, contingency; concepts that could hardly be defined only through purely spatial categories; consequently, the discriminant becomes the temporal category. The space–event of this general idea is a representative or symbolic space that literally shapes around the movement of people who participate in the public space of cities; a space that is always in motion and in a continuous process of semantic reconstruction. It is the experience of physical space which, through the work done by our memory, is capable of re-actualizing a moment even when it is over. The research shows how, the Time of Intersection in this category is the result of the superimposition of the time of our memory of an event (our inner time) and the linear time that the objects around us project onto us (the outer time).

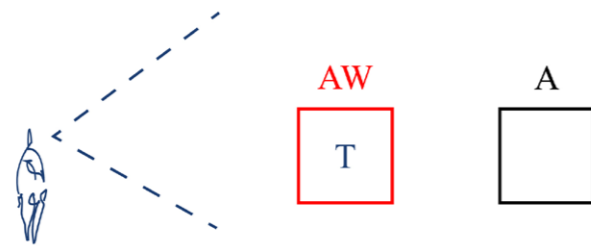


Figure 162 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

**Modify the shape to modify its time. (Space and Time by Addition or Subtraction)**

The reduction to pure geometric elements helps us understand the meaning of addition and subtraction in architecture. These geometric elements are at the origin of architectural design, so any element I add to a starting shape becomes an addition to the original shape, and conversely any element I subtract from the same original shape becomes a subtraction. We extend this type of relationship to the relationship between the architectural object (read as a whole of its parts) and the artistic object. Architecture and work of art in this case have a different physical bond between them than that established through the overlapping or juxtaposition analyzed previously, because the spatial order that the two subjects create is not a sum of the two, but a new unique, a crisis that arises as a consequence of the physical

action that the artistic object operates on the architectural object, modeling it. As a result, we have that in this category, the *Time of Intersection* is a single time, given by the physical action of the work of art on the architecture. It is no longer possible to distinguish the time of architecture from the time of the work of art, because their physical addition or subtraction has made them a single object.

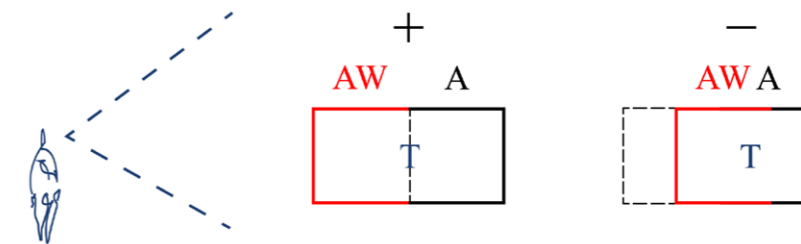


Figure 163 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

**The definition of a new layer. (To rewrite our perception)**

Permanence overlaps discontinuity in a continuous cross-reference between persistence and contingency, between static elements and formal transformation and consequently, semantic transformation. Architecture is transformed in its passage from one condition to another, re-writing means giving new meaning to the subject which must undoubtedly be considered not only in its formal essence, but in its structural whole of different elements, whether physical or perceptive. Unlike the previous category, the work of art does not add or remove elements from the architectural object in a compositional way, but dominates it from a sensorial and perceptive point of view. The results of our research show us that the *Time of Intersection* of this category is given by the visual sum of the two subjects, in which one perceptually dominates the other.

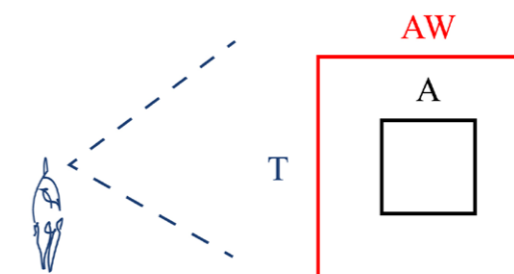


Figure 164 - Diagram of the physical relationship established between viewer, architecture, and work of art. Romano 2023

## 2. Conclusions

In the initial steps of this thesis, we hypothesized that there were two different temporalities which, in their superimposition, created a third time.

The first, the time that we find within the architecture, inherent in its very structure. This time can be read from various elements such as the year of construction of the building, the different materials used for its construction, the structure of its internal spaces and its functions, the architectural style. All these characteristics have been analyzed through case studies. Art too contains its own time (the second), which we can identify by analyzing characteristics similar to those we have listed for architecture and which, also in the case of art, we have studied in the various case studies previously analyzed. Our initial hypothesis was that one could perceive the artwork in the public space together with the architecture in the background, from a temporal dimension emerging from their superimposition and that this superimposition generates a third time.

The path developed through the analysis of the typologies of the different ways of physical connection between architecture and the work of art in public space leads us to the conclusion that in the moment of overlapping of the two subjects examined, the time resulting from their overlapping, concerning our point of view, it is not a third time as hypothesized at the beginning of the thesis, but rather a temporal flow that originates and diversifies precisely according to the physical connection of the architectural object with the work of art in space public. An anisotropic time that is determined and in turn determines our perception of the two subjects we are observing.

As we have seen, the subject is the body, that of the observer which allows him to have a physical connection with the reality that surrounds him, the body of the architectural object and the body of the work of art. But as we examined during the thesis, our approach to reality has changed, we have a new understanding of reality, a new point of view derived from scientific and technological discoveries, new social achievements, political changes and all the things that contribute to the creation of our worldview. This new vision of reality that we have called many-temporal has also influenced our physical understanding of the world, and reciprocally also its digital simulacrum.

The change in our perception of space and time in which we move affects our idea of reality because it changes the way we move and perceive the space in which we are. Nonetheless, this influences our actions because our way of acting and responding actively in space depends on the perceptive stimuli we receive in reality.

This thesis wants to be the beginning of an analysis and a path that we hope to expand later also through the contribution of all those who will have an interest in the topics explored in it. The six categories identified through the keywords do not represent the only possible ways in which an architectural object or an urban space can relate to a work of art in public space. Architecture and art are susceptible to epistemological and ontological changes linked to the time of their realization and to the time of our perception. This means that with the transformation of the ways of making art or architecture, new ways of relating will arise or the existing ones will change, for this reason, the thesis becomes an initial platform that will be continuously developed and verified.

One of the groups that can best verify the validity of the thesis are the students of art and architecture universities, as it is to them that the thesis is mostly addressed (as well as of course to professionals in the sector). The approach to architecture and art proposed in this thesis, allows us to see an opening towards both disciplines to consider them not only within the current stylistic and compositional dictates, but also as malleable subjects and part of a unique experiential landscape of which art and architecture function as a pivot. As also highlighted by Till:

*«Time in all its complexity cannot be summoned up in a single system of representation, so one has to resort to multiple modes of communication: drawn, made, photographed, told, enumerated, enacted».* (Till, 2009, p. 113)

The possibility of learning to read the physical relationship that is established between architecture and work of art in public space helps to broaden the cognitive abilities of the student or professional, offering them a renewed range of interpretation of reality. Exactly as Formaggio states:



« *We find that the building, the temple, the house have not naively arisen from the modelling of an art of space called architecture, but are verifiable, describable, as temporal configurations*». (Formaggio, 1990, p. 38)

This new perception of space enables the reader to translate it into new formal syntheses, which in turn will become verification of the thesis and perhaps proposals for new categories of interpretation of the temporality between a work of art and architecture.

In the appendix to this thesis, we have added the results of a workshop carried out with a group of students from the Bergamo Academy of Fine Arts, who worked on some of the categories proposed in the thesis.

#### **CHAPTER 4 Interviews (SOMETIMES)**

Sometimes: ('sʌmtaɪmz) adv. 1. Formerly 2. At some (past or future) time –a. 3. Former –  
'sometimes adv. 1. Occasionally 2. Now and then

In this paragraph will be presented a series of interviews realized during the research, with professionals in different fields. The professionals have been chosen because of their curricula and their interests in the main field of work of this research.

The professionals interviewed are a physicist: Mimoza Hafizi; a philosopher: Vittorio Morfino; an art critic: Alessandra Pioselli; two artists: Anri Sala and Stefano Boccalini; an architect: Franco Purini.

Their point of view on the topics related to art, architecture, time, and space, have been integrated also into the ideas developed in the thesis, but they are presented in this section, as an apparatus, to give the reader, the opportunity to create their point of view on their thoughts.

## 1. Mimoza Hafizi

Interview with Mimoza Hafizi, physicist, Professor of Physics at the University of Tirana, Department of Physics

February 24, 2022

**Stefano Romano:** What does time mean to you?

**Mimoza Hafizi:** Regarding time, there are many things about which people in general and physicists in particular do not agree with each other, but there is a broad consensus on something: that time as a notion is difficult to define.

Time is related to the question: How long? In this regard we need an instrument to measure it and some units as well. People have built throughout the millennial history of civilizations both of these. Nowadays we have clocks of such high precision that they can be wrong by one second in 14 billion years. As much as the entire time of the universe since the Big Bang. Today we have time units, the second, the hour as dividing units of the 24-hour day, etc. They are tools and units that people have built themselves, in an effort to have a cooperative and efficient society, as well as to put themselves in relation to the universe.

Time is related to the question: when? At what time? Here we refer to a certain moment. But anyway, this moment is given in relation to an initial moment that people have agreed to call “*zero moment*”. This is the beginning of our era. So even in answering this question, we actually answer the first question: How long?

Time is an essential element in the experiments and observations in physics, from which the postulates of this science have come. We know the physical quantities at every instant of time, from the initial instant when the experiment begins. So, in all cases actually, we are dealing with duration.

Therefore, as a physicist, I like to refer to time as duration. It seems to me that time, as a word, out of the context of duration, is a philosopher’s subject — not entirely, anyway. However, I am sticking to the first meaning.

**SR:** How has the notion of time (from the science point of view) changed in the last century?

**MH:** The notion of time took a conceptual leap with Albert Einstein’s “*Theory of Special Relativity*”.

Physics had been stabilized for several centuries, from the era of Isaac Newton and Galileo Galilei to absolute time. Thus, a linear flow, from the past to the future, the same everywhere in the universe, and eternal.

However, due to some problems that the physics of the early twentieth century had shown, the concept of absolute time fell, as the new physics proposed such relations, which showed how the duration of a process depends on the reference system where the clock that measures it is located. So time does not flow equally. These connections were tested and are still tested today with the highest precision. For instance, atomic clocks have been installed on airplanes, and the flow of time from departure to its arrival has been different in the time measured by the airplane clock and the time measured by the clock on the ground.

Thus, the flow of time is related to the coordinate system that means, to space. We no longer have a 3-dimensional space and a time that flows eternally and uniformly, but we have a four-dimensional space–time.

With Einstein’s Theory of Gravitation, which was proposed in 1915, ten years after “*Special Relativity*”, it was seen that time, its flow, depends on the presence of masses, and so on the gravitational field. Einstein’s theory of gravity is confirmed every day, through observations. We have a space–time inextricably linked to the distribution of masses.

Astronomy discovered that the universe is expanding. The Big Bang model of the universe that “begins sometimes” in the past, was born from that moment.

Today, all the data show that the time flow since this initial state is about 14 billion years. Time is no longer eternal.

As can be seen, people were forced to accept a common cosmic time as a parameter in their equations and refer to it. This was possible due to the gravitational equations.

**SR:** How does time act in our perception of what is real, namely in our idea of space?

**MH:** All that we are saying is imperceptible to people outside of the science community, because we are dealing with situations of powerful gravitational fields, or systems with extremely high speeds. Even the expansion of the universe is the result of observations with sophisticated instruments that go beyond our perceptions. For us as humans born under earthly conditions, daily time is an indicator that measures the successive changes that occur in a day. So, time is about change. We are able to perceive a changing space, therefore we also perceive time. Even in an artwork, I believe that the idea of time flowing can be given when the image has some dynamism. I am referring to the visual arts, where the main element is space.

**SR:** In a famous letter Albert Einstein wrote that: «people like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between past, present and future is only a persistent illusion». What are past, present and future according to science?

**MH:** Based on Einstein's relativity, the block universe model is used for the conception of space and time, in which each event occupies a certain position, with its spatial coordinates and the time when it happened, referring to the world time. In this conception, which is called the block universe or the eternal universe, there is no difference between the past, the present and the future. They are all real and present. The past, the present and the future are only their positioning in relation to us, in our present, which is the event that belongs to the position where we are and the time that our clock ticks, now.

There is also another conceptual model, which considers only the present as real, while the past and the future do not exist. One has gone, is no more, the other has not yet arrived.

I mean, there is no unique view of the past, present and future in science. Because indeed, these are related to time, and not to its duration, which I described at the beginning. Physics is primarily concerned with duration. However, there are quite a few physicists who deal with the concept of time in general, which they see as related to how physics is trying to build a unified theory between the megaworld and the microworld.

**SR:** Can the linearity of time be changed?

**MH:** The linearity of time is a concept related to our own time, which develops from the past into our future. Even in physics, in space–time, every event has its own world flow line, which is a relation between space and time coordinates. This is called the world line. This is the basis of what is called linearity.

When we ask whether linearity is changed, we mean the question of whether we can travel through time. I like some reasoning about this issue:

If time is absolute, means that has everyone's consensus, then time travel is impossible, because there is only one time for everyone.

If there is no absolute time, then there is no universal time, so the question itself is meaningless. The question that would make the most sense would be: Can we fly into someone else's future? Yes, this is possible, but it didn't change the linearity of time.

## 2. Vittorio Morfino

**Interview with Vittorio Morfino, philosopher, Associate Professor of History of Philosophy at the University of Milan/Bicocca and director of the Italy Program at the Collège International de Philosophie, Paris**

**January 4, 2021**

**Stefano Romano:** St. Augustine asked himself in his book “Confessions”: «what is time then? If nobody asks me, I know; if I want to explain it to anyone who asks me, I don’t know anymore». What does time mean to you?

**Vittorio Morfino:** For me it has always been a great passion towards a philosophical object that seems extremely interesting to me, it has always fascinated me let’s say that my passion for time born almost together with my philosophical beginnings. What is time to me? I cannot say that I have a definitive answer, let’s say that the answer lies in the semantic area of that concept that I have tried to formulate as “plural temporality”. This is an attempt to counterattack what Heidegger would call the “history of metaphysics”, that is, to find a materialist tradition of time, which rejects both time as a circle, as a circular return on itself, and time as a progressive line. This has become the meaning of time to me, in the sense that I also tend to read my experiences in terms of “plural temporality”, that is, of stratification, of overlapping. Evidently, the conceptual framework that orients us ends up influencing our perception as well, then naturally there are all a series of analyzes on time, which I could apply to myself, for example, Bergson’s on the very long time of a football match when your team is winning, or in the extremely short time the other way around. In short, I have the experience of time that everyone has, and at the same time I try to read it conceptually through this framework.

**SR:** Can you explain the concept of “plural temporality” to us?

**VM:** The question of what is the “plural temporality” presupposes a complex answer and, as I told you, does not refer to a precise theory, but is rather a criticism of some conceptions of time. Let’s say that what I call “plural temporality”, at least as an object of research, arises from studying Marx and Althusser and precisely from a chapter of Althusser’s “*Reading Capital*”, in which Althusser criticizes Marxist historicism. Althusser in particular, criticizes the idea, that Marx expresses in the preface of ‘59, according to which history is a succession

of modes of production and the engine of this succession is the contradiction between productive forces and relations of production. So that we have a history that proceeds linearly towards progress and towards an eschaton, that is, an ultimate goal, which is communism. Think of Marx’s famous quote: “*The end of prehistory is the beginning of human history*”. Engels already towards the end of his life had, we could say, blurred this model, because he had spoken of the ultimate determination of the economic, of interaction, reciprocal action of superstructures. Althusser elaborates a theory of “differential temporality” that is, Althusser says, a society cannot be conceived as a spiritual whole that develops according to a single time, but must be thought of according to different rhythms which are articulated between them. Therefore, every time, the time of every level, must be thought of in relation to the other levels, categorically refusing to think that there is a fundamental time, under all these levels. As if there were a clock of history, a clock of being. From there, an enormous series of problems opened up, I had read this chapter as a boy and it struck me greatly, and from there I began to do research in various directions. In the direction of the History of Thought, I found tools in Lucretius, tools in Machiavelli, in Spinoza, Koselleck who speaks of “plural temporality”. I found tools in Herder and it took me a very long time to find the text in which Herder speaks about this topic, because I had gone through the texts of Philosophy of History and I hadn’t found it. I discovered instead, that in a text in which he replies to Kant, criticizing the “*Critique of Pure Reason*”, and which it is titled “*Meta-critique of the Critique of Pure Reason*”, Herder expressly speaks of plural temporality.

Then looking into the Marxist tradition, I found a series of extremely interesting texts. For example, the beautiful book by Remo Bodei entitled “*Multiversum*”. Or Bloch’s texts where obviously the utopian element is also present, but it is a Bloch who analyzes Nazism, who analyzes the society of his time, so he is extremely interesting, and is very rooted in the Marxist tradition. Then reading Gramsci in the light of this concept, I found some very interesting elements. Just as in Latin American Marxism there are extremely interesting elements on this issue, and in Indian sub-alter studies. In particular in this book, which in my opinion is very important, and which deserves an in-depth conceptual analysis, this book by Chakrabarti “*Provincializing Europe*”, in which I think there are some very important theoretical elements that need to be analyzed. All criticism of Eurocentrism conceived in the form of a theory of “plural temporality”, namely, that there is no such a thing as a single time. The time that has brought primacy to Europe and that indicates that other countries are living in previous phases, still in the development phase, but in reality, history must be thought of under the

aegis of “plural temporality”, of course every time I say “plural temporality”, I know I am using a provisional concept. In the sense that it is a concept that works very well to criticize the dominant idea of temporality, at the same time, I am not sure that it has any consistency in itself. That is, that it can be stated as a theory; In short, this is a bit the path that I followed.

**SR:** Bergson states that «there is no state of mind, however simple, that does not change at every instant, since there is no consciousness without memory and there is no continuation of a state without adding to the present feeling the memory of past moments». What is the duration?

**VM:** For me, Bergson is an extremely interesting point of reference, as far as “plural temporality” is concerned, because he poses questions that are very close to those that interest me, and at the same time resolves them in a direction opposite to mine. That is, it seems to me that there is a spiritual concept of duration in Bergson. This idea of duration which is an inner duration and is a plural duration. That is, it is made up of a flow, an intertwining, of elements that are not discrete and clearly distinguishable from each other. And the critique of the spatialization of time is also very interesting. Now, my perspective, which precisely poses the question starting from the tradition, on the one hand Marxist and on the other materialist, leads me to think of this inner plurality, not as non-existent, it obviously exists and the analyzes Bergson makes are of extreme interest, just as Husserl’s analysis is extremely interesting, just as St. Augustine’s analysis is extremely interesting. But it seems to me that there is, in these authors, a reduction of plurality to experience. Putting it from a Marxist and Materialist point of view, I want to think of experience as an effect of a social structure. That is, the experience of the individual is not something original, and here I believe there is a fundamental option of philosophy, that is, one can choose to start from interiority, or one can choose to start from the totality. Spinoza starts from God, Descartes starts from the ego, it is an alternative, in the sense that, if one starts from God, that is, from the totality, one is then led to think of the ego, and its structuring, which is made up of plurals, as an effect. Why is Bergson so important? Together with James and a series of authors from the early twentieth century? Because they essentially break with the idea that was born with Descartes, which was then continued in Locke, according to which looking towards interiority, we see a time-line, that is, we see the flow of our ideas. For Descartes the time-line is made up of the succession of ideas in the mind. Locke’s definition, which is very important because it is the definition that then founds the whole empiricist tradition. What is duration? Duration

is the idea we have when our mind looks inward and sees a chain of ideas. A chain of ideas that follow one another, for which, at this point, we have the determination of the instant in Locke as the presence of the idea in the mind. The idea of time is nothing but the indefinite continuation of duration. Now, of course this is a very powerful theoretical construction, which will influence all subsequent tradition, but whose affirmation presupposes the denial of a fundamental plural temporality. Which in my opinion is at its base, but which is denied. In a certain sense, perhaps one of the most interesting results of the research I have done, both in ancient philosophy and in modern philosophy, is the fact that both Plato and Aristotle, as well as Descartes, Locke, Kant, base their idea of time, denying plural temporality. For example, in Aristotle, there is precisely a passage where many times are mentioned at the same time (in Physics, Book IV) and it is, as often happens in Aristotle, to refute the position of an opponent. Aristotle is an amazing philosopher, extremely honest, he’s not like Plato who cheats a little. Aristotle in class (because what we have are the protocols of his lectures), he explored every possibility. He went in all possible directions, then continued his own, excluded possibilities, but explored them. And he says, if time is identified with the sphere of the universe, that is, with the sky, if there were many skies, there would be many times at the same time. But that’s impossible, he says.

So, a great interpreter of Aristotle, Wieland who wrote a beautiful book entitled “*The Physics of Aristotle*”, says that there is an overdetermination of cosmology over physics. Why aren’t many times possible? Why is there only one sky for Aristotle? because the universe is finite, there is only one sky, but evidently, in the background there is the great opponent, both of Plato and of Aristotle, who is Democritus, who speaks of the infinite universes. So, if there are infinitely many universes, then every universe has its own time. We have to complicate the framework, what does it mean that there are multiple times at the same time? That there is a plurality of times, articulated among them. This goes in the direction of Physics, although I am reluctant to take the results of a research path in Physics and transpose it to another, completely different level, but I believe that we can be in dialogue. Precisely in the book “*The order of time*” by Rovelli, the author begins by saying that the universe is not made up of a series of moments that march in parade, one next to the other, but in reality, there is a plurality of times, and every place it has its own time. Here is what I have tried to say, it is precisely that history too has a similar structure, that is, history is not made up of a succession of instants, or of epochs, or of stages, but it is made up of a plurality that intertwines, and this interweaving always gives rise to a specific phase, which is never simply a

step on a ladder, but the question is increasingly more complex. This intuition by Chakrabarti seems very interesting to me, in which he says that history in capitalism is always constituted by the interweaving of a time number one, which is the time of capital, therefore the time of abstract labor; and from time number two, which is the time of life. He uses this Heideggerian, or Husserlian terminology. The time of life which obviously includes religion, imagination, art.

The very interesting thing that Chakrabarti says, in my opinion, is that capitalism in Europe, therefore in the way in which it was constituted in its specificity, (for example, through the establishment of the Protestant ethic as a fundamental moment, according to the Weberian scheme), is not the paradigm of capitalism, it is simply one of the peculiar capitalisms, in the specific way it developed in that place. Then of course, this capitalism has been exported to America, it has carried out massacres, it has been exported to India, but it is a peculiar among other peculiars. And I think this shows us a very interesting research direction, namely how does capitalism coexist with caste society? For example, in China, what kind of capitalism is there? Is it a capitalist society? Is it a socialist society with market elements? These are all questions which, in my opinion, are interesting to ask but starting from a fundamental nucleus which seems to me to be the strong nucleus of Chakrabarti's proposal, namely, European capitalism, which has been the effectively dominant capitalism, is not "Capitalism" as a paradigm, but it is one of the possible combinations, one of the ways in which it has developed. And if we then analyze, we have different capitalisms. Because capitalism has not only combined with Protestantism, but also with Catholicism and also with the Islamic religion, now I take religion as an element, but we could take other elements, for example the state. When we speak of the state, we speak of a universal that brings together many peculiars, but not all states are the same, there are very different forms of state. And this seems interesting to me, it is as if the idea of plural temporality were a sort of methodological caution, which allows you to break the idea that there is a single time everywhere. That everything develops according to a series of phases that are already pre-ordered and naturally, in my opinion, this perspective is not the transcription of the relativistic theory in the field of history, nor the transcription of the Darwinian theory of evolution in the field of history. But in my opinion, it can dialogue in a very interesting way both with the developments of Darwinism, I am thinking of Gould, with the theory of the "*punctuated equilibrium*", and it can naturally dialogue with the disclosures of Quantum theory, or of Relativistic theory.

**SR:** In the idea of time that I am building for my thesis, this "Time of Intersection" as I have called it, one of the notions I use is that of History from the Hegelian point of view, that is Geist. In your opinion, could the idea of *geist*, or rather *multi-geist*, work in our discussion?

**VM:** The time of the *geist* for Hegel is the time of presence. In my opinion it is a great transcription of individual time into collective time. A time in which the idea is no longer what lies in the mind of the individual, but is an idea-principle, which lies in the mind of the community. And Hegel's greatness lies in having first formulated a univocal explanation of total facts, that is, how a society must be explained, starting from a principle. The beautiful individuality in the Greek world, the juridical and abstract personality in the Roman world, and then the inner freedom, which becomes appearance in the Christian-Germanic world; it seems to me that the challenge of the idea of plural temporality is to go beyond this idea of *geist*.

It is trivial to say, Hegel is an idealist, therefore he explains society starting from a center of irradiation. This center of irradiation is refracted in the various instances of society, in the various levels if we want to define them thus, which are then naturally intertwined with each other, art, religion; because it's not that the artist doesn't have a religion, or doesn't go to buy bread. We separate them through abstraction, but then in fact these levels are interconnected. Hegel explains all this starting from the centrality of a principle, which is the religious principle. An immanent religious principle, however, which manifests itself at every level of society, from which derives the famous phrase in the book "*Outlines of the philosophy of right*", in which Hegel says that it is impossible for an individual to go beyond his own time. Here, if we place, as a fundamental element of explanation, or if instead of giving primacy to spirituality and centrality, we give primacy in society, to materiality, to a-centricity, language is no longer the expression of a spiritual center, but itself becomes that which produces spirituality. That is, it is from language that spirituality is born, in this way we will have a different model of explanation. Meaning that already in the language we could perceive stratifications. Language is made up of a plurality of interpenetrating times, sometimes each one simply goes on his own way, if we could observe the everyday language of an individual, if we could record it in a certain sense, we would see that many times coexist in this language. In an extremely stratified language coexists many times, and this stratified language is the product of the experience of the individual throughout his life. It's curious, isn't it? Sometimes when we are angry, for example me when I get angry at my children,

my mother's words come out. All the racism, the machismo emerges, all these things that are dormant in us, but that come out in a flash, and we realize that consciousness is not at all centered, it is not something that dominates its language, but in reality, it is our language that constructs this idea of consciousness. And these experiences – of course we could talk about them as if our ego were writing a novel – but in reality, these experiences are not the center of anything. They are the effect of a complex social interweaving.

Let's take the example of the expressions that come from my mother; these expressions are the effect, not of the individuality or interiority of a single person, but of a social interweaving, of a family positioning, of my mother's family belonging to a certain social class, to a certain language, to a certain life experience in a certain place. So, in a certain sense we are constantly crossed by the stories of others, by the experiences of others. In this sense I was saying, I place my research on the opposite side of the line of Augustine, or of Bergson, not that I am not interested, indeed inner time is an element of extreme interest, but inner time is always the effect of a interweaving of social times. Think of Spinoza's analysis of the prophecy in the "*Theological-Political Treatise*", in that book there is this imagination which is a social imagination. The prophet simply has a more vivid imagination, he is able to project images, but they are images that somehow come to him from a social experience, they come to him from the experience that surrounds him. It is as if the prophet could illuminate this common sky of the imagination. In the individual who formulates the prophecy it is easier to grasp this interweaving of social experiences.

**SR:** In the past the work of art in public space was conceived as something static, which stands out and is perpetually there, there is an idea of eternity somehow in this relationship. On the other hand, contemporary art, especially in the last fifty years, is often an ephemeral art, also as a consequence of the widening of the artists' expressive possibilities, I'm talking about performances, temporary installations, and so on. I would like to ask your point of view on the concept of the ephemeral, or on the contrary, on the concept of eternity.

**VM:** If I had to answer from a strictly materialist point of view, I would tell you that every work of art is ephemeral, but the question you rightly ask me is not so much about whether a thing is ephemeral or not, but whether a thing defines itself as ephemeral. That is, the difference is not so much in the fact that, evidently, even an equestrian monument or a temple is doomed to destruction, as Kant said – we are not made to build eternal huts on this world.

Rather, the artist himself, who conceives his work, conceives it as ephemeral, this seems to me the effect of a change in perspective, which has affected Europe at least, since the fall of the Berlin Wall. We were facing a great struggle between the so called "democratic" countries and the countries of real socialism, and the countries of real socialism, supported an ideology that somehow defined them as those who would have brought humanity out of prehistory and into history, and this defeat, which is also the defeat of a progressive vision of history, has led to a sort of fragmentation of time. If we want to stick to stereotypes, post-modernism is the idea that there is a plurality of times and let's say, in the classic version, the one that was born with Lyotard, there are no longer great narratives, even if Fukuyama had tried to build a great narrative saying that history ended with liberal democracies. Nonetheless, history has shown that this is not the case at all, we are facing a polycentric world, in which the United States of America is trying to reassert a sort of hegemony, but it is a hegemony that is affirmed with war, with violence, but which no longer has the ability to build a compact block; so, we are faced with a plurality of centers. And this has perhaps led to conceiving art itself in this way, that is, art is not the expression of the spirit of a time, to go back to Hegel, that is, there is no spirit of time. The time of our era cannot be reflected in the work of art as a wholeness.

This is one of the lessons of the materialist tradition, the other is the excess of nature compared to man, in fact I haven't written anything about the pandemic, because everyone talks about it as an epochal phenomenon, in reality it is simply a sign that reminds us that we are a *particula*, as Spinoza would say, we are a small part of nature. And evidently, not only we cannot dominate it, but nature, which is not some kind of divinity, but is a complex set of relationships, has no teleological respect towards us. And this is what Lucretius says, what Machiavelli says, what Spinoza says, all the materialist tradition that I have questioned over the years actually says exactly this. Therefore, there is actually no art that is not ephemeral, because there is no form of society that is not ephemeral, every attempt to erect a certain model of society above the others is nothing but, we could say, a hypostatization of power relations. Christianity wanted to stand as a timeless paradigm compared to all other sects, Bacon says that – all other sects are founded on sand, while the Christian sect is founded on stone.

**SR:** How does the concept of time change from a philosophical point of view, with the discoveries of quantum science that even go so far as to postulate the non-existence of time, as an element in its own, and to “reduce” it to a gravitational force?

**VM:** The fundamental point is that it disappears, but this already happened with Descartes, the idea of absolute time and absolute space. After that, Newton bases his model of physics on absolute time and absolute space. And it’s interesting how he justifies absolute space. How do we know that in infinite space, two instants flow at the same time? If I place two planets extremely distant from each other, how do I know that these two planets are contemporary and therefore exist at the same instant? This is also a problem of individual experience, that is, if I look (assuming one could look at the planets like this, in the sky); if I look at the first planet, I’m looking at it in a “time one”, when I look at the second planet, I’m looking at it in a “time two”; then I can look back at the other planet, but I can’t look at them together. I can’t unify them in a unique experience, but how do I know that they exist at the same time? Newton’s answer is that space is the *sensorium Dei*, that is, it is that thing within which God feels, experiences, and in this way, I can establish absolute spatiality and absolute temporality.

The moment I lose the idea of absolute space and absolute time, I no longer have the clock of being, I no longer have a time that flows linearly, in which I can place things. And this, in my opinion, if I move it to the level of history, poses a whole series of extremely interesting problems. Because this absolute time of physics, which is a homogeneous, empty, repeatable time, which is the time of the laboratory, in history becomes a linear progress, made up of phases, which mimic progress, the growth of man, childhood, adolescence, maturity, and therefore this line would repeat itself in history. And in my opinion, a whole series of interesting problems open up here, that is, questioning this time at a physical level, I would not think of the level of physics, like the Cartesian tree on which we build other things on top. Let’s say that a philosophical analysis of time in quantum physics, of time in relativistic physics, and a philosophical analysis of, for example, temporality in the Darwinian theory of evolution and its offshoots, can create a very interesting resonance with the philosophical analysis of time in history. I would say that working on physics, working on evolution, you can refine tools, which you can then use on history and vice versa. It does not seem to me possible to construct a theory according to the scheme of classical metaphysics. You can work on the concept of time in different fields and try to dialogue.

### 3. Alessandra Pioselli

**Interview with Alessandra Pioselli, curator, art critic and professor of history of contemporary art at Politecnico delle arti - Academy of Fine Arts “G. Carrara”; Bergamo, Italy.**

**October 10, 2020**

**Stefano Romano:** What does time means to you?

**Alessandra Pioselli:** Time is a dark, impalpable substance, a sort of black hole, elusive and this can be taken for granted but, if I have to imagine time, create a mental image of it, I think of something dense and solid. I therefore think of the impalpable time which is at the same time almost material. It is not exactly a good feeling. It gives me the feeling of being immersed in a rough, nocturnal sea, in dark water, where, however, you don’t drown, and therefore you are in this kind of amniotic fluid that envelops you and even scares you, but doesn’t pull you down. You don’t go to the bottom, you stay there, suspended, in a sort of oscillating floating. More than finding the words to say what exactly time is for me, because perhaps I don’t know, except by bringing it back to very real experiences and then it also becomes fear, here I configure time in an image and it is this: a dark solid substance. One can slip into the concreteness of existence and add that perhaps there comes a moment in life when the perception of time changes radically, perhaps it is true for everyone. At a certain point time becomes solid substance, it is transformed in this passage into a dense and dark image.

**SR:** Time is obviously part of our perception of reality, but, is there a specific moment in which time becomes the protagonist in artistic creation?

**AP:** The dimension of time has always been part of art, because art is closely linked to life, to the flow of existence. Art has a close relationship with temporality. We can reflect on how temporality has come into play in art under different historical conditions. From Byzantine icons to the tragic feeling of time in the Baroque, for example, when time is not only metaphysical but is that of life, and becomes real. The iconography of the *memento mori* speaks of fear, a human feeling, not only of the time of the Divine. We can get to Realism and the time of modernity, to the avant-garde currents that deal with the flow of modern life, with the birth of the first metropolises and industrialization, with poets like Charles Baudelaire, with Impressionism, Symbolism, Futurism, Duchamp and so on. The passage that can be traced



after the Second World War takes place when the dimension of time is no longer represented but becomes real, but the matrix is in the historical avant-gardes of the twentieth century. I am referring to Minimalism, Land Art, the procedural and performative aspects of the art of the sixties. Real space and time become materials of art. It is a crucial step, preceded by Fluxus, Dadaism, Futurism, etc., and concerns the “way out” from frames and representation. In the sixties the so-called crossing of boundaries becomes programmatic. With the performative dimension of art, temporality becomes a constitutive and essential component of the work. And it is the real time of experience, the artwork happens in the time and space of life, it shares it with the viewer. It is a biological time, the artwork like a living body. The perishable, ephemeral, changeable, transitory artwork is born to dissolve. The artwork reflects the provisional nature of existence. We are well aware that it questions the values of stability and eternity. Thought also goes to the practices of Happening and to the discourse on the happening, the process, the event, the accident. However, time has always been present in artistic practices in an attempt to capture it, fix it, exorcise it, evoke it, nourish it.

**SR:** What changes with the definition of art in public space, in the operational categories of art? And when do we start using it?

**AP:** The definitions of “public art” and “Art in public places” became current in critical language in the second half of the sixties, when public art programs were also institutionalized in the Anglo-Saxon, but also French and Nordic worlds. They become labels. Art has always been connected to public space since ancient times, but it certainly becomes a specific operational dimension in the contemporary world, as you say. In the United States, when the first programs from 1967 onwards were born, they sometimes assumed this definition, “Art in Public Places”. They have an educational function: if people don’t enter museums, close to being contested as elitist institutions (the notion of museum-forum-laboratory against the museum-temple), then modern and contemporary art goes to the streets, considering the square and the street as the public spaces par excellence, as opposed to the closed and classist museum space. The street is interpreted as a public space while the museum space is not accessible to everyone and does not represent all the “new” subjectivities that are establishing themselves on the political scene around 1968. Therefore, these public art programs focus on an educational function, based on the thought that art could be brought closer to people, and people could be educated through art, making artworks available to everyone in the places of everyday life, in the city, creating widespread open-air museums. Therefore, there was not

only the intent to embellish the urban space with artworks considered of value, to qualify it visually, but a desire for civic education.

The definition of public art and “art in the public space” circumscribe and clarify a set of values, intentions, objectives, which are sanctioned by the statutes of these programs. These values and objectives guide the projects, the choice of artworks, the locations and indicate a certain relationship with the public. In this sense, definitions become operational, and become cages. These definitions were soon contested, already in the seventies. In this decade, public art programs introduced the concept of site-specificity, incorporating the nodes emerging in critical reflections and emerging artistic practices, distancing themselves – not always and in variable ways – from the model of the so-called drop sculptures. The theme of interdependence with the place becomes central. The other step is to consider the “place” no longer a physical site but a discursive context, from the “place” to the “public sphere”. The question is prompted by the advance of conceptual practices and “institutional critique”. Perhaps we can also say that up to a certain point urban space has been considered public space, as opposed to the museum, regardless of the actual dynamics. If one deals with the complex discourse on the definition of “public” and the regime of “spectators” we should also consider Debord’s theories. Rosalyn Deutsche underlines the centrality of building a discursive “public sphere”.

**SR:** According to Lynch, cities are spatial constructions that can only be read across long periods of time; what is the city for you?

**AP:** The question may require an intimate answer and a critical answer. On a personal level, I have never thought about what the city could be for me. The question forces me to think of a dimension that I have always taken for granted, perhaps in the sense that it is my natural living environment. Even if that doesn’t necessarily mean loving it. Therefore, a fish in water thinks it is his element and cannot imagine that there could be a solid earth or a sky to fly. Not that I can’t imagine other possibilities for living, I know them and think about them, but with respect to the city I feel like this, after all, like a little fish running around in a large sea where there are fish of all sizes, from tiny to sharks, with caves to hide in and soft algae meadows. Perhaps, after all, the city is also indifferent to me, paradoxically. I live between two different frames, the nest home where I am able to stay for days and days because my world is here, and that of travel, of travel to many places, in many countries, in many ways,

in many worlds. I jump from the domestic micro-scale to other micro-macro worlds located in many other geographies; and between the two, I exclude the closest one, the city where I live. I am misaligned with the city, with the context that surrounds me. If I think of the city where I live, Milan, I realize that at the end, I don't know it. Perhaps it is impossible for anyone to really know their own city. There are interstices, folds, discrepancies, ravines that you will never be able to know, that you don't cross, that you don't access. The city is explored, observed, but there are space-time levels and lives that inevitably escape. There are many cities in the city. The city is a pluriverse. It's another kind of black hole. How many other "cities within the city" do I have to take into account in my city image? I have to think of it dislocating from myself. Carlo Rovelli in the book *"The Order of Time"* dissects our empirical beliefs about time. My image of the black hole comes from an intimate physical sensation of time. It is a phenomenological approach.

**SR:** Blaise Pascal in one of his books, speaking of time and eternity, wrote: «The little time that I am given to live has been assigned to me in this point rather than in another of all the eternity that has preceded me and that will follow me. I see only infinity on all sides, which enclose me like an atom and like a shadow that lasts an instant and does not return». Let's talk about the concept of the ephemeral. Why is contemporary art in public space often temporary?

**AP:** Pascal's statement is wonderful. It accurately captures the meaning of existence. How many of us have ever felt it physically, the sensation of being a small dot in a flux. It's the feeling in front of the ruins. With regard to contemporary art and public space, the ephemeral and the temporary, it depends: it is not always like this, there is also a lot of permanent art. I don't think transience generally predominates over permanence. The choice of duration (eternal? for how long?) depends on the relationship with the place, on the meaning of the artwork, on the links with the contexts and communities, on the transformations of the place itself. Cities, territories, are space-time stratifications. Places cannot be read horizontally, they are not a surface where everything is exposed and apparently visible, they possess depths, non-perceivable, silent elements. Aleida Asmann says it precisely about memory. Luisa Bonesio writes it referring to the landscape. Places are not just like a cake with perfectly superimposed layers, but are equipped with several intersecting, coexisting, moving space-time levels. There is a quantum idea of time. So, if we think of the city, the space, the place in these terms, the ephemeral artwork can intercept this fluidity, it does not bring

it back to a rigid, stabilized, frozen temporality. The temporary artwork can have the flexibility and adaptability to grasp the flow, to intercept moments of life of certain contexts, places that are always and in any case in transformation. Its transformability becomes co-evolutionary. The artwork coevolves with the context. It puts eternity, fixity in crisis. It escapes the solidification of values. It becomes a process open to change, which is built step by step and according to unexpected, unforeseen guidelines. I am also thinking of the forms of the anti-monument which refers to the impossibility of affirming the eternity of values, as well as the construction of counter-narratives. We saw it during the months of the pandemic when the debate about the monuments to be removed following the demonstrations of the "Black Live Matters" movement broke out. The "ephemeral" processes, but I don't like this adjective very much because it suggests too much an idea of lightness and pleasantness that is exhausted in a breath, however the "non-permanent" or we could say artworks with "variable permanence" contrast some values: mobility and nomadism against static; flexibility versus fixity. It was also an assumption of architectural practice, radical, ephemeral, nomadic architecture. I also want to say that an ideology has perhaps also been built on the notion of nomadism, identified as the paradigm of contemporaneity. As if nomadism was always the bearer of positive values, as opposed to a permanence which instead is the bearer of negative values. In reality Vito Teti connects the sense of "*restanza*" (the idea of staying), to wandering and distance. The "*restanza*" is a critical stay on places that presupposes a sort of "extraneousness" and "distance" with respect to the place itself, which allows it to be read critically, to produce counter-narratives.

It is a constructive challenge that balances this continuous circular wandering, I am thinking of the figure of the nomadic artist who moves from one artistic residence to another, all over the world; a journey that risks maintaining capitalist and neocolonial forms. Nomadism needs a different conceptualization. Returning to the ephemeral, yes in artistic practice responds to a change of values typical of contemporaneity. In the artistic experiences of appropriation of urban spaces, based on action, on happenings, the ephemeral dimension was rooted in the sixties and seventies in the need and desire to physically occupy places and experience them. And to arouse something that could involve passers-by or the viewers, even spontaneously, without filters, in a liberating sense of energy and imagination. In the event, which cannot be represented, experience is worthwhile. The *hic et nunc* of the situation. It is a situationist type of practice. Other experiences evaluate the ephemeral event in a negative way, as a horizon that actually uses the city only as a backdrop, without affecting its social

structures, while instead it is necessary to enter the urban dynamics in a more constructive and synergistic way. It is the theme of cooperation. Shifting a little the question, today we need to consider another factor: what is the nature of contemporary project? Pasquale Campanella, for example, underlines that in order to be truly, concretely, co-evolutionary with respect to a context, a project must possess a quality, the “non-determination”. This goes beyond consideration of duration.

The reflection puts forward an idea of a project that is based on an ongoing process, which can take unforeseen paths because it responds to the reactions and requests that the context solicits. The “non-determination” allows the project to be responsive to the context. The figure of the artist-researcher takes us to the heart of “making a project”. A project that is anti-method does not follow a linear scheme, established upstream to articulate its overall design. The “undetermined” enters the idea of “rhizomatic” planning. Let’s think of long-term projects in territories or in urban and social dimensions: social processes cannot be read from a deterministic point of view of cause and effect, so planning – I prefer this term to the word artwork, declining in objects, laboratories, talks, processes, etc. –, they must be able to maintain openness, flexibility, capacity for transformation and adaptation. They are projects that are structured in progress. In this sense, the term “ephemeral” no longer finds a place in opposition to what is durable, permanent, persistent. Temporality concerns a long extension of the process within which episodes of different durations are structured. If the process is open, different temporal scans are brought into play, as waves emerge, condense, dissolve, other waves emerge.

#### 4. Anri Sala

##### Interview to Anri Sala, artist.

September 10, 2020

**Stefano Romano:** Anri, the first question I wanted to ask you is, how did you approach art?

**Anri Sala:** It started like with all the children that at some point develop an interest in drawing or using colours. But around the age of 10, I realized that my curiosity went a bit further. I was lucky to be able from early on to experiment with different types of colors, including oil paints, which was unusual at that time, as “serious” material like oil paint was not accessible unless you were studying art or were officially a painter. I was helped by the fact that, even if my parents came from a background of exact sciences, they were mostly surrounded by artist friends. So, I was fortunate to not only be imbued by such closeness to artists, but also have every now and then a limited access to paints and materials that were hard to find. Subsequently, given how the curriculum of art education was back then in Albania, by the age of thirteen you had to make up your mind, because by fourteen you would need to choose between going to the normal high school or entering the competition for the art lyceum. Once accepted, there was almost no return; you could not change your mind afterwards and turn to other fields of study. Thanks to my keen interest in painting from an early age, it gave me ample time to make up my mind. Needles to remind you that at that time there was no freedom of expression. If being a child partly absolved you and you would be forgiven for the formal deviations of your early paintings, upon entering the art school the margin of forgiveness would instantly get thinner. That’s when the loss of innocence occurred. If until then, being a kid, you were relatively sheltered from the strict, orthodox approach to how reality should be represented in accordance with the codes of socialist realism, upon entering the lyceum you lost that relative protection. That was also the moment when I started to understand that the best way to shield myself, was to remain faithful in depicting what I saw, be it a tree or an apple, a landscape or a still life. In a manner of speaking, I indulged in realism, without succumbing to the strict and formal codes. By realism I mean a heightened inquisitiveness and observance on the subjects, their shape, the surrounding light, the scale, etc. Such approach would also sharpen your consideration for what you see in order to represent it, in a realistic way of course. Being accurate without surrendering to the conventionalisms of what was expected was a great exercise. I believe that this sort of regime (diet) unconsciously heightened my visual alertness, which has aided me since, even after the fall

of the regime and the ensuing freedom of expression. Because, even when one is absolutely free to express oneself, there are always strings attached. One is continuously tempted by the zeitgeist and the trends of the epoch one lives in. In democracy, no political superstructure obliges you to do things or express yourself in a certain way, but one is still confronted with hip, fashion, penchants and predilections. In that sense, the heightened inquisitiveness from my earlier years has been a good school for me: how to remain alert to how I see things, despite of what the society loves and how the discourses evolve.

**SR:** Can you tell us about the turning points of your research?

**AS:** In my practice as an artist there have been several turning points, and whether some came from “outside” and others rose from within, they always trigger each other. The first turning point after I decided to study art was the fall of the Communist regime, the immediate rupture and the effects such an aperture had upon the values of the society, upon its “common sense”. The ensuing rift provoked an estrangement from everything that we were familiar with, on one hand it allowed an unimpeded freedom to search within your soul; on the other hand it produced alienation with any previously established common grounds or norms. Yet another turning point was when I moved to Paris to continue my studies there. It opened the world to me, as if the retinas of all my senses grew large at once. Just before moving to Paris in 1996, to study video at ENSAD, I had already taken an interest to moving images. My project for the diploma in the Academy of Fine Arts, in Tirana, was a video work. However, it’s in Paris that I completed my full transition – from painting and fresco (I was fond of the latter during my years in the Academy in Tirana) – to photography and video. Video allowed for a totally different way of developing my thoughts and contemplations. From then onwards, there have been other key moments in the trajectory of my work. Such *Intervista (Finding the words)* (1998), one of my earlier works that evolved a lot around language, my mother tongue in this case. In the film I interviewed my mother, after finding at my parents’ home a real 16mm film, where the sound was lost. In the found footage she is participating in the Youth Congress. In the end of the film reel, there are also fragments from an interview that she’s giving to a journalist, also without sound. My efforts to find the words, in the absence of the sound, resembled to a sort of archaeological approach. Not only I was able to “excavate” the words, with the help of the alumni from the deaf and mute children school, but in the process of “finding the words” I became also aware of a fundamental truth that goes often unnoticed. Significance in language is not to be found only in the content that it

carries, but also in the syntax and the arrangement that convey it. Meaning in verbal communication is not as see-through as it may seem, and at times its apparatus can be remarkably opaque. Yet, its opaqueness is only exposed when something fundamental breaks in the society, where the given language operates. Language during the Communist Regime was a tool of control before being a means of communication. It aided the dictatorship in shaping people’s views and controlling the way they communicated their thoughts, leaving little space for ambiguities and abstraction. Over the time, it literally became what in French is known as “*langue de bois*”, an atrophied limb of communication. While the rapid fall of the regime freed our thinking and the choice of words, syntax was unable to adapt seamlessly to such immediate changes. To say it metaphorically, syntax is like a window glass. When everything is fine you see the view, but when it shatters all you see is the broken glass. While my experience with *Intervista* increased my interest in language, it also made me extremely aware of its elusive opacity. Language is a tool of power, everywhere, at all times, not only back in Albania, not only in a dictatorship, but also in a democracy. Sometimes one’s accent tells more than one’s words. The way you speak English, being native English or foreign, the way you speak French and so on, tell a lot about where you’re coming from and where you are situated within the pyramid of power and opportunities.

Anyways, this distrust in language drew my attention to sound, that led to another turning point: starting with *Mixed Behaviour* (2003), *Now I See* (2004), *Long Sorrow* (2005) and so on, my attentiveness shifted from sound to music. Progressively music became central in my work. Not as content, like film music, but as a tool that allows me to structure time, action and narrative. It helps me configure the passing of time, because we perceive time differently through music.

Another turning point for me was when I had a chance to do solo exhibitions, instead of participating in group-shows with singles works. From the onset, I never approached an exhibition as an occasion to present individual works, but as a modus in which different works operate together, inviting the visitor to focus in the experience that arises from the interval between the works. Music, in connection with architecture, has helped me shape these intervals.

**SR:** The video is maybe the media par excellence that talks to us through the dimension of Time, because there’s a duration that you decide for the video and because you master

the time of the video, through the editing of the filmed material. What is your relation with Time?

**AS:** Well, in the very beginning Time for me was “the time it takes” to give form to something, for example when I was painting frescos. When you compose the image that the fresco will depict, you cut it in various parts called *giornate*, that comes from Italian, which are the surfaces that you’ll be able to paint within a single day, keeping the wall’s surface continuously wet, until you have achieved the desired result, until you are done with the giornata. The magic is how *giornata* after *giornata*, one day after the other, you compose an image whose individual parts are no longer separable and the puzzle is no longer distinguishable. When painting a fresco, you’re extremely aware of the passing of time: the time to yield a layered expression, the time it takes to apply each layer of paint, the time it takes for the image to manifest itself. This entirely changed when I started to work with video. Now it was no longer as much about Time as my experience of it, but Time as the experience of the viewer. In that sense, *Intervista* is a fresco of sort. Its *giornate* are the past (the found footage with my mother), the present (me filming my mother looking at the footage) and the future (the opportunities and the uncertainties that lay ahead).

Later, with music becoming central in my work, the notions of past, present and future, as clearly separated realms (like the different tenses in language), ceased to exist, because when listening to music we exist in a *continuous present* of sorts. Of course, there’s always a reminiscence of what you just heard before, and often musical compositions play with such “remembering having heard”, like the use of *ritornello* in classic music, for instance, or choruses and other recurrent passages in pop music. Yet, you’re continuously within the flow of time, enveloped in the present moment. To come back to the subject of exhibition making, when I imagine an exhibition, I like to anticipate the choreography of the visitors, the time it takes to navigate the space, not as an A-to-B trajectory, but as a time-to-space conversion. The storylines of my films, since 2003, mostly evolve in the *present continuous moment* and consequently the notions of *before*, *now* and *later* are transferred to the visitor. In a manner of speaking, I like to think of an exhibition as a large compass pointing to the visitor. I imagine the visitor as the magnetic north and the exhibition as an internal dynamo that develops around the visitor’s acuties.

**SR:** In the work *It Will Happen Exactly Like That* (2008), there’s a voice over (like also in other of your previous works) that is the voice of a very famous Italian sport commentator, Bruno Pizzul, describing one of the most famous goal in the history of modern soccer, that of Diego Maradona in a match between Argentina and England in the 1986 edition of the World Cup. The narration is in the future tense, as if this action is going to happen in a non-specified time, also the action seems to be out of time and space.

**AS:** Bruno Pizzul, probably less known to the younger generation nowadays, was a voice that I grew up with. In Albania, back at the time, most of the international football events would be re-transmitted from RAI. So, when I was a child, Bruno Pizzul’s voice in the background was the voice that conveyed not only what was factually happening on a pitch somewhere else, but also a world I couldn’t access, but liked to imagine. While his voice was communicating actions from a football match that that I could see (being transmitted), the timbre of his voice was resonating that imaginary world. On another note, the match between Argentina and England during the 1986 World Cup in Mexico City is famous (or maybe infamous for the British fans) for “the Hand of God” goal that Maradona scored “a little with his head, and a little with the hand of God”, as he would later say. It also played out as a gesture of symbolic revenge against the English, over the lost Falklands War, a retaliation of the underdogs against the mighty. I was interested in re-writing a report from the past, as if it would happen again and again in the future, not as an attempt to re-write the past, but to keep its prospective alive. Apparently very recently, Maradona stated again that the only gift he craves is another “Hand of God” goal against England, but this time he wants to score it with his right hand.

As you know, when reporting a football match, the commentator speaks mostly in the *present* tense or the *present continuous*, maybe a little bit in the *future* tense when he is guessing what is going to happen, and sometimes when the ball is not playing, he tells anecdotal facts from the past. Now, the articulation of an action in the future takes longer, because one has to employ more words to articulate the future tense. Placing all the action in the future tense may slow the perceived urgency of its outcome, but it increases its potentiality.

What does it mean for someone like Pizzul, who during a lifetime has mostly commented in the present tense, to all of a sudden have to tell it in the future? Speaking is a form of gesticulation and when you communicate in a certain way for a long time, it almost builds

a “muscle” memory. I still remember how hard it was for Pizzul to transpose his reporting into the future. We recorded his voice in Parco Sempione. To make sure that Pizzul wouldn’t rush it, I wrote the names of the players – Maradona, Valdano, Hodges, Shilton – on pieces of paper that I placed sparsely on the lawn. Pizzul could not call a player into action before reaching the position where the player’s name was resting on the grass. Taking in account his late age, increasing the distances helped pace his speech.

**SR:** Again, the idea of uncanny is present in both *Le Clash* (2010) and in *Tlatelolco Clash* (2011). In both works it seems to me you focus on space and time through the memory of a song, exactly a punk song, *Should I Stay or Should I Go* (1981), by The Clash. There’s also a physical interpretation of the song through the playing of the music box and the barrel organ that really re-build the tempo of the song, so also the tempo of our understanding of the narration.

**AS:** Absolutely, I intentionally chose two musical instruments, a music box and a barrel organ, whose existences precede by far the advent of punk music, and this to the point that one has a difficult time to relate their tune with the sound of punk. Punk is all about energy and verve and little about melody, whereas an instrument like a music box (and to some extent a barrel organ) can only relay the melody of a song. Musical instruments have their distinct morphologies; it’s not in the nature of an instrument from the past to play a sound from the future. So, by choosing a barrel organ and a music box, two old-fashioned instruments respectively from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, to execute in 2010 an anthem of the counter-culture of the 80’s, I sought to bring “trouble” to our perception of the arrow of time, what comes first and what comes after.

*Tlatelolco Clash* was shot in the *Plaza de las Tres Culturas* (the Square of the Three Cultures) in Mexico City, a location of rich historical meaning. The name of the square recognizes three periods and their respective cultures: Pre-Colombian, Spanish colonial and Mexican (since independence). It was the site where the Aztecs lost their final battle against the Spanish, as well as the spot where the military and the police massacred students following demonstrations that took place shortly before the Olympics of 1968. In 1985 a dreadful earthquake destroyed many modern-era edifices massively altering its urban surroundings. Next to the ancient Aztec still stands a Catholic church (from the early XVI century), where native indigenous boys were prepared for ordination to the Catholic priesthood. It is very

obviously visually, that the establishment was erected using stones from the Aztec temples. A long introduction to say how rich and multi-layered is the location where I set the film.

On the other hand, I divided the barrel organ score of *Should I Stay or Should I Go* in many parts that I distributed to various local people. Having placed the barrel organ in the midst of the ruins, I invited them to come in the course of the day, bringing their respective fragments of the score, to play them with the barrel organ. To play a barrel organ implies manually turning a crank (*a manovella* in Italian), which will also set the pace of the music, its rhythm. Depending on the individual’s age and temperament, depending on how they felt like, some played faster and others slower. The ensuing pace felt like agency and inserting the fragment of score into the barrel organ felt like casting a vote. Their individual paces embedded themselves in the resulting collage, which did not reconstruct the song in its chronological order. Yet, *Should I Stay or Should I Go* earned a manifold and unique continuity.

**SR:** Once you said that “Body produces a choreography instead of a discourse”, so the narration become something visual instead of verbal. Especially in your last productions, bodies move according to a sound, a music, as in the case of *Ravel Ravel Unravel* (2013), where you tried to create space through a temporal gap of two contemporary executions of the Ravel’s *Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major* (1930), played by famous pianists: Louis Lortie and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet.

**AS:** I’m fascinated by how the body “remembers”, how events rebound in our bodies, how our bodies take them in, and the gesticulations or the nods that entail. With discourses and statements having become increasingly omnipresent in art, I believe that it is important to attend to the nuances that may be lost in translation, inadvertently or consciously, when experiences are retold or history is written. A way to challenge a certain “tyranny” of linguistic discourse is to pay attention to how the bodies conjure events, recollect rites, evoke practices, and even remember how to remember. I believe in the body’s mnemonic qualities. Take for example the beleaguered citizens enduring the siege of Sarajevo. How they developed surviving skills and conducts. How one would duck down or run across the very dangerous crossings of the infamous “Sniper Alley”, under the imminent risk of being put to death by snipers positioned in the adjacent hills. The manner their bodies remember the excruciating experience cannot be wholly recounted by linguistic means, including those of their own.

You mentioned *Ravel Ravel*, a work that was inspired by a piano concerto executed by the left hand alone. Paul Wittgenstein, a pianist who lost his right arm during the First World War, commissioned it, so that he could continue playing the piano despite his mutilation. Actually, many compositions for the left hand alone have been written following the First World War, because it was a war that produced countless injuries and dismemberments. Perhaps each time that Wittgenstein executed the concerto with his left hand unaided, it resuscitated his amputated limb, not as a mere metaphor, but a real sensation. The *phantom limb* is a phenomenon, where the amputee is able to feel the missing limb. In that sense, the left hand didn't only take over the function of the missing right hand, but also resuscitated it, by recalling sensations of it. There are so many ways that our bodies remember, doing so at their own volition.

**SR:** Could we say that the same physical choreography is also part of *The Last Resort* (2017)? There's an historical time embodied in the work? I especially like the idea to turn upside down also the physical experience of the artwork.

**AS:** In terms of physical choreography, the thirty-plus suspended drums in *The Last Resort* are performing "by themselves". Each of the snare drums conceals a set of two inbuilt speakers: a subwoofer that reproduces only low-pitched frequencies, and a speaker emitting a high- and midrange sound spectrum. The low frequencies generate vibrations on the drum skin that in return trigger the rat-a-tat of the drumsticks. Seeing them play by themselves, one is drawn to imagine the numerous invisible hands activating them.

The orchestra of suspended drums plays a rearrangement of Mozart's renowned *Clarinet Concerto* (1791), its Adagio movement. To put it in a historical perspective, Mozart composed the concerto one year before *La Marseillaise* was written, three years after the First Fleet arrived in Australia, a decade after the American Revolution. So yes, it was a tumultuous time that also corresponded with what could be called the golden age of the Enlightenment. In the realm of politics and society, some of Enlightenment's novel and progressive principles were tolerance and a non-judgmental acceptance of the other. It was a period that saw the empowerment of the notion of the individual, beyond the feared or revered aristocratic and the religious circles. Artists started to be recognized as singularities with their own views and impressions; in some cases they were even considered "geniuses". However, this liberal moment in the history of the Western civilization, this novel era of confidence in pro-

gress, knowledge and freedom also produced a buoyant blindness and a lack of sensitivity towards other ways of life. Upon reaching distant shores, these praiseworthy ideals caused exacerbating prejudices and untold ravage.

I was taken by this disfiguration of the values and choose to imagine their ill fortune as a *corruption* delivered by the journey. Consequently, I wanted to implant this notion of corruption in Mozart's concerto itself. I fantasized that the weather and the unforeseeable circumstances of the journey prevented the composition from fulfilling the composer's original aims. What would happen to a piece of music if one were to put it inside a bottle and throw it in the ocean?

Having this in mind, I decided to substitute Mozart's original tempo indications with the wind conditions described in the private journal of James Bell, *Private Journal of a Voyage to Australia* (1838), where every day's entry starts with a weather description. Actually, Bell's voyage to Australia lasted much longer than expected, as the ship went off-course several times. Back then, the journey to Australia followed the clipper route, and its accomplishment largely depended on the sea winds and ocean currents.

In a manner of speaking, Mozart's concerto in *The Last Resort* is not driven by its original tempos, but is carried forward by the winds of the voyage. Accordingly, unfavourable or calm winds, breezes, gales, hurricanes and storms literally take over the concerto, transposing Bell's daily recount of his journey into the composition's bars and musical phrases. Thus the elements of weather corrupt the flow of the concerto. I don't mean corruption here as a political metaphor (as we mostly use it in Albania or you perhaps in Italy), but as a distortion of the material itself, a perversion of the concerto's tissue.

**SR:** Is it correct to say that exist a relation between an historical time and a human time in *1395 Days without Red* (2011)?

**AS:** I believe so. *1395 Days without Red* was conceived with Šejla Kamerić and from the onset we wanted the main character's crossing of the besieged city to conjure the four years of exposure and perseverance of the beleaguered community. What it meant to go somewhere and, once you made it, still have to come back through the same litany of perils.

The woman's crossing also reveals how the urban grid of Sarajevo – a beautiful development across a valley between two ranges of hills – was weaponized in a time of war. The city's sensibly thought orientation turned into a weapon against itself, when its streets running perpendicular to the hills provided the snipers with vintage points on the city life. The journey of Maribel Verdú, playing a musician on her way to a daily rehearsal, was inspired by Sarajevo's Philharmonic Orchestra courage to continue rehearsing and performing throughout the siege. It was a valiant and extremely civilized way to not give in, not to surrender and prevail with dignity despite the odds.

Running across the intersections, obstructed Maribel's breathing, affecting her humming of Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique* (1893), particularly altering its original tempo. So, in a manner of speaking, a geopolitical situation combined with an urban grid impacted the music's flow, through Maribel's breath. Her breath in return evokes at once the distressed breathing of a besieged community.

**SR:** In your recent work *If and only if* (2018), you build a narration through a relation based on a gap of time. The time of the violinist playing Stravinsky's *Elegy for Solo Viola* (1944) and that of the snail moving on the viola bow. When the snail reaches the end of the bow, also the execution of the piece ends. What comes first in this case, time or space?

**AS:** The term "*If and only if*" signifies in logic a bi-conditional statement, meaning that both conditions must hold for the statement to be true. I choose the title because of the singular bi-conditionality of an act, where a musician and a snail, space and time are contingent to each other. Such co-dependency means that none of them comes first. My aim was to subvert Stravinsky's *Elegy* through the tactile interaction between the musician and the snail, revising its duration to almost double its usual time, so that the finale of the music and the completion of the journey would become one.

Of course, that would have been barely possible without the ingenious performance of Gérard Caussé, the renowned viola player. We discussed possible ways how the music could accompany the snail and encourage its journey, while being responsive to its progress. In that sense it's a very tactile rearrangement of the *Elegy*, because the snail's progress contributed to the manner Caussé executed the score. Caussé had to continuously ponder the position of the snail, to make sure that when he run the bow over the strings it wouldn't hit the shell

of the snail. It was a continuous negotiation, a heightened alertness that also reminds me of *Long Sorrow* (2005), where Jemeel Moondoc, a saxophone player suspended from the top floor of a building, continuously stabilized his precarious condition with the help of his music. In other aspects it also reminds me of *The Last Resort* and *1395 Days without Red*. They are all "road movies" of sorts, having bi-conditionality at their core.

**SR:** Do you consider the project for *Skanderbeg Square* (2017) as your own work of art? Can you tell us something more about it?

**AS:** *Skanderbeg Square* is a work of architecture and urban planning. It was the fruition of multiple collaborations, starting with the architects of *5IN4E* and myself from the moment of its conception, followed by a multitude of other partnerships between the architects and other teams who gave their valuable input. It has been a long and stimulating process that engendered its own ecosystem of collaborations and inputs.

Having said this, it doesn't mean that *Skanderbeg Square* is unlike an artwork; it's just that it is many other things at once. Yet, despite the clear differentiations between a contemporary artwork and an architectural oeuvre, I distinguish strong similarities between the two practices. Otherwise, I would have been unable to participate in a project of such nature. The contemporary artworks that I cherish do not divide us into spectators, viewers, listeners, audiences or bystanders. They connect us, without lessening our singularity. They don't tell us what to think, and yet trigger a sense of heightened common subjectivity. One of *Skanderbeg Square*'s merits is how it enhances peoples' own sensations and narratives, regardless of their age or interest, without imposing a central thought that dominates the whole space. It's not monophonic space, but a polyphonic one. In my opinion, this is what public space can be at its best, a place of cohesion that doesn't level the differences.



## 5. Franco Purini

**Interview with Franco Purini, architect - History of Philosophy Associate Professor at the University of Milan/Bicocca and Director of Italy Program at the Collège International de Philosophie, Paris**

**February 11, 2022**

**Stefano Romano:** What is time in art works and architecture in your opinion?

**Franco Purini:** In architecture, time is a category that does not have just one role, presenting a certain number of different aspects. There is a time when an architectural work is born bearing in it the mark of the period in which it was conceived, whatever is the intention of the author. Then there is the time of the author himself, who will have to mentally conceive, slowly or quickly according to his temperament, what he wants to achieve and then, once he has found this image, he will have to develop it in the various phases of the project. Furthermore, the time needed to build the architecture that has been conceived and studied should not be forgotten. Usually it is quite a long time. Subsequently, the time that will serve for those who observe the finished building to get to know it through the architectural *promenade* theorized by Le Corbusier intervenes, or rather an exploration of the exterior and interior of a building that requires its complete ritual. Finally, the time that an architecture will live must be considered, a more or less consistent time that will introduce the building to the ruins dimension, an eternal time, as might be, the Pyramids of Giza, the Imperial Fora, the Colosseum and the Baths of Rome, which remind us the enigmatic urban stratifications of historic cities. Acknowledging all the while that in the period we are living there is the domination of the present, which has profoundly transformed the idea that we had of the time before the media age, the digital revolution era that we are living in, of *hypertechnology*, and disappearance of the idea of place. As Marcel Proust believed the time that will be lost, and that you want and seek for is today increasingly difficult to understand and to find.

**SR:** Does it your conception of time reflected in your architectural work? If yes, how?

**FP:** These five times of architecture – but I’m sure there are others – exist and are active in my architecture. The problem is to unify them in compositional writings that can synthesize by making converge in a structural unity that means in a linguistic coherence, which transcends them in a complex and at the same time simple and direct expression. This operation

is not simple. Indeed, it is necessary to overcome the difference between the various times by bringing them together in a sort of superior time, a time that takes on a poetic character. This happens, incidentally, in all the other arts, such as literature, visual arts, photography, theatre, cinema, dance, music. It gives these compositions what enables them to overcome time, in the manner that in every period the sense of an architecture, if carefully thought out and built, will be able to be contemporary in every period that it will go through.

**SR:** Blaise Pascal in one of his books, speaking of time and eternity, wrote: «The bit of time that I am given to live has been assigned to me in this point rather than in another of all the eternity that has preceded and will follow me. I see only infinity on all sides, which enclose me like an atom and like a shadow that lasts an instant and does not return». We are talking about the aspiration of architecture to be infinite and, on the contrary, about the ephemeral concept in architecture.

**FP:** An architecture has different durations, but it always tends to both a *representation of the cosmos* and an unlimited permanence in the world. Even human beings, who know they have to die, think of themselves in life as ideally immortal. Everything humanity has thought and done lives in this extraordinary and mysterious duality. Although it may happen that a created work must be temporary, as in an exhibition, it will always tend to be the metaphor of an endless temporality.

**SR:** In the text *From Postmodernism to New Realism. Notes on Italian architecture in the last thirty years*, you defined drawing as the expression of a theory in the analysis of the landscape, cities and architecture. Is there a relationship between drawing and the notion of time?

**FP:** In my opinion, drawing is, in the first instance, the exhibition of time in its making, in its internal essence, that is, our imaginative capacity, which produces a virtual drawing and the concrete expression of what we have seen with the mind’s eye. This “internal design”, as defined by Federico Zuccari, is entirely temporal as the “external” one, the one that we create and we can all see, also theorized by the founder of the San Luca Academy in Rome. From this point of view, the architectural drawing is simply a pending architecture, a place where it shows what is possible but also what is not, what has been and what has never appeared

on the Earth. Thinking of the Prisons of Giovanni Battista Piranesi, this prophetic essence of the drawing is revealed in all its extension and in its unfathomable depth.

**SR:** According to Lynch, cities are spatial constructions that can only be read across long periods of time; what is the city for you? In this definition given by Lynch we think of the building's stratification (along a horizontal axis, but also along a vertical one) and of our crossing the city horizontally. In your view, what is the relationship between city and time?

**FP:** The city is *time physically translated*. It is also the collaboration of different times. A non-continuous time but made up of different segments, sometimes conflicting. Urban settlements take quite a long time to get to know, times intertwined in labyrinths from which it is difficult both to enter and to exit. In cities, time is built memory or, if you prefer, *materialized history*. From this point of view, *psychogeography*, an extension of situationist drifts, can teach us a lot, as it is clear to read in the book *London orbital*, by Jain Sinclaire.

**SR:** Do you have any suggestions for a bibliography that goes in this direction?

**FP:** Any good architecture book is in one way or another a tissue of implicit or explicit references. Books on the history of architecture can help us establish the relationships between time and landscapes, cities and buildings, but principally it is our personal measure in life, the fundamental parameter of the building craft and its results. Every architect should choose by himself the texts that as such tell and explain the time that since humanity has existed it is an indecipherable mystery.

## 6. Stefano Boccalini

**Interview with Stefano Boccalini, artist.**

**January 24, 2022 – August 5, 2022**

**Stefano Romano:** What does time means to you?

**Stefano Boccalini:** For me, time is a place to inhabit, or rather to co-inhabit, starting from the “desire” which has always been a starting point in my work, and when it coincides with that of other people it has triggered constructive processes that have been able to affect the reference contexts.

Time in these projects is never a unit of measurement and its boundaries are shaped by the “processes” that defining its contours become themselves time.

Nevertheless, the time I am talking about is not the one that can be measured with the tools that scan it, but it is a time that is structured and defined starting from people and their actions. A time defined by their will and their desire to occupy a space and share it, then time is no longer a convention but becomes, for me, the place of research.

**SR:** So, time for you is sharing?

**SB:** Sure, it is, the same as space which is for me a place to activate processes of knowledge and exchange based precisely on sharing, a place to build “belongings” starting, once again, from “desire”.

**SR:** The words you carefully look for in many of your projects (*PublicaPrivata*, *Civico Mercato in Civica Terra*, *Affetti*, *Una Parola su Latronico*, *La Ragione nelle Mani*) seem to me to contain the idea of time as sharing that you were talking about. How did these words come about?

**SB:** The passage from the Fordist factory to the linguistic factory has transformed the word into a real tool of production and uptake of economic value and has taken on an increasingly important dimension within the social context.

Through language, the new economies born from technological innovations produce great wealth that is increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few, the result is those social inequalities that characterize our societies, and which significantly reduce the possibility of building a collective vision capable of to propose inclusive development models.

For over ten years, my work has been structured starting from the word. What interests me is to restore specific weight and collective value to language, which becomes the “place” where diversity assumes a fundamental role and becomes the means by which to contrast the economic value with the value of “the common” as a moment of inclusion.

Through the physicality with which I “stage” them, words become real communication devices in continuous dialogue with the “places” that welcome them, and become moments of reflection on issues that concern everyone, starting with those that we consider “the goods of the common”.

What interests me is to put in place work strategies capable of triggering processes of inclusion and sustainability, strategies capable of shifting one’s gaze away from that dominant economy which sees the social context as a place from which to profit, and this it can only generate exclusion.

**SR:** Continuing the discourse on place that you introduced, according to Lynch, cities are spatial constructions that can only be read through long periods of time; what is the city for you?

**SB:** I answer starting from a quote from L. Sandercock:

*«I want a city where my profession contributes to all of this, where city planning is a war of liberation fought both against silent. Anonymous public spaces and against the multiple forms of oppression and domination and exploitation and violence; where citizens tear space new possibilities and immerse themselves in their own cultures, while respecting those of their neighbors and collectively forging new hybrid cultures and spaces».*

This short quotation is capable of restoring the complexity that the contemporary city brings with it, it has often guided me in operational choices when I have had to deal with the urban

context, a context where the contradictions of contemporary society are concentrated and are more visible.

Precisely these contradictions have become, for me, an opportunity to experiment with new development strategies capable of making our cities more inclusive and participatory.

You quote Lynch when he says that cities are spatial constructions that can only be read across long periods. I agree with him, but in my opinion, this also applies to the practices we activate when we deal with the city. It becomes difficult to influence the social context, if processes capable of taking root over time through the active participation of those who live in the city are not triggered.

Thus, cities have been for me the place of experimentation and comparison, but today my attention has shifted to peripheral places because I believe that there, in small towns, in those areas that are called internal, one can find those necessary “seeds” if we want to look to a non-homogenizing future.

**SR:** In the past, the work of art in public space was conceived as something static, which stood out and was perpetually there; there is an idea of eternity somehow in this relationship. Instead, contemporary art, especially in the last fifty years, is often an ephemeral art, also as a consequence of the expansion of the expressive possibilities of the artists, we are talking about performances, temporary installations, or on the contrary of permanent installations or sculptures that have a life cycle that develops in any case over a pre-established time. What is your relationship with the concept of the ephemeral, or conversely, with the concept of eternity?

**SB:** I have never bothered to define my work through the concept of the ephemeral or the concept of eternity, my work comes from looking at what surrounds me and takes shape from the thought that defines that look. Ephemeral or eternal are a consequence of that thought.

## APPENDIX Summer School (THEN)

adverb. /ðen/ 1 used to refer to a particular time in the past or future. Life was harder then because neither of us had a job. Things were very different back then. She grew up in Zimbabwe, or Rhodesia as it then was.

In January 2022 an agreement was reached with the Bergamo Academy of Fine Arts to allow the candidate to spend his study period abroad at the aforementioned academy. During the months between July and October 2022, the candidate will carry out a summer school theoretically based on the research themes. The Summer School will result in a series of projects carried out by students who have decided to attend the residency, projects that will be included in the thesis as a practical application of the topics covered in the thesis.

## RELATIONS OF PROXIMITY, THE FORMS OF TIME IN THE SPACES OF THE CITY

Workshop held by: Stefano Romano (artist, curator, researcher, PhD candidate)

Students who participated in the workshop: Diego Azzola, Luca Brama, Martina Donzelli, Elisa Gritti, Dea Jaupi, Giulia Lazzarini, Aurora Villa.

Location of the workshop: Bergamo (Italy)

During the mobility period carried out at the *G. Carrara* Academy of Fine Arts in Bergamo, we worked on a workshop with some students from the first to the third year of the bachelor program. The workshop entitled “Relations of proximity, the forms of time in the spaces of the city”, foresaw that the students worked on the relationship between artwork, architecture and public space in the city of Bergamo, following the six types of physical relationship between art and architecture, identified in this thesis.



Figure 165 - Moments from the workshop relations of proximity, the forms of time in the spaces of the city. Photo by Daniele Maffei.

The workshop was built following the hypotheses and theoretical bases described in this thesis. The notion of time described to the students is that of the thesis, whose main imprint is the idea of flow mainly described by Henri Bergson and used by us as a basis for describing the relationship between art and architecture. To rethink space-time as a series of connected events and in relation to each other in a not necessarily linear way. It is therefore essential to understand how time works in art and architecture and how the time resulting from the relationship between the artistic and the architectural object works, to read between the lines of this relationship our approach to reality, considering from this moment on, time as a constructive and fundamental category of the artistic and architectural project.

After the theoretical introduction to the ontological and epistemological themes and approaches of the thesis, we carried out an analysis of the city of Bergamo together with the students.

Bergamo is a city located in northwestern Italy, in the Lombardy region. It is a city of about 119 563 inhabitants<sup>1</sup> divided into two parts called *città bassa* (lower town) and *città alta* (upper town).

<sup>1</sup> Data from the ISTAT website: <https://demo.istat.it/app/?a=2022&i=D7B> date accessed: January 11, 2023

*Città alta* is the most historic part and is located on the seven hills of the Bergamo pre-Alps, *Colle Aperto*, *Colle San Giovanni*, *Colle San Salvatore*, *Colle di Rosate*, *Colle di Gromo*, *Colle Santa Eufemia* and *Colle San Michele del Pozzo*. The nucleus of *città alta* is located at a higher altitude than *città bassa*, also of ancient origin but with modern urban planning and architectural interventions. The Venetian walls separate the two parts, a sign of the domination of Venice over the area, built between 1561 and 1588 and remained practically intact until today.

*Città alta* has a purely medieval architecture, surrounded by the Venetian walls built in the 16th century. It is crossed by *via Colleoni* which connects the main square of the city, *Piazza Vecchia* with the *Piazza della Cittadella* and houses a series of buildings of historical and architectural importance for the city, such as the *Biblioteca Civica Angelo Maj*, the *Torre Civica*, the *Cattedrale di Sant' Alessandro* and the *Cappella Colleoni*.

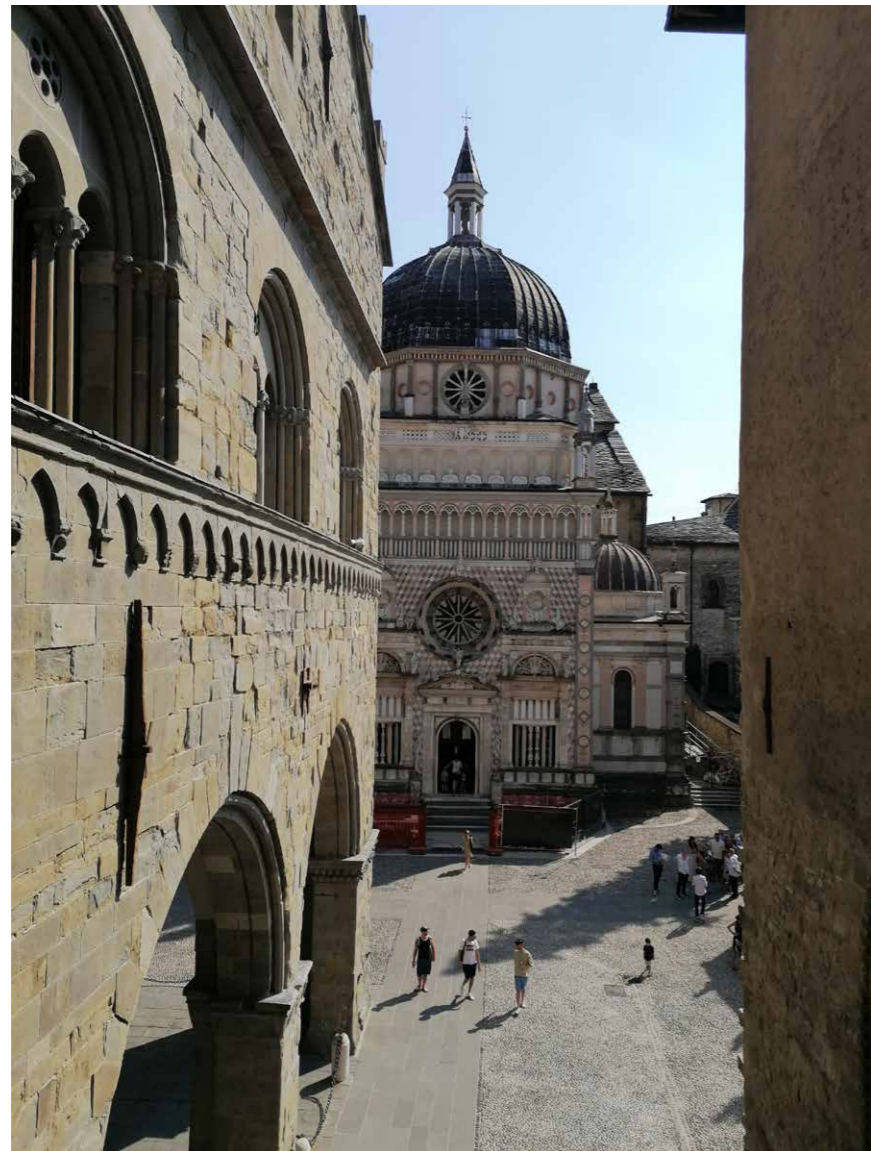


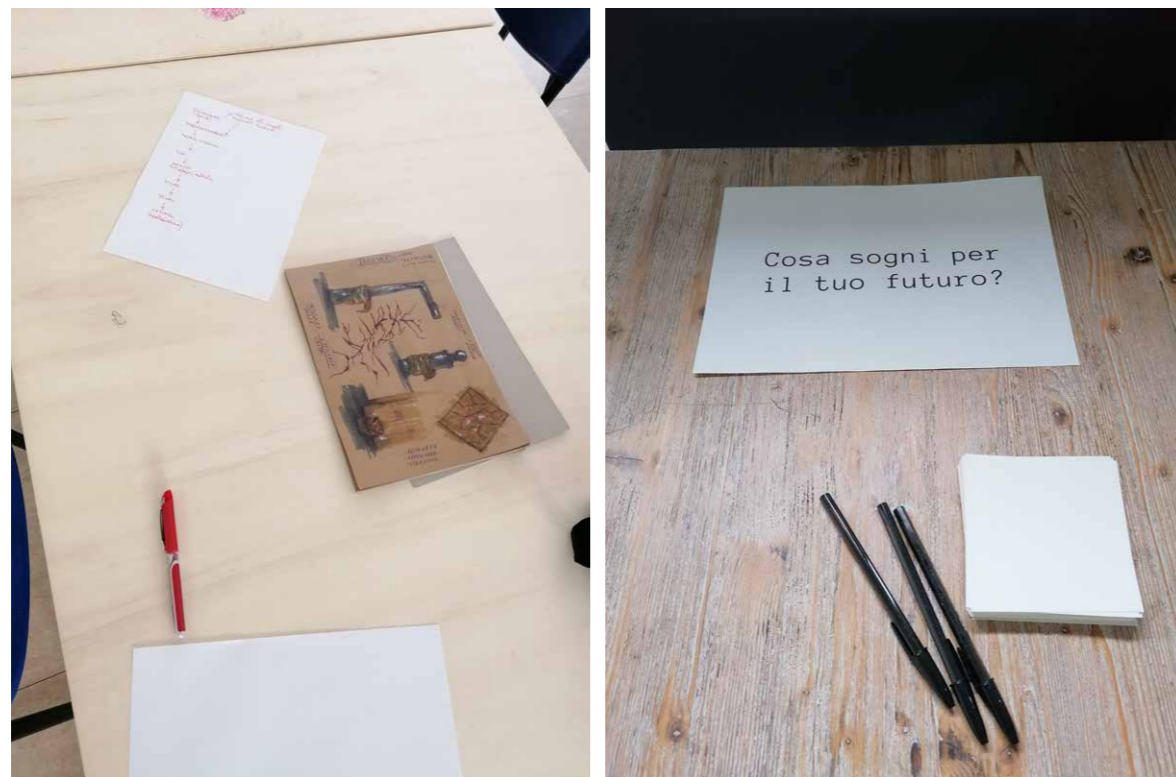
Figure 166 - Bergamo, Cappella Colleoni. Photo by the author

*Città bassa* develops around a few neighborhoods along the main communication routes. The city is crossed by the *Morla* river for 8 kilometres. The history of the city starts from antiquity but is strongly characterized urbanistically and architecturally in the twentieth century. Even in the lower part of Bergamo there are historic buildings such as the *Accademia Carrara* and the *Teatro Donizetti*. The district that today also houses the Municipality of Bergamo and which has become the center of the city was entirely built in the 20th century, shifting and strongly characterizing the city plan. The central axis of the city starts from the railway station and ends in the *Porta Nuova* square, a monumental gate built in neoclassical style in 1837 of which the two propylaea remain today, a kind of symbolic passage towards the *città alta*.



Figure 167 - Bergamo, Accademia Carrara. Photo by the author

Each student was asked to create a personal artistic project that would develop a physical and temporal relationship with an architectural object or an urban space in Bergamo. The type of relationship to be created between art and architecture had to be chosen among the six typologies highlighted in the thesis and therefore: the temporal relationship that occurs when there is a spatial distance between the artistic object and the architectural one. The temporality resulting from a relationship of juxtaposition between the work of art and the architecture. The type of temporal relationship that is created by connecting the structural rhythm of the artwork with that of the architecture. The time that we can read in the relationship between architecture and the work of art when the latter is of an ephemeral nature. The type of temporal relationship that is established by realizing an addition or subtraction of formal elements of the work of art to the architecture and finally the type of temporal relationship that is established between the artistic object and the architectural object when the one perceptually rewrites the other.



Figures 168 – (A - B) - Moments from the workshop relations of proximity, the forms of time in the spaces of the city. Photo by the author.

Each student worked according to his own operational methodology and his favorite medium, some started from a building or a place in Bergamo to finalize their ideas; others started from an idea, subsequently finding the place to which connect the project. Everyone was

confronted with the architectural and urban space of the city not as a scenography where to install his or her ideas, but as an integral part of the very definition of the idea.

With her project (*opera provvisoria*) – *una bambina*, Dea Jaupi started from a visual element that she found in her Albanian origins; a doll that families hang on their under-construction houses to protect them from the evil eye. In Albania, this element is therefore linked to luck, to the protection of the house from malicious intrusions from outside. In this case the scheme is reversed, the doll is hung outside to visualize social problems (such as those related to violence against minors) that often develop between the folds of family dynamics.



Figure 169 - Dea Jaupi, *Opera provvisoria - (una bambina)*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

The doll made entirely with shreds of clothes taken from different people, hung in a public space, is a clear warning of how we need to take care of the social space we build *inside* our homes, before trying to protect ourselves from what is *outside* them. The building with which Dea has chosen to interact in the category of **juxtaposition** of her work with the building itself, are the propylaea of *Porta Nuova* square. A place chosen precisely as one of the symbolic spaces of youth socialization in the city of Bergamo.

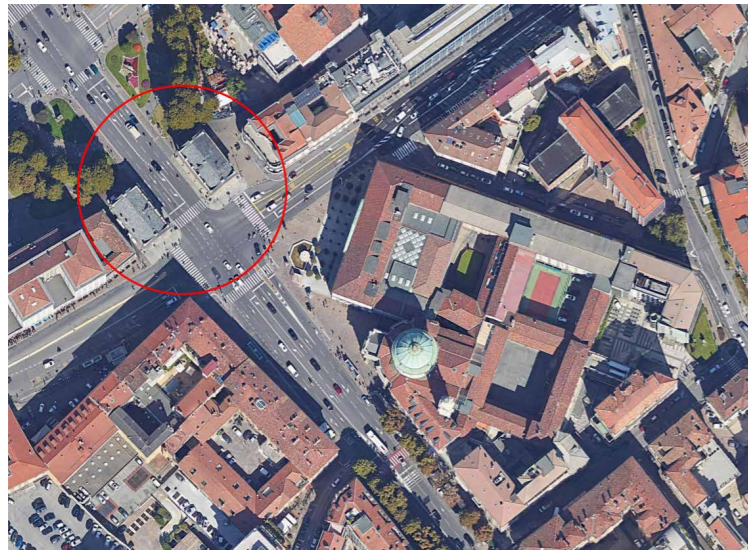


Figure 170 - Bergamo, Porta Nuova. Photo taken from Google Maps.



Figure 171 - Dea Jaupi, Opera provvisoria - (una bambina), 2022; preliminary drawings. Photo by the author



Figure 172 - Dea Jaupi, Opera provvisoria - (una bambina), 2022. Photo by the author



Figure 173 - Dea Jaupi, Opera provvisoria - (una bambina), 2022; detail. Photo by the author

Youthful dynamics that are also the basis of **Martina Donzelli's** project which started from the concept of a dream, associating it with youthful uncertainties and restlessness towards

the future. The project titled *Fragile* is in fact developed starting from a question: “What do you dream about for your future?” that Martina asked to several groups of young people from Bergamo around the city and through social media.



Figure 174 - Martina Donzelli, *Fragile*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

She transcribed the answers on sheets of light paper measuring 10x10cm, which then became butterfly-shaped origami to accentuate the fragility and fickleness of their content. Each origami was placed on a building in Bergamo, developing a relationship with it that it is part of the category of the **ephemeral**. Therefore, a precarious relationship that however has the strength to determine a double value for the artwork and for the architecture, to give a dream to that building, and at the same time receiving substance from it.

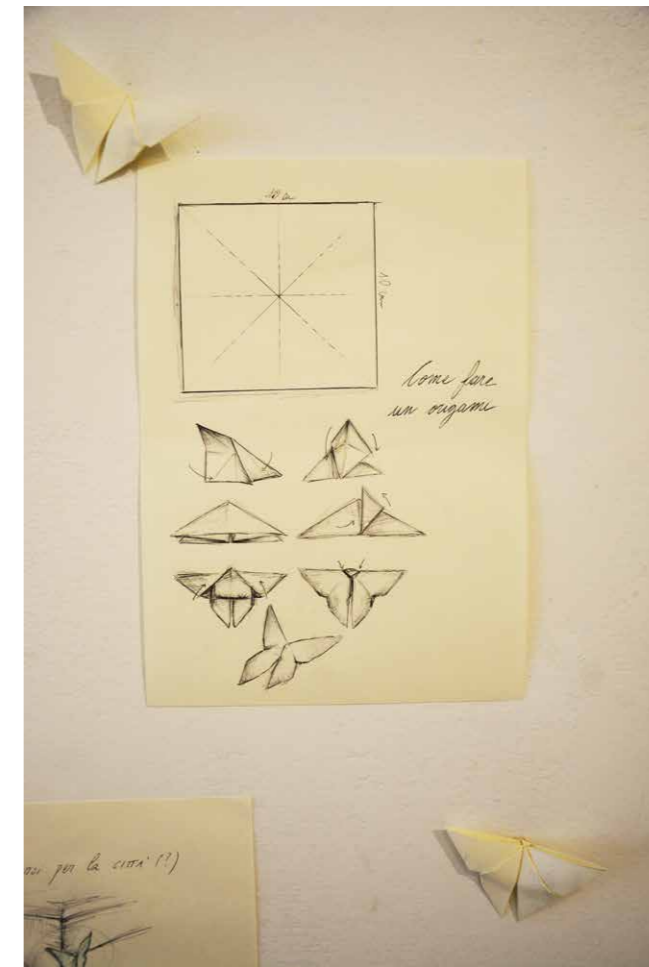


Figure 175 - Martina Donzelli, *Fragile*, 2022; preliminary drawings. Photo by the author



Figure 176 - Martina Donzelli, *Fragile*, 2022. Photo by the author



The buildings of the city of Bergamo are instead the protagonists and starting point of the reflections of **Aurora Villa** and **Diego Azzola**, who have decided to develop a common project starting from the concept of *panismo*<sup>2</sup>, diverting it to the human-artificial relationship. Their project *San Bartolomeo* also taking its cue from the icon of the saint who is always depicted skinned, in fact investigates two categories of buildings that Aurora and Diego observed around the city.

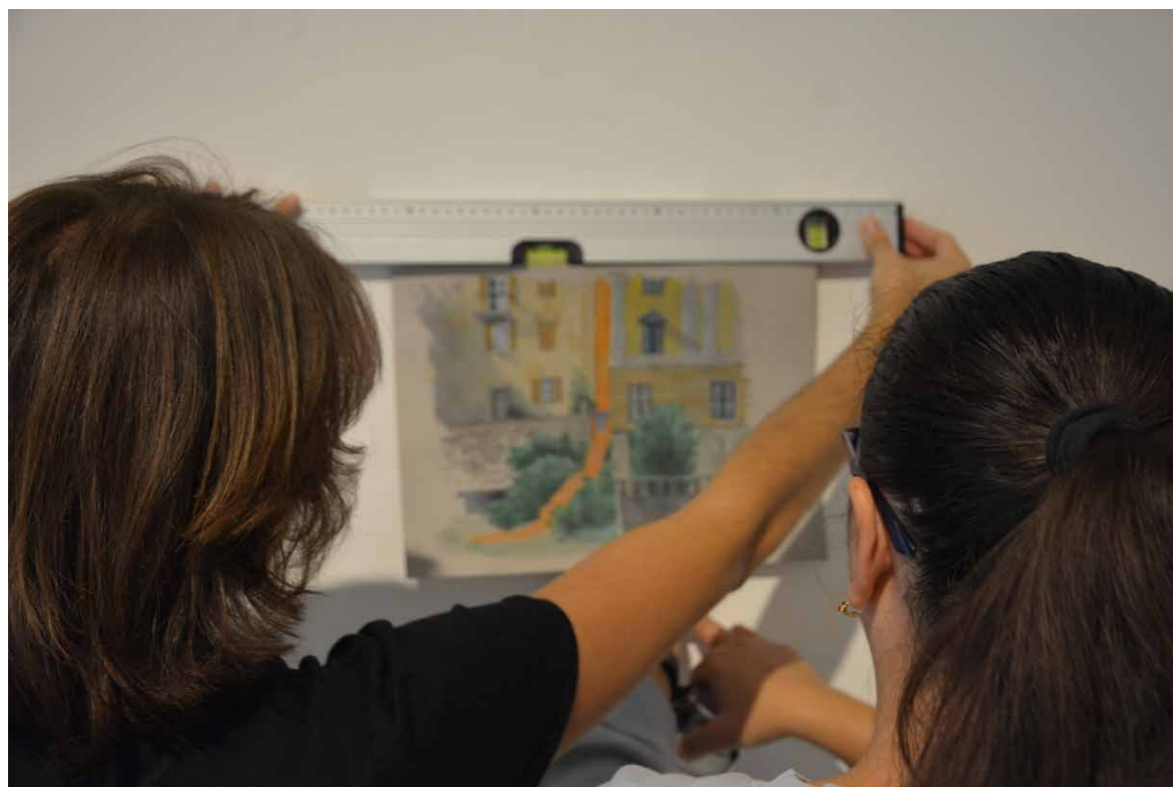


Figure 177 - Aurora Villa & Diego Azzola, *San Bartolomeo*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

Those buildings that remain visually submissive to others that have been built around them and those to which, due to various structural modifications, windows or doors previously in use have been walled up. The project takes the form of a **rewriting** of the architecture through a series of drawings where the chosen buildings are covered by a sort of skin.

<sup>2</sup> A strong perception of the outside world connected with an identification with the natural world.

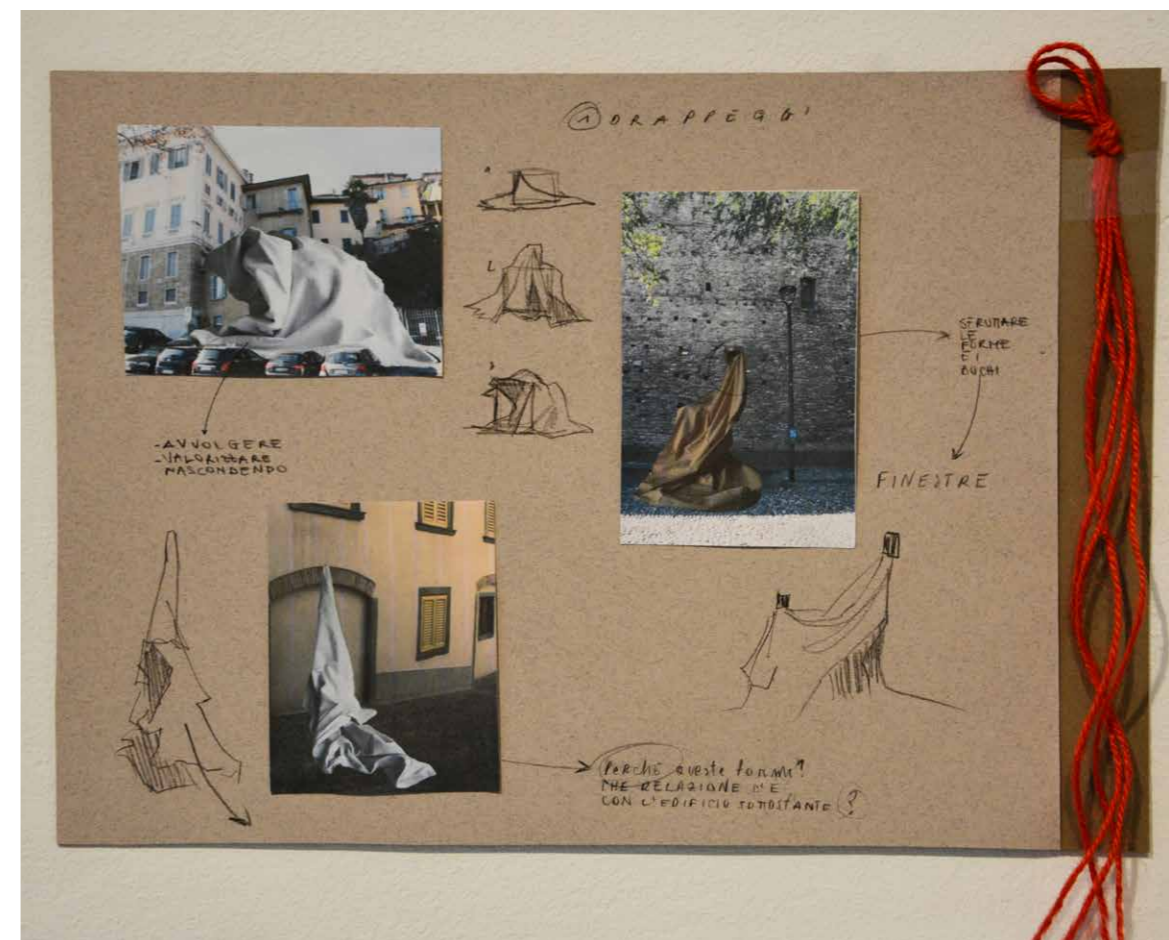


Figure 178 - Aurora Villa & Diego Azzola, *San Bartolomeo*, 2022; preliminary drawings. Photo by the author



Figure 179 - Aurora Villa & Diego Azzola, *San Bartolomeo*, 2022; detail of the artwork. Photo by the author

This skin opens up in some parts showing their own blood vessels and allowing seeing a glimpse of the underlying building, as if to underline the vital relationship between the viewer and the building that forms the surrounding reality.



Figure 180 - Aurora Villa & Diego Azzola, San Bartolomeo, 2022. Photo by the author

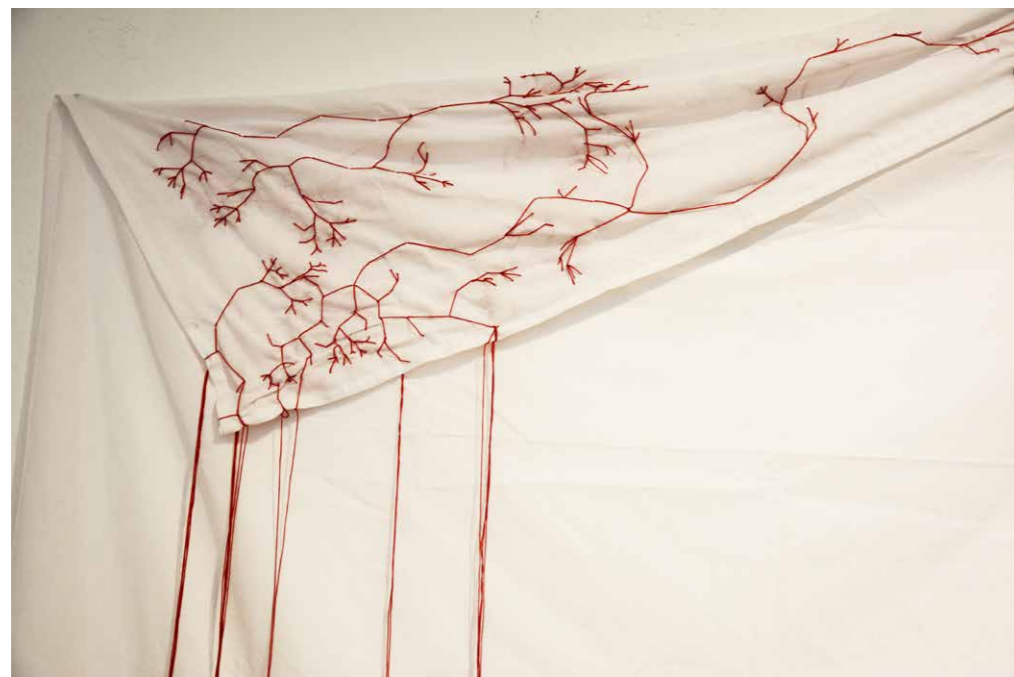


Figure 181 - Aurora Villa & Diego Azzola, San Bartolomeo, 2022; detail of the artwork. Photo by the author

A precise place in Bergamo instead becomes the genesis of **Luca Brama's** *moto a luogo* project, in a relationship that clearly falls within the compositional category of the rhythm between artwork and architecture.



Figure 182 - Luca Brama, *Moto a luogo*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

The intercity bus station, with its architectural and social specificities, becomes the subject of Luca's reflection, who frequents the station, meeting the homeless who use it as a "home", as a place to stop and rest, creating also a parallel with the people who instead have a house and use that place to come and go. The project develops starting from some dialogues with homeless people of which Luca keeps some sentences, which together with other sentences composed by him, become an ideal passage between the two extremes of damnation or eternal bliss.



Figure 183 - Bergamo, Intercity Bus Station. Photo taken from Google Maps.

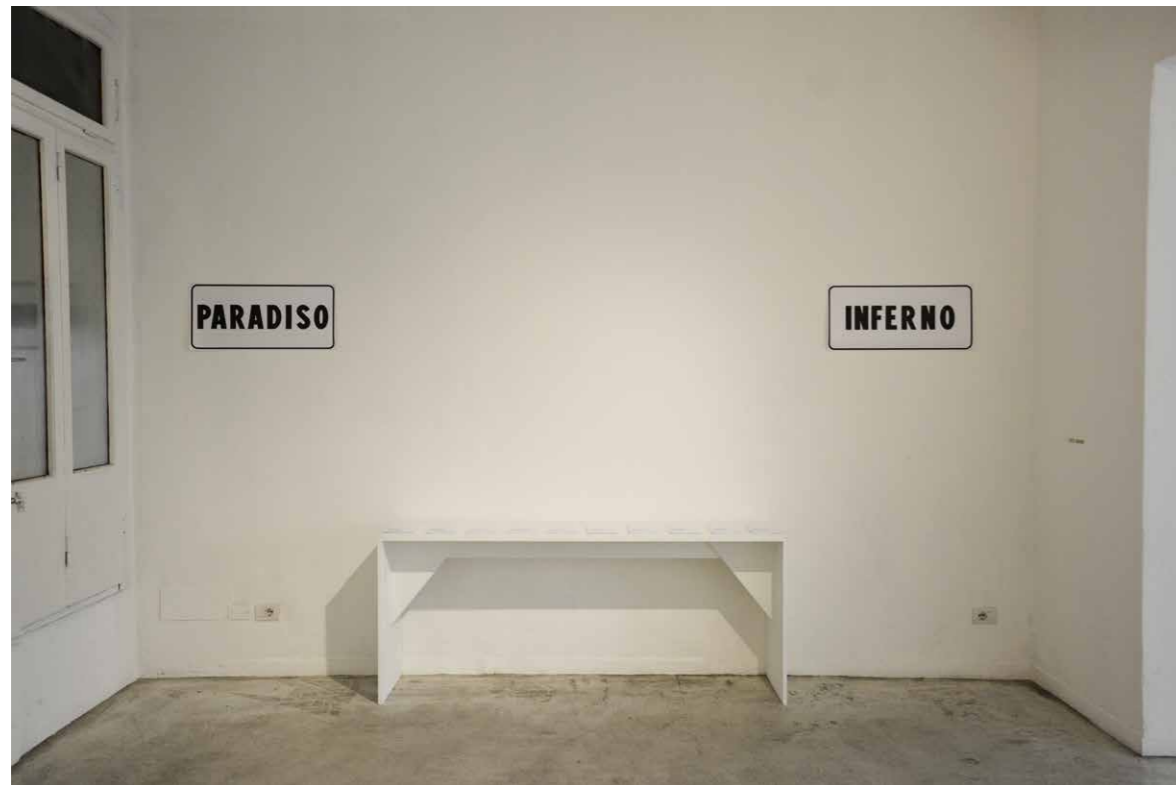


Figure 184 - Luca Brama, *Moto a luogo*, 2022. Photo by the author

The architectural structure of the station, with its shelters, offers itself as a “via crucis” for the viewer, a path of suffering (or expiation), in fact the sentences are printed on A5 sheets and each positioned on a shelter and depending whether the viewer moves in one direction or another, they gradually become more or less suffering. In the final installation, the words “Hell” and “Paradise” are printed respectively on two road billboards located exactly at the two ends of the bus station to act as the opening and closing of the human passage between the station shelters.



Figure 185 - Luca Brama, *Moto a luogo*, 2022; detail. Photo by the author

A certain relationship with buildings is also developed in **Giulia Lazzarini’s** *Addizioni archeologiche* project that started from some research done on archaeological finds in the Bergamo area, focusing on tools.



Figure 186 - Giulia Lazzarini, *Addizioni archeologiche*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

Tools still refer to our daily life today, to those anti-heroic moments in which – perhaps – we are ourselves more than on other occasions of the day because the gestures are not socially over-structured, but are those necessary for biological survival; eating, drinking and so on. Giulia reasoned by function, associating the tools found with the buildings that today represent that function for us, the aqueduct with an amphora, the baker with a spoon.



Figure 187 - Giulia Lazzarini, *Addizioni archeologiche*, 2022; preliminary drawings. Photo by the author

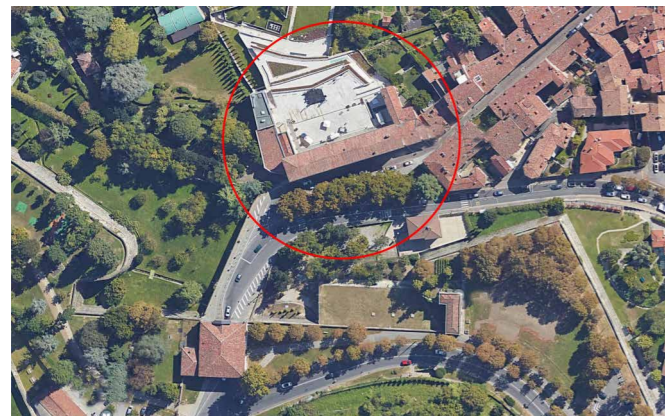


Figure 188 - Bergamo, *Aqueduct*. Photo taken from Google Maps.

The project starts from the category of **addition**, as to visualize this symbolic/functional relationship between the archaeological finds and the buildings with which we associate them today, Giulia has created semi-figurative watercolor paintings. In those paintings, the object and the building merge together, making a clear division of the two no longer possible, they became a new subject representing a space-temporal crisis.



Figure 189 - Giulia Lazzarini, *Addizioni archeologiche*, 2022. Photo by the author

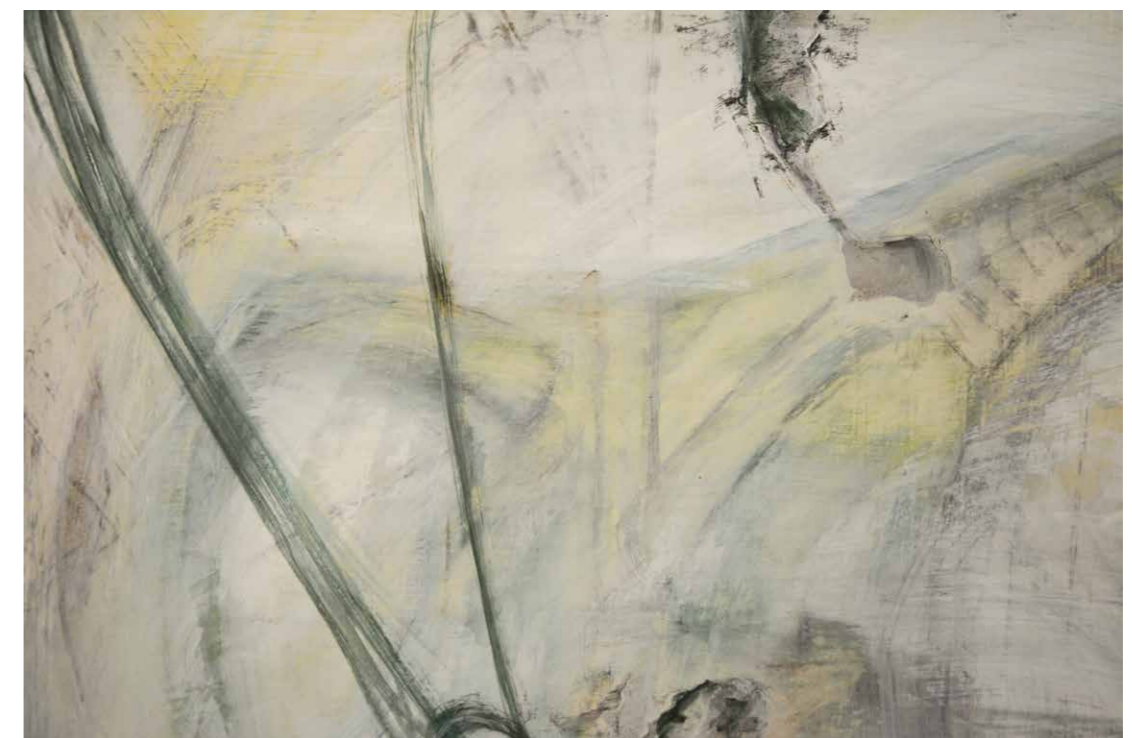


Figure 190 - Giulia Lazzarini, *Addizioni archeologiche*, 2022; detail. Photo by the author

A temporal transformation of space also takes place in **Elisa Gritti's** project, entitled *stadi* in which the reflection is centered on the space-time of Elisa's growth and on what these different stages (*stadi*), or moments, leave within her.



Figure 191 - Elisa Gritti, *Stadi*, 2022; installation of the artwork. Photo by the author

The starting image is that of the cocoon of the chrysalis, which transforms into a butterfly and in particular, on the emptiness of the space of the cocoon, which contains all the signs of the transformation. In the same way, the project is based on cocoons, molded on Elisa's body, each of which becomes the container of different stages of her growth.

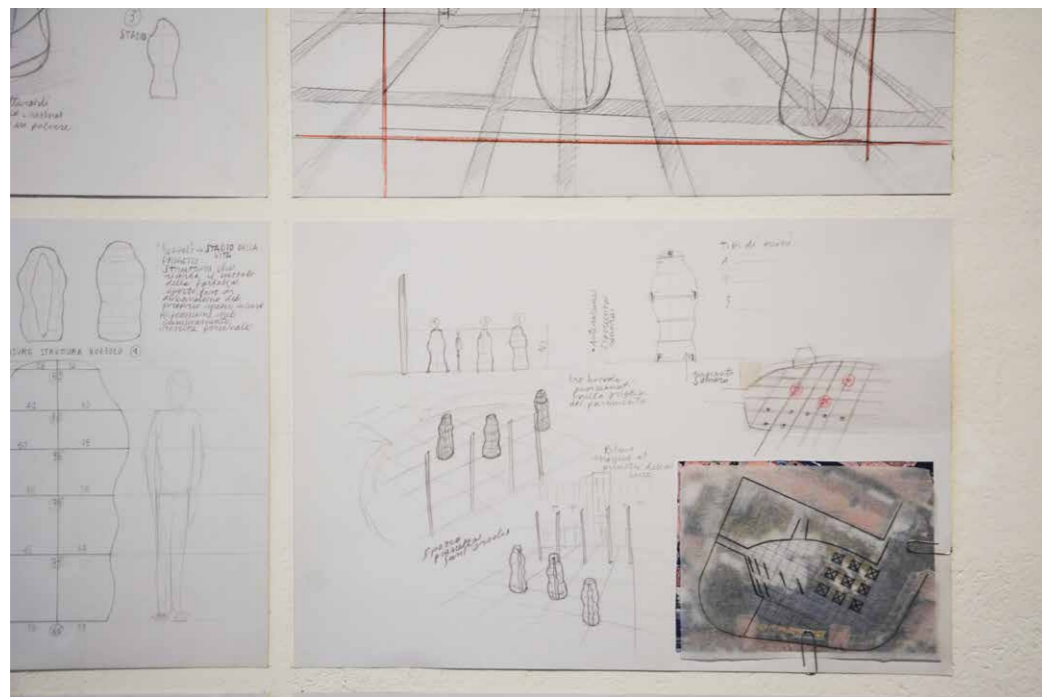


Figure 192 - Elisa Gritti, *Stadi*, 2022; preliminary drawings. Photo by the author

The cocoons are in fact of the same height as Elisa, made of semi-transparent resin and each cocoon contains a "sound memory" of the emotional stage crossed, which also becomes the auditory springboard for the viewer to access that particular memory of Elisa's life. The urban space in which the interactive sculpture interacts is the small square in via *Sant'Orsola*, generating a relationship that falls into the category of **rhythm**. The space was chosen precisely for its structural and visual characteristics of an enclosed and intimate place, with this rhythmic scansion given by the quadrangular mesh flooring.



Figure 193 - Bergamo, *S.Orsola Square*. Photo taken from Google Maps.



Figure 194 - Elisa Gritti, *Stadi*, 2022. Photo by the author

The students' experience is particularly useful for understanding how these perceptual categories can be used from a practical point of view in artistic design (in this specific case). We verified how their way of looking at the city and its full and empty spaces has changed, and how the approach to their working method has consequently changed, allowing students to experiment with new approaches and new points of view on their research and new ways of perceiving the space–time reality in which they operate.

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