Architecture as Performance:
the construction of display

by

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André Lepecki
SCL2110: Closing Evening, Alfredo Jaar + SCL2110 Team

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DEDICATION

To my mother Silvia, my father César and my sister Paula.

To the memory of my godfather and my abuelos with whom I grew up.

To Natalia and Diego.

This dissertation is also dedicated to
all the exceptional people I have met over the course
of the last ten years that in one way or another,
contributed with their thoughts in
Santiago and New York.
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ABSTRACT

An exploration of the practices of art and architecture of the 20th and early 21st centuries, “Architecture as Performance: the construction of display” unfolds a theoretical and practical approach to understanding the concept of performance (in the broad sense) in relation to these two specific fields of cultural production. This thesis reshapes the notion of (cultural) performance to include parameters of the performative and of performativity derived from the spaces and objects that we share, and that are projected by architects and artists. If performance needs to be “designed” (or at least desired), then this dissertation considers and expands upon the implications of space and object discourse within the field of performance studies. In doing so, the thesis also highlights and questions the dimension of performance as a doing and thinking practice.

The expansion of the fields of architecture and art proposes a new hybrid territory of practice within the spaces of the city and its culture. This dissertation confronts conventional modes of disciplinary practice within architecture and art with practices of performance and “design thinking” as an alternate means to consider when displaying ideas of and about new hybrids projects of architecture and art. This thesis constitutes a theoretical and practical approach to the space of/for performance offered by the possible associative work between artists and architects. The ideas here contribute to both fields of architecture and performance.
studies to interpret, re-shape and project the word performance when thinking about space. At the beginning of this new century, the integration of different mediums of expression propelled by art and architecture plus the use of new technologies contribute to change the way we manipulate and perceive, debate and practice—by means of thinking, projecting and constructing—the world that surrounds us.
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INTRODUCTION

Seven points to begin with

The theory we need, which fails to come together because the necessary critical moment does not occur, and which therefore falls back into the state of mere bits and pieces of knowledge, might well be called, by analogy, a “unitary theory”: the aim is to discover or construct a theoretical unity between “fields” which are apprehended separately, just as molecular, electromagnetic and gravitational forces are in physics. The fields we are concerned with are, firstly, the physical—nature, the Cosmos; secondly, the mental, including logical and formal abstractions; and thirdly, the social. In other words, we are concerned with logico-epistemological space, the space of the social practice, the space occupied by sensory phenomena, including products of the imagination such as projects and projections, symbols and utopias.¹

—Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space

Before anything else, I would like to point out that this dissertation has to have a “double-consciousness,” one for the performance studies reader and another one for the reader interested in architecture and architectural discourse. This dissertation has struggled since its beginning between two places: the theoretical, offered by performance studies; and the practical, offered by architecture. It is relevant to express this from the start, as the ideas you will find here are sewn from these two approaches, and I have tried to make sure that these two types of readers, at least, can approach the text and the ideas presented here.

¹ Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (2001), 11.
This is what this dissertation will present: the desire to find a concrete place in which to combine both approaches to develop unconventional type of project that could be understood from performance or architecture—or from the arts in general (that consider performance strategies). I must warn you that in some occasions a performance studies reader will perhaps find here information that might seem redundant or not really necessary to revisit about performance and performance studies. At the same time, the architectural reader might find aspects of this dissertation also unnecessary to revisit. Yet, as a starting point, both perspectives have to be presented and confronted in order to approach these fields with a certain level of information that will constitute the basis for each, as this manuscript attempts to present a general theory that combines performance studies with the practice of architecture. What a performance studies reader understands might be not understood by someone interested in architecture and architectural discourse, and vice-versa. I hope that the basic ideas presented here are going to attract your attention to “see” the project that means performance studies+architecture and its inversion. The position that I have now is truly as the ‘plus sign’ that joins both fields and that is represented by a notion of an in-between. With the occasion and opportunity that this signifies, I propose from this in-between place a theory that might unify both disciplines, therefore highlighting the project of new lines to create between the disciplines that might arise when existing in the in-between.
1. Performative Objects

What could be the contribution of performance and performance studies to the fields of architecture and architectural discourse? This dissertation explores the possible “collaboration” between architects and artists by combining their theories and practices: systems of representation, presentation and ideas of productivity. As an architect, I question the borders of the field of architecture as well as its discourse to explore other types of architectural productivity that are different from the conventions that, as architects, we are currently accustomed to (in Chile). My intention in doing so is to delimitate certain parameters for the configuration of space that could problematize and somehow “shape” not only architecture but also the field of performance studies from this (inter-)disciplinary or cross-disciplinary approach—one that moves over the ambiguous territory that the disciplines of architecture and art share: performance.

Henri Lefebvre invites us to think about a theory of unity that collapses the physical, mental and social dimensions of space. In *The Production of Space* (2001) he argues for the necessary bridge between theory and practice to understand fully shared issues of philosophical and practical dimensions. This dissertation situates itself in this exact point between rational and embodied practices in its exploration of “things” that are part of the spaces we create and that experiment in the everyday. In this respect, Bill Brown’s *Thing Theory* (2004) that
challenges the limits of the reading and understanding of a “thing” is also central to my thesis. Brown questions the relation subject-object to discern the ideological and ideational effects and transformations of the material world—rather than only the material effects of ideas and ideologies. He searches for something else from the things (that are around us) as a result and raises questions to ask not what they are but what work they perform. Things “become” something when they do something, signify something or represent something, and if they do, then they display certain reciprocity to a subject (one or multiple individuals or one or multiple objects). This notion of connection of “communication” is going to be explored in the following chapter. Brown’s questions are, in fact, not about things themselves but about, in particular, the “performance” described by the subject-object relation. This understanding suggests the exploration of ideas in relation to the design of certain places and objects and consequently questions the tools and methods that we have (as architects), to shape experience within a spatial and temporal context.² Space is embodied by the display of different “things,” from a rug, to a chair, to a lamp, to a wall, to a house, to a building, to a park and to a city. These things that have (or play) a certain “role” constitute the matter of analysis in this thesis to “see” performance. The “dimension” of the object is directly connected to the “designed” ambition of its performance. This is an important contribution to the fields that are going to be explored here. When we analyze

them, we then understand all the implications and different levels of space, its reasons, its functions, its limits and consequently its possibilities (because of the manipulation of perception). This approach also helps to incorporate the consciousness of design to the process of projecting space as it focuses the “interest” of the object on the relation to the user (the customer or the audience), depending on the circumstances (type of performance to be explored from a daily life event to a calculated one). Now, in this respect, one could talk about objects that perform and that embody “performalism.”

This reflection is of great relevance for this thesis because it mixes form, performance (and desire) to understand role (in a wide set of concerns) in a certain specific context. One hypothesis here could be then to relate performance (in the broad sense) to clear notions of productivity (or the resistance of it). Another option could be to relate performance only to notions of cultural dimensions (but eventually this cultural scope also relays on issues of productivity). In the search for an answer, the first

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observation here would be that the object naturally presents itself combining doing and effects on a certain space and unders specific circumstances (Fig. 0.1).

Fig. 0.1 - Performalism, Peter Arkle (2010).
2. Theory-Practice (and disciplines)

Rationally, I believe that theory has to be proven or materialized by any means. Otherwise it remains not visible; it does not “exist” in concrete terms. Theory has to be effective (or ineffective) in terms of what it can do; what its purpose and scope is. It is relevant to highlight here that this argument considers a crossover of issues between postmodernist art, art criticism, architecture and architectural criticism and theory in both fields, in part because similar theoretical paradigms (notably post-structuralism) influence and are influenced by these disciplines (to shape post-disciplines) and discourses (to re-shape and transform other discourses). At the same time, these disciplines and discourses trespass and re-shape other territories of thinking and practicing. Those disciplines are of course of interest to performance studies, some examples are: anthropology, sociology and psychology among others.

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4 Think of Kate Nesbitt (1996) when she refers to Anthony Vidler in her thesis concerning the theory of postmodern architecture. Nesbitt states that art plays a greater role in postmodern architectural theory than technology, as the pendulum moves between the poles of architecture as art and architecture as engineering. She alludes to Vidler, who states: “the question of the art of architecture closed by the functional ethic, may well be opened, with all its disturbing implications, by this attempt in the domain of ideas […] until recently architects were more concerned to develop machines for living in than art to wrestle with. The positivistic utopia of modern architecture was in this way based on the repression of death, decay, and the “pleasure principle.” Nesbitt continues Vidler’s thoughts: “[…] in this period, it often seems that the formal ideas being grappled with first become clear in art (which is free from the complications of inability, collaboration, and finance), and then trickle down to architecture” in Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: an Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965–1995 (1996), 40.
Common issues that create tension within and between the fields of architecture and art include ideas about the “character” of the artist in terms of his or her role as a producer in society.\textsuperscript{5} “Architecture as Performance: the construction of display” combines the practical and the rational lens of architecture within the ambiguity proposed by \textit{performance}. Art gives to architecture a freedom that the latter does not intrinsically have as a rational discipline. The aim is to understand an architecture of action as an effect of expressing, operating, executing and doing.\textsuperscript{6}

This thesis proposes a general theory for the concrete relation of these two “creative” fields to discuss and formulate \textit{performance}. The argument also challenges the notion and implications of \textit{display} through a specific performative act that was realized with the collaboration of many architects, artists, intellectuals and scholars in Chile, during our Bicentennial celebration in September 2010. The “act” was titled \textit{SCL2110: arte | arquitectura | performance}, and was presented to think and project the city of Santiago and Valparaíso in the next one hundred years. This event proposed to question the notion of future, to highlight one of the most essential aspects of the practice of the architect, which is to give solutions by projecting the future. In other words, what \textit{SCL2110} was doing was exploring the

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{6} The architecture of action requires energy, decision and capability; in other words: \textit{disposition}. See \textit{The Metapolis Dictionary for Advanced Architecture} (2003), 26.
concrete relationship between theory and practice to explore architect’s and architecture's performance.

SCL stands for “Santiago of Chile,” the abbreviation used for tagging suitcases at the airport (as if Santiago could start a flight around the globe); 2110, of course, suggests the end date by which to realize these multiple proposals, “ideas” about the future. This action, as an act of performance, strove to “present” some theories of how to establish performance within the field of architecture to explore the way it is conceived and executed.

3. About the design of place and the questions pertinent to performance

The SCL2110 project also initiated questions concerning the notion of place and the new spaces that should be provided with those places. SCL2110 explored in the limits of architectural practices and artistic practices to speculate about “performance design,”7 or, in this respect, to the relationship between architecture

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7 Dorita Hannah and Olav Harslof discuss the idea of Performance Design in their titular book (2008), positing performance design as a “porous fluctuating term” that works across a broad spectrum and that embraces the theatrical, historical and quotidian. This explanation assumes that performance then has a theatrical connotation. Instead, and to add more complexity to this, I propose to invert the term to design performance with the intention to analyze issues related to the house of the always-becoming performances of daily life. It is assumed here that architectural and artistic results, in any scope of project, have to be designed. Furthermore, that such design is more “free” if it is combined and analyzed congruently with the concept of performance. Design performance, which could be more applicable to the efficiencies and the effects of things (and spaces), does not have the reference to a theatrical “stage” that performance design has. See Performance Design, edited by Dorita Hannah and Olav Harslof (2008).
and art, to speculate about how to design performance. Of course, conceptual artists and architects, in this sense, had a lot to say—they have been proposing “performance” ideas since the end of the 19th and early part of the 20th centuries to present the future. To highlight this, I recall to the introduction I wrote for the catalogue of *SCL2110*:

We have begun a bicentennial with two big events: an earthquake and a change of government. The earthquake has caused commotion throughout the country, and to this day, we have not been able to rebuild what we have to; it will take time. The earthquake has also raised questions about what to do and how to envision our future. The change of our president also implies a shift: new possibilities for new projects and, therefore, new opportunities. The history of our society and the city continues to turn in cycles. *SCL2110* begins to trace its navigation route. In doing this it is trying to install a new space of debate in the bicentennial.

We work in a studio called MESS. This studio tries to combine its work between possible projects and impossible projects. The possible projects are a “type” of project that any architect could have. These projects refer to commissions made by a specific client. For example: a piece of furniture, a remodel of a house, the construction of a building or the proposal for a city. On the other hand, the impossible projects are responses to non-specific clients; usually, a response to self-commissioned desires and a reference to projects with a higher degree of ambition. Therefore, the studio tries to create a sort of equilibrium between existing desires and possibilities in order to envision, develop and materialize them.

MESS is interested in the city and urban culture of the future, and, even more, in the possibility of doing an unconventional project within society and the spaces designed for it. We resist the practice that most often functions only as a matter of a preprogrammed operation regulated by economical and political markets. Hence, here emerges the concern for the impossible project (a project that is entirely possible within the following one hundred years): *SCL2110*. It seems to be impossible to have an ambition that imagines a space in 100 years; a long-term project like that would be difficult to implement because many different people have to agree with and also
participate in it. The project tries to make authorities and cultural institutions talk, and to mediate ideas of people from this country with the foreign views of outsiders about the “possible.” In short, we must reach an important collective consensus in order to implement the SCL2110 project. An important degree of impossibility exists, and this project will only be realized if those parts agree to work in unity and collaboration: beyond even the economical market and the short-term business that are sometimes a big problem.⁸

With these ideas SCL2110 invited practitioners and thinkers, artists and academics, professionals and students to discuss and reenvision different ideas for the future of the principal area of Chile that house the political, economical and cultural “center” of the country. Through the multiple perspectives offered by its many participants, this event shaped the issues, limits and goals in a multifaceted consideration of the production of space in terms of Lefebvre’s quote at the beginning. SCL2110 installed, in the Museum of Contemporary Art of Santiago, an exhibition to display the desires of architects and artists about the spaces they wanted for the future of the city. Their proposals contributed to start a debate of how to imagine a possible city. My introduction continued:

The earthquake and the change of government are two good reasons to think and rethink the way we want to mobilize as architects and artists from now on. There is no doubt that the earthquake has caused an enormous destabilization in the country, resulting in material damage and many human losses. An earthquake implies a break, but also the appearance of a new space: the void of a crack in the earth represents a new opportunity to think in terms of a project. There has been a lot

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⁸ Rodrigo Tisi, SCL2110: arte | arquitectura | performance, 21–23. I have revised and translated this quotation, and all subsequent references about this project (from Spanish to English).
of emergency work as a result of this event, and many mid-size and long-term projects have ceased being a priority. However, despite this tragic earthquake, we believe that a project like SCL2110 continues to be pertinent. This is about envisioning the future of our cities and how to realize such a future—particularly one in which Santiago and Valparaiso together become a capital of the future.

SCL2110 establishes itself in another type of void: one of desire, not in the search for a solution for survival. Like the earthquake, the change of government represents an opportunity for undertaking new projects. From this standpoint we think that SCL2110 can help to support and sustain a different, leading project that was born at a unique moment of history in which “special forces” converged. SCL2110 began in 2006, at a time when a series of bicentennial projects were already underway. These projects were searching for a more complex way to think about society and the city during this celebration, to demonstrate that Chile is “almost there” with the standards of a “developing” country (which was, for me, a big ambition). Since 2006, we have been encouraging a reflection on the meaning of city and life in society within certain conditions of “development” that imply greater comfort and opportunities—a product of the economic growth that Chileans are proud of. President Ricardo Lagos (2000-2006) wanted to enhance the quality of life, and, therefore, to demonstrate a better society with more access to public spaces and infrastructure. Michelle Bachelet’s government (2006-2010), which concentrated on strengthening what was accomplished before to give impetus to new projects (among them the controversial cultural centers of Gabriela Mistral and Ex-cárcel), continued Lagos’ vision. It is 2010 now and Santiago and Valparaiso continue being the same. Some of the bicentennial projects that were on file didn’t materialize and, indeed, many of those that are being carried out are only necessary to solve problems related to normal city growth and development—nothing really ambitious if we think about a vision for the future.

It seems that a bicentennial project must transcend the functional need to comply with the necessary infrastructure that might solve those needs. We believe that a bicentennial project has to reach certain ambitions placed much further away in order to imagine and to dream of a better future, and one with more challenges. Highly ambitious and complex projects, like the transportation system “Transantiago,” failed to be as emblematic as intended; furthermore, to this day, that project is still demanding a lot of effort within an economy that was not planned for. This despite the fact that the initial
goal called it a bicentennial project, because the intention with it was to place Santiago on the map of global cities with an extraordinary integrated transportation system (with a GPS technology incorporated). There are other Latin American cities that did succeed in doing something similar, like Bogotá in Colombia or Curitiba in Brazil. It did not happen here; the transportation system of the city of Santiago (since 2006) is still under construction. For the bicentennial ambitions it failed. There are a series of other projects with the bicentennial “stamp” that do not play an exceptional role, implemented only to solve with urgency problems of needs and functions (as what the earthquake might require now). We believe that some of the government’s selected bicentennial projects lacked ambition, and certainly a particular complexity, at the moment of their implementation. In this sense SCL2110 is very ambitious, and, with a sophisticated idea of the future in mind, it proposes and invites artists and architects to envision this future. SCL2110 intends to use this bicentennial occasion to “see” a future project marked by our position in this time: two hundred years after our independence and one hundred years before the future of our society. Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna did it in his time for the initial centennial. He established an idea that kept developing over the course of time. Today we live in the city that was projected one hundred years ago.

We are using this celebration as a space to provide moments for discussion and to put different perspectives in harmony in order to project what will belong to all of us in a hundred years. None of us will be alive then, but our city will be. We discard opportunism by using all of the instances that we have and to raise some questions to which we can respond, and by contributing to the urban culture and society that we imagine having. This project will help strengthen certain areas of the city that perhaps, despite being recognized by all, are under deterioration from the passage of time and poor maintenance. Such places are characteristic of the city that we already know and that could certainly identify us as Chileans, but that somehow, paradoxically, still suffer from an inexplicable status quo. These places are: Plaza Italia in Santiago, San Cristóbal hill, Central Market and La Vega, Bulnes Boulevard opposite to Plaza de la Ciudadanía, and the ascensores (funiculars) of Valparaíso—which in an integrated plan of transportation, could include funiculars, trolley buses and subway—as well as a new type of project that are beginning to be placed on the agenda, such as the new “cultural” centers. All these are projects of great significance, and all could present or
The development of Chilean society can only be seen in Chilean cities. So, which of these Chilean cities are the most important? The answer is probably between Santiago and Valparaíso. We believe that Santiago and Valparaíso are cities that work in relation to each other: they “collaborate.” No question, there is some tension between Santiago and Valparaíso: Chile’s cultural power, political power, and economic power is divided between these two cities. Santiago seems to be the city richest with opportunities in the country, while Valparaíso is just the opposite. There is a certain atmosphere between these two cities that allows us to think of them together as a great capital center with which the future Chilean society could be identified. The “in-between” space of these two cities—which refers to more than the physical space between them—is the space that articulates SCL2110. This space is the space of more possibilities, of new opportunities. The “in-between” is that space that also refers to the concept of associativity, of collaboration and the shared ground between architects and artists.

SCL2110 aims to strengthen significant urban elements: Plaza Italia, the place of interest for the encounter, celebration and memory of all Chileans. Valparaíso’s funiculars and trolley buses are very unique elements of the city; they are a distinctive “urban” icon within Chile. The center of Valparaíso is considered a world heritage site, but its funiculars just sit there, deteriorating. SCL2110’s intention is to strengthen the places of national interest and popular significance; it is not about making something new for the future, it is about bringing these places we have to the extreme, and it is about to display its potential, emphasizing the meaning these sites have for us. SCL2110 is about being able to project ourselves through these objects and spaces that live with us; it is about the consolidation of an identity that represents the becoming of a new Chile.”

4. Ambition (to provoke change)

Because this project was “strange” for Chilean standards (combining simultaneously art, architecture and performance), the challenges to execute it

9 Ibid.
were many. The “innovation” supposed the finding of solutions that were not known and coherently required a lot of versatility from our team (SCL2110). A project with the characteristics of SCL2110 was never done before in Chile, and furthermore, none of us had the previous expertise, it was a real challenge. Some issues created different conflicts: first, it was difficult to convey confidence to the people (directors of schools of architecture and art) that could have supported this type of entrepreneurship—it was strange for them to think about architecture associated to performance and to art; second, it seemed that many colleagues (of the circuit of architects and artists that I work with) had questions and doubts about the feasibility of a project like this happening in our own country; third, would this project really succeed? The possibility of failure was there, all the time.

To emphasize these concerns, I borrow Henry Bial’s words from *The Performance Studies Reader*:

> This was, perhaps, an over-ambitious goal for a student [PhD candidate], but performance studies is an enterprise, which encourages (not to say induces) such ambition. In a landscape where the boundaries are blurred and borders routinely violated, where your view changes which each step, who is immune to the temptation to simply set out in search of the Emerald City?\(^{10}\)

> Now, here, it is also relevant to recall and to think about Rem Koolhaas thesis about Manhattan, as a laboratory for humanity. Have it failed? (Fig. 0.2).

5. To begin something

New directions and sources of creativity within performance studies arise from the living, breathing symbiosis between aesthetic practices and the study of them. There is an active interchange between theory and practice, scholar and artist, art form and knowledge formation. New objects of study, particularly the unruly objects of contemporary art, destabilize not only what counts as art but also how they and all that came before them might be studied.¹¹

—Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, *Performance Studies*

In spring 1999 I had the opportunity, as an exchange student, to visit the Department of Performance Studies at Tisch School of the Arts/New York

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I was coming from a country that is far (Chile) and from a field that is rigid (architecture). This short introduction to the program inspired me as I was completing my master’s thesis on architecture, titled “Architecture as Performance, stations of the wonderers.” In my thesis, I considered a “monumental” design for all Chileans: an architectural proposal for the main “square” of the country, La Plaza Italia of Santiago. The project was a proposal for the present (year 2000) and the “possible” future of that place (year 3000).

After I returned to Chile, after a year or so of my first “approach” to performance studies, I received a letter from Professor Diana Taylor accepting my application directly into the program as a PhD candidate (a rare and unique opportunity for an international student). However, to my surprise, my country and some of my colleagues did not support my intention to continue my studies in performance studies. Why was that? I think they were skeptical and confused: “WHAT IS THAT?” they asked me when I was applying for recommendations and

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12 I came as an international student on an exchange status program, sponsored by a grant from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile. This was the first time that the masters program of Architecture at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile offered a student exchange status in a discipline other than architecture.

13 After being for one semester (in exchange status) at the PS department at NYU, I presented my masters thesis on architecture at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile in December 1999. The presentation went well and had great success with audience from both schools of architecture and art.

14 That thesis was the initial point of departure for this dissertation. In 2002, I had an opportunity to create a web cuaderno of it (with a grant given by the Hemispheric Institute of Politics and Performance). In this web cuaderno I expanded my ideas relating to my masters thesis. The web cuaderno was created with a team of NYU technology specialist Tal Halpern and Jeremy Mickel, a graphic designer who understood the complexity of the project immediately. For more information about the project proposed see: http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/en/web-cuadernos (1 April 2011).
scholarships in Chile. Retrospectively, I think I understand why they did not support my plans. In Chile not too many people take risks.\textsuperscript{15} I felt lucky and thankful for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; certainly it was a risk for the program of Performance Studies, too.\textsuperscript{16} With little luggage and a great challenge in front of me I joined the PhD program at NYU in the fall of 2000.

It has been over 10 years since I decided to take this new path in my life. With many different concerns and issues in my own agenda—those concerning architecture, architectural discourse, social architecture, architectural possibilities,

\textsuperscript{15} In Chile it is difficult to find economic support for expensive education and even more so for those rare cases who want to pursue unconventional studies. The education system of my country still relies on traditional forms, and specializations of some specific, understood sort. I know this more clearly after an opportunity to be part of an evaluation committee of Chilean grants. It is very clear that conventional specializations are more supported and are higher priorities in Chile. Performance studies offered something that seemed to be in the exact opposite direction of specialization. Even if PS tends to be the specialization of something—performance—the concept is still wide open to different options that tend to engage a wider and general knowledge. As we PS people know, conventional forms resist the field. That said, after only ten years I am happy to learn that some cultural programs that engage critical analysis, akin to PS, are starting to arise within Chilean cultural studies: Universidad de Chile, Universidad Arcis and Pontificia Universidad Católica are some examples. I believe that this situation is also connected to the effects of democracy over the past 20 years that followed a long period of a dictatorship during which intellectuals where silenced. Further, of the more than 40 schools of architecture that exist in the country, only four or five do research and investigation in the field of architecture that suggests an interest in other types of cultural studies. Certainly, any cultural studies program, which the field of PS can be related to, assumes critical thinking and ideological confrontations. In 1999, neither Chile nor its educational system was ready to support someone interested in a post-discipline. Of course this might sound a little too narcissistic and too close to my own personal story with this field, but the fact that now, after ten years, people are willing to take more risks for me relates in a cultural sense to the situation of no support in 1999 when I first applied to grants to study at NYU.

\textsuperscript{16} Risk in the sense that an international student, coming from a different background than those usually listed on applications to PS, could also fail. While writing this introduction, I think again that I was lucky and that this decade-long experience has clarified for me what is meant by “the continuous becoming” of performance and PS.
eco solutions, jobs in local and global markets, unbalanced economic realities, fast city transformation, as well as the role of art, the importance of identity and so forth—I started to wonder about the many possible relations and tensions between performance and architecture, as well as to wonder about the space of architecture within the field of PS. At the same time, I also started to query the possible contributions from one field to the other (architecture to performance, architectural discourse to PS, and vice versa). I believe that the concept of performance, understood in a broad sense, offers a critical approach to analysis and practice that can be applied to architecture. Does architecture offers something to performance and PS at all? When I started the program, I also looked around to my classmates and colleagues who shared similar interests and concerns; sadly I found out that architecture was not their primary concern (or their main, only concern, as it was mine). I felt alone.

It is clear that PS provokes crucial questions—controversial questions—in relation to “space” as performance strongly draws on the perceptual dimension. Therefore, this program was for me an evident place to continue my doctoral studies as an architect interested in the essence of materialized spaces, considering objects as well their effects on people (although, still, I felt alone). The one

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17 I had intended to work primarily with May Joseph. She unfortunately left the program the semester I arrived. Joseph introduced to me great critical readings about city and culture Lefebvre, Lyotard among others. I also met Professor Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett and other PS professors who helped me find a “way” with my baggage and concerns: “space” and architecture. Professors Diana Taylor, José Muñoz and André
crucial thing, for reasons I still cannot really explain, became the dimension of performance. Performance suggested to me something related to my emotions, something that other theoretical programs did not offer; something unclear and confusing that was appealing and still confirms my decision to be here, finishing this writing. Performance stimulates my sense of hope. This sense of hope has implicit a sense about the future. Of course, this subjective point was very vague at the beginning and I did not quite understand it. I was not sure about this point and, evidently, I am not sure about it now either because it remains subjective (and I like it like that). It seemed for me that performance had something to do with the “real,” living body organized (out of theory) through the flesh and not only with the thinking, grey matter of the brain. I was not sure what performance was, but because of that simple reason I was fascinated by it. Perhaps something interesting and “cool” would come with the decision, I thought. I have to admit that I felt subversive within my own field, that of architects, and lost in the field of PS. Over the last ten years, PS offered me insight to my own personal interests in architecture although its primary discourse does not come from architecture at all. PS comes from the understanding of the arts and cultural practices—in the broad sense—and also from the social spheres that represent the societies we live in. PS

Lepecki touched, from a parallel positions, issues about space. Yet, at the beginning, I resisted an interest in performance—in “doing” performance. I recall that I still wanted to be recognized as an architect. All these issues of identity have developed and, to some degree, resolved since then. PS has pushed me to explore other spaces and concerns of architecture that I did not realize existed (such as identity, gender, memory, etc.). This might sound basic but such kind of studies are not common in Chile.
offered me new concepts to think about in architecture, and issues of performance, of the performative and of performativity of objects and buildings, started to arise in my mind. I started to think in the “gestures” of the architect and the actions and effects of designed spatial solutions that were not only restricted to buildings—actions and effects that emerge from the combination of art and architecture. Now, I can say that many of these principal concerns were already beginning when I was formulating my initial thesis for a new Plaza Italia in 1999.

6. Dreams / Utopias

… to develop an interest in architecture as experiment, utopia and research. Utopia here does not mean a denial of reality. On the contrary, in the implicit crisis besetting the rational order, it offers a critical glimpse of creative work and its sometimes-visionary dimension.18
—Marie-Ange Brayer, The Spirit of Experimentation

Architects have dreamt about reality since the time of Leonardo Da Vinci. Many attempts to “construct” new realities have emerged throughout history. This dissertation presents some relevant cases to begin to explore the “new” with the intention to establish a clear and concrete relationship between art and architecture

to explore performance. Of course there are many examples. However, what you will see is what I have selected as representative to present the ideas explored here.

The tower of Vladimir Tatlin, designed in 1919 (Fig.0.3) constituted a project about the vision of a possible future. This image leads us into the developing of new matters and concerns to project and resolve. On Brian Dillon's article published on The Guardian (2009), it is evident to understand the dreams and visions of Tatlin by means of its image. The impact of this “visualization” unfolds new themes to develop on a project that could have existed today:

The tower, according to what evidence remains of Tatlin's intentions, was to have served as a propaganda hub for the city, the state and the world beyond. The mysterious glass volumes inside the structure might have recalled the segmented design of a Russian church, but they were primarily administrative spaces. A vast cube […], rotating once a year, was to host conferences and congresses. Above it a pyramid, revolving once a month, was given over to office space. Above that a cylinder, disseminating propaganda to the global proletariat, would spin once a day like an ideological dynamo, charging the air with information […] the tower was instead a constellation of inspiring fragments, dispersed across the century by an artist who dared the future to build something out of the ruins of his dream.19

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7. Practical concerns and certain facts

This dissertation explores a relatively imprecise territory of knowledge that is driven by some of the main concerns of the combination of the fields of architecture and PS. The idea is to question: What constitutes performance when thinking about the design of space (architecture)? What could be understood as performance and as a performer? What is the role of the audience/the user/the spectator? What is the importance of time and context to understand the performance of architecture? What are the issues to explore when designing experience? How does presence manifest itself? How do we perceive place? How

Fig. 0.3 – Tatlin Tower, Vladimir Tatlin (1919).
Many of these questions seemed to be a good excuse and a real opportunity for me to explore and to offer a contribution (from outside) to performance studies and to borrow concerns from within that field to expand certain issues that arise with the ambition of an architectural project. A question over the past ten years has been, “Why PS”—rather than a more conventional field of critical thinking in the arts, history or social sciences, which architecture already shares elements with? I understood that PS is not completed, and is not going to be completed since it is always re-shaping itself. PS, with its interdisciplinary characteristics, defines itself, as described by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, it is a post-discipline of inclusions.  

I think about performance studies and wonder about a nonlinear discipline that accepts other disciplines in an eternal continuum, seeming to extend toward the infinite.

PS scholars claim that the field incorporates a broad spectrum of cultural practices and critical discourses to understand the concrete role performance plays in culture—to which I would add, plays in an advanced culture. 

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21 The construction of the city environment is a cultural problem, interpreting culture in the broadest sense of the word. “Advanced culture sees to the reappearance of optimism in the construction of a future that is foreseen as differing from the conditions in which we live today: more intelligent buildings, sustainable cities, large quantities of information
these multiples ideas, I thought that one of the main contributions of architecture to PS could be related to that notion of “constructing,” or, for lack of a better word, BUILDING culture. It seems that is an obvious connection, but was not that obvious for the architectural environment with which I grew up in Chile and in which I was working before pursuing research in PS. After all this time, with some INs and some OUTs of the field (I have been doing projects as any other architect interested in doing will be), I have developed with certain clarity the “why PS” contributes to architecture, and vice versa.

Before continuing into the first chapter, I have to say that, within the program of PS, I felt lost many times. It was difficult for me to stay in the program in a coherent manner because I never stopped being an architect (I was working as one). I mention this here because I believe that PS is still perceived as mainly connected to disciplines where it seemingly more easily fits or connects: theater and communication. In exploring performance actions in architecture, I felt like an “activist” in the field of architecture (sometimes this was an issue within the field of architecture). Once again, I wonder about that position of the in-between, determined by the liminal norm as a recurrent mode of being in-between “states.”

I was always interested to understand and contribute to the shaping of

that can be accessed from anywhere, much more leisure time, etc.” See the *Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture*, 142.

22 Henry Bial, discussing the liminal ideas Jon McKenzie presents in *Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance* (2001), writes: “PS is self-consciously positioned as ‘liminal’ between two states of being (e.g. between theater and ritual), and belonging to

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the field of PS, but from the perspective of architectural analysis and practice. This was difficult because I rarely encountered texts that related to my own field of expertise. Today, we find that there are a variety of publications on performance and architecture (and design) that have been recently published, which contribute to expand this discussion.23 Now, it may sound dramatic, but I had to work the double by analyzing performance within PS, and then transport these (PS) ideas and concerns to architecture (and vice versa). Luckily, I found academic colleagues and architects who shared similar thoughts.

In a talk delivered for the Rockefeller Foundation in September 1999, Professor Kirshenblatt-Gimblett discussed the field of PS as a post-disciplinary field of inclusions that sets no limits on what can be studied in terms of medium neither. Because this liminal position is often understood as a space of transgression or resistance (ideas and acts that go against the mainstream), many performance studies scholars have come to consider social activism a defining characteristic of the field.” See The Performance Studies Reader (2004), 5.

23 Some recommended references include: Progressive Architecture (1697), which describes Performance Design as an issue to consider in architecture building in terms of efficiency and sustainable standards; Performative Architectures (2005), which speaks from a wider approach (the efficiency employed in building buildings) while also considering a “theatrical” aspect of derived from building constructions; Performance Design (2008), which focuses attention on the expansion of performance to multiple art practices that invade the daily while also offering a sensitive approach to the phenomenon of performance more related to issues of experience and theatricality; the Journal of Architectural Education 61, 4 (2008), which explores many different proposals from young academics that combine the notion of performance with the notion of technology and interactive and temporal installations; and, finally, Architecture Oriented Otherwise (2009), which speculates about performance and pure factual characteristics of perception, discussing architecture and performance from the point of view of the resultant effective acts.
and culture.\textsuperscript{24} As she notes, PS is drawn to the idea that for performance to exist, there needs to be (most often) an embodied practice that takes place within a certain context and in the form of an event. The city is full of \textit{events} (Fig.0.4). Such events, which implicitly entail an element of performance, could range from one unique occasion to the repetition of many.

\textbf{Fig. 0.4 – Fireworks, Bernard Tschumi (1974).}

\textsuperscript{24} This talk was the basis for Professor Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s entry in Henry Bial’s \textit{Performance Studies Reader}. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett also presented this talk in the class “Issues and Methods,” which she taught in performance studies at Tisch School of the Arts/NYU during fall 2000. NYU’s program, as stated by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, explores “performance” in the broad sense. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett’s approach to PS shares the contribution of ethnography to explore heritage, folklore, tourism, museum and other cultural studies with the intention to frame and analyze specific characteristics of our contemporary culture. In \textit{Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage} (1998), for instance, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett discusses the production of heritage, the limits of multiculturalism and the social efficacy of the arts. Currently, there are many international programs that offer performance studies programs beyond New York University: Northwestern University, University of North Carolina, Texas A&M University, University of Sydney as well as other programs that combine PS with dramatic writing, directing and theater studies.
To illustrate this idea from a personal position: I could say that the defense of this dissertation is going to be an event in my own personal life; it will have a level of “performance,” but it is in fact a normal activity in the life of scholars who are regularly part of academia (and take part in defense committees). If I decide to say that my defense is going to be a performance then I might be in trouble because the academic conventions still need to have a clear margin with conventional practices that are recognized for an occasion like this: I have to display a “real” dissertation defense by means of these pages and the presentation that will happen (with its own levels of rituality). In other words, if I decide to say that the defense of this dissertation will be a performance then the evaluation of it might be problematic and different from those normally realized under this specific situation and context (i.e., that of the PhD defense). On an occasion like this, the evaluation committee has clear points to look for in my delivery and presentation, which are indicated or determined by academic standards.

PS is all about conventions and practices, the expected and the unexpected. A defense is most likely a relevant action (for the presenter), but only another

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25 In this instance I want to recall Marcela Fuentes’ sit in “action” planned at the end of a PS workshop directed by Ricardo Dominguez. The sit in at NYU was meant to be an action (or performance) of resistance in response to the presence at NYU of the Argentinean economist, Domingo Cavallo, known for implementing Ley de Convertibilidad in Argentina. Fuentes’ performance was quickly silenced and stopped by authorities inside and also outside the university.

26 Why? This dissertation is presented in an academic program that promotes the post-discipline, yet its delivery has to be in a conventional form expected as per the protocol that signifies an occasion like this for academia. Why is it that the form PS adopts is still that of a more conventional discipline?
common situated procedure for the committee and the spectators. The defense of a dissertation cannot be a performance because it happens within a context that is not adjusted to such a possibility. This dissertation (and its defense) is also about that event presented at the beginning of this introduction that took place in Chile at the end of 2010. The practical part of this dissertation was already “presented” and “defended” in front of a much larger audience—the spectators of SCL2110. Now I wonder, is it possible, in a program that belongs to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences but that is placed at Tisch School of the Arts, to defend something that was already displayed as the combination of theory and practice on a Museum of Contemporary Art?

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett places the beginnings of Performance Studies in relation to its early stages of theater combined with anthropology. PS was born to promote the studies of bodies and objects that “perform” and/or that have a certain theatrical component not only from one angle or a single medium

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27 The context of academia is regulated under strict parameters imposed by the standardization of learning and processes of “making” knowledge. A defense, then, is only going to exist as a performance if there is an audience and if, within the defense event, it is recognized as such. An architecture student, too, is trained to present a project as part of his or her studies, and, therefore, enacts the character of architect when he or she presents and defends a final project in a manner of a performance.

28 The exhibition and debate SCL2110 is for me the concrete conclusion of this process (after all these years doing and undoing this dissertation). The “project” is also the basis by which to reorganize the ideas presented here. I needed to “see” the theory in order to understand it and to write about it. This theory was of course constructed with the input and collaboration of many colleagues that share similar thoughts. The defense at NYU is presenting the ideas, the process and the conclusion of it in a theoretical manner that connects to the practical method of SCL2110.

29 Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett was chair of the department of PS between 1980 and 1992.
but from many, simultaneously. The naming of the department of PS reflected a shift away, initially driven by Professor Richard Schechner, from New York University’s theater department. Richard Schechner shared many interests with cultural anthropologist Victor Turner, particularly regarding the relationship between performance and the everyday that might be explained in the many rituals we find in all cultures. Both Schechner and Turner studied rituals and ceremonies to begin to shape the discourse of PS, inspired by the idea of the dramatic “presentation” within everyday life that Erving Goffman addresses in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959).

It is worth mentioning here the term “restoration of behavior” that Schechner offers to the PS field. This term is relevant because it studies the actions performed as “behaviors” of certain rituals and popular practices. This term is relevant for the purposes of this thesis because it might be extrapolated and associated from theater to ideas of architectural programming. The spaces of architecture are planned for human actions to happen. Sometimes these actions are repeated over the course of time and therefore similar to be considered in the projection of a certain place. An architectural design then could contribute with a solution to locate on time and space those behaviors. These activities are some other times unique and therefore “permanent” architecture cannot design the place for them (as the activities seem to construct with its organization a temporal architecture over the existing places). From this approach, Schechner “restoration
of behavior” suggests (to me) to associate the repetition of activities performed as daily-life routines to certain specific spaces that locate them (in terms of rituality), where spatial situations of “performance” consequently happen. This constitutes a vision of “an architect” re-interpreting Schechner’s approach.

The Chilean architect/artist Juan Downey\(^{30}\) dedicated part of his life to the study of “culture.” In the late 70s, Downey lived with the Yanomami Culture. While living with them and his family, he developed ideas about man and society art, architecture, mediums of expression and mechanisms of (re)presentation, propelled by the use of new technologies (video). Downey also embodies the in-between (architect/artist) in which performance studies reside. His contribution to reflect on the societies that we share is of great value because it pushes us think about the most essential things of life: who are we? and how did we get here?

\(^{30}\) Juan Downey was an architect and artist who studied architecture at the school of architecture of Pontificia Universidad Católica of Chile. After moving to New York he began to explore many different mediums to represent his ideas. Many of his drawings, engravings and videos were related to architectural projects (see Fig. 7). Some of the pieces reflected on the man and the universe, others at human living conditions and the distinctions between different areas of civilization. Downey was one of the pioneers, with Nam Jum Paik, to use video as a new artistic form in the early 1970s. He created many performance works, though it was only after his death in 1993 that the Chilean circuit of artists recognized the importance of his work. Downey, like many other relevant artists of that chilean generation, was very interested in ideas about democracy and capitalist resistance. He was very critical of Augusto Pinochet’s dictatorship (1973–1989) and the multinational companies that were starting to regulate many of the markets o small countries like Chile. One of his most well-known works engaged new media (video) to study the Yanomami culture in the Alto Orinoco of Venezuela (between 1976-1977). See Rodrigo Tisi, “Arquitectura y energias posibles: el proyecto de Juan Downey,” Revista 180 #25 (2010): 30-35.
When comparing ourselves to natives that live on the jungle of the Amazonas today (Fig.0.5).

Fig. 0.5 – Two Yanomami with CCTV, Juan Downey (1977)

Here, I want to recall Nicolás Guagnini’s letter to Juan Downey:

I cannot but write to you. Through public disciplinary forms of address such as the essay or the article, I have already said what I had to say about you, and in some way about myself. I have only questions to ask now, or perhaps just one single question.

Since Julio Le Parc and the Groupe de Recherche d’Art Visuel formed your notion of the spectator (by the way, between Pablo, Roberto and Julio we have a collection of commie characters of a rather dogmatic official line, almost Stalinist, I understand you were young and impressionable but I do not see you vertically accepting truths), we could conceive of your work as a continuous renegotiation of the ways of being the spectator and the participant. In theory, the technological utopia would help redefine the notion of
community. In reality, you fought against the Church and other repressive forms and forces, both in terms of space and image, hijacking and resignifying every symbolic horizon moving away your lens.

The camera in the hands of the Indian. Your face, and your camera, reflected on the lens. The abolished conquest. Who is the public of that image, Juan? Of that image that you never soiled with the cliché of the “document,” or, for the matter, framed within the equally disastrous cliché of “art.” What is documented there is an authentic relation between the most radical art possible and us (because the image forces us into an unstable “we,” and consequently into a somewhat more stable “them”); proposing that, given our conditions of production and distribution, our only option is an experiment without outlines. We learn much more about our limits, closer and more present than we could care to admit, than about their “primitive” culture. J’accusé. See that when I say “we learn” I have declared myself part of your public. Now I have accepted all the responsibility, Juan. Not guilty, but responsible. A small step beyond the venerable Theology of Liberation, even.

I think of you when you said no to Leo Castelli. And I think that those late Works, so dense and so crazy, about Chile, Pinochet, Catholicism and your childhood house (yes, I am referring to The Motherland and The Return of the Motherland) presuppose an impossible audience. ³¹

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³¹ This letter was written by Nicolás Guagnini to Juan Downey (dated January 2010). It was published in the catalogue for the exhibition Juan Downey, el Ojo Pensante, presented at Fundación Telefónica in Chile between March 31 and June 27 2010. The event was part of the Bicentennial celebration realized by Fundación Telefónica de Chile in 2010. See the exhibition catalogue “Juan Downey: El Ojo Pensante” and to complement this information see the catalogue of the previous exhibition “Juan Downey: With Energy Beyond these Walls,” realized at the IVAM center in Valencia, Spain (1998).
At the end of the 21st century, the field of PS clearly offers a disciplinary inclusion of multiple concerns, it fusion with many traditional forms of expression. These are not restricted to specific art-related disciplines and which comprise elements that are not commonly considered in conventional academic curricula. This new disciplinary milieu that we see having formed through the 30 years after its origin in the 1970s is part of a process of cultural expansion that goes beyond conventional forms/territories of study and that is more related to an associative thinking (promoted by post-disciplinary thinking). The promotion of such type of exploration suggests the formation of new methodologies of analysis to approach a wide range of cultural manifestations.

Under this lens, the production of traditional arts becomes both obsolete and not very interesting to either my inquiry or to PS. The production of traditional architectures is then, also, obsolete and not very interesting to PS either. Professor Kirshenblatt-Gimblett states, in the aforementioned talk, that the division of the arts into different mediums is arbitrary, as is the creation of fields devoted to each.32 Returning to the personal event that this defense is then, the defense of this dissertation is also a good exercise to push the academic borders that analyze and theorize creative practices as cultural “machines” of production. Now, what if we think about art dissolved into the everyday?

32 Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett also discusses the panorama of PS within academia and places the position of the department of PS at NYU as where the “official” field was born (see Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1999).
Performance could be understood as an extension of “conventional” artistic practices; a form that has a background in or that can be explained through a recognizable discipline (or practice) such as theater, dance, music, photography, video, installation, architecture (among others). When I say this, I think of performance within “traditional” contemporary forms. Under this approach, anything that exceeds the limits of these traditional forms could be understood as performance (“art”).

Chapter one situates, in general terms, the concept of performance, as that which engages live bodies and objects within a particular space, in the wide territory of art and architecture. Drawing a broad web of connections and relations between this concept of performance and PS, this chapter also discusses issues of communication in relation to interpretation: who is the interpreter? A living-body? An object? Consequently, this first chapter explores the notion of place and how it interferes with the “reception” of the performance. Chapter two explores the relationship between places and human activities, and the objects surrounding them. Here, I expand and problematize the field of architecture to think about unconventional “scenarios.” At the same time I include and discuss ideas of different spaces: what they could be and which are the “solutions” that come with them when thinking on a specific project of architecture? I also refer to utopia, performance and hope. This chapter offers a formula for a general methodology to explore and resolve any (artistic or architectural) project that considers the
dimension of performance in its scope. Here, I also discuss issues of the “performative act” of projecting and building space and of the performativity found in different objects and places we share. Chapter three goes back in time to discuss SCL2110, to explain how it functioned as a practical project inspired by this concurrent theoretical endeavor. At the end of this chapter I also consider “interactive” systems of participation to understand the project of architecture proposed for the future of Chile (see Fig. 0.6). This issue certainly incorporates aspects of performance, presence and “experience.” The documentation of SCL2110 presents a record of what happened in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chile as a means to display the ideas developed for the occasion. These ideas were embodied on dioramas that were developed with sophisticated technology to reproduce the navigation of a possible place of the future in real-time space. These dioramas also had the mission to highlight the presentations of the different designs proposed by the architects and artists invited to the event. This presentation activated the debate for the future. “Architecture as Performance: the construction of display” concludes with images of the machines built so as to

33 In the space of the screen, Fig.0.6, you will see that the future is presented with the presence of the bodies that are in the room where the project is displayed. In Fig. 0.6, the body is behind the screen and also present in the future, which is represented by the proposal on the screen. In other words, the body is in the present (real-time) in the room but also in the future that is displayed on the screen.
“see” the future of Santiago and Valparaíso with hope and optimism (Fig.0.6). I offer Henry Bial’s humor again to question the traveler to Performance Studies.

How does one idea relate to another? Where do academics disciplines overlap? Is performance studies properly a discipline at all, or is it a kind of way station, an academic version of Grand Central Station, where ideas and idea-makers brush up against each other on the way from one place to another? “Your attention please, this is the final boarding call for cultural studies, making all local stops including women’s studies, African studies, Asian studies, queer theory, and cultural studies. If you’re not going to cultural studies you are in the wrong train!” And even if readers know, or think they know, how to connect the dots from where they’ve come from to where they are to where they would like to go, it is not always easy to stick to the path, given the converging and diverging rush of words, images, and performances that swirl about in every direction.34

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CHAPTER 1

About confusions, disciplines and labels

There is evidence of a clear shift both in the nature of debates within architecture and in its relationship with other academic disciplines. Not only are architects and architectural theorists becoming more and more receptive to the whole domain of cultural theory, but cultural theorists, philosophers, sociologists and many others are now to be found increasingly engaged with questions for architecture and the built environment.

—Neil Leach, *Rethinking Architecture*  

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**Fig. 1.1** - Art & Architecture frame the spaces of/for performance, Rodrigo Tisi (2001).

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Within the space in-between the fields of art and architecture, two fields of traditional academia that operate, most of the time, in relation to conventional forms, there emerges an integrated space of practice that is full of possibilities. That space is the space of design.36 The space contained by the dotted line on Fig. 1.1 represents the space between these traditional areas of cultural production (art and architecture) filtered by a possible common practice of artists or architects. That space also represents the space of performance studies, a permeable space that borrows—something—from the two fields to delimitate its own territory. Such space is in constant flux and also houses performance in a broad sense.

The space of and for performance(s) highlighted between art and architecture establishes the “associative” thinking of an area of practice that comes into existence when artists collaborate with architects or when artists start to do “architectural” work, or when architects do “artistic” work. This type of practice is more common to the end of the 20th century, when many of the creative disciplines begin to share (and collapse) ideas in the processes of execution that ultimately produce hybrid results. Contemporary artist and architects are

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36 As John Heskett discusses, design is sometimes explained as a subdivision of art-historical narratives emphasizing a neat chronological succession of movements and styles wherein new manifestations replace what emerged before. He also suggests that many architects can also work as designers, employing a variety of approaches (urban design, housing design, furniture design, etc.). For particularly complex objects, perhaps with highly specific performance requirements, form may be determined by engineering designers on the basis of technological criteria. An additional complication is that complex objects can require multidisciplinary teams working in close cooperation. See Heskett. Design: A Very Short Introduction, 6-38.
designers. In both cases their work is conceived in terms of a thing (project) that has to be designed. Because artists (and architects) in the second half of the 20th century are concerned with ideas of space related to the realms of the city and society, much of their work finally constituted outside traditional disciplinary conventions (impulse by their own fields), and, therefore, carried out with it the need for a certain level of design and strategy of implementation for its execution.

*SCL2110*—a bicentennial exhibition realized last year in which different artists and architects proposed multiple projects of architecture and art in the main cities of Santiago and Valparaíso, Chile—demonstrates the tension, or “space,” between art and architecture that I want to explore here. The projects comprising

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37 I initiated *SCL2110* in 2006 when I was invited by Spam_Arq to create an exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Santiago. The idea was to present some “issues” that would problematize notions of art and architecture—combined—to understand the growth and the development occurring at that time within Chile’s capital city Santiago. During that same year many bicentennial projects were presented to the public, including a main project: Transantiago. Transantiago is an integrated transportation system for the city of Santiago, which ex-president Ricardo Lagos inaugurated also in 2006. That particular project had many problems in its design and implementation, such as circuits of trajectory, coordination with regular traffic, size infrastructure on bus stops and so on. Transantiago has still not been completed. Its correct implementation failed and it continues to financially burden the government and all Chileans. The invitation to present at the Museum of Contemporary Art offered me an opportunity to think about new possible projects for the capital of Chile. *SCL2110* is the result of that thinking. I invited different world-renown architects, artists and academics to consider and to propose ideas for the future of Chile’s capital area. *SCL2110* was sponsored by Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes, Fundación Imagen de Chile and Fundación Telefónica, as well as the Swiss Embassy in Chile and Uqbar Editors. The show included over 60 expositors and 20 intellectuals congregating to debate the future of the capital—not for the bicentennial but for the tercentennial. With this bicentennial project I decided to think about a new type of architectural project, a project more related to issues of experience, identity, social congregation. In short, and as presented in my introduction, *SCL2110* was installing a new debate in the local scene of the field of architecture and art, one that was contaminated with and by performance and performance studies. *SCL2110* was realized between
SCL2110 proposed ambitious new goals for the future of the city and a new type of thinking for the development of the society that would attend it. SCL2110 was looking at the future of the capital city and its society, promoting a new debate in relation to heritage, identity and social practices. The project aimed to consolidate certain specific areas that represent cultural value to the Chilean population and offer Santiago’s population a sense of place and society that they are searching for. It is in this sense that Fig. 1.2 offers a diagram that explain the principal forces that as in any society shape the current forms of art and architecture that interpret our (neo-liberal) identity.\textsuperscript{38}

September 22 and November 6, 2010, in the Museum of Contemporary Art, Quinta Normal, in Santiago.

\textsuperscript{38} Chile has implemented many different governmental projects in recent years, including those featured in international exhibitions of art and architecture. Some venues include: Venice Biennale, Sao Paulo Biennal, Expo Shangai and Prague Quadrennial, among many others. All these projects speak of our culture and of our country, they are aimed to promote Chile abroad. In this respect, the government has displayed important “products” (such as food, wine, poetry and music, just to name some) and “landscapes” (Atacama desert, Patagonia and Easter Island) that characterize us and that somehow establish with an image (the commodity) our idiosyncrasy outside the country. Conversely, SCL2110 tried to establish a new dimension of Chile: the dimension of culture, the city and the society. The idea of the project was to present Chile abroad not only through its products but also through its people and the places they inhabit. Chile has been recently part of global news with the earthquake of February 27, 2010, the trapped miners in the desert in which the country displayed an extraordinary technology to rescue them, and recently the possible fusion of LAN airlines with Tam, which would connect most of all Latin American air routes to and from Chile and Brazil. While the government promotes products, tourist destinations and technology, Chile is not very recognized for our cities, our people or even our city culture—although a recent publication in the \textit{New York Times} declares that the first city in the world to visit in 2011 should be Santiago (http://travel.nytimes.com/2011/02/06/travel/06hours-santiago.html). Of course, a promotion of this kind is more related to the “news”—the economic and political relations between the USA and Chile, such as trade of free commerce—than to the quality of the spaces and activities that Santiago has to offer. It is not that such quality does not exist.
Integral to this is a culturally sensitive approach that architects and artists need to maintain towards the realm of public space—a different approach from that currently happening in Chile, and perhaps in more areas as well in which political and economical development determines the way cities develop without input from architecture and art.\textsuperscript{39} Although we have planners and people thinking

Rather, Chile’s cultural development could be more productively related to its concurrent political and economic development.\textsuperscript{39} After \textit{SCL2110}, the government declared through Consejo de la Cultura y las Artes, with the minister of Culture at the Biennale of Architecture (during November 2010), that the lines of architecture and design will be prioritized parts of the new cultural programs. Architects and designers will have, beginning in September 2011, an area with public funding to promote architecture and design in our local culture of art and “public
about the city, we do not have a consistent cityscape and city surroundings that encourage and promote a better quality of life. From this angle, an approach to the city through a performance and performance studies perspective could offer a great contribution to the projects that my country is implementing now. Local artists and architects who engage notions of performance could assist authorities in their envisioning of a new spaces that shape to our cityscape (Fig. 1.2).

Performance is a slippery and controversial concept. It cannot be explained from one single perspective. Performance generates doubts and questions as it constantly moves and changes its boundaries, resisting one single definition. Marvin Carlson considers performance—specifically, the *modern* idea of performance—to be a construction built up from both a wide range of art forms (the visual and performing arts, literature, and the social sciences) *and* from many different art practices (including cultural and social activities). In this respect, Carlson’s idea of performance as construction refers to the daily life practices and the routines we maintain. Performance, then, blends with the quotidian acts we perform. Alluding to Mary Strine et als’ argument that performance is a *contested* art.” With this announcement, architecture and design are now officially part of our Chilean culture (as if they were not part of it before).

40 Recently, many of the public debates on public space have been initiated by local groups within the areas affected by new projects. These groups have congregated and have resisted some political decisions, like the new plan for high-rise buildings in Vitacura or Nuñoa, the construction of new areas for public encounters in Parque Forestal and so on. Many of the projects officials intend to implement are decisions made in response to functionality requirements (a response to the city’s “growth”) and without a future plan. Furthermore, the public realm does not hold any real authority in Santiago. For instance, the city does not have a mayor to coordinate and overview the projects of the all 37 districts that comprise Santiago.
concept developed within an atmosphere of “sophisticated disagreement,” Carlson suggests a disciplinary expansion of a “traditional” view in order to recognize the many possibilities that can arise when performance is situated both within the arts and within other cultural fields. Carlson is considering other disciplines (also outside their own conventions) to discover new manifestations of theatricality.41 Performance is flexible; it can be adjusted as required depending on the occasion and the circumstance.42 It only exists in the present and with the presence of a “performer” and an “audience” who perceive it.43 In “The Ontology of

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41 For example, the incorporation of theater into other disciplinary territories such as the social sciences might help to explain a new type of theatrical work within its traditional context. This disciplinary expansion explains the difficulty to understand performance from one single approach. As the field of performance studies expands, other disciplines interact with its practice and discourse, allowing for many other possible combinations to emerge (i.e., the way in which architecture can adopt aspects of and contribute to performance studies by implementing new ideas in relation to space, the city and society).

In this expanded territory, performance requires for its existence the input of other areas of cultural productivity. Schechner explains the growth of performance studies as a result of such exploration within the many kinds of human activities beyond conventional fields of study (see Performance Studies: An Introduction [2002]). For Schechner, performance could also be found in many different quotidian activities. In scholarly collaboration with Victor Turner, Schechner is interested in mundane activities that have an implicit level of ritualization (rituals of the everyday), as well as in sports and popular entertainment, politics, business, technology, sex, plays, etc. These rituals of everyday life are very interesting activities to contemplate in relation to architecture as well. Architecture is predicated on programming space; from this interdisciplinary perspective, the spaces for ritualization become also characteristic of architectural design. In other words, a building needs a program to work as a bulding of / for something. That program is linked to what happens in it just as the “ritual” of certain activities are linked to our daily life.

42 For purposes of this dissertation, I use the definition of performance in three different combinatorial levels simultaneously: 1) to do, as in terms of an “action”; 2) to re-present, as in terms of a “show”; and 3) to evaluate, as in terms of “effects.”

43 “What is or is not performance does not depend on an event in itself but on how that event is received and placed. Today, the enactment of dramas by actors is a theatrical performance. But it was not always so. What we today call theatre people in other times did not,” writes Richard Schechner in Introduction for Performance Studies (2002), 31.
Performance: representation without reproduction,” Peggy Phelan declares that being present (as an audience) to a performance is crucial to the experience of it. Performance can only be perceived in the present and not through documentation; a video or a photograph is a medium that transforms performance into something different from the performance itself. Following Phelan, art and architecture shares the same experiential space as performance: both practices exist only when they are perceived in a real present, otherwise any other representation of what they are constitutes a replacement to describe the experience that the spectator or the user cannot have. Architecture is (re)presented by plans and photographs by it is only experienced in the real space of it. In other words its (re)presentation is also linked to Phelan’s argument about the present moment of experience. This is crucial because architecture is presented and “sold” by presenting renders of the future. In many cases now (because of technology developments), with great pictures of that possible imagined future. In the consumerist world that we live propaganda plays a

Beyond theatre, performance in the world of visual arts might be related to installation, happenings, minimal art, pop art, video installation, multimedia and so on, as RoseLee Goldberg suggests in From Futurism to the Present (1988), 9. Peggy Phelan highlights in “Ontology of Performance: representation without reproduction” that “performance only exists in the present.” She discusses the distinctions between being there (for the performance) and perceiving it through another medium—which becomes a re-presentation of what it initially was. Her thesis resonates with Schechner’s understanding of rituals as occurring within a space-time basis and Goldberg’s argument that performance art is a live art as Phelan emphasizes the experience the audience member perceives in the present moment of encounter with any artistic form (or, in terms of Schech­ner, activity of the quotidian). See Phelan Unmarked: the politics of performance (1993), 146.
fundamental role to promote and sell architecture. By means of building images societies are also promoting themselves.

Fig. 1.3 - *Nuevo proyecto en un barrio único*, Paz Creatividad Urbana (2011).44

Fig. 1.4 – *Blanca Montaña*, Ediciones Puro Chile (2011).45

44 *Paz Creatividad Urbana*, promotes an “urban development” project. This leader in the local industry of development has transformed radically the cityscape of Santiago in the last 10 years (it exists since more than 40 years now). The company offers “fancy” buildings with apartments that “solve” the needs of standard people that can afford standard (accessible) prices. They have also completed projects around the country in Antofagasta, Concón, Viña del Mar, Valparaiso, Rancagua, Talca, Concepción and Puerto Montt. For more see: http://www.paz.cl/ (1 April 2011).
Performance studies (henceforth, “PS”), as a field that uses the lens of performance to see and analyze the world, contributes to shape ideas around many different performatives (with different levels of performativity) implicit in many of the forms displayed in the culture in which we live. In considering J.L. Austin’s performative “speech act,” PS look for activities or actions that do something through their expression. A design, either of a piece of art or an architectural structure, somehow does something that can be decoded by the spectator or user.

45 “Blanca Montaña: Arquitectura reciente en Chile,” is an extraordinary book that compiles all the most important icons of the recent architecture in Chile. Architects such as José Cruz, Germán del Sol, Mathías Klotz, Smijan Radic, Cecilia Puga, Alejandro Aravena, Sebastián Irarrázaval, Alberto Mozó, FAR (Marc Frohn & Mario Rojas), Assadi+Pulido, Pezo von Ellrichshausen and Eduardo Castillo (among others) are part of the selection. The architectural pieces are presented with images and plans of the buildings. What is interesting though is that there’s no people on the images and that the projects are mainly related to luxurious homes and private buildings. This leads us to think that architecture could be commercialized as a fetish of “good” and expensive design. The authors of this initiative are Tomás Andreu and Claudia Pertuzé of Ediciones Puro Chile. The editor of the book is Miquel Adrià, director of ARQUINE, who says that “la arquitectura chilena es la más interesante y original de todo el continente Americano” (in English: Chilean architecture is the most interesting of the whole American continent). For more see Miquel Adrià ed. Blanca montaña. Arquitectura reciente en Chile, Santiago: Editorial Puro Chile, 2011. Online see: http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2011/03/18/blanca-montana-arquitectura-reciente-en-chile-puro-chile/ (1 April 2011).

46 New York University explores the wide ranges of performances to frame the field of performance studies. Other academic programs, such as PS at Northwestern University, focus more on the aesthetics of communication—following what J. L. Austin called “utterances.” Austin explains in How to do things with words how language can actually do. The speech-act plays an important role in performance because it is connected to ideas of expression and communication. When Austin suggests implications of language and the doing with it, he is also explaining the power of meaning. To do something because of an instruction is also relevant because the instruction has to be previously decoded by the receptor or the executer (the performer). Architecture too has its own codes and systems of (re)presentation in order to express a project and therefore to do something with the receptors or the users of it.
In this respect, art and architecture are intrinsically performative because they induce through forms a certain level of engagement with the audience, who then “responds.” We perceive performance from many different levels, through people and through things, from evident stages to many different situations that fulfill our daily routines. PS helps to expand the conscious practice of architects and artists by pushing their disciplinary limits to a broader panorama of the forms and actions that surround us.

1.1 - On the spaces in-between disciplines and practices: art, architecture and performance (studies)

In Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space, Elizabeth Grosz states that the position of the in-between lacks a fundamental identity, lacks a form, a giveness, a nature. Yet this in-between facilitates and brings into being all identities, all matters and all substances. It is itself a strange position and has a strange way of becoming. Grosz writes:

One discipline would submit the other to its internal needs and constraints, reducing it to its subordinated other. It is only by submitting both to a third term, to a position or place outside of

47 Elizabeth Grosz. Architecture from the outside: essays on virtual and real space (2011), xvi.
both, that they can be explored beside each other, as equivalent and interconnected discourses. 48

The position of the outside that both disciplines occupy then represents the position of someone literally claiming a space that exists but has not been clearly recognized. This space is an ambiguous place (or state) that can be detected only by the indeterminacy of a border. 49 PS interprets this condition.

To be outside of a field, in Grosz’s terms, is to be on the other side of its border, in a place that does not fall within another territory but that is located in a space that shares something with the “other” discipline. This “other” assumes ideas from that shared space. If we accept PS as a post-discipline, as a field of inclusions, then we assume that there are “other” previous disciplines (such as theater, dance, visual arts, music, anthropology, sociology, literature, language, architecture, design, etc.) before it that feed PS. The space Grosz describes is not a void; on the contrary, it is filled with a mixture of disciplinary ambiguities:

The space of the in-between is that which is not a space, a space without boundaries of its own, which takes on and receives itself, its form, from the outside, which is not its outside but whose form is the outside of the identity. 50

48 Ibid., xvii-xvii.
49 “By indeterminacy we understand a certain state of suspension within the precise meaning of the object, a consequence of the redefining of the limits in which the latter is inscribed,” writes Yago Conde in *Architecture of the Indeterminacy* (2000), p. 59. For Conde there is also a coherent connection between contemporary architecture and the contemporary visual arts in levels of conceptualism. He discusses all the many influences radical art and avant-garde manifestos had in “inspir[ing]” actions in architecture.
50 Ibid.
Post-modernism and post-modern practices provoke a proliferation of discourses that tend to generate new fields of knowledge in academia. The traditions in the arts were no longer a must and many of the regular forms were revised to update a contingency of the moment. Late-20th-century artists were much more interested in real life than in staged conventions (i.e., theater and exhibition spaces). The avant-garde promoted this new attitude at the beginning of turn of the 20th century through innovations of the futurists, constructivists, dadaists, surrealists and so on. Movements such as De Stijl and the Bauhaus also incorporated ideas of performance in their manifestoes. Within this framework, after the First and Second World Wars, the territory of cultural studies emerged and continued to develop during the 1960s, eventually accumulating a significant body of work during the 1970s. Post-disciplinary environments also emerged, promoting new disciplinary practices like PS. In this context, the classic

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51 Cultural Studies uses critical theory and Marxist literary criticism to analyze political conflicts and historical precedents for the understanding of contemporary culture. Cultural studies include a wide subset of studies within its field. NYU offers many of these programs related to the study of different aspects of culture, including race, gender and socioeconomical status.

52 During these ten or so years, many other branches of cultural studies began to stimulate areas of new knowledge that continue to grow and expand. These include: American studies, black studies, Latino studies, gender studies and many other “studies” that contribute to the larger field of cultural studies. PS shares this territory as well, expanding upon the limits of theatre studies. In this respect PS was a new platform to understand theater and its implications in “real” life. Schechner writes that PS considers actions in four very serious ways: 1.) behavior as an object of study; 2.) “artistic” practice in the broad sense; 3.) fieldwork as participation and observation; and 4.) social practices, with emphasis upon issues of ideology and confrontational positions and the negotiations employed to maintain those positions. See Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 1–2.
disciplines promoting traditional practices were no longer the “new.” The 1960s generated new ideologies and a variety of new artistic and cultural practices. Movements such as conceptualism, neo-dadaism, postminimalism and many others also began to develop in the arts. A special space began to be shaped between all these movements: the space of performance art, in-between the fields of visual and performing arts.

In architecture, ideas leftover from modernism began to be questioned and revised by the same architects who were the practitioners of those ideas. This is how many of the manifestoes from the 1960s acquired an important presence—among them: GEAM’s “Programme for a mobile architecture” (1960); Louis Khan’s “Order is” (1960); Werner Ruhnau/Yves Klein’s “Project for an aerial architecture” (1960); The Situationists’ “International Manifesto (1960); Eckhard Schulze-Fielitz’s “The Space City” (1960); Costant’s “New Babylon” (1960), Buckminster Fuller’s “The Architect as World Planner” (1961); Walter Pichler/Hans Hollein’s “Absolute Architecture” (1962); and Yona Friedman’s “The Ten Principles of Space Town Planning” (1962). These manifestos challenged conventional thinking and offered progressive approaches to the field.53 Subsequent movements such as the Critical Regionalism of Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre (desing thinking tools), later revised in the 1980s by Kenneth

Frampton, displayed clear resistance to what the previous innovators promoted, such as life in ideal buildings within the ideal machine of the city. In the 1980s, deconstructivism revised the 1960s to ’70s era of big manifestos. In architecture, this period corresponded to the presentation of ideas displayed only on paper, or “paper architecture.” Paper architecture revisits the essential questions of architecture, the city and its society: the form and functionality of the urban. And all of this was eventually revised with the development of new and improved technologies. During this period, many philosophers including Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, Jean Baudrillard and Maurice Merlau-Ponty inspired architectural thinking. This is not to say that philosophy did not inspire architecture before, but rather that the revolution within philosophical thinking that marks the end of the 20th century contaminated the radical work of architecture. Philosophy is then situated within a relationship to language and (de)construction operated by reconfiguring language structures, impacting as well architectural forms and discourses. After modernism, postmodernism reconstructs notions of language and codes. Architects such as Peter Eisenmann, Frank Ghery, Bernard Tschumi, Zaha Hadid and Daniel Liebeskind define the trend of a new architectural ambition (on paper) by the late 1980s and during the ’90s. This new step, clearly connected to a

[^54]: Michael Hays highlights this as a post-humanist era. Although modernism tried to be humanist, it failed. Post-humanism is a response to the technological modernization. It embraces the anti-individualist consequences of technological progress and attempts to turn the perceptual effects of modernity to explicitly collectivist sociopolitical ends.

postmodern perspective, pushed architecture toward new agendas and construction methods in terms of materials, forms and technology.

![Fig. 1.5 - Grand Buildings, Zaha Hadid (1985)](image)

New types of critical thought promote new types of disciplinary work, and new disciplinary work promotes new types of knowledge: the “studies” of philosophy, language and sociology. This trend of the new involved the sharing of and collaborating on ideas in-between different fields with different methods of production. Culture is not the privilege of a single field, but of many. Architecture and art have an important role in the construction of culture, as these practices

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56 Zaha Hadid was one of the prominent paper architects who displayed her ideas through paintines. In 2006 she had a show at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. The show was titled “Zaha Hadid: 30 years of architecture.” He work is part of the post avant-gardist architects of the 80 who implemented the decontruvist thought as a mainstream form of practice, on paper. Hadid’s research is proposed in the interrelated fields of urbanism, architecture, and design. Some of these architects saw their revolutionary forms constructed later on. For more see online: [http://www.zaha-hadid.com/exhibitions/guggenheim-new-york](http://www.zaha-hadid.com/exhibitions/guggenheim-new-york).
(even with their differences) shape, construct and sensitize us with their forms; we live with the experiences that art and architecture give us. Both art and architecture can estimulate a reflection of who we are and how we inhabit the space we share everyday because they both (re)present, in many different forms, the culture we live, experience and shape everyday. Art and architecture are always in a constant state of change; always in a constant state of becoming, constantly responding to different social values. If we look at artists/architects from Duchamp to Diller or from Marinetti to Koolhaas, we find, in all their work, a certain level of radicalism present in their ideas and explicit in their intentions and proposals. We can think of them through the discourse of performance and PS because underlying each project (or proposal) there is an individual who motivates the work and the idea to be executed and relevant within its context. If we apply this provocative perspective to a discipline as a whole, then we might also agree that performance makes evident to PS the relevance of performatives and of performativity. It is in this sense that the diagrams explained in Fig.1.6 illustrate these ideas about the performative (body or object) and of performativity.
Fig. 1.6 – Spaces of / for performance: Performativity, Rodrigo Tisi (2011).
Discourse concerning multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary work began to shape the new milieu of the postmodern era, emerging from the postwar prevalence of manifestos. This progressive intellectual and artistic era, concurrent to a political and economic revolution, resulted in revolutionary projects for society at large. The bodies of knowledge of different fields within the social sciences expanded and shared between disciplines ideas that where no longer restricted to only one discipline. The creative fields, specifically the visual and performing arts, also played a role in such revolutionary interdisciplinarity. From the 1980s onwards, PS has shared the term performance with the visual and performing arts, anthropology, sociology and politics, and as well with history, psychoanalysis, queer theory, semiotics, gender and feminist studies and pop culture theory, among many others.\(^{57}\) This thesis proposes that architecture could be one of those “new” lines that informs, contributes and helps to shape PS.

PS combines and shapes a discipline that is composed by the association of multiple fields of knowledge, starting with the “in-between” of theater and anthropology. This notion of the in-between challenges the exact position or place of that collaborative knowledge; it remains flexible, shifting depending on the mode of analysis needed for each of the art or architectural practices. PS is interested in culture and that which can be decoded from it. It looks at the role of

performance (in many different forms) to understand an “expressive” situation that results from the embodiment of cultural practices. Architecture represents one of such embodiments, presenting every day the spaces that belong to us. Architecture is a solid embodiment of culture while performance is an ephemeral one.

Performance denotes an umbrella concept that is constantly redefining its limits and refers to the in-between as a mode for generating a liminal state.\(^ {58}\) This state lasts only for a specific period of time and is always between states of being. This notion “shares” when it comes into existence through a materialized or embodied form; it resists a closed single limit of reception because it is in itself performative. The object of architecture performs to the user or the spectator. With the intervention of PS into its discourse, analysis, and practice, architecture might no longer focused only on its form but on what that form realizes.\(^ {59}\)

Performance is in a constant flux of creating itself. If we think of the disciplinary practices of art and architecture, we see that the two fields, when combined, represent an unformulated area of practice—essentially because academia has “said so.” Tradition states that architecture (or “conventional” art) is something “definite” (in terms of its fields). Yet after many years of practitioner development, architecture has developed its own field of knowledge. Similarly, PS is a very new field, without closed definitions. We have an idea of what

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\(^ {58}\) See Jon Mckenzie’s consideration of “liminal norm” in *Perform or Else: from Discipline to Performance* (2001), 88–94.

architecture is or could be, and what art is and could be. They are different but they share the possibilities for differentiated practice. Contemporary art and architecture, for instance, both refer to creative practices initiated by the Beaux-Arts and the performing arts of that period. Architecture and visual arts have in this sense a common background, while performance comes from another area related to oral re-presentation. Painting, sculpture, theater, music, dance and architecture are forms that have their own characteristics that belong to a certain accumulated "tradition." Now, performance allows for an expansion of both art and architecture. This is why performance is also a controversial form.

Performance, as a concept and practice, is constructed even as the "tradition" of it is clarified, explained—though some might disagree. Perhaps performance and performance studies, in 2110, will be a traditional practice and a traditional field. With performance, both art and architecture grow.

Academia says that PS is in constant construction, its definition always being revised depending on a particular and individual point of view. The field does share some characteristics that enable the student or the expert to recognize it (performer and audience). By depicting performance’s form we can both (students and professors) share and confront ideas to test and shape PS. For instance, for reasons I cannot surmise or discover, the theories grounding and practice of architecture does not have as strong a presence within PS discourse as other fields of cultural productivity have. Architecture is always “present” through other
cultural practices: practices that refer to space and the sense of place and identity through their relation to the contextual political, cultural and social aspects. All cultural practices have a site that serves as “scenario.” Discussing environmental theater, Richard Schechner states:

The fullness of space, the endless ways space can be transformed, articulated, animated—that is the basis of environmental theatre design. It is also the source of environmental performer training. If the audience is one medium in which the performance takes place, the living space is another. The living space includes all the space in the theatre, not just what is called the stage.

Interpreted from the architect's perspective, Schechner’s idea of “living space” presents space as a living organism. If architecture is considered primarily in response to living bodies, then its fundamental characteristic is related to the present and to aliveness of that space, which we can think of in Phelan’s, Lefebvre’s and De Certeau’s terms. Schechner suggest certain clues for the developing of the environment that are related to the people that use it. Each of the disciplines related to PS explore notions of performance in the broad sense as well as the sense of time and space by which we perceive the “shape” of objects and

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62 Michel de Certeau talks about the practiced space standing in for the presence of a body that is aware and that circulates on the street level of Manhattan. That body is practicing the space of the street, living the space at the same time that the space is living for his or her experience. See De Certeau, “Walking in the City,” *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 91–110.
places. If PS had developed from an architectural program, rather than theatre studies, PS’s discourse around space, place, and the performance of each clearly would have been different. Yet, PS’s current lack (or beginning) of a relationship to architecture offers much evidence to uncover and a fertile ground for both discourses to discover because the political and the “emotional” level that PS can analyze is a plus to think in the contingencies about space production.

It is important here to insist that architecture has to be understood as another embodied practice, a materialized form impelled by the notion of “design”. The question of space and spatial conventions might enter the discussion from two angles: 1) What are the implications of performance in the territory of architectural forms?; and 2) How might PS readjust itself as a result of incorporating architectural practice and discourse? PS is a field that analyzes and defines what performance is; how a “script” (or a programmed “thing”: space or a form) is performed and what it provokes. Both art and architecture can offer their own scripts to the field of PS. PS offers theoretical models to approach practically anything that is expressive and that can be studied as or considered performance. Architecture has its own methodologies that refer to site, significant roles of forms, programming and functionality that can be as well shared to/with those that PS implements.

What becomes relevant here is the construction of that in-between, the place between the “performer” and the “receiver,” as a space and as an interface that
provokes communication by highlighting a position of an “inter-situation.” In conceptual terms the existence of that interface signifies a medium of communication; the interface can interpret the place where behavioral negotiation occurs. Performance enables the phenomenon of communication while performance studies analyzes it. Questions including “How and why does it happen?” and “What is the purpose of it?” arise when we observe and study our surroundings, finding within them many different performances. An architectural “gesture” could be understood as a performance, and certainly art can be performance if the artist “declares it” or the audience “accepts it.” An architect could say that his or her architecture is a performance (a spatial performance, a programmed performance, a material performance, a political performance and so on). Examples of mainstream architecture in these terms and at the end of last century support this: La Villette in Paris, the Jewish museum in Berlin, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and many others. These are all constructions where projected and then built with an intention beyond the mere object of architecture. History of architecture is full of examples like this from the pyramids to the Eiffel Tower to the (ex) Twin Towers and the Bicentennial Tower in Chile.

63 Instead of presenting performance in an interdisciplinary context, I prefer to use the idea of an intersituation. By this I mean a sense of place in reference to architecture. Interdiscipline seems much more abstract; architecture is about the concrete praxis as well.

64 Coincidentally, these examples refer to deconstructivist architects that at some point implemented notions of “paper architecture” as presented before. This is the architecture about intentions that is displayed by means of exhuberant forms.
What all these constructions do beyond the mere building is to build up an image or a representation of a specific moment in time of a certain society in a specific place.

If we reflect on Grosz’s points now, the question posed would be: How to construct the space of the in-between so as to give it a shape that provokes communication? Nowadays, a designer’s aim could be focused more on the specific goal of the in-between, the place between the receptor and the transmitter (the performer). This space have been explored by many as the “interface” space. If designers were to choose this route, they would no longer be concerned with the resulting object but, rather, with the result it generates in terms of communication. This type of approach to design is much more complex than the traditional counterpart of a conventional practice (about form). The issue then seems to be something more subjective. The “aura”65 of the designed object that, when taking into account the significance of an object’s reception, enters another level of this argumentation. If a designer concerns him or herself with only the result of a designed object, he or she will require a great deal of knowledge and the ability to

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65 See Walter Benjamin’s “aura” and the impossibility of its mechanized reproduction in an era of different technological advances. Benjamin argues that the art object has an aura that cannot be experienced through its representation. If we consider Benjamin’s “aura” within design, the issue would concern the aura that the design generates and that cannot be experienced through its representation. We can extend Benjamin’s contribution toward all massive reproductions that also have a connection to the notion of standardized space. To live in a place means to be part of the space of it, its situation in terms of actions and material characteristics. See Robert Beauregard, “From Place to Site: Negotiating Narrative Complexity,” Site Matters (2005), 39–40; and Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction (1936),” Illuminations, ed. Hannah Arendt (1968).
manage great quantities of information to be able to choose the correct solution that reaches the desired effect. By all means, it may be considered intense to base a process of design in its reception and on its effects. Who can control the way in which something is received and perceived? PS certainly does not answer these questions, but does contribute with the knowledge and methodology necessary to be conscious of the variety of levels at or on which spaces, objects and people perform. PS offers clues about how to perceive performance, to imagine and to analyze how it takes place and what it can generate in relation to the cultural context in which it occurs. Both art and architecture take into account a notion of their effect on the receiver; a target that is both convinced and seduced by “the product.” In both cases the product is designed for a receptor.

Hal Foster discusses the controversy of the “effect” of the art object. He alludes to the understanding of the fancy—relational—form as the need for a product that is ambiguous and not precise, a form of art that is not for mere contemplation but also incites dialogue. He questions the active role of art in the spectator (or user) to illuminate the question of a practice. For Foster the artistic practice is defined and should not be blurred into different amorphous categories; if this happens then the “communication” with the spectator is contaminated and confused. In other words, the “product” of art is meant to have an effect on the receptor but that effect fails to exist if the receiver does not perceive it (if it is

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ambiguous or nebulous). Foster is criticizing extreme conceptualism within practices of the “everyday life” art. Although he supports the existence of non-definite forms, he states that the form (of a new culture of art) is uncertain. And though Foster is conscious of contemporary “studies” that contribute to the new shape of art culture, he does not include in his argument the speculation or possibility of analysis offered by PS. PS offers the analyses of performance, which in itself comprises and emerges not only from the bodies plus certain (artistic) objects, but also context, the spaces and the characteristics of how those objects and bodies are displayed and received. If we agree with this stance on the operation within the external borders of disciplinary practice (the outside, the inside and the “in-between”) we will no longer be focused on the objects resulting directly from a narrowly contained practice (art or architecture), but rather take part in the object’s performative qualities.

In *Design and Crime (and other diatribes)*, Foster comments upon the implications of *design* within a panorama of new cultural and artistic practices. He explores the “political economy of design” to explore identity, architecture and city development in terms of a society ruled by the spectacle. He connects architecture and design to explain the needs of a commodity, which is regulated by

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67 Hal Foster, “Festive Art,” in *Otra Parte Magazine* # 6, 1–6.
consumers and capital economies. These forces shape culture. Now, combining the word performance with the word design within PS discourse also suggests a fertile territory and offers a place where the shaping of the “in-between” design clearly occurs. Performance is always designed (even if there is no script, the fact that there is no script is a design of a no script).  

There are many ways and mediums in which performance “appears.” We can perceive it through the materiality of its design on a canvas, on a stage, on a screen, in a room, on a façade of a building or within a specific territory of the city. Architects use design to construct multiple “interfaces” that constitute a place. Conceptual Artists use design to present issues and contents by means of the medium. Interfaces are the elements that transmit the perception and understanding of the space we perceive and that we subsequently act upon. An interface is a “translator” mediating between two parts, making one part sensitive to the other and, hence, shaping their boundaries. The design of spatial interfaces shapes and defines the user’s experience and connects the performer with him or her but also with the material characteristics of place. That performer, as viewed through design (within art or architecture), could be the

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69 The absence of a script indicates theater practices that are more open to the circumstances of the site or location where the performance happens. In other words, a script’s absence is constructed in time by the placed practices or “actions” within a specific site. In terms of design, such material absence also allows for the participation of a certain audience that interprets the object as if it were a performance. Participation plays a key role in this respect.

resulting “object” of the piece (subject). Architecture shapes and programs the interfaces that materialize our spatial situations of life. PS, from the perspective of an architect, presents tools to make the practice more complex by pushing the design and construction of space to new areas of concern. These new areas are more interested in the actions and reactions that bodies enact in relation to other bodies, both artificial and natural, rather than only to singular bodies in themselves.

The following figures illustrate the space in-between art and architecture that the principal exhibitors of SCL2110 use to perform their practice (Fig.1.8). These images display the theory and practice behind each project/proposal that developed over the course of the project’s realization. The five figures, some by architects, some by artists, represent the practice that each has accumulated through their body of work, beginning in the 1970s. These architects and artists are: Bernard Tschumi (Fig. 1.9), Vito Acconci (Fig. 1.10), Diller Scofidio + Renfro (Fig. 1.11), Alfredo Jaar (Fig. 1.12) and Lot-ek (Fig. 1.13). They all have created work in-between the fields of art and architecture, sometimes closer to art and some other times closer to architecture. They have all designed their pieces within parameters that fluctuate gradually from art to architecture and vice versa. In this main category of international presenters, we also invited RoseLee
Goldberg to participate (Fig. 1.7). Before her recent work with Performa, Goldberg offered many contributions to the field of architecture including a collaboration with Bernard Tschumi in the early 1970s on the exhibition *A space: a Thousand Words* (1975). This exhibit aimed to describe an image of a project in a thousand words. Tschumi and Goldberg considered the possible relations between (conceptual) art and (conceptual) architecture. In this event, Goldberg presented a key issue of conceptualism to explain the art object. In her catalogue essay “Space as Praxis” (1976) Goldberg alleged a “dematerialization” of the object and proposed instead that conceptual art allowed for the possibility that it may or may not be executed. For Goldberg the display of ideas was relevant and

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71 For more information about the non-profit organization PERFORMA, see “live art” videos at the organization’s website: www.performa-arts.org. PERFORMA is Goldberg’s most recent project, dedicated to the support and presentation of new performance art in New York. Performance might be seen as a cultural project occurring throughout the territory of the city, using multiple locations to display the event: galleries, building halls, streets and so on.

72 The exhibition was intended to be the first dialogue between art and architecture. It took place at the gallery of The Royal College of Arts in London and led to a special issue of *Studio International* on art and architecture, by invitation from Richard Cork. In this issue Goldberg contributed her essay “Space as Praxis” and Tschumi, “Questions of Space.” Cork invited contributors to consider “the production of space” and its mental apprehension within a uniform format comprising drawings or photographs. Ideas about the ideal and the real, and about text and visual material resulted from this initiative. Sandra Kaji-O’Grady also wrote an article about the 1970s London Conceptualists’ architecture and performance, highlighting, from the exhibition, “the discussion of space was divided between personal and nonrepeatable experience and the language of a political manifesto in which public space was conceived as of a broad category.” See Kaji-O’Grady, “London Conceptualists: architecture and performance in the 1970s” *The Journal of Architectural Education* 61, 4 (2008): 46–47. For more information about the 1975 exhibition at The Royal College of Arts in London see *Studio International* #190, 1977.

could also “present” the art. The exhibition becomes relevant here because of its consciousness of the mediums through which to present a project related to and/or about space. This certainly highlighted the consciousness of place (gallery or street) as the realization of ideas about space and that should occur within an actual space. The move from theory to practice occurred in performance, where space indeed gives a physical context “in which to experience the materialization of that theory.” In the submissions to the exhibition, Goldberg identified a number of artists whose work presented a new sense of space, which she categorized under the following terms: “constructed space and powerfields (Bruce Nauman and Acconci),” “natural space (Oppenheim),” “body space (Simone Forti, Trischa Brown, and Yvonne Rainer),” “spectator space (Graham),” and work presented as “a critique of the uses of public and private space (Daniel Buren and Dimitriejvic).” The last three, Graham, Buren and Dimitriejvic, Goldberg included in the exhibition.

The architects were aligned and familiar with ideas of conceptual art, and their contributions were focused on ideas about process. Many of the French and Italian architects presented work related to “decisions” in the expository sense. Many of the proposals explored sociological questions about architecture and the configuration of the city from a personal an experiential perspective, using

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76 Ibid.
firsthand narrative and freehand sketches as “drawings that I have lived,”\textsuperscript{77} in the words of Leon Van Schaik, a fellow student from the Architectural Association that was part of the group of architects (the AA comprised the youngest and largest group of exhibitors). The idea of “drawings [one] has lived” relates to Goldberg’s work as an art historian, particularly with regard to the history of performance art in the area of visual (plastic) arts. For Goldberg, any \textit{live-art} could be considered performance, allowing also for traditional forms such as dance and music to enter into this category.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{fig17.png}
\caption{\textit{Art < > Architecture: Roselee Goldberg’s path on visual arts, performance and architecture, MESS (2010).}}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{77} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{78} This figure shows five different projects that gave form to the work of RoseLee Goldberg since the 70s: \textit{The Kitchen} (70s), \textit{A Space, a Thousand Words} (1975), \textit{Performance Art From Futurism to the Present} (1979), \textit{Artists Space} (70s-80s), \textit{Performa} (2004 – present).
Fig. 1.8 – Art ↔ Architecture: *a blurred practice in the in-between space*, MESS (2010).
Fig. 1.10 – *Art <> Architecture: Vito Acconci Studio, MESS (2010).*

80 This figure shows Vito Acconci’s path between disciplines. These are five projects of Vito Acconci and Acconci Studio that are in-between the territory of architecture and art. The projects are: *RE* (1967), *Following piece* (1969), *Personal Island* (1992), *Storefront for art and architecture* (1993) and *An Island over the Mur* (2003).
Fig. 1.11 – *Art <> Architecture: Diller Scofidio + Renfro*, MESS (2010).\textsuperscript{81}

\textsuperscript{81} This figure shows Diller+Scofidio’s path between disciplines. These are five projects from Diller + Scofidio, and Diller Scofidio + Renfro, that are in-between the territories of architecture and art. The projects are: *Moving Target* (1996), *Facsimile* (2003), *Blur* (2002), *Highline* (2009) and *ICA Boston* (2006).
Fig. 1.12 – *Art < > Architecture: Alfredo Jaar, MESS (2010).*

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82 This figure shows Alfredo Jaar’s path between disciplines. These are five projects that are in-between the field of art and architecture. The projects are: *El Lamento de las imagines* (2005), *Rwanda project* (1994), *Estudios sobre la felicidad* (1981), *Lights in the City* (1999) and *Skoghall Konsthall* (2000).
This figure shows Lot-Ek’s path between disciplines. These five projects are closer to the territory of architecture but share with the field of art. The projects are: Theater for One (2010), ESPN waiting lounge (2004), Bohen Foundation (2002), Puma City (2008) and Pier 57 (2009–present).
In all of the participants’ work of SCL2110 we see that the practice of architecture has, since the 1970s at least if not dating back to the Futurists, consistently demonstrated an assumption of a level of performance. The same occurs in artistic practices, such as those performed by Vito Acconci that brought his body to the street.84 Acconci’s performance art pieces, or events, highlight two main points: 1) the practice of art or architecture is indeed expanded when combined with strategies of performance; and 2) these practices are now considered to be possible in the curriculum of academia as possible practices of performance within art and architecture. It is relevant to emphasize the latter point because what was meant to be a polemical work or attitude towards the discipline and does not function as such any longer. The field of PS (with its stamp as a post-discipline) promotes the imbrication of disciplines in other territories that house and share similar interests and concerns. For example, it is understood that an action of an artist on a space could have repercussions on dimensions of architecture and, if it is placed on the street, certainly, on sociology. The same could happen with an action of an architect. If a specific wall is built on the interior of an exhibition space, it will present some restrictions or constraints to an

84 Vito Acconci incorporated his body to the work he presented as “activities” from 1969. During the ’70s many of his pieces comprised “performing” different activities with certain instructions. Today, Acconci does not like to be recognized only as an artist but also as a designer and an architect. He founded Acconci Studio in 1988, and has since been collaborating with architects in the design of spaces for other bodies—rather than only for his own personal body. For more details see my interview with Acconci in SCL2110 arte | arquitectura | performance (2010), 178–93.
artist in the sense of how he or she can present or perform work. Before
addressing the theatricality implicit in performance, this thesis assumes that the
transformations of artistic disciplines are already happening (or have happened)
with the inclusion of performance. Here is a table proposed by Brita Wheeler in
2005 (Fig.1.14) with some points and dates about the institutionalization of
performance within the academic milieu:

Fig. 1.14 - The Institutionalization of the Avant-garde. Britta Wheeler’s conceptual map explains the fate of this controversial
movement during the second half of the 20th century (when the
“alternative” became the mainstream). Franklin Furnace commissioned the map, and Wheeler self-published it in 2005. It travels with the exhibition “The History of Disappearance,” and it is forthcoming in Perform, Repeat, Record, edited by Adrian Heathfield and Amelia Jones. This map was also part of the exhibition SCL2110 realized in Chile during 2010 to celebrate the bicentennial.
1.2 - On communication and practices: the architect and the artist as a designer

The performer, a space or even an object that performs, or acts, in front of an audience has to do something with a mechanism of codes that will be understood by the receptor. Language plays an important role in all aspects of performance (including performatives and performativity) because is through language that we can relate thoughts and experiences to the effects of performance.

In the contemporary world where efficiency is the key to all possible systems of production, in a marketplace where budget is almost always the fundamental variable when considering the realization of a project, and at a time when the mantra “What you see is what you get” is the explicit mode of operation, it seems that the priority of any creative project is its “results.” We understand performance because of or through those results. This emphasis on result should not terminate at the level of the object itself but should continue to enter and mold the sphere of effect. Any construction and its resulting effect on the user are then considered as an expansion (a concern that could be oriented to gain such result) of the design process into a place where we not only use, but where we do. This constitutes performance. There is only one dynamic: a framework wherein the performance projects a resulting effect on the spectator. If the effect does not exist then the performance did not take place. Even if a photograph tells something
different, that image is not a performance but a documentation of “something” that has happened (a render in architecture or design is the literal documentation of that something that “will” happen).

Let us imagine any conventional practice as having an epicenter. That central point is the most defined place within the discipline—a trodden ingrown path that does not present the discipline’s broader array of challenges, complexities and possibilities. As an example, let us discuss architecture. The center that represents the core of the discipline defines its concrete structure (what is important for architectural discourse and practice) by recognizing the results as something expected; a building is a building, even when, in the case of Diller Scofidio + Renfro (DS+R), a building could be a cloud.85 Certainly the center nos is located in a “secure” place that does not confront the limit (borders) due to its inherently stable place (and proven context). Is that the place of architecture?

Let us imagine an area found further outside that epicenter, a peripheral zone defined by its borders. It maintains enough distance from the place and the specifics found at the center of the practice’s circle to be considered “alternative,” but has the limitations and boundaries of the margin, the edge. It defines a new frontier within the discipline, one that offers an alternative site for the performance of architecture to happen, but that now has the constraints of its own border. It

85 The studio of Diller Scofidio + Renfro gained reknown after the opening of the BLUR building in 2002. This building, designed as a water pavilion for the Swiss Expo, introduces the spectator into a mist of water taken from the lake over which hangs a structure of nozzles. See Diller Scofidio + Renfro, Blur: the making of nothing (2002).
cannot surpass the circular demarcation and hence cannot do; it is an architecture that has fewer possibilities of being performative in its own right. When we exit the circle of the discipline or go beyond its boundaries, we enter another, third disciplinary space where there is a greater potential for doing, for projecting into a territory that is not so tied to or limited by common practice. Architectural projects that possess the potency of their own possibilities with less reference to a built object (the conceptual aspects of architecture) are located in that space and can perform throughout an unlimited area. This area of architecture does not have the constraints of material resources and spatial conventions, the area of THE architectural project, its process and own performance. Here, outside the second circle, there is “permission” to envision without a constant reference to the building as epicenter; it becomes a non-location where one can more easily imagine architecture without building. Performance invades the area outside this circle that might share the stage with an(other) epicenter(s). In this place performance could be designed. The historical and conventional reference point of the discipline of architecture and its predetermined borders seem, from this angle, no longer to be architecture’s limitation.

A project is something that will occur in the future. Architects work with the future and therefore with its representation. Architects must include many constraints and limitations before they are able to conceive of that possible future. They must imagine how to create it and a way of presenting it. As architectural
history advances in time and the specialties and details of the discipline expand, we could dare say that, today, good architects are not much more than good communicators of their ideas. Surely the bulk of their preoccupation lies in the execution of the projects, while an engineer, a lighting designer, an acoustical engineer, an electrician or a landscape designer participate by assisting in the project’s execution. The more sophisticated and rare architects are, the more unconventional the experts to be included on the team will be. The architect’s role is to envision the impossible by means of the possible; he or she has the capacity to promote new ways of living that contribute to shaping a better place for the future by confronting new demands with new techniques and technologies.

Architects are the orchestrators of the many different layers of a project, each one having its own specific issues.

Architects must fine tune and manipulate knowledge that is foreign to their practice to be able to confront questions and concerns of space and therefore resolve the execution of the project they have envisioned. The architect constructs and he or she trespasses his or her ideas. When architecture communicates it constructs.86 It is not about the construction per se, but what that construction

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86 Umberto Eco writes about architecture and communication: “A phenomenological consideration of our relationship with architectural objects tells us that we commonly do experience architecture as communication, even while recognizing its functionality.” This explains that the object of architecture “functions” and therefore is not built to communicate, even though functionality works because of a level of communication established between the object and the user. Eco continues, “No one can doubt that a roof serves to cover, and a glass to hold liquids in such a way that one can then easily drink
actually builds *ex post facto*, by saying through forms. When architecture speaks it
gives information *as* an instruction to the user. In other words, we all use spaces as
we know them. Certain values and conventions give us the clues of how to behave,
and therefore how to read space. This communicational aspect of architecture
could be also related to J.L. Austin’s ideas about the utterances. With each new
space built (or projected) architects talk and declare through forms, materials,
programs and conventions the way we could use space. The “actions” projected by
the design of space (future) are part of the cultural baggage we carry with us now.
We cannot “act” differently because we do not have spaces that are different. This
is why Diller Scofidio + Renfro’s Blur Building is a paradigm for contemporary
architecture. In this case the “script” is not the assumed script of architecture.87
The building is timeless and therefore does not considers a linear “story” in terms
of a certain program as a traditional building might include.

In *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?: Experiencing Aural Architecture*,
Barry Blesser explores the acoustic dimensions of architecture and its different
spatial forms from the prehistory to the present. He talks about “evolution” and
synthesizes technical, aesthetical and humanistic considerations of aural
architecture to promote interdisciplinary work when thinking about sound, space

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and society. Beyond all the literal (or technical) discussion, sound, the immaterial aspect of architecture, builds up space within or of the invisible. Here, Blesser questions the traditional discipline of architecture in academia:

Evolution is a useful lens through which we can examine aural architecture, offering the potential of fusing contributions from different disciplines into a single picture. Theories about evolution have been successfully applied to broad questions such as the adaptive function of sex and the influence of geography on genetics, and to narrow questions such as the origins of lactose intolerance and sickle-cell anemia. In contrast, traditional disciplines, with their formal paradigms, cannot readily address some kinds of questions. Evolution is fascinating just because it has the potential to offer explanations about phenomena that would otherwise appear to have no explanation.88

Incorporating sound to any particular architectural project certainly signifies a great challenge. Not only because what architecture attempts is, most of the time, the construction of a material force, but because sound and the sounds produced by or in a space are much closer to the “events” that could happen in such space. In other words, perhaps the discipline hasn’t considered sound (as well as many other factors) as a consequence of the design of space and that certainly has an impact on the receiver (audience or user). Sound is a dimension that can be shaped by materials (and acoustics) as well as by the behavior we enact in a space as the result of the de-codification we process and the cultural conventions we perceive.

Different spaces are recognized by their sound. The “program” of architecture shapes that sound, as well as the acoustics of the material form of space. We can recognize certain sounds inside a cathedral or inside an airport, but also sounds on a square with children playing or a performer putting on a show in front of them. Like the notion and enactment of performance, sound is a dimension of space that has not been explored in its full capacity (that beyond its mere functionality) within the field of architecture. Perhaps it has been explored even less than performance.

But this point is about communication. Representation is the key element to transmitting thoughts and concerns through designed artifacts. Architects communicate their ideas by speaking through specific mediums: drawings, models or renderings that lead to a design. An architect could be the designer of a piece of furniture, the designer of a house or the designer of a city. A project of design or architectural design speaks through means of other constructions that express its ambitions. These constructions are based on language, symbols and codes. The idea transmitted by a designed object is what matters at the end, whether one is discussing any of these disciplines: art, architecture or design. An architect’s fundamental role points towards the materialization of those ideas (re)presented by a complex design process. This not only refers to a physical materialization but also to a mental construction that has the capacity to stimulate experience.
There is a certain amount of mental material that also must be organized in a project’s purpose and itinerary in order for it to be successful. The clients, the users or spectators of the work are the individuals who decode the message the architect or designer relays when they interpret the space that is displayed. Communication is important here because the representation that embodies architecture should perform for the client, the user or the viewer (the audience). When decoding the representation, the receiver will understand its unique make up.\(^\text{89}\)

We could say that once the audience decodes work of an architect the experience of architecture takes place. I should point that it is evident that one does not precede the other but rather both occur simultaneously: the experience and the decoding occur simultaneously (with regard to the impossible disjunction of perception and experience referred to by Bernard Tschumi).\(^\text{90}\) The architect therefore is a character who goes through life giving messages with his or her

\(^{89}\) See chapter 3 for an expansion of this notion of representation.

\(^{90}\) In the Introduction to *Architecture and Disjunction*, Bernard Tschumi writes that, because of the events of 1968, “I was concerned with the need for an architecture that might change society—that could have a political or social effect.” In this book Tschumi presents ideas about space, program and disjunction in order to clarify the impossibility to think about space without perceiving it. Certainly the projected space is rather different from the one that is constructed in reality in terms of experiences and specifles of constructed moments, all dependent upon context. For Tschumi there is no dissociation between the two (space and practice of space). He continues, “the new questioning of that part of architecture called program, or function, or use or events, is fundamental today. Not only is there no simple relation between the building of spaces and the programs within them, but in our contemporary society, programs are by definition unstable.” *Architecture and Disjunction* (1997), 20–21.
constructions. These messages are sometimes regulated by structures of political, economical and ideological power. It is impossible to perceive architecture without perceiving and experiencing it within a certain scenario filled with many different levels of information. In this sense, architecture interprets what society requires by establishing through material the ideas of a certain (spatial) order. Paul Sheppard argues in *What is architecture?* that architecture can be found everywhere, even in spaces that exist without specific design. It is impossible to avoid architecture’s presence, he maintains, but, arguing against a philosophical approach and toward a purely creative understanding of the field, he also states that architecture is not everything.\(^{91}\)

On most occasions the messages transmitted by architecture come through the simple presence of “buildings.” They are constructions that suggest or provoke us. There are no written instructions about how to act within or how to perceive space when experiencing it, but there are certainly customs and a degree of shared knowledge about specific behaviors (actions that “should” happen) that explain the space projected for the individual inhabiting it. There are cultural settings that exist to define what an architect does, to define the production of a building (or spatial structure): to build space. I argue that an architect is essentially occupied with the realization of thoughts, whether these thoughts are directed to ways to

\(^{91}\) Paul Sheppard establishes that architecture has strict borders and that it shouldn’t be related to other practices, arguing in coherent terms of materiality. For Sheppard the principal goal of architecture is to house humanity. See *What is architecture? Essays on Landscapes, Buildings and Machines* (1999).
satisfy needs or simply to generate other thoughts in a chain of production.

Buildings are the products of architecture based on traditional conventions, but certainly there are many other possibilities for building space other than by a materialized structure. Architects must conceive in a complex manner resolving the many different layers of what seems, at first, to be a very simple “materialization” of space. The field of architecture is in itself a space in which to speculate on space and on ideal spaces—that is, the space that generates other spaces. Here, we must shift our consideration to the notion of interpretation, explicit in any theatrical form.

The interpreter is the performer but also the presentation of several interconnected roles (Fig.1.15). The sound of a space is also a strong component associated with spatial performance, and, of course, in the field of theater, sounds and silences are an important aspect of any piece on stage. Patrice Pavis considers the direct “physical communication” that occurs in theatrical spaces—the specific moment of perception that is memorable and that differs from conventional theatrical situations. He highlights the “dialogue” of the audience and the actors as the “experience” in theatrical spaces. Sound constitutes a significant part of the communication process that occurs between audience and performers and therefore is significant in shaping the performance.
Performance does not depend on the event itself but on how that event is received and placed. What Pavis does not consider is that levels of communication exist in a defined space, i.e., in the architecture of the theater. Michael Foucault writes about heterotopias as the places where utopias are enacted and other spaces are congregated. He emphasizes that one of the principles of heterotopias is that they are capable of juxtaposing several spaces within a single scenario (place), sites that are not compatible on their own. Heterotopias are the spaces “of other spaces.” Foucault uses the example of theater to explain a space in which a whole series of places that are foreign to one another are successively brought together on to the rectangle of the stage, emphasizing that performance happens in “a space” that is somewhere else and not in the location of the stage: an “external” space.

Performance studies as a mode of analysis contributes to a new understanding of the concept of presence by looking at an event through the elements that constitute this event: bodies or objects, communication and space. From this angle, we perceive presence in two ways. First, in relation to the presence of bodies or objects in a certain place that constitute the performance; body or object as performer and the audience or other bodies as spectator. Second, in relation to the construction of the space that locates the performance: the lights,

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the sounds and the scenography. This creates a coherent spatial idea of design in which to place the spectator: Foucault’s space “of other space.” In other words, bodies and objects in space are presences that shape the experience of the space of the performance. This space is also the product of the “aura” designed and mounted around the bodies and objects.

Many performance artists have used their bodies to create “presence” in society. These artists’ bodies become a territory of experimentation, a ground on or from which to explore, to demonstrate and to execute ideas. Vito Acconci used his body to provide an alternative “ground” to the “page ground” he used as a poet.94 By engaging Acconci’s work we can explain how artists change medium and focus on their bodies to present a work of performance (art). In Following Piece (1969) Acconci transports his body, his medium of self-presentation, to the public realm. In the street context Acconci decided to work with the private and the public space. When does the private start to become public? Acconci explains that moving from the page to the body to the space of the city was a way to shift focus from his words to himself as an “image,” presented to the public realm as a “collective” place. Instead of writing a poem about following someone, he acted out a “following piece” in which he followed someone in the street.95 By

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94 See Vito Acconci, *Following Piece*, 1969. Acconci followed strangers on the street until the stranger entered a private space. Acconci could be following someone for anywhere from a few minutes up to many hours depending on the spaces that the stranger was “using.”

95 RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: from Futurism to the Present* (1979), 156.
performing an action on the street, Acconci’s body becomes the “space” of his work, a space of the “other” Acconci, the other poet, a writer who displays poetry through his body, rather than through paper. The image Acconci addresses might be read through Foucault’s mirror:

> It is, after all, a utopia, in that it is a place without a place. In it, I see myself where I am not, in an unreal space that opens up potentially beyond its surface; there I am down there where I am not, a sort of a shadow that makes my appearance visible to myself, allowing me to look at myself where I do not exist: utopia of the mirror. At the same time, we are dealing with heterotopia. The mirror really exists and has a kind of come-back effect on the place that I occupy: starting from it, in fact. I find myself absent from the place where I am, in that I see myself in there.96

The space of performance is activated by the presence of the body and only after that moment of activation does the presence of the space appear. The body then becomes a filter to perceive the presence of other bodies and the space that situates them. It is important to remember that buildings and material constructions represent the traditional “body” of the expertise of the architect.

In Pavis’ words, “presence” stands for a collision between “the social event of theatre” and “the fiction of the character.” He emphasizes that presence is precisely “the conjunction” of event and fiction.97 On the other hand, performance

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manifestos\footnote{RoseLee Goldberg considers the significance of the Futurists and the early 20th-century avant-garde in \textit{Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present} (1988).} of the avant-garde demonstrate that the decision of many artists to use their body outside conventional spaces have been an attempt to find another means to \textit{do} and to evaluate an art experience: performance in the everyday life. The conjunction of “event and fiction” might be the experimentation of a dialogue between daily routines and “surrealist moments” that we experience within traditional spaces, everyday.

Theatre, by definition, is not a quotidian domain but an extra-quotidian dimension beyond the everyday, though ironically dependent on the everyday. Alan Read, arguing for an ethics of performance, writes that what is perceived as “everyday life” is the continual negotiation between theater and its ground, performance and the quotidian.\footnote{Alan Read, \textit{Theater and everyday life: an ethics of performance} (1956), ix.} He suggests that everyday life must occur for “good theater” to happen. From Read’s perspective, the everyday can be understood as something of value, something “like” theater, an event, not with a script to represent but with a life to present. As many PS scholars such as Marvin Carlson, Richard Schechner and Victor Turner agree, everyday-life routines present to us THE drama of life that can be understood as performance. Acconci’s piece is not only about following someone but is also about pointing to that someone, the “other,” and \textit{Following Piece} highlights the private versus public territory inherent in society. Architecture allows the presence of multiple others
within one single moment in a place. PS picks these moments for study. Unlike in theater, in which an actor plays a character, the artist in these moments is a “standard” person: the performer *is* the artist. The content of these pieces rarely follows a traditional plot or narrative, or, in theatrical terms, rarely follow a script.\(^{100}\)

If we look at Pavis’ argument through the experience of everyday life we can think of “the encounter” as THE theatrical experience. It is precisely this encounter that constructs the perception of time in performance and in this moment is the moment of the “other space” Foucault refers to. This encounter not only highlights the presence of bodies but also the presence of a stage, which may or may not be the “frontal” stage in theater. The act of perceiving performance constructs a stage as another type of front, the “other” front. It is a new presence, a new hierarchy that constitutes this space of the performance, the “stage.” From this perspective performance is the organization of presences, bodies in space that guide and rule our perception as spectators.\(^{101}\)

\(^{100}\) RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: from Futurism to the Present* (1979), 8.

\(^{101}\) In an investigation conducted between 1998 and 2000 with architect and scenographer Ramon Lopez, the Director of the School of Theater in the Faculty of Arts at Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile, I explored three inquiries regarding presence: 1) Urban Scenery; 2) Bodies and Buildings as *Presences*; and 3) The Narrative of Space as *Appearance*. This trilevel analysis offered us clues about how to approach an understanding of city spaces. To understand cityscapes and their role in our daily life routines, we have to understand that there are many images of the city that “function” in such scope. These images construct perception on four levels: 1) urban scenery; 2) urban presences; 3) urban scenography space; and 4) urban script. We compiled the results of this investigation in a collection of essays, including those by Ramon Lopez, Rodrigo Tisi,
In Pavis’ argument “the encounter” happens amongst the “presences” of the social event of theater. Pavis’ moment also points to the moment of spatial presence. In daily life, the encounter might happen in public spaces, where the “social” really does exist—as opposed to the “social event” of the theater, which is restricted to a certain elite, those who actually enter the building to see the spectacle or, from another perspective, the private world that Acconci was pointing to in his work. In contrast to Pavis, however, the Situationists declare that “society is full of spectacles” and that we all are in front of those spectacles, all the

Renato Bernasconi, Cecilia Philippi, Francisco Sabatini, Alejandra Serey and María Berrios. See Rodrigo Tisi and Renato Bernasconi eds., Escenografía Urbana (2010).
time, every day. In fact, spectacles are “events” of society; something produced and re-produced to infinity.\(^{102}\) We can have a spectacle on a red light in a corner or inside a building, depending on the characteristics and the “quality” of the performer. But this view begs a reconsideration of the performer and what his or her role is in a scenario. In this context, who designates who the performer is?

The “encounter” for Pavis constitutes a specific moment, the “eternal now” of the theatrical experience. Encounter here stands for the time taken to perceive these presences as spectacles. That time is the other time beyond the real. Perhaps that is why the silence in John Cage’s 4’33” (1952) is too dramatically disruptive to the continuation of perception. The lack of sound (from the stage) that the receiver experiences transforms perception into the consciousness of time passing. 4’33” uses the strategy of no sound to enable audiences to hear what is there outside it, around it, in a city like New York for example.\(^{103}\) Considering everyday life, this concept constructs a reciprocal relationship between spectacle and spectators. Pavis’ proposal goes further to make this moment of perception an eternal condition that highlights the perception of the spectator and his or her impression of being elsewhere in an eternal present.\(^{104}\)

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\(^{103}\) 4’33” was about listening to the world that is around another world: a room and outside it. After the premier, Cage discussed the piece in relation to the streets of NYC and the sounds of the city.

Architects make and unmake, build and unbuild; they create and destruct possible and impossible castles while they come up with the necessary strategies to communicate what has to be communicated through them—the social dimension of architecture. If we agree that for ideas to project a future they must be ambitious then we can understand why the impossible is part of the engine that sometimes drives the utopian attitude of planning and designing the future. And yet the question remains: How do we do that? How do we, architects, speak?

I recall Mark Wigley’s introductory words at a 2003 presentation given by Elizabeth Diller, of Diller Scofidio + Renfro, at Columbia University. Wigley spoke about decoding and situating the work Diller had been developing in collaboration with her studio in New York. Diller Scofidio + Renfro’s way of working is relevant not only because it questions fundamental aspects of the architecture, but because it also gives the field a new angle that then draws on other disciplines, such as the visual and performing arts.

DS+R has a certain “eccentric” (the opposite of epi-central) manner of approaching a practical problem. Clearly, they have expanded the contemporary conventions of architecture to a greater notion: that of the performative. “For DS+R, performance offers an element of flexibility to the ways we conceive and realize an architectural project.”105 A building could be a cloud. Many of DS+R’s

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105 Elizabeth Diller says on an interview conducted during SCL2110: “We are interested in the effects. We design effects but we are also conscious of the artifact and the detailing and the material experimentation—all the things that many architects are interested in. But
proposals start off in the peripheral areas of architecture: an ephemeral installation; a construction for the viewer or the person that will experience it in theatrical ways; an artifact that engages a certain level of participation by provoking thoughts in the receiver. DS+R also adds a great amount of technology to their proposals. Each of their projects addresses specific problems of space and questions the traditional conventions we are used to within the discipline of architecture.\footnote{Criticism of DS+R’s work now could be in relation to the building. Perhaps DS+R has entered into the circuit of conventional architecture, especially considering the amount the studio has grown. Therefore, the need to respond to conventional practices. But because DS+R began with a relation to the visual and performing arts, many of the requests that the studio receives are still in the direction of the arts and “performance.” For DS+R performance is indeed a fact tied to architecture.}

DS+R’s work provokes the user. Their work speaks. Their practice goes beyond architecture and visual and performing arts towards a point of communication. Those are essential problems that are often far removed from the “practical” objective production of architecture. Wigley proposes “the visionary” standpoint for this same reason: an eccentric situation, far from a purely practical circle of production within the parameters of standard architecture. In this sense DS+R plays with subjectivity by consciously implementing a performative aspect in their constructions. The realization of their design is carried out through the crossing of borders, by confusing and dissolving traditional disciplinary
boundaries. Citing DS+R’s practice and methodology, I argue that the practical limits of an architect’s profession should not be restricted, but rather should incorporate actions that gravitate around architectural themes but that are not solely restricted to the core of “building” technique.

By eccentrically locating ourselves we are expanding our discipline and going beyond the conventional borders of an assumed practice. This is exactly what becomes relevant with regard to the tension between architecture and art. There is always a becoming state in both—a performative aspect. The most paradoxical and exciting thing about DS+R’s work is that their position within the discourse of architecture is at its core. They remain central to the discipline even though their work is made up of “light” or “ephemeral” structures and experiences that are categorized as temporary—as opposed to the permanent aspect of traditional architecture.107

In the “practical” world of performance, installations and exhibits this team’s production is known for raising fundamental issues in the core practice of architecture, highlighting questions of building space through unconventional manners that recalls the early 20th-century avant-garde. This eccentric and essential way of working is what allows an exploration of and advancement in a possible new and updated contemporary practice.

107 However, as DS+R has grown they’ve also developed a new level of practice more in the line of conventional buildings that match traditional requirements of construction and regulations.
The website of DS+R is highlighting the different “categories” they perform in the studio: art, commercial, cultural, landscape, master plan, media/tech, objects, “performance,” residential. This is how they communicate the work they do, which is generally referred to as architecture, or with reference to the visual and performing arts.

Fig.1.16 - DSR’s website, Diller Scofidio Renfro (2011).  

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108 The website of DS+R is highlighting the different “categories” they perform in the studio: art, commercial, cultural, landscape, master plan, media/tech, objects, “performance,” residential. This is how they communicate the work they do, which is generally referred to as architecture, or with reference to the visual and performing arts.
An architect should be able to open up to new horizons so to expand the possibility of action, new ways of solving and making. This is important especially now, when the tension between demand and supply is so great. There are markets for many different groups. The art world and the architectural world are well aware of the postmodern condition. The need to promote different ways of expanding conventions appears within that extended horizon. Art and architecture can both work together in order to define new manners of productivity; or, in other words, art and architecture can generate a new product that is not yet clearly defined in the marketplace. What would this be for? What would it solve? Whether it is from within or without depends on the attitude of each individual who does it: on the “performer.”

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1.3 - On art and performance (studies)

It seems that contemporary culture is ripe for rapid and drastic change. Free radicals are reproducing in the arts as they are in physical matter. Because artists are uniquely capable of both initiating and adapting to change, art forms are mutating all around us. As in biochemistry, evolutionary development depends on free radicals. But evolutionary development also entails a disruption of the status quo. Progressive art can be unsettling. It can be threatening. Its long-term affects can be gradual or precipitous, superficial or dramatic. Selection rules in culture, as in the biological realm. Some artworks pass on without effect, while others produce a temporary deviation from a norm, a few cause irreversible mutations in the DNA of an entire culture. Art can have a profound consequence.

—Linda Weintraub, *In The Making*¹¹⁰

Many fields, such as philosophy, sociology, linguistics and anthropology, have revisited the word *performance* to examine core issues of the social sciences. They have shifted the focus of a structuralist method of analysis toward the study of processes.¹¹¹ This new approach of “social” interest also inspired the arts. It could be argued that this shift was mainly driven by the “new” art practices of the late 20th century, such as conceptualism, neo-expresionism, pop, minimalism and many others, but that were impelled ideologically at the beginning of the 19th century. Many art forms, from visual to scenic, have developed radically since the 1960s in response to these new cultural paradigms.¹¹² Since the 1980s, many of these thoughts have been institutionalized within many different “studies” housed

¹¹² This shift can be associated with the shift, during the 1960s, in ideas about capitalism, social values and human rights.
in conventional academia. Performance studies locates itself in this new space and
relates its discourse mainly to notions of theater, dance, music, language,
literature, visual arts and the broad panorama offered by cultural studies, within
which many other programs are housed, including: American studies, Africana
studies, Hebrew and Judaic studies, Sian studies, Latin American studies, Irish
studies, gender studies, museum studies, cinema studies, and religious studies,
among many others. This cultural dimension also explains an interesting shift in
academia toward a consideration of issues within the global culture in which we
live. Many of these cultural studies offer a platform or context that, on one hand,
deals with history and specific characteristics of the field, and, on the other, also
contributes to shape a broader spectrum of contexts from which to analyze
“culture” or a specific product of culture.

Much of the material that was considered art after the Second World War
was “revised” and “reconsidered” by both artists and spectators. Much of that art
dealt with general and essential topics of life. Performance (art) promoted a new
dimension of practices, rendered complex because of an imprecision created
through multiple perspectives. New possibilities with new readings of the
everyday started to inform social sciences and many different “cultural” practices:
anthropology, linguistics, communication, sociology, psychology, etc. This new
approach was radical and certainly signified a new manner to look at the world we
live in. Hoffman and Jonas present it as such:
Witnessing a hot-dog-eating contest suddenly became a form of anthropological experience, in which a social structure was created, that would tell us something about the process of civilization. Similarly, cooking came to be seen as a performative ritual involving central elements in the creation of our society. Culture—in particular the connection between ritual practice, staged situations and the overall process of civilization—is now viewed as performance.  

All these new possibilities for art of “strange” perspectives were shaped by the rapid growth of the concept of performance. The concept was primarily recognized as coming from the performing arts (theater or dance) before also linking to the world of visual arts (and all the fields of social sciences that studies them now). It is in fact in this second territory of visual arts where the term is more controversial because it provoked many different possibilities by which to “understand” or to receive a piece of art. It is no longer about a work of art in a gallery or in a museum but about what the piece does outside of that “restricted” traditional space (which is, most of the time, elitist). Of course the word performance also pushes the producers within the theater milieu. In theatrical terms, performance already represented a variation on the way to do a “traditional” play (also considered a performance). Contemporary art is about the traditional and the new forms, combined. On one hand, it is about forms that we already know, and, on the other, about the exploration of new modes. Performance, in its

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113 Jen Hoffmann and Joan Jonas eds. “Entrance” in Perform, 12.
combination of many different (art) forms on- and offstage, represents an opportunity for a new system of presentation that considers a variation on the ways that conventional display previously worked.116 In talking about display within the framework of a museum, Julia Noordegraaf writes:

The notion of “script” is a useful tool to analyze the complex relations between the intentions of the designers, the objects themselves and their potential or imagined users.117

Noordegraaf here alludes to the receptor, the viewer or the audience that perceives, receives or contemplates meaning (even if through a materialized form or an object). The relation between the need and the ambition of the design establishes a manner of doing to create meaning. As objects are organized in a museum through a “script,” they consistently construct in an associative manner meaning and discourse. SCL2110 was a project that also considered the exhibition dimension in relation to the users, the audience visiting the “show.” In this case the display played an extremely important role in the presentation and transmission of the exhibit’s ideas. It both embodied the script of SCL2110 and helped to trespass the ideas that artists and architects presented. Much of the “culture” that we appreciate in special spaces—spaces adjusted for such presentation—requires some degree of (de)codification that relates to understood conventions in terms of

116 Goldberg, Performance Art: From futurism to the present, 9.
meaning and knowledge (depending on the group of people that is anticipated to be or considered the audience). Unlike the contemporary art museum, 19th-century museums were specially designed to collect and display large amounts of material that were somehow pre-established within the cultural traditions of art (and its display) at that time.\(^{118}\) A theater of that time worked as a museum—the difference being though that a theater would have living bodies whereas the museum had dead ones (or artificial objects) that embodied through an abstract form of representation a certain type of knowledge. Performance drastically installed new values of “art” presentation in the culture we live and consequently experience.

Art spaces to think and produce work are different now. An artist could nowadays be found on a café working with a skinny notebook (composed out of traditional paper or innovative microchips), doing research with a bunch of magazines and newspapers or just chatting (as an ethnographer) with a group of “standard” people, while he or she consumes coffee at one of those global coffee chains. A situation like this demonstrates that, now, there is no rule to make art, and no restrictions of how to think about and produce it. The question now would concern how to display a “free” form of art?

Performance contributes to this dimension and in the expansion of what it could mean to do art. The role of the contemporary artist and the function of art in our current society has developed in many different directions. Much of this

\(^{118}\) Ibid., 53.
happened recently in the US, Europe and Asia, and it is certainly a consequence of new practices and a “new world” after the Second World War. Art is now embedded in the concrete world of human beings, no longer outside it or contained within museums. Recalling Grosz’s argument about the in-between, art is now in-between the practices of the quotidian.

Now, if we stop here to think about the early 20th-century avant-garde, we understand why conventional arts are no longer provocative to contemporary audiences. It is not that contemporary art should be provocative but certainly the most interesting contribution of it occurs when something is opening up new possibilities and new unexpected forms. Because of its “unstable” definition and “controversial” situation within the realm of (traditional) arts, performance, at the end of the 20th century, seems to be the obvious and strategic form by which or through which to do something. In combining ideas of doing and display, performance engages visibility.

Performance is an art that is for artists but also for society (an updated and very different approach from that of the 19th-century bourgeois). The doing factor of performance is relevant because it explains the decision taken to provoke or induce a level of communication. Performance studies, as a space for contemporary art production and analysis, and without a traditional category upon which to rely, recognizes the intrinsic aspect of communication derived from the performative body or object displayed for critical analysis. In this respect,
performance as a practice has something to say, communicate or at least propose by provoking through the combination of different natural and/or artificial mediums.

At the beginning of the last century, the avant-garde proposed the dissolution of certain borders within the realm of art productivity. Avant-gardistes declared a new way to produce that resisted conventional forms (i.e., new manifestoes). What is important to analyze here is the “effect” on the context of the arts at the end of the 20th century. The role that avant-gardistes played through many different activities (from art interventions to rallies) in order to express “the revolution” in a new (artistic) manner was fundamental to understanding contemporary (art) performance. In her text, “Performance Studies,” Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett quotes Ray Birdwhistell’s thoughts: “Performance is an inherent constituent of all communication.” The many different attitudes and performances carried out by the avant-garde displayed manifestos and generated important consequences of “artist behavior” in the years that followed. The avant-garde was promoting on many different levels ideas through performative actions. Peter Burger argues in Theory of the Avant-Garde that:

[t]he avant-garde not only negates the category of individual production but also that of individual reception. The reactions of the public during a dada manifestation where it had been mobilized by provocation, and which can range from shouting to fisticuffs, are

certainly collective in nature. True, these remain reactions, responses to a preceding provocation. Producer and recipient remain clearly distinct, however active the public may become. Given the avant-gardiste intention to do away with art as a sphere that is separate from the praxis of life, it is logical to eliminate the antithesis between producer and recipient. It is no accident that both Tzara’s instructions for the making of a Dadaist poem and Breton’s for the writing of automatic texts have the character of recipes.120

The “instructions” presented by the leaders of the avant-garde represent a stimulant way to reach a popular and diverse audience. With these instructions the avant-gardistes implemented a thought that was not restricted to the intellectual milieu because, literally, by performing these instructions the standard individual (not artist) was closer to art and was perhaps in fact able to do art or to contribute to the new ideology of “collaboration” (and to the massive production impelled by the movement). This attitude of saying by doing121 is also related in a coherent manner (that of resistance) to what was happening in terms of industrialization and industrial productivity (of ideas). Burger’s analysis is also very provocative in the sense that the “massive transmission” of the arts, ideologically speaking, provokes a “performance” of social magnitude. In speaking about the producer and the recipient Burger is consequentially presenting the work of art as a massive thing (which could be possible). In this respect, social ambition was clearly emphasized

121 See J.L. Austin’s concept of the speech act and the means by which utterances and actions do through language in How to do things with words (1997).
by the machinist sensibility of the avant-garde (the new social provokers—for a change). The theatrical machinations of the avant-garde demonstrate how performance is about communicating so as to expand new ideas through new, different (artistic) forms.

Jackson Pollock shifted the paradigms of conventional painting after the Second World War. Pollock introduced a different notion of production with his “gestures” over the canvas (which could be understood as the “embodied” facet that interprets the field of artists that paint: painting). His actions, literal drippings of paint, recorded movement and violence against a canvas. His performance, documented by both large-format canvases and Polaroid photographs, were a clear testimony of expansion within a traditional form (painting). Although Pollock was still doing “painting” he was also proposing a new phase in the way painting can be produced and reproduced. This example explains the importance of an artistic “attitude” and questions the production towards a sensitive field of art that in itself is not mass-reproduced. Pollock was revolutionary because, with his “performance” over the canvas, he was at the same time suggesting the need of

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122 Amelia Jones extends the notion of the body to the notion of the subject. In her consideration of Pollock she establishes the importance of the artist as a subject of content to the history of painting, a crucial moment of “performativity” from the discipline of painting to discuss issues of body—in this case to the body of the artist, “the performer” that does a new type of painting by actions and random gestures over a canvas. Jones extends the conventional readings of a body (dimensions and “perceptions”) into a complex system of meaning/content/context signification. The subject is then what really matters with regard to the presence of the body. See Body Art: Performing The Subject (1998).
artistic documentation. In other words, the production of a painting now also incorporates the dimension of photography as its documentation. Painting expanded to photography. What is more important or valuable here: the painting or the photograph?

Pollock also suggested a new paradigm of territory with his neo-expressionist act: the object of art is beyond its own form and always in a state of becoming something else. How and who can do art? Perhaps it is easy to drop painting on a canvas and call it “art,” and, perhaps, the result of it will look very similar to one of those very expensive Pollocks. The issue now is that this gesture of what and how to do is not new. Performance always redefines new ways to do and revises what and how to do.

To quickly summarize: this notion of a field that accepts new practices as new forms of productivity were adopted by many “subversive” or “controversial” artists of the late 20th century, akin to those new forms of productivity enacted by the avant-garde at the beginning of the century. As Burger suggests, the “producer” has the responsibility to open up the field: he or she consequently allows any standard individual to access the codes of (new) art. Was the milieu of artists always so accepting of these provocative proposals? If we think about Weintraub’s argument concerning the making of art, we can say that, of course, no. This has a reasonable explanation in the moment when these provocations took place: the artistic medium was not educated to receive that, but the context was
clamoring for it! It seems that the artistic milieu, as well as the consumers of art in the current capitalistic environment in which we live, understand that the performative component (the “strange message”) of any form could be of a certain value. Pollock was saying something within the territory of painters and visual artists; the avant-gardiste was saying something within the broad field of arts and society. Both Pollock and the avant-gardistes were provocateurs, on different scales, of the artistic scene and the society in which they lived.

Performance studies offers a space to categorize (performance) art in creative, open-ended and associative ways that did not exist before. This art is more connected to daily life routines and activities than to an installation of a mere object inside an exhibition space (a gallery, a museum or even the private house of a collector). Understood as an art *par excellence*, performance (art) has an in-between space within the fields of visual arts and the scenic arts (if we need to understand it in a conventional form). In both cases, the term *performance* is referred to as the notion of a certain body doing a certain action. These actions can be performed randomly, with certain instructions, or simply under the strict constraints of a calculated script. These actions exist and, for the most part, occur within a certain space for a limited period of time. In any artistic milieu, performance expands the notions of art, effectively reshaping society through different art or “cultural” forms. Performance exists because it appears as a result

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of some action (body or thing), and it produces an effect after its existence. The audience acts as the receiver of the “event,” “show” or “artistic action.” Although, as stated previously, the term might mean different things in many different “cultural” scenarios if we think in fields beyond traditional artistic ones. 124

The word *performance* (in the realm of visual arts and theatrical arts) is primarily related to certain conditions of *display*.125 Performance conveys a content-based meaning in a drama-related sense, rather than being a simple show of something (painting, photography and so on) for its own sake (entertainment purposes). Although it might sound basic, the possibilities of the dialogue or lack thereof between the performers and the audiences can assume many forms.126

124 Jon McKenzie offers an interesting dimension of performance associated with many different activities and practices embedded in the reality of quotidian functions. Much of the functionality of the global cultural scenario is composed by an infinite mixing of events, actions and activities that organize a continuum of effects. McKenzie explores the efficiency and the efficacy of objects. People in different situations establish the success of performance execution, or its failure. Of course all those actions happen in a cultural context that is, most of the time, regulated by forces of economical and political power. Much of McKenzie’s argument is connected to the notion of cultural performance that describes the characteristics by means of events and actions of different societies. See McKenzie, *Perform or else from discipline to performance* (2001).

125 This dissertation combines the idea of performance with the notion of display. Display is understood here in a very complex manner. It is an action associated with meaning and with the effects of that meaning. In other words, here I use the word *display* to denote an action that has a temporal existence. This existence depends not on its ephemerality but its performativity. I highlight display in relation to signifier (content and meaning), of course including the act, which is there to “present” the form (performative object) that will exist or that will be read or valued by its performativity, the reception of that form. All of this is related to specific conditions of context in the dimensions of time and place. A display is somewhere else than a mere store, therefore a very interesting place to explore performance and notions of performative and of performativity.

126 The relationship between the performer and the audience, in the world of performance, is sometimes more problematic. The existence of the performer and the audience can be blurred and not really clear for a standard individual. What performance does though is to
Many different constructions around the notion of performance can be found in the realm of art and of everyday life; different technological devices, different mediums and different strategies (agendas) of making can complicate its definition and therefore also complicate the perception that we have of it (for instance, if it is live, mediatized or replayed).¹²⁷

In the field of visual arts performance is linked to practices of “performance art” (body art or happenings). It is an art form defined by a live body utilize codes of transmission that could be (most of the time) understood or received by anyone who is aware of the situation around him or her. In this thesis I connect these ideas to the place and content of the forms presented as performance. The audience has the job to understand performance. The point here is that the level of communication assumed by or within performance unfolds with a certain efficacy if the performer coherently organizes and establishes the means for understanding the content of the performance for the receptor. At the end, the communication problem is the factor by which to construct the performance, as it is the thing perceived. The thing that performance constructs is established by the audience, the object or body performing and all the content and meaning that exist in the place where the performance is displayed.

¹²⁷ Perception is basic in all experiences. Arnold Berlandt writes: “What makes it important here is its predominance in aesthetic appreciation. Baumgarten established this when he adapted the Greek word aisthésis, perception through the senses, as the name of this new discipline, defining aesthetics as the science of sensory knowledge directed toward beauty. Sensory experience, however, is never pure sensation as the psychology of perception and social psychology have long known. Many factors shape our sensory awareness, from the physiology of the brain and other organic functions, to the formative influences of education and the other cultural institutions and practices that inform our belief system, affect our responses, and contribute to the many-layered complexity of perception. Sensation, nonetheless, lies at its center, making perception different from other modes of awareness, such as intellectual cognition, mystical bliss, and intense physical activity. Aesthetic perception, often considered peculiar to the arts, has always been at the heart of our appreciation of nature, from small objects of special beauty, such as a blossom or a stone, to monumental ones in the form of a waterfall, a canyon, or an entire landscape. Indeed, nothing in the character of aesthetic perception precludes its appropriateness for other objects and situations. Perceptual experience may also dominate certain social occasions, such as moments of affection between parents and children or between friends or lovers, and also times of quarrel or hatred.” See The aesthetics of everyday life (2005), 26–27.
in a scene based on a presentation, and through these terms “performance art” can
be related to—or confused with—theater or drama. As art historian RoseLee
Goldberg explains, performance is a live art that shapes freely between a number
of disciplines.128 She declares that there is no other artistic form of expression that
has such a boundless manifesto since each “performance” is produced by its own
means, by the process and manner of execution.129

Goldberg explores the provocative work created by the Futurists. She argues
that the futurists performed “declamations,” which for them strategically became a
new form of theatre.130 The futurists used the political scenario of Italy at the
time131 to reform the arts by using new ideas related to nationalism and
colonialism. The futurists promoted performance by using traditional art through
painting, among other mediums:

129 Ibid.
130 “On his return to Italy, Marinetti went into action with the production of his play
*Poupée électriques* at the Teatro Alfieri in Turin. Prefaced, Jarry-style, by an energetic
introduction, mostly based on the 1909 manifesto, it firmly established Marinetti as a
curiosity in the Italian art world and the ‘declamation’ as a new form of theatre that was to
become a trademark of the young Futurists in the following years.” RoseLee Goldberg,
*Performance Art: From Futurism to the present*, 13.
131 The “political scenario” is relevant to this thesis because it establishes a dimension of
space that is hardly malleable by means of “democratic” societies. The notion of a
political scenario installs, first, the ideological dimensions associated with a cultural
dimension and, second, the interest of place, perceived by “forces” and “energies” that are
not only related or resultant from a materialized form. Architecture is a very sophisticated
tool of spatial construction that can and should organize meanings and functions, concerns
and desires in many different orders and by means of the material forms of space.
Performance then is a plus to understand, project and manipulate architecture in this
direction (toward performance and performance studies).
Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrá, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini and Giacomo Balla, with the ever-present Marinetti, published the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*. Having already used Cubism and Orphism to modernize the appearance of their paintings, the young Futurists translated some of the original manifesto ideas of speed and love of danger into a blueprint for Futurist painting. On April 30, 1911, one year after publication of their joint manifesto, the first group showing of paintings under the Futurist umbrella opened in Milan with works by Carrá, Boccioni and Russolo among others. These actions illustrated how a theoretical manifesto could actually be applied to painting.\(^{132}\)

In describing their “performance” Goldberg continues:

“The *gesture* for us will no longer be a fixed moment of universal dynamism: it will be decisively the dynamic sensation made eternal,” they declared. With equally ill-defined insistence on “activity” and “change” and art “which finds its components in its surroundings,” the Futurist painters turned to performance as the most direct means of forcing an audience to take note of their ideas. Boccioni for example had written “that painting was no longer an exterior scene, the setting of a theatrical spectacle.” Similarly, Soffici had written “that the spectator (must) live at the center of the painted action.” So it was this prescription for Futurist painting that also justified the painters’ activities as performers.\(^{133}\)

The opportunities impelled by new performative (art) practices gradually changed the panorama of *what* to do and *how* to do art. Goldberg notes that the avant-garde movement was the expression of “dissidents” who have attempted to

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\(^{132}\) RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the present*, 14.

\(^{133}\) Ibid.
find other means to *evaluate* art experience in everyday life.\textsuperscript{134} She suggests that a new form, as an artistic “gesture,” could emerge from quotidian acts. Again, these new acts (provoked by different types of artists) had the power to change and transform cultural conventions. Their actions incorporated an implicit performative gesture to push for a better society through the call for revolution\textsuperscript{135}.

This is relevant not only because of the situation itself and what has been said here, nor through the mixing and blurring of art with daily life activities, but rather because all these thoughts (new beliefs) and actions (the pieces resulting from these thoughts) promote a certain development within the arts and, consequently, expand the opportunities to produce art. The “performance” of the avant-garde was a real contribution to the development of the arts at the beginning of the 20th century. In other words, the “dissidents” were visionaries who executed a platform for a change at the beginning of the century.

Now, the world we live in is the consequence of what other people have projected, provoked, foresaw or implemented one hundred years ago. The passage of this movement through the course of an entire century suggests that an idea

\textsuperscript{134} Ibid., 8.

\textsuperscript{135} The speech-act in this context is related to the representations used to transmit ideas, to present ideas in front of an audience. Architecture and architectural representation has to house this discourse in order to expand notions of project and design. Architecture transmits by means of the forms of a space. If the messages of many different architectures connect, then the perception of a cityscape or an artificial landscape could become more coherent in terms of democracy, development and evolution. Think about the speech-act of important buildings and public spaces of a city; they represent the society in which they are embedded.
needs time to be consistently implemented (this was literally a revolution in the art world). After one hundred years, artists as well as intellectuals are used to working with these ideas, which is why new programs of education such as PS exist. (It is not rare to have a cultural context adjusted and evolved to accept these manifestoes as “coherent” ideas.) Ideas such as the ones promoted one hundred years ago now affect the way we see, think and produce (art). They all sound “traditional” and possible. Then now: What is art?

In the introduction of *Everything Seemed Possible: Art in the 1970s* Richard Cork discusses many different articles written for the *Evening Standard newspaper* between 1971 and 1981—marking, with great lucidity, the moment of art history near the end of the 20th century that provoked a change. There were many reasons: different artists, different work and different materials. Cork establishes that, already by 1969, a large number of serious artists were concerned with redefining the nature of art, seizing on new materials and new approaches in order to escape from the old preconceptions about what art “should be.” He, similarly to Goldberg, also describes how the artists congregated in different groups to begin employing new strategies (as they wished) to perform change. The meaning of the word “art” has always changed according to the requirements and

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136 The program included much art of the “scenes” happening in New York, London and Europe beginning in the 1970s. Most of the art presented was very controversial because it utilized “new” mediums and “new” forms that were not previously established as art. Of course performance played a principal role in much of the contemporary visual arts of the second part of the last century.
aspirations of society. The 1970s became a period within the arts where many of the ideas generated since the early part of the century were firmly established. Since that time, nothing has seemed off-limits. Movements such as abstract expressionism, minimalism, happenings, fluxus, neo-dada, op art, arte povera, body art, performance art, and conceptualism, among many others became part of the mainstream of that time.

Allan Kaprow’s writes: “The line between art and life should be kept as fluid, and perhaps indistinct, as possible.” He suggests a type of artistic production without boundaries and blurred with quotidian life. What happens when an art form begins in the museum and ends on the street? What happens when intellectual property belongs to an artist but also to the group of people who worked through the process and received it? What happens when a work is transformed into something else after its existence? Under strict artistic parameters these are questions that could be explored by performance. However, not in a strict theatrical context and not in the formality of an exhibition space.

Conceptual artists at the end of the 20th century pushed the limits of what could be understood as art. They created a new language of operation that

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139 Henry Flynt, a composer, coined the term *conceptual art* in 1961. Flynt stated that the material of conceptual art is concepts: “Since concepts are closely bound up with language, *Concept Art* is a kind of art which the material is language.” Then, in 1967, Sol Lewitt declared in *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art* that this type of art supposes that “all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a per functionary
implemented new territories of practice. The relevance of conceptual art, as a “new” type of artistic production, has its beginning when Marcel Duchamp\textsuperscript{140} intuitively declared the end of conventional art practices with a single gesture of resistance: a displaced mass-produced object. In 1915 he stated that art could be about ideas and actions in order to highlight the rational understanding of the mind. Art since the avant-garde is more than a mere physical construction that provokes the eye (what Duchamp called “retinal” art) and has a goal beyond its limits. That goal is what results from the effects of delivery and display. The avant-garde resisted traditional conventions installed during the previous century.

affair.” The dematerialization of the art form is evident. In both definitions, the idea represents the force that makes the piece. It is the objective of the conceptual artist to produce intellectually interesting work for the spectator, and there is no reason to suppose that the conceptual artist is producing work to bore the viewer. Conceptual art is concerned with stimulating the mind in different ways, perhaps in new ways never explored before. This is what later on will be called “participation” (or, for Nicolas Bourriaud, relational aesthetics), an awareness of what the piece does or what it provokes for the spectator who engages it. The ideas behind conceptual art should be simple and “logical” (rather than illogical); purpose is to be direct and to have a clear and a direct response from the audiences’ intellect. What is offered then implies that different people will understand the same thing in different ways. The piece and the meaning of it are more in the hands of the receiver rather than in the provocateur (the artist). See Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, eds., “Language and Concepts,” *Theories and documents of contemporary art, a source book of artists writing* (1996).

\textsuperscript{140} Although Duchamp used many different mediums, such as painting, sculpture and ready-mades or “installations,” visual and formal concern was not a primary issue in his art. The eye was directly connected to what the mind had to say, and emotions then were only considered as the result of a process of understanding through the mind. This notion of art has become his legacy and shaped the production of future generations of artists by shifting the traditional way to conceive and do a piece. Fifty years later, in the 1960s, Duchamp’s ideas about art were recognized and incorporated into many different types of art, by many different type of artists. Joseph Kosuth, George Maciunas, Yves Klein, and many others mixed their “practice” with performance. Duchamp expressed his radical objective when he presented his first ready-made. This was the time when he intuitively declared the end of having to do art in such traditional manners.
This was an important moment in art history, when artists started to communicate different ways of producing and understanding art forms through the incorporation of actions.

The parameters of conceptual art were set, described and ruled by the openness to different possibilities and decisions of the mind. Art culture has changed. What now is the answer to the question, What is art? The response is: Art is what it is and wants to be in this specific moment and in the presence of others, now.

The production of art since the mid-1960s was somehow blurred between the high intellectual (thinkers) and the mundane world of “standard” people. As history demonstrates, the early 20th-century industrial era and now, at the early 21st-century, technological era comprise highly developed ideological concepts, economical concerns and social repercussions that artists incorporate into their work to state a position within the frame of contextual political scenarios.

Performance artists are concerned and aware of “things” as valuable events of life. Activists and artists in the late 1970s began to push the boundaries of how to represent and express a thought. With many exhibitions and publications of his work, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Duchamp’s impact on the experimental and ideational direction of art became decisive. The display of ready-made pieces changed the notion of art because for the very first time any ordinary object, just by making a decision to call it such, could become art. From this angle, such a

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new reading represented the beginning of an era where art was no longer the result of the production of traditional aesthetic practices. As a consequence, Duchamp’s notion of art expanded the different disciplines of art by offering new possibilities of practice and analysis. Conceptual art opened new debates to question the frontiers of how to act being/becoming an artist.

Thinking of a process to make art,¹⁴² and in avant-gardiste terms, is perhaps the best way to implement a new attitude by which to approach how now to explain performance in a broad sense and, more specifically, to explain art forms that relate to social values. Conceptualists agree that the presentation of a piece of art is more important than what the piece is in formal and perhaps functional terms. Such aspects of the object (the displaced presence of the object implies many ideas behind it), taken out of its normal context, allow for its meaning and its value to be reshaped (that is the matter behind the idea). The dadas or the conceptualists are not interested in construction as a matter of craftsmanship. What is relevant, then, is that ready-mades highlight a paradox in our time: how to express an idea without having to build it from scratch or through pre-existing conventional forms? (Rather than using pre-existing conventional forms, artists now might use pre-existing conventional objects to subvert those forms, hence creating nonconventional ideologies about art.) One could say that an artist’s

¹⁴² The idea to “make art” is relevant because, beyond aspects of production, to make art means to think and choose what is or potentially could be art. Make art denotes an action that, therefore, could be associated with performance and performativity.
decisions represent in fact the construction of the piece, which is intended to be read (if the art is meant to communicate) by the audience. The artist has the choice to select the moment when he or she decides to show/do something; in other words, to select the conceptual construction in time and space to construct a performance.

One aspect that is crucial to reinforce here is the presence of the audience. Conceptual pieces provoke the spectator and demand a certain mental reaction, so the piece is not for everyone but for “some” (in this sense, some performances could be only for “some”—intellectuals—that understand). These aspects now constitute a point: What is performance and what is the relevance of performativity in an action? Could ideas of the performative operate not only in the territory of visual and performing arts but, eventually, in the territory of architecture as well? Certainly, the way artists display ideas constitutes a key aspect to present “meaning.”

Joseph Kosuth makes this point evident with his piece One and three chairs (Fig. 16). In this piece, Kosuth confronts representation of three different

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143 Performance is about its interpreters, but is also about the audience. Interpreters “enact” performance, do performance and execute performance. Interpreters could be people but also buildings and societies. The audience that receives the performance or “understands” the interpreter could be known or unknown. This connects to issues of private and public, to personal and collective, to massive and global. The audience could be smart and exist but also not smart and nonexistent (although, they would still exist elsewhere). The last group is the group of people that performance studies does not include in their studies and perhaps none or only few academics programs really consider it.
presentations of a “possible” chair: 1) a chair (although it could be of any kind or style, “a chair is a chair”); 2) an image of a chair (through a photograph, which brings up the question about the type of chair and the similarities it has to the original); 3) and a description of that same chair (that highlights the memory, “an image” we could have as result of the chair’s non-[visual] presence).

Fig. 1.17 – *One and Three Chairs*, Joseph Kosuth (1965).

Kosuth is presenting an argument, through *One and Three Chairs* (Fig.1.17), about language and its de-codification. Conceptualism fuses different mediums with philosophical ideas. Art now relies on the existence of the mind

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144 See *Performalism* in the Introduction of this dissertation.
or, rather, in the existence of a language that will operate in conjunction with the possible readings of the mind; art relies on its intellectual engagement with the audience. Language is the primary source for the epistemological structure of knowledge and conditions the very making, presentation and reception of art.145

In describing the beginning of performance art, Krisine Stiles argues that this type of artistic form emerged almost simultaneously in Japan, Europe and the United States after the Second World War.146 Other historians could argue that the beginning of performance art is located in movements such as the Futurists, Constructivists, Surrealists and Dadaists among other groups. This search for a fixed definition is something similar to what happens in PS, trying to define itself. In a sense, PS could define itself from the earliest manifestations of performance. Is important to clarify and insist that only after a period of time did the name “performance” regularly appear. Conceptual art and performance art as practical

146 “Performance art” manifests after the World War II in different scenarios. It is not evident that it is a consequence of the war in the view of many artists that wanted to change the world by means of concrete actions. Of course, there are other initial “gestures” toward performance within the frame of visual arts—what Goldberg associates with futurism but otherwise could explain through Duchamp or other moments within the avant-garde. In the specific scenario after the Second World War, performance arises very clearly with artists who generate intellectual production and others whose work is more practical. It is in this second group where performance will draw new lines of individual and collective expression through street actions, rallies and activism—all “performances.” The field expanded to the street but also within the intellectual circuit (art for other artists). The public manifestation of performance closes a circle that started with the theater, and the developments in art and performance during the 1970s connects the scenic and visual arts “collapse” to the street with “real” architecture.
“action” are technically visible only after the mid-20th century; prior to that, they were not as fixed, or “precise.” Taking art out of traditional circuits of exhibition and bringing it closer to the people, allowing them to experience it, becomes the last main idea in this chapter: the performance and the performativity of architecture.

Richard Cork, editor of Studio International Magazine, provocatively writes in a special issue dedicated to architecture and art (titled “architecture < > art”):

It may seem paradoxical for a magazine like Studio International to devote a whole issue to examining the interaction between art and architecture. The two disciplines have not, so far as the 20th century is concerned, managed to achieve any sustained basis for mutually beneficial exchange of shared ideas.\(^{147}\)

Although the avant-garde already impelled many of these ideas, and the “alternative” galleries of that time where open to and inspired by this new art scene, Cork warns that there is also danger to a speculation of this kind, to “integrate” art and architecture. This integration is dangerous because

\[\text{[i]t could end up celebrating the importance of interdisciplinary discourse without bothering to retain an equally necessary understanding of how art and architecture differ from each other. It}\]

might be tempting to start making airy claims about the breaking-down of the barriers between the two media, and regard this dissolution as an automatically healthy state of affairs.\footnote{Ibid.}

Although Cork accepted the thinking of the “new” style in his writing, he was still cautious about the real implications of it to each field and practice. Although he was promoting the “shared” space and therefore promoting the dissolution of strict borders between art and architecture, Cork establishes that the conventions of academia are still alive and the thinking of the intellectuals is still driven by existing standards. Currently, these distinctions and conventional fields, determining how to address such situations, still exist. The common and shared territory of cultural practices that exist today accepts a multidisciplinary curriculum that considers performance to be a non-restricted term of inclusion. In other words, the existence of such thinking as a possible terrain of intellectual and professional practice exists because the academic milieu today is continuing to develop and progress (through programs and departments such as cultural studies, performance studies and so on). Now, what if we consider architecture within the vast territory of PS?

When art is related to architecture, then the space (the context of where art is placed) begins to shape and to mold the piece—and therefore its reception as well. This might sound evident now, but in the 1970s it was a significant discovery to
find new possibilities for the artistic artifact within site-specific spaces or contexts. Architecture is found in the everyday and is part of the always evolving society; as performance it does not have a definite form (although it might look like it does). Art in this dimension demands more of the quotidian than ever—the value of a piece is no longer relevant because of what it is in itself (its formal aspect), but because of what it does with the spectator in a certain space and within a specific social context.

In *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writing*, Kristine Stiles explains performance art as such:

By emphasizing the body as art, these artists amplified the role of process over product and shifted from representational objects to presentational modes of action that extended the formal boundaries of painting and sculpture into real time and movement in space. Removing art from pure formalist concerns and the commodification of objects, they also sought to reengage the artist and spectator by reconnecting art to the material circumstances of social and political events. 149

Performance art incorporates the surrounding context to place performative gestures (or manifestations) in a more immediately evident way than in the production of conceptual art (which was more focused on the intellectual context). After 1950, all the progressive production of art fell into a category of a certain

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“performance-related” work because the boundaries between types of artistic practices became less rigid than they had been before. The umbrella of “performance” accommodates many different manifestations of art, including architecture.\textsuperscript{150} Live actions, though, are impossible to articulate with clear definitions. Initially artists invented different terms to describe their performative intent: happenings, fluxus, actions, rituals, demonstrations, direct art, destruction art, event art, and body art, among many others.\textsuperscript{151} Already by 1973, however, the stylistic range and ideological differences between these different forms had been subsumed by critics into the single category of “performance.” This occurred despite protests by many artists who complained that the term depoliticized their goals and disarmed their work by the term’s proximity to theater, then associated by many with entertainment.\textsuperscript{152} This is a crucial point in the sense that

\textsuperscript{150} RoseLee Goldberg describes performance as a manifesto without precedent in the history of art: “Performance draws freely on any number of disciplines and media—literature, poetry, theatre, music, dance, architecture and painting, as well as video, film, slides and narrative—for material, deploying them in any combination.” See Golberg. “Introduction” in \textit{Performance Art from futurism to the present}.


\textsuperscript{152} Europeans opposed the term performance art. They argued that the term connoted theater and not really visual art. The explanation is directly related to the “events” of taverns and other spaces where artists congregated and that many of the times were more related to practices with the body. In fact much of the work that started with the futurists and the avant-gardists in general, used the body as a medium “serious” expression (Fig.1.14). This notion of performance as theater is also exacerbated when looking at collective manifestations that are more in the sense of collective “force” as actions of activism.
performance studies was born, as stated before, from the influences of theater and anthropology.\textsuperscript{153}

PS understands performance (drama, theater, performance art, visual arts) as two possible practices (although, within my argument, I am considering them simultaneously, as only one practice): 1) from theater (with emphasis in the speech act and the interpreter); and 2) from exhibition spaces of any type (with emphasis on an action and the place where it takes place). There is, however, a third possibility: one that fuses both, a sophisticated artifact that includes all of the above plus a concrete consciousness of the place were performance is located in material form. A “spatial performance” suggests a very complex act. If words, gestures and actions are understood in a broader context that orchestrates them. A spatial «gesture» within the spaces of the quotidian intersects with the field of architecture.

\textsuperscript{153} In this sense, and for the purposes of this dissertation, it is relevant to mention the existence of many large architecture studios that consider issues of market, productivity, mass and popular media as well as technology and city culture when they are developing an architectural project (or design in a broader sense). Paradoxically, these studios are also often related to private and public institutions, both for- and non-profit, and their projects perform on many different levels in terms of architecture and public realms as well as entertainment. One example of this would be the case of Rockwellgroup, where I had the opportunity to work from 2003 to 2005. Rockwellgroup takes on large-scale theatre and architectural projects including productions such as \textit{Hairspray} on Broadway, theatres such as the Kodak Theater in Los Angeles, and public spaces including a playground in downtown Manhattan. For more about Rockwellgroup visit www.rockwellgroup.com. This office also collaborate with other big firms and after the attack to the World Trade Center they collaborates with Diller Scofidio + Renfro to assist with the temporal ramp that was constricted on on the site. Rockwellgroup now is also expanding to the film industry.
Let's think about the future and how to project the future. It is in this sense that the Futurists (Fig. 1.18) proposed a revolution for both the fields of art and architecture. They were visionaries that somehow confronted the past and the conventions of the present to think and project the future. Architectural history has been somehow shaped and inspired by many different models that were about about the possible future. Architectural practices are about envisioning that time-space situations that will happen ahead of our now.
CHAPTER II

About space design: on architecture and performance (studies)

Fig. 2.1- Le Corbusier (1887 – 1965).

Who is an architect? What is it that he or she does and how does he or she do it? What is a building? What is it that it does and how does it do it? What does it mean to be an architect and what does it mean to make architecture in the early 21st century? (Fig. 2.1). These questions have been constantly present since the
moment I intuitively decided to find a new path, shifting from the core discipline of architecture to a different one: performance, which is less dense, less solid, less static and less linear. This decision is one of ambition; it does not exclude the passion that one could have for architecture (and the arts). To the contrary, it has to be understood, as a decision with purpose, a drive to leave architecture with the objective to search for new tools and new “stories” that will somehow (and eventually) contribute back to my original field. This dissertation Highlights the in-between space (between performance studies and architectural theory) to develop a dialogue between the two disciplines.

PS as a field that offers a wide range of approaches to understand performance. It allows us, through its lens, to “see” what performance could be. This concept, when associated with an aesthetic practice such as architecture, can help us understand the “performance” (in a broad sense) of constructed forms. Architectural acts have certain purpose. They can range from the presentation of an idea that provokes consciousness about concrete problems and consequently impels some change in the future; or, they can be understood as the solution to dwellings in many different forms; or as the construction of a space that might act as a platform for encounters (i.e., a plaza); or the building of a prominent display

\[^{154}\text{Masters thesis on Architecture: “Arquitectura como performance-estaciones del errante” (Architecture as Performance: Stations of the Wanderers). Defended at the school of Architecture at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile December 27, 1999.}\]
that represents a political or ideological position (i.e., the destroyed World Trade Center or a government house).155

Architecture produces effects even if those effects are not “scripted” as an explicitly declared intention. After the object is built, architecture constructs another layer that is more related to signifiers and meanings. Architecture builds new spaces and therefore new forms that organize perception; what it constructs after its concrete presence is a more fragile and subjective space, related to the sense of place (on, with and as a result of context). This construction is what really interests me: the afterwards construction of architecture, the result and the effect of it. This result contributes to a level of identity associated with the object and in the level of certain emotional “connections” to specific territories that explain belonging. (This is not a new perspective if we think about existentialist philosophy.)156 It is from this point of action that performance and PS contribute to

155 Architectural acts inspire me. I understand these acts as gestures (sings, sketches and drawings on a paper), but also as the actual construction of material form (i.e., a building). Architectural acts also refer to the intentions (or performances) of those gestures and those constructions; they have a purpose in both cases, when displayed as ideas and as well as when constructed. In this respect I am inspired by the catalogue of the exhibition “Perfects Acts of Architecture,” realized in 2001 with the support of Wexner Center for the Arts at Ohio State University, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This exhibition included the work of prominent architects Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis, Peter Eisenman, Bernard Tschumi and Daniel Liebeskind, among others. In the Foreword to the catalogue, the Director of the Wexner Center for the Arts and the director of the MOMA write: “[Architecture] serves as a fascinating and reliable bellwether of contemporary culture.” See Perfect Acts of Architecture (2001), 7

156 The philosophical dimensions of the self are also very relevant in a project of “space.” If we think in holistic ways the project of space might need compliments from other areas that are more connected with preceptions and emotions. If intersected with the field of architecture performance practices and performances studies gain concrete “medium” or
architecture: to shape perceptions and experiences as the result of certain “desires” of a human dimension. This is the project that interests me as an architect, the modes by which performance and PS shape the perception of certain crucial moments, whether in the form of a unique event or an activity within daily life. PS proposes questions about practices and disciplines that might allow for a future consideration of a potential object’s effects (and affects). The future of architecture could become a new paradigm of concerns when considering performance and performance studies.157

There are also other disciplines and ideologies that might find other interests in thinking about “performance” within the scope of architecture. A politician might perhaps think about architecture as a way to implement political agendas. A political “act” could use architecture to display the “connection” the politician has with people and society. Others could see architecture as a tool to operante and therefore instigate change. To explore about this one should go to the pesimistic aspects of life rather than the optimistics (just to see the project). See texts and “stories” about existencialism and human philosophy: Jean Paul Sartre: La nausée (1938), Albert Camus: La chute (1956) and Franz Kafka: Die Verwandlung (1915).

157 Performance studies analyze many different “gestures” of expressive culture. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests that PS offers new paradigms to the disciplines that it intersects. Although Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests this in relation to the new paradigms that unfold from New York University (which engages a broad spectrum of performance), Northwestern University (aesthetics of communication), University of Paris VIII (ethnoscenology), there are also parallel paradigms that might intersect performance studies. Considerations of performance and the incorporation of performance studies analysis and methodology can help to expand the field of certain specific practices and therefore the way that they are studied and consequently performed. Each field or discipline, such as architecture, might develop new paradigms when confronted with ideas from performance and performance studies. See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Performance Studies,” The Performance Studies Reader, 44–47. See Erin Striff ed., Performance Studies (2003).
phenomenon of interest for the development of new economic models or new technologies and techniques. Engineers or those within the corporate realm, for instance, might see architecture as a means to enhance the product design industry. This industry in particular is, among other things, related to the construction of multiple objects and is therefore inspired by a constant reproduction of those constructions within a capitalist society. Architecture can be understood as both solving the “needs” of mass markets and also as the product of goals of expansion of certain specific knowledges (to make other new products) and economies. When enriched with a consciousness of performance and performance studies, architecture can function both within an economic and intellectual continuum.

There is also the question of ethics to address. Philosophers, and even critics of architecture, might find in architecture some answers that can explain things about who we are and the society we live in. Architecture, therefore, could be also understood as a tool that contributes to the shaping of identity. From this

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158 Tom Spector writes, “the role of the architect involves obligations that are not easily reduced to issues of mere technical competence. An Architect addresses client’s needs through the medium of the built environment and helps protect the public against the dangers of shoddy and insensitive building. In assuming these obligations, an architect is charged with resolving often incommensurate demands. It is this activity, ultimately, that justifies the architect’s special status as a professional and distinguishes him or her from, say, an artist or technician. The architect is hired, at least in part, to take on the ethical dilemmas of building.” See “The professional obligations of an architect,” *The Ethical Architect: the dilemma of contemporary practice* (2001), 5.

159 Architecture is understood here as a complex object that is the consequence of multiple demands and which eventually produces and reproduces a new set of networked demands with new requirements that address the needs of other complexities. Architecture is embedded within a complex system of relations that literally contributes to the existence of the city as a major living organism.
approach many other individuals concerned with ideas about space productivity might be interested (to consider the broader impact of performance on architecture, society and its culture). Performance offers many angles from which to approach architecture and to investigate the performance of cultural expressions (through spaces and different scenarios).

The position that I have here, in PS, allows me to read the architect and his/her role as a “performer” within our society. Of course, now I read the object of architecture and its “impact” from a much more complex dimension composed of the many ideas presented here. These ideas are embedded in the project of architecture, contributing to shape both its process and its product. The sensitivity that performance (art practices) contributes to this dimension presents new issues to the project of space and therefore to the project of architecture. A relevant component that performance and PS offers to architecture in relation to its practice

In this respect, there are “cultural” studies that include notions of performance as an exploration and production of space and identity construction (sociology, anthropology, psychology, gender, politics, philosophy and so on). Scholarships about such expansions of performance are related to history and to a sense of belonging. Joseph Roach explores ideas about surrogation in terms of memory and archives in Cities of the Dead (1996). Nestor García Canclini explores notions of hybrid forms of cultures and identities in Culturas Híbridas: Estrategias para entrar y salir de la modernidad (1990) but considers these ideas in terms of a macro. Also engaging identity is Joel Sanders, ed., Stud: Architectures of Masculinity (1996), a study of the construction of spaces through the complex interdependency of gender and architecture as cultural productions. Similarly, see Aaron Betsky, Building Sex: men, women, architecture and the constructions of sexuality (1995) and Queer Space: architecture and same-sex desire (1997). Professor José Muñoz has recently contributed to this bibliography with Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics (1999). The list is long and it is not my aim to do more than point out a few of these interconnected ideas that explain and express multiples approaches to investigate our (urban) contemporary culture.
is creating new layers of information to add to the project in question. Performance and performance studies might enhance the project of architecture, reshaping a project that sometimes seems to be rigid and very solid because of its pre-established simple conventions—which is my main critique to current architectural practice. Now, mainstream current practices of architecture are reinvigorated by the dimensions performance might address, allowing for architecture to adopt much more diverse and complex methodologies that in themselves may reach out to other areas of practice. Performance questions the initial and main concerns of the practice, which is about role and signifiers.

Fig. 2.2 – *Break Time - Rockefeller Center*, Charles C. Ebbets (1932)\(^\text{160}\)

\(^{160}\) In this extraordinary image of Charles C. Ebbets, “Break Time,” we see that the “stability” of those workers is admirable. Something similar to this, is what happens to me
Important things (events) have happened when (radical) artists searched for new forms in which to perform their “task” or “role” as an artist or cultural contributor to their society. Architects can definitively explain their practices as a means to solve multiple types of concerns; they could, of course, promote new dimensions of cultural productivity in relation to spatial construction as they are the ones that deal with space (in a complex manner) and the organization of it (in an aesthetical form). Architects should think and produce projects that could go beyond a specific site. This is paradoxical because my feeling is that current standards of productivity, immersed in a world that values the efficiency and the rapid execution of “things” on all sort of levels, have pushed the architect to become a “producer” of space rather than a creator of space. Many constraints of the culture and societies that we share, which demand “practical” and “efficient” solutions, have pushed the architect to find solutions like a machine. The architect has become the director of an orchestra that is already organized. These are the conventions and standards constructed and adopted by societies, which at the end both challenges and controls the architect’s task in society. Finally, the project of the architect could also be referred to “the connection” that a project of architecture has with another existing project; therefore, from this perspective, the

when I try to describe a field that is instable but yet with its rules and characteristics. Ebbets’ image is very provocative in terms of the “break.” Performance studies contribute in very unexpected manners to think about practices, shifts, moves, methodologies and forms. In this image, the maximum height, corresponds to the those tired workers.
project discussed (as the practice) would be working towards the *unification of space* rather than towards creating more differences within it. Instead of building one building the architect could be working on projects that enhance existing system of spatial relations in accordance with the preexistence of others that exist within contextual circumstances, time and place experiences.

After many recent events (earthquakes, mounted wars, radiation alarms and so on), and of course understanding the fast transformation of society we live in (by ideas of democracy and the implementation of new technologies), we, as architects, need to adjust and adapt architecture. Architecture is no longer about the rigid and solid building that is going to last forever; it is about the construction of fluid forms and spaces that are in constant flux, and that might present and represent this contemporary condition of culture that is also in constant flux—and that is embodied in many different “products” that soon became obsolete. This thesis does not present a solution, but offers a means of addressing these issues. Architecture changes faster in the current, faster world in which we live. Some cities need to reimagine themselves in order to exist within a worldview of desire.

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161 Many architects project their buildings as unique forms without a real consciousness of the context surrounding the new project. An example of this would be new development in Santiago, where new construction develops to meet the economic needs of the “growth” of the nation. These buildings construct Santiago’s “new” cityscape, a cityscape that represents a new Chile, with a strong economic power. This area, unfortunately, has been built poorly and without considering one’s neighbors. The area is not really connected at the pedestrian level, and not even connected in its street level. It does not solve the problem of the “performance” in terms of mobility and transportation. Surely the image of strong and solid buildings declares that the country is stable in economical terms (Fig. 2.1).
and consumption. Other cities, in Asia and Africa, require different strategies of reimagining as they are, in fact, historical pieces that represent culture and human civilization. The strategies to make these cities “live” (in terms of a global presence), even if it is for a temporary moment, are related to strategies that represent them as “attractions,” to implement new markets and economies, that ultimately will present them as possible areas to visit for new experiences of “other” cultures. The city is then a working machine that builds up and reshapes an archive that is always re-adjusting itself to a human scale. The city as a cultural manifestation constitutes a compilation of traces and stories that explain the space we share as living individuals that belong, present and project reality.

These are the “new” fancy cities that have implemented through major acts of architecture an urbanism that locates them on the global map. They are “re-constructed” in terms of their societies and landscapes as new cities: Barcelona, Bilbao, Brasilia in its moment, Bogotá and other cities of Colombia few years ago, recently Shangai and Abu Dabi. In this line, Santiago has also become a “new” city.
It is in this sense that the work of Professor Diana Taylor is of great value. Her questions about politics, identity and belonging, referred to the “acts of transfer,” are pertinent here to emphasize how a living body carries out and displays culture. Taylor also queries the many of the possibilities of the word \textit{performance} and the implications that it offers to new political and socio-cultural scenarios. Understood as “actions” that trespass a certain level of information, experience and values, performance plays a fundamental role in the construction of meaning and history. Stories are going to be told within those constructions; other performances will emerge from those act of transfer. The transfer of “content” that Taylor searches for exists in the actions performed by artists, scholars and of course other individuals that do not belong to the exclusive milieu of academics and intellectuals.\footnote{Diana Taylor’s concerns (and perhaps those of her colleagues) engage how “performance” and the notions of it (in the broad sense) could be related to the “political” and the “politics” of the Americas. Performance studies, as an academic discipline, serves Taylor and all the team of the Hemispheric Institute as a platform of new knowledge that}

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\textbf{Fig. 2.3 – Costanera Center, César Pelli + Alempanre y Barreda Asociados architects (2006-2012)\footnote{The building started construction on March 2006 under the government of Ricardo Lagos, the project is still in process as some problems have come through the execution. The estimate cost of construction is USD $ 600 M. The return is calculated on USD $ 150 M a year. The building and the complex that is on construction is already provoking problems with traffic and access to the area. The building is still not working on its full capacity. I did a strong critique that was published on the local newspaper \textit{El Mercurio} (19 August 2010). The building will give 600.000.000 square meters, with this number it is going to be the biggest complex of this kind in South America. For more see the publication online: “Arquitecto Rodrigo Tisi califica como un ‘desastre’ barrio empresarial ‘Sanhattan’” online: http://www.emol.com/noticias/economia/detalle/detallenoticias.asp?idnoticia=431487 (3 April 2010).}}
\end{flushleft}
presents performance as an act of imprinting, an act that moves or re-moves information from one place to another:

Performances function as a vital act of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory and a sense of identity through reiterated [gestures], or what Richard Schechner has called “twice-behaved behavior” [in reference to his studies on rituals].

The importance of Taylor’s approach is related to the body and to all that it can be trespassed by it. Much of this is learned, some experienced, and some discovered by means of the learned and the experienced. The point, then, and in relation to the practice and effects of architecture—of a building, a city or a society—is that the archive that Taylor presents in the (living) body is replicated in yields the formation of a new academic institution. The new institution can be understood as a project framed by “culture” and “society” in terms of wide ranges of expression. Taylor’s work looks for crossover points between intellectuals and artists, and local people to construct a definition of performance and performance practices that are pertinent to the understanding and the shaping of (new) culture in the Americas, all within the context of a post-colonial, capitalist era. Taylor founded the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics in the wing of performance studies at NYU in 1996. The mission of the Institute is described as “a collaborative, multilingual and interdisciplinary network of institutions, artists, scholars, and activists throughout the Americas. Working at the intersection of scholarship, artistic expression and politics, the organization explores embodied practice—performance—as a vehicle for the creation of new meaning and the transmission of cultural values, memory and identity. Anchored in its geographical focus on the Americas (thus “hemispheric”) and in three working languages (English, Spanish and Portuguese), our goal is to promote vibrant interactions and collaborations at the level of scholarship, art practice and pedagogy among practitioners interested in the relationship between performance and politics in the hemisphere.” For more information about this project visit: http://hemisphericinstitute.org/hemi/ (2 March 2011)

Diana Taylor, “Acts of Transfer,” Archive and the Repertoire: performing cultural memory in the Americas (2003), 2. The quote has been highlighted with the intention to denote the importance that these acts represent for this thesis. For my argument, the “gestures” that are the actual transfers of content and the actual performances and rituals might, in Schechner’s terms, be repeated to the infinite. For more on this, see ideas of play, performing and rituals in Richard Schechner, The Performance Studies Reader (2002).
the (living) building or city this thesis presents. A living building or city that is fueled by the existence of people doing, acting and performing in and with it. Taylor defines PS in ways that supplement Richard Schechner’s and Peggy Phelan’s definitions when she speaks about acts and experiences (impelled by the nature of human performances, living bodies doing things). From this angle, the interpretation of her work is directly related to the archive (ARKHE) and the repertoire (BODY). Taylor articulates concerns about ARKHE in terms of “building” constructions that archive meaning, knowledge, experiences and the BODY understood as a space that changes and creates, and is of a different nature through its own “cultural” construction. Architecture is a complex machine that combines both the moving and the static, the mutable but also the permanent. This overlaps with an interesting notion of material knowledge that could be dissected to explore culture—culture as framed by the combination of history and stories + architecture. Another type of transfer might be indicated or achieved through architecture and architectural representation. This is content is related to ideals and desires that could be impelled by the design and construction of new spaces, which, if we think in radical terms, could shape new identities, new beliefs and therefore new realities—and, at the end, new individuals.

To summarize up to this point about the role of the architect, I would like to highlight possible distortions that are very welcome to be considered when “becoming” at architect. These distortions are, I believe, of great interest because
they inspire to speculate, debate and eventually materialize in new ideas. Performance serves to re-fresh what we have dying in the field of architecture. The «interferences» provoked by the field of performance studies and the practices of performance, to the field of architecture, are significant and not only because of them (as “tools”) but because the consciousness about them contribute to think more on a line of holistic order. If an architect really understands that then the business might be exponential, this is also relevant because architects, as well as artists, are most of the times broke (that might be the first issue when “projecting” architecture. As it is going to be presented in the following points of this chapter, the architect gains a lot when he or she understands the “communicative” dimension (possibility) of architecture. Pavillions and emblematic buildings are some examples along the history of architectural practices that have interpreted an aspect of cultural representation that is embodied by the material constructions designed by architects and nowadays also projected with the collaboration of interactive artists (Fig.2.4).
2.4 - *Seed Cathedral*, UK Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo (2010).\(^{166}\)

\(^{166}\) *The Guardian* journalist, Heather Stewart writes about the “Seed Cathedral” to explain that “The British government has set itself the task of changing that perception forever, by
2.1 - Architecture and the architect’s role (within PS)

Architects invent what is not there and yet must always begin with an idea of something located somewhere.
—Nathaniel Coleman, *Utopias and Architecture* (2005)\(^{167}\)

What is the field of architecture today, then especially as perceived by those at its front lines—architects, architectural writers, and theorists? Historically, architects and artists have often commented on the condition of their discipline, whether through descriptive statements (“this is what is happening”), precriptive ones (“this is what we must do”) or both. Have the modes of self analysis and expression changed? How will a new generation voice itself? These are among the questions we set out to explore in this volume.

wowing the 70 million visitors to this year's Shangai Expo — with a £25m see-through ‘seed’ cathedral.’ British designer Thomas Heatherwick, known for distinctive works such as Manchester’s The B of the Bang, has created a building made up of 60,000 transparent acrylic filaments, each of which holds a seed from Kew Gardens’ huge Millennium Seed Bank — a worldwide project to preserve a quarter of the world's plant species. The government, which has stumped up most of the £25m cost of the project, hopes that as the 7.5m. long spikes sway gently in the breeze, potential Chinese investors will be inspired to bring their business to Britain, UK exporters will be inspired to strike up new contacts, and Chinese students will be attracted to the idea of studying here. *The Chinese view of Britain is a rather old-fashioned one; it's all to do with Britain as being a heritage country, a traditional economy – there's an awful lot of cobblestones and fog*, said Sir Andrew Cahn, director of UK Trade and Investment, which has the job of promoting Britain abroad.” For more see *The Guardian* online newspaper website: http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/feb/15/heatherwick-design-shanghai-expo (4 April 2011).


Some could argue that the architect is the professional who provides solutions to dwelling needs or who gives answers to the requirements of a society by building the forms that individuals demand from him or her. Others, like Jeremy Till, argue that architecture depends on things that are outside the discipline, outside its own concerns. External issues such as time, politics and ethics regulate the object of architecture. This is what Till argues is the “mess” of architecture: the real world that surrounds the presence of architecture is what constitutes the forces that ultimately shapes it.\(^\text{169}\) For Till, architecture is based on two premises: first, that architecture is a dependent discipline; and second, that architecture, as a profession and practice, does everything to resist that very dependency.\(^\text{170}\) Architecture and architects negotiate a variety of external forces when producing and reproducing architectural forms (Fig. 2.5):

Architecture at the very stage of its existence—from design to construction to occupation—is buffeted by external forces. Other people, circumstances, and events intervene to upset the architect’s best-laid plans. These forces are, to a greater or lesser extent, beyond the direct control of the architect. Architecture is thus shaped more by external conditions than by internal processes for the architect. Architecture is defined by its very contingency, by its very uncertainty in the face of these outside forces.\(^\text{171}\)

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\(^{170}\) Ibid., 1.

\(^{171}\) Ibid.
Offering another perspective, Rem Koolhaas argues that “architecture is a dangerous profession”\(^{172}\) because it represents a poisonous mixture of impotence and omnipotence, in the sense that the architect almost invariably harbors megalomaniacal dreams dependent upon others, and upon circumstances, to impose and to realize those fantasies and dreams.\(^{173}\) This second argument reverberates through Till’s reading of the dependency architecture maintains.

\(^{172}\) Rem Koolhaas, “Conversations with Students,” Architecture at Rice #30. Lars Lerup organized this event in January 1991, during his tenure as Dean. The lecture was published by the Rice School of Architecture and edited by Sanford Kwinter (second edition in 1996), 12.

A third approach would be Jonathan Hill’s description of the real matter of architecture. Architectural matter is not always physical. It is whatever architecture is made of: words, bricks, blood cells, sounds or pixels. Hill states that architecture can, for example, be found in the incisions of a surgeon, the instructions of a choreographer or in the movements of a building user (the pedestrian movements of one who walks through a building). Anyone who wants to produce architecture should discard the preconceived boundaries of the discipline and learn from architecture wherever it is found, whatever it is made of, whomever it is made by. Architecture can be made of anything and by anyone.174

With its presence, architecture gives form to human life experiences through different (spatial) performances that sometimes are permanent and other times ephemeral. Combined with performance, architecture expands its domains to notions of time, place and experience: all becoming “parts” of a certain spatial situation that an individual can perceive and that can be designed. Performance contributes to the expansion175 of the field of architecture through new agendas of design thinking. This new agenda is much more focused on issues that explore the effects of the object produced. Performance gives to the field of architecture a

175 Rosalind Krauss discusses the “expanded field” of an artistic practice when she describes the growth of sculpture into a site-specific situation. Krauss describes this place as a place that is not placing sculpture and that is not solving architecture, but that certainly transforms landscape and interferes with the notion of place. See Rosalind Krauss, “La escultura en el campo expandido,” La Posmodernidad, edited by Hal Foster (1985), 69. The original tittle is The anti-aesthetic: essays on postmodern culture (1983)
dimension uncommon to architecture’s conventional form, bringing into architecture’s process a situation of actions and reactions that are comparable to a more liquid state, a phenomenon that fluxes and changes throughout time depending on place, context and cultural circumstances.

Our principal mission as architects still resides precisely in this capacity for articulating a propositive meditation between the forces of production and the conditions of those scenarios to which the latter are associated. Hence, we derive the capacity to “PROJECTISE,” that is, to KNOW, CONCEIVE and REPRODUCE; to RELATE (explore, associate, deduce, imply, etc.); to PROPOSE (imagine, foresee, anticipate, invent); and to CREATE (build, structure, organise, coordinate, etc.).

The value of architecture no longer results from creating shapes in space, but rather from fostering relationships within it. Combined relationships and actions—reactions—in (and for) a definitely “open” and non-predetermined reality; the more qualitative, the more potentially interactive. In positive synergy with the environment. This points to a latent change in the figure of the architect, no longer formulable only in terms of a

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176 “Cyberspace is liquid, liquid cyberspace, liquid architecture, liquid cities. Liquid architecture is more than kinetic architecture, robotic architecture, an architecture of fixed parts and variable links. Liquid architecture is an architecture that breathes, pulses, leaps as one form and lands as another: liquid architecture is an architecture whose form is contingent on the interests of the beholder.” Marcos Novak in Neil Spiller, Visionary Architecture, Blueprint of the Modern Imagination (2006), 204.

177 See definition for Architecture in the Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture (2003), 587
“designer of objects,” but rather in that of a “strategist of processes”\textsuperscript{178}

How might the field of PS act as a territory that can house architecture? Of course architecture is, in a way, a performance by means of the object: \textit{the object performs and that performance yields results, products}. Architecture could construct a performance, built with materials but also with the effects of the materialization of the architect’s desires. The points of intersection between performance and architecture have not yet been fully explored, and therefore have not yet been fully confronted. Although scholars, including Dorita Hannah, Olav Harslof, Omar Khan, Mette Ramsgard, Sandra Kaji-O’Grady, Cristián Frías and many others, have explored the relationship between performance and architecture (among other arts as well), those explorations have been more conducted to the actions and performances that result with the object. These exploration plus the one that I am articulating here attest a fertile ground to expand “theories” of construction. It is crucial to understand performance through the dynamics between objects and subjects. The theatrical dimension to be designed with architecture is fascinating because it goes further beyond the implications of site and its constraints. In fact, if someone is aware of “performance” then all the constraints become possibilities to work with. Of course all this operations because they also provoke and “signify.” The effect that an object produces can be of

\textsuperscript{178} Ibid.
course manipulated and or pre considered. With this said, the ideas presented are not far from the other dimension that presents Till, which is about the variables that are not even in the hands of the architect/artist. Architecture depends on the context and on the time of reception, hence its values.\footnote{This could be related to Richard Schechner’s idea about the cultural reception of performance, as well as to the “acts of transfer” Diana Taylor suggests.}

Performance adds a new dimension to architecture in two main ways: the first is related to the time-place experience and therefore to an event; the second is related to the object of architecture in itself, and how this object constitutes an interpreter of certain codes, practices and values. PS, then, could incorporate the dimension of acts by means (of the presence) of certain objects (architectural constructions). As a “material” practice architecture does not focus its concerns in the immaterial effect but in the material requirements that produce the effects. In this sense, performance arises by means of another body—that of architecture. Architecture shapes the form and therefore conditions performance. This could happen as a predetermination of certain actions or activities to happen on projected spaces.
Fig. 2.6 - Globe Tower, Samuel Friede architect (1906)\textsuperscript{180}

\textsuperscript{180} The capacity of the Globe Tower was projected for 50,000 people at one time. The proposal included a pedestal roof garden (150 feet above ground), an aerial hippodrome (250 feet above ground) and the largest ballroom in the world (at 300 feet above the ground), with moving restaurants and panoramics view to New York and Coney Island. The “views” that the project was proposing was: “a ground floor chance to share profits in the largest steel structure ever erected...the greatest amusement enterprise in the whole world...the best real estate venture...” Samuel Friede, the man behind had an estimated cost for the total project of USD $1,500,000. Of course the project never happened but what happened, as stated by Rem Koolhaas, is that the skyscraper was born after Friede’s attempt. For more see Koolhaas. “Sphere,” “Stations,” and “Discrepancy” in Delirious New York: a retroactive manifesto for Manhattan, 71-75. What I think is really interesting about this kind of “vision,” is that is based in New York and that requires a lot of money to be executed. It is not difficult to connect ideas of capitalism to gigant buildings we have many stories in this respect. Why is necessary to present this then? Because the type of architecture that I am trying to propose, as a possible result, of the reflections and the operations that can be done or initiated with strategies of performance (and performance studies) is another type of construction, that does not fix the attention to productivity or leisure time. If we think radically, theses are the two main forces that drive the standard or conventional “objectives” of architecture. I believe that a mix between the radical ideas of the avant-gardists (or neo-avant-gardes) and the capitalists there is an evident space of
One of the most fascinating aspects of architecture relates to the visualization of the future. Traditionally, blueprints and cardboard models projected the future. Today, virtual animations of the “real” do it. Nowadays architecture can be understood through many different mechanisms of representation, most assisted by technology (virtual animations, 3D renderings and so on). Architectural thinking displays the future by means of the present that is consequently charged with experiences of the past. The architect represents the future by using codes and conventions of visual imagination. But it is only through the means established by traditions and conventions, which society has built up (with architects), that the representation of an architectural form appears in and with its own rules of logics, coding and signifiers. The visualization, and, then, consequently, the construction of a desired space (place), is the main idea I am exploring in this chapter.

The explanation of this (initial) strategy to discuss architecture and performance can be understood not only when thinking about the traditional “product” of architecture (which must have its own performance and requirements), but also when thinking of people living within a certain space (exposed to a cultural baggage) and the perception they acquire or assume as result of it. Architecture performs for and on people. What is going to be discussed here
is something that is more difficult to grasp and that changes as the conventions of society change: culture (and city culture).\textsuperscript{181} PS offers a means by which to analyze the complexity of time/space-based experience.

From this point of view, the architecture that I intend to highlight is composed of different bricks. They are less rigid and are more flexible.\textsuperscript{182} Architecture when understood \textit{as} performance\textsuperscript{183} constructs an object, which has certain characteristics and qualities derived from a temporal situation, which is mutable and flexible, provocative and active: in short, a \textit{live situation}. Architecture as performance constructs a complex transformable body (like an atmosphere, if we think of physics), which is far more provocative and active than a traditional reading of architecture: that of static buildings. The performance of a building that this thesis proposes is at a level different to that of functionality (but certainly also considers it). Modernism and postmodernism were about new forms and new functionalisms that referred to those forms. In modernism, the utopia of public space transformed architecture into a “machine” to satisfy the needs and desires of society. In postmodernism, all the orders between function and form are revisited

\textsuperscript{181} Nestor García Canclini discusses “Hybrid Cultures” in the context of Latin America. These cultures are the result of local but also a global identities, forces and concerns that are in most of the cases reshaping constant and consistently the ideas of values, identities and significant practices of local specific places. See \textit{Hybrid Cultures: strategies for entering and leaving modernity} (1995).

\textsuperscript{182} The German modern architect Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe defining architecture in the \textit{New York Herald Tribune}, 28 Jun 1959: “Architecture starts when you carefully put two bricks together, there it begins.”

and reformulated to satisfy the needs of symbolism, propaganda and economical efficiency due to capitalist forces. PS might contribute to the field of architecture to shape a “live” architecture, one that is much more connected to the contradictions and demands of contemporary culture’s society: participation, tourism, colonialism, minority groups, and so forth. Of course, functionality and materiality are still important, and they are also issues to be analyzed and evaluated by the performance of architecture. Rather, the point here is clearly focused on the next level, that which occurs while the project is taking place and/or after it is finished. This notion is better described when we analyze the ambition of the project that is, of course, related to the consequences of the materialized ideas. As Andrea Ruby defines it in the *Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture*:

[O]f all conceptual paradigms of architecture, performance is the one which seeks to evaluate the efficiency of its ambitions, and opposed to an architecture for the sake of architecture, it investigates the feedback loops between architecture and the systems that are embedded in. Isolated questions of forms, process, fabrication, etc. are not relevant anymore. The question now is not what something is, but what it does.\(^{184}\)

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Within the discussion of traditional forms, conventional aesthetic paradigms are just as rigid and static. I am, rather, interested in new forms of expression that fuse architecture with other fields of creative practice and other cultural practices of the everyday (i.e., art and performance art). I am also interested in engineering, technology, politics, and sociology, among many other disciplines that can help to expand the field of architecture (and that can possible as well enrich the field of PS). A performance studies reader will follow me in this argument, in general terms, because the more knowledge/information one could have to think about a project the more complete an understanding of the things to be produced. Performance is also an act of response to other actions. I intend my idea here to consider the constantly changing states constructed by the many different performatives that one could find when doing an act by means of the manipulation, transformation or construction of space. These actions infect, shape and reshape our perception through the experiences we have while we live in and with a certain space. What is relevant here is to understand that the resulting object of the association of multiple fields (while using the parameters of performance), suggests the result of a complex body that fuses both visible and invisible concerns (constructions). In the discussion of objects and their ontology, Michael Hays notes:

If ontology is the theory of objects and their relations—a structure within which being itself may be given some organization—then, I believe, art (generally) and architecture
(especially) can and do operate ontologically. Architecture is fundamentally an inquiry into what is, what might be, and how the latter can happen. Architecture is one way of attaining the verb “to be.” […] The very nature of subject-object constructions and relations and of the subject’s relation to its other was opened to a scrutiny as intense as any philosophical inquiry. An architecture reached a limit condition in which its objects were not longer construed as mere elements and assemblages of building, however complicated or sophisticated, but rather as a representational system—a way of perceiving and constructing identities and differences.  

With this explanation Hays suggests not only that the object of architecture should be considered in a more active and profound way so as to respond to the idea of a constant being (and therefore serve as an engine of a possible becoming), but also to what and how it can project this becoming through different mechanisms of (re)presentation. Architecture becomes a representation of the real (needs and desires of society) that rearticulates the needs of the future in terms of what is needed in the real. The object of architecture (and possibly art as well) suggests different possibilities and dimensions of constructing culture that are not usually considered by a practice that works with and within traditional conventions. The object of architecture, understood in its performative role, can question the conventions of how and what to build for, under which circumstances to become a coherent product of that certain time when executed. After 

185 Michael Hays discusses architecture in the age of “discourse” (the decade of the 1970s). In his terms the advanced architecture of the ’70s “must” remain a salvage operation in which the element of modern architectural tradition are all at once reduced to an enigmatic fragment of independent ideas. Michael Hays, “Desire,” Architecture’s Desire: reading the late avant garde (2010), 2–3.
architecture exists, new necessities are revealed; new spaces and new forms (what we come to understand and need after the understanding of its ontology) that consequently will demand the production of new “spaces.” Although architecture might primarily be a functional solution, it is also an object that generates and builds desire, as Hays argues. The shift of attention from the object itself (materialized idea) to its results matters through its relation to architectural representation.

2.2- Spatial (re)presentations and Utopia: the construction of a better society through possible and impossible images

Reshape environment; don’t try to reshape man. —R. Buckminster Fuller, New Form vs. Reforms (1963)

To talk about Utopia in Architecture might sound passé. Architecture has a long history in relation to Utopia, mostly comprising the architects who have used Utopia as a tool to visualize their projects and dreams. Much of the revolutionary thinking in the field also started with the avant-garde (forms and attitudes) of the beginning of the 20th century. The futurists, for instance, promoted new and

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186 Ibid., 1–22.
radical views of what society had to become. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti declared in his manifesto on Futurism: “Put simply, futurism means hate of the past. Our aim is to energetically combat and destroy the cult of the past.”

In discussing the city and urban conditions, architects have been able to implement a “new” social discourse that shapes the lines of collective scenarios to solve the different needs of people and to debate new concerns and new possible scenarios about society’s spatial needs. By using the concept of Utopia architects suggest and promote a vision of radical change for humanity. Futurists did it when they employed the manifesto form and the “communication” strategies to bridge the gap between artists and ART, on the one hand, and their audiences on the other. Many of the paintings and the photographs realized by futurists contained a vision of a possible (and impossible) new society based on new dynamic forms. Works such as “The City Rises (Fig.2.7),” “The street penetrates the house,” “Hand in motion,” “Rhythms of objects,” “The revolt,” “Dynamism of an

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188 Futurists promoted a new dynamic environment as a response to the Industrial Revolution. Futurism was based on notions of movement and velocity, a vision of what society was going to be. Fillipo Tomaso Marinetti and Antonio Sant Elia were perhaps the most emblematic interpreters of the Futuris thoughts.

189 On February 20, 1909, with the publication of his manifesto “Le Futurisme” in the French journal Le Figaro Marinetti founded Futurism. Futurism was a new formula for art-action and society: art plus action plus life equals futurism. See Futurism (2005), 7.


191 Umberto Boccini, 1910–11, see Futurism (2005), 26–27.

192 Umberto Boccini, 1911, see Futurism (2005), 30–31.

193 Anton Giulio Bragaglia, 1911, see Futurism (2005), 32–33.

194 Carlo Carrà, 1911, see Futurism (2005), 34–35.

195 Luigi Russolo, 1911, see Futurism (2005), 38–39.
automobile,”196 “Long live Italy”197 and “Futurist life,”198 among many others demonstrate that the topic of the city and the society was a primary concern avant-gardistes. In other words, what it is interesting here is that the inspiration of a new possible (or impossible), a new form for the city, a new form for society and politics was the issue depicted through avant-garde paintings and photographs (Fig.2.8).

Fig. 2.7 - The City Rises, Umberto Boccini (1910).

196 Luigi Russolo, 1912-13, see Futurism (2005), 52–53.
197 Giacomo Balla, 1915, see Futurism (2005), 62–63.
198 Giacomo Balla, 1915, see Futurism (2005), 64–65.
Artists’ preoccupation with improvements and progress of society have always inspired the development of their practices. In other words, the critical sense that artists maintain about their own context, and the (re)presentation of it by means of their work, have produced a critique that tends to suggest a new possible. This intersection of art and the “real” quotidian is crucial to understand the architect’s role and the vision that he or she displays and promotes through his or
her “actions”: the realized (“presented” buildings) or theorized (“represented” buildings)—the wished world.

Fig. 2.9 - Glass Pavilion, Image Bruno Taut (1914).

Most of the modern production of art and architecture was clearly driven by means of a different vision. By 1911, Germans had adopted the idea of
Expressionism\textsuperscript{199} to denote modernist art. Bruno Taut (Fig.2.9)\textsuperscript{200} was the leading architect of the expressionist movement in Berlin and perhaps one of the most important and radical visionaries of that time (with Sant Elia of the Futurists). His proposal about society and the future concerned binding the individual and the Volk in a transcendental unit.\textsuperscript{201} Taut proposed two “objective” needs: “practical” individual dwellings to satisfy the needs of everyone and symbolic buildings to offer socioideological representation for society.\textsuperscript{202} During the First World War (a dead period in building), Taut worked on two books: Die Stadtkrone and Alpine Architektur.\textsuperscript{203} The former was concerned with historical examples of buildings symbolizing the Volk and the latter with apocalyptic visions of an imaginary architecture, mixing images and texts rather in the manner of a Baroque emblem book.\textsuperscript{204}

\textsuperscript{199} The term Expressionism was coined in France in 1901 to describe the paintings of the circle of artists around Henri Matisse. See Alan Colquhoun “Expressionism and Futurism,” Modern Architecture (2002), 87.

\textsuperscript{200} Bruno Taut wrote the first manifesto of Expressionist architecture in 1914. It is important to note that this manifesto was written prior to the First World War. See Alan Colquhoun, “Expressionism and Futurism,” Modern Architecture (2002), 92.

\textsuperscript{201} Volk stands for “pueblo.” See Alan Colquhoun, “Expressionism and Futurism” on Modern Architecture (2002), 90.

\textsuperscript{202} Taut’s thinking promoted and developed the tension between the practical and the symbolic role of architecture. See Marcel Franciscono, Walter Gropius and the Creation of the Bauhaus in Weimar (1971), 94–95.

\textsuperscript{203} Both books were published in 1919.

\textsuperscript{204} See Alan Colquhoun “Expressionism and Futurism” on Modern Architecture (2002), 90–95.
Many of the “visions” of architecture can be dated to the late 1800s. The Chicago School\textsuperscript{205} became a paradigm of the architect as manipulator of the visual “language” (classicist) and as exponent of a changing technology (organicist). This can be broken down into a series of further oppositions: 1) collectivism versus individualism; 2) identity (national) versus difference (regional); 3) the normative versus the unique; 4) representation versus expression; and 5) the recognizable versus the unexpected. These oppositions constantly reappeared in the architectural debates of early 20th-century modernism. In America, more explicitly than in Europe, these debates tended to be connected to problems of national policy, such as in the city of Chicago. It is in this city, where this tendency manifested \textit{dramatically}.\textsuperscript{206}

\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{205}] The Chicago school, when used in 1908, refers to Frank Lloyd Wright’s and Thomas Tallmadge’s group of local architects. In 1929, it began to refer to the commercial architects of the 1880s and 1890s. The movement, then, had two moments, the domestic phase and the commercial, which was then understood as a \textit{pre-modern} vision. In contemporary usage, "Chicago School" refers to the commercial architecture of the 1880s and 1890s while the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and his colleagues refer to as the "Prairie School." See Alan Colquhoun, “The Chicago school,” \textit{Modern Architecture} (2002), 36.
\end{itemize}
Fig. 2.10 - *The High Building Question*, Louis Sullivan (1891).

Chicago constituted a very fertile arena to develop an architectural vision of the future. This unique opportunity in the city was related to the extraordinary boom in commercial real estate between late 19th century and early 20th century. Architects such as Louis Sullivan (Fig.2.10) and Dankmar Adler, who had the opportunity to participate in this moment, were very enthusiastic to work and to profit by implementing new ideas. They had a strong sense of mission: as architects, they should give the shape of this new landscape of artificial constructions that will represent society. They considered the moment of great economical success to create a new architectural *culture*. The situation in Chicago
seemed to offer the possibility of a new synthesis of technology, aesthetics and of creation of an architecture that symbolized the “energy” of the US midwest. The importance of the Chicago School is that beyond the world of architects; it represented a true moment of inspiration. The Swiss art historian Sigfried Giedion offered a new interpretation of the production of the Chicago School in his book *Space, time and architecture* (1941). He presented the Chicago move in Hegelian terms as a *stage in the progressive march of history*.

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207 Technology played an important role in this period of economic success: metal skeletons for building and the electrical elevator, for instance, were a radical change that allowed architects to build towards unprecedented heights.


209 Many architecture and art critics wrote about what happened with the Chicago move. The writings of Henry Russell Hitchcock, Fiske Kimbal (*American Architecture*, 1928) and Lewis Mumford (*The Brown Decades*, 1931) became very influential to this North American view of modern architecture. These texts were published during the late 1920s and early ’30s.

Fig. 2.11 - *The Wainwright Building*, Danmark Adler and Louis Sullivan (1890-2).\(^{211}\)

But all these ideas about the new revolution in technology and height also had an impact on the image of the city. The Chicago World’s Fair\(^ {212}\) proposed a

\(^{211}\) Sullivan refers to “ornament as an extension of structure.” This represented a revolution in terms of the aesthetics of building that combined classical ornament with the goals to implement with new technologies for construction: i.e., the highrise buildings. Ibid., 42.

\(^{212}\) The Chicago World’s Fair is short for the "World's Fair: Columbian Exposition" or the World's Columbian Exposition. This fair occurred in 1893 for the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus’s arrival in the "New World" in 1492. But, for this dissertation, it is better understood as a response to the first World Fair (Crystal Palace) in London which included the first world exhibition of manufactured products. As such, it influenced the development of many aspects of society including art and design (education), international trade and also tourism. The World's Columbian Exposition was designed by Daniel Burnham (landscape) and Frederick Kaw Olmsted (buildings) to propose THE
model for the city of the future. The fair could be understood as a collaborative exercise in landscape and urban design. The idea was to think about an environment that would combine landscape and building to build a new landscape for American cities—the initial gestures for a modern cityscape. The World Exposition provoked a wave of a classical architecture in the US. For instance, many of the tall commercial buildings began to show the influences of European Beaux-Arts. With this, the fair had a great effect on the “City Beautiful” movement, an organization triggered by the Senate Park Commission plan for Washington (the Macmillan Plan presented in 1902). As opposed to what was happening in Europe, the Chicago World’s Fair was much more influential in the local politics aimed to construct society. Daniel Burnham, who was involved in the initial production of the fair, was asked afterward by local authorities to prepare many city plans (of which only a few were executed). The visions of the exhibition were now also helping to project the real. Burnham (with Edward Bennett) prepared in 1909 an extraordinary plan for Chicago (Fig. 2.12). The plan was financed and managed by a group of private citizens, and was the subject of an elaborate public relations campaign.213

view of a better city based in notions of landscape and building or building landscape. The Columbian exhibition was the prototype of what Burnham and his colleagues thought a city should be. It was designed to follow the Beaux Arts principles (neoclassical architecture) based on symmetry, balance and splendor. See Alan Colquhoun, “The World’s Columbian Exposition,” Modern Architecture (2002), 43–45.

213 The plan for Chicago incorporated a network of wide, diagonal avenues superimposed on the existing road grid in the manner of Washington and of Haussmann’s Paris. At the
center of this network, there was to be a new city hall of gigantic proportions. Although never executed, the plan was to some extent used as a guide for the future development of the city. See Alan Colquhoun “The City Beautiful movement” on *Modern Architecture* (2002), 46.
But all these attempts to *display* the future were now much more focused on the rational and structured thinking of a planner. Architects grew (up) to become characters of society whose role was more similar to the scale of a urban planner, someone who worked to present new views of a possible world. The architect had always had that role, but after the revolutions of the new century (from the early 1900s) including the avant-garde, industrialization and economic booms and falls (triangle of concerns to work in the production of new cities), the architect’s profile started to develop as a character of society that functioned to present hope. The rational (and sometimes irrational) ideas became a strong tool to push and provoke the modern in architecture.

Many reforms began in Chicago, and many reformists and intellectuals interested in social development saw this opportunity as an essential instrument of industrialization (the concrete possibility to transform the real). The University of Chicago opened the Department of Social Sciences and Anthropology and became an important centre of urban sociology, whose influence continued until 1920s. The University of Illinois focused its attention on the nuclear family and individual home in the belief that the reform of the domestic environment was the necessary first step in the reform of society as a whole. The design of the home became one
of the key elements in a radical and wide-ranging social and political agenda.\textsuperscript{214}

Alan Colquhoun writes:

The reaction of intellectuals against the excesses of uncontrolled capitalism in 1880s America is represented by two Utopian texts: Henry George’s \textit{Progress and Poverty} (1880), which proposed the confiscation of all yield from increased land value, and Edward Bellamy’s novel \textit{Looking Backward} (1888), which described a future society based on a perfected industrial system, in which there was no longer any space between freedom and total political control. A third text—Thorstein Veblen’s \textit{Theory of the Leisure Class} (1899)—is of particular interest, not only because Veblen taught at the University of Chicago in the 1890s, but also because his book advanced the theory that there was a conflict in capitalism between the production of money and the production of goods.\textsuperscript{215}

Considering the increase in understandings of Utopia, one could say that the revolution in productivity also provoked a larger desire to build the perfect, a new force promoted by capitalist society. In Germany, for example, the Christian Socialist politician Fiedrich Naumann and the architect-bureaucrat Hermann Muthesius work together for the \textit{Deutscher Werkbund}.\textsuperscript{216} Through this


\textsuperscript{215} Alan Colquhoun comments on Francesco Dal Co’s “From Parks to the Region” in \textit{The American City}, explaining that “a similar theory favouring technology over market capitalism was being propounded around 1900 in Germany by social theorist Werner Sombart. The theory re-emerged during the Weimar Republic.” See Alan Colquhoun, “Social reform and the home,” and the notes on \textit{Modern Architecture} (2002), 49–51.

\textsuperscript{216} The \textit{Deutscher Werkbund} was a mixed association of architects, artists and industrialists founded in 1907 in Munich by Hermann Muthesius. It was an important organization in the history of modern architecture, modern design and represented the engine of the Bauhaus.
organization Naumann and Muthesius and company pondered the possibility of high-quality goods for massive consumption. In 1906 Naumann stated:

> Many people do not have money to hire artists, and, consequently many products are going to be mass produced; for this great problem, the only solution is to infuse mass-production with meaning and spirit by artistic means.\(^{217}\)

Additionally, in the *Werkbund’s* inaugural meeting, Fritz Schumacher, well-known professor of architecture at the Dresden Technische Hochschule and director of the highly successful Arts and Crafts exhibition in Dresden (1906), stressed the need to bridge the space between artists and producers that had developed with machine production.\(^{218}\) Schumacher commented:

> The time has come when Germany should cease to look on the artist as a man who […] follows his inclination, and rather see him as one of the important powers for the ennobling of work and therefore for the ennobling of the entire life of the nation, and to make it victorious in the competition among peoples… there is in aesthetic power a higher economic value.\(^{219}\)

Despite this well-defined program, the membership of the *Werkbund* represented a wide range of opinion. The organization’s main areas of activity were: general propaganda (publishing, exhibitions, congresses); the education of the consumer (lectures, window dressing competitions, and so on); and the reform of product design (for example, persuading industrialists to employ artists).\(^{220}\)

\(^{217}\) Fiedrich Naumann, quoted in Stanford Anderson, “Peter Behrens and the Cultural Policy of Historical Determinism,” *Oppositions* No.11 (1977), PAGE.


\(^{219}\) Ibid.

\(^{220}\) Ibid., 59.
With this, many questions about form and style, types and ideologies began to inspire and contaminate the production of space. Like the futurist artists and architects, the Germans proposed revolutionary approaches to contribute new visions to the new era at the beginning of the 20th century. Architect Heinrich Tessenow, an influential professor of architecture,\textsuperscript{221} was concerned with mass housing and the problem of repetition. His projects were supported by social theory that romanticized the petite bourgeoisie as the foundation of a traditional German social order. His drawings visualized small towns of between 20,000 and 60,000 inhabitants with a handicraft industry accommodating a maximum of ten artisans per workshop. In addition to housing Tessenow built a cultural building which held the stage-sets of Adolphe Apia (Fig.2.13).

\textbf{Fig. 2.13} - \textit{Dalcroze Institute}, Adolphe Apia’s (1911-1912).

\textsuperscript{221} Although he hated the Nazis, Heinrich Tessenow had a famous student: Albert Speer.
Directly after the Second World War, several architectural projects in Germany displayed an ideology related to expressionism. Although it was a very difficult architecture to define, the movement has usually been referred to in terms of what it is not (not rationalism, not functionalism, not futurism and so on).\(^{222}\) Naming, or describing, something via what it is not suggests a more undefined territory of action (an ambiguous space, a space of the in-between, a space of performance studies).

The expressionist ideology also had goals within the political arena. In an open letter, written in 1918, and addressed to the Socialist Government, Taut wrote:

> Art and life must form a unity. Art should no longer be the delight of the few, but the good fortune of the life of the masses. The aim is the fusion of the arts under the wing of a great architecture… From now on, the artist alone will be the modeler of the sensibilities of the Volk, responsible for the visible fabric of the new state. He must determine the form-giving process from the statue right down to coin and the postage stamp.\(^{223}\)

Taut was a provocative architect and went further (after realizing the near lack of interest that the government had in his proposals)\(^{224}\) to conceive the idea of


\(^{223}\) Note that the letter was written in the year that the First World War finished. For more on Taut’s vision, see Iain Boyd Whyte, *Bruno Taut and the architecture of Activism* (1982), 99.

\(^{224}\) Taut, like many other Expressionists, became involved with the revolution that swept Germany in 1918. Taut founded, with Gropius, the *Arbeitstrat fur Kunst* (AFK), a trade union for artists modeled on the Soviet workers who were a feature of the revolution, and more particularly on the proletarian council of intellectual workers, an outgrowth of Kurt Hiller’s Activist literary movement. Taking his cue from the political ambitions of that movement, Taut envisaged a group of architects within the AFK who would take control
an Exhibition for the Unknown Architect, which would appeal directly to the people. Taut resigned the chairmanship of the AFK before the exhibition came to fruition. Walter Gropius, who became the leader of the AFK, took Taut’s ideas and produced the exhibition in April 1919. With Gropius accession to the chairmanship position, the AFK abandoned its revolutionary program and moved “to the right politically and to the left artistically.” With this move they became safe to operate within the then current political scenario.

In the Exhibition for the Unknown Architect, people, not only artists and architects, were invited to submit visionary schemes unrestricted by programmatic or aesthetic constraints. Although it was not successful in its popularizing aims, it turned out to be an event of great significance in the history of modern architecture. The work shown fell into two categories, more or less. The first category corresponded to drawings depicting possible buildings, however unconventional, from the crystalline geometrical to the amorphous-curvilinear. The second category consisted of pictorial fantasies that made use of architectural

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225 After the AFK exhibition Walter Gropius became the director of the Bauhaus School (spring 1919), and since, that school has given space and housing to the unification of the arts under the leadership of architecture within a social-democratic framework. The Bauhaus was the revolutionary school in where the design work started to grow in all directions, a mixture between visual, arts, theatrical arts and architecture somehow joined for a complex project to develop in the future. After a year Taut abandoned revolutionary politics and began to concentrate on the design of social housing.

subject matter. While the former represented objects naturalistically (that seemed to be rational), the latter tended to be anti-naturalistic and irrational (Fig.2.14).227

Similar images of those shown in the exhibition appear in the letters of the Glass Chain228—a group of architects and artists close to Taut who began a correspondence in 1919, on Taut’s initiative, for the purpose of exchanging architectural ideas and fantasies. Many of the drawings originating in the Glass Chain were subsequently published by Taut in his magazine Dawn (1920–22).229 Some of the “fantasies” of the Exhibition for the Unknown Architect were created by Berlin-based artists associated with the dada movement, such as Jefim Golyscheff.

The Dadaists belonged to the extreme Left and had supported the Communist Spartacus League which led a workers’ uprising in January 1919. In contrast to the earnest of the AFK, they used the weapons of mockery and ridicule to discredit the Expressionist movement, which in their opinion had betrayed the revolution of 1918 by siding with the Social Democrats rather than the Communists. In the style of their rhetoric and in some of their formal techniques, though not in their ideology, the Dadaists owed a great debt to Marinetti and the futurists.230

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228 In German: Glaserne Kette.
230 Ibid. 9.
Utopia is about the future. Many movements throughout the history of the arts and architecture have striven to construct ideal scenarios for life. As a Utopian endeavor, these efforts represent an ambition that might be outside of the logic of a practice. Much of this work was realized by individuals who maintained the complete conviction, and true desire, to contribute to the development of society. This type of revolutionary, visionary work required much more energy than usual to solve conflicts of ideological and political order. Artists and architects of that time represent an example of a compromise with their role in society (by implementing ways to say and demonstrate ideas), akin to that of a

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231 Other avant-garde movements existed in Europe: De Stijl in Amsterdam and rationalism, constructivism and suprematism in Russia.
civilized citizen who happened to be an artist or an architect. Of course, many other intellectuals contribute in this respect but what is interesting here is the fact that visual artists and architects were closer to the presentation or display of artistic “gestures” and “thoughts” by means of sociocultural and -political projects. Artists and architects became social provocateurs to the bourgeois and to the hierarchical political power established by society. These architects and artists were playing beyond pre-established contexts; again, as a radical example, futurists were striving to change reality by incorporating unprecedented technologies developed at the end of the 19th century: electric lighting, the telephone and the automobile. Futurism was the first movement that saw these developments as an opportunity for a total revolution connected to the everyday culture.232

Now, in modern mechanical engineering, forms seem to be developed mainly in accordance with function. The designer or inventor probably does not concern himself directly with what the final appearance may be, and probably does not consciously care. But men are endowed in varying degree with an instinct for ordered arrangement, and this can come into operation even when least thought of. The ordinary motor-car engine is conspicuous example of this. Some are disorderly and “messy” in arrangement; others well planned and clearly disposed.233

Utopia is about a desire that is represented in a form of a possible (or impossible) project. Between the First and Second World Wars, many of the ideas that were being considered by intellectuals and that were related to urban

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development, concerned with the possibility of a better society, started to decant in paper as well as in reality.

One of the key figures of the modern movement who combined forms and new technologies for the development of new ideas in the realm of architecture and urbanism was Le Corbusier (Fig.2.15).\textsuperscript{234} He presented his preliminary ideas in the journal \textit{L’Esprit nouveau} between 1920 and 1925.\textsuperscript{235} One important element of Le Corbusier’s proposal, within the scope of this thesis and in relation to performance and PS, is that he considered the power of “architectural emotion” by means of (his) \textit{intentions and events}:

The evolution of my reasoning, through which I hope to make you see architecture, leads me to the following summit: \textit{intention}. The concrete or abstract elements of architecture must be governed by an intention. You have to select the proper techniques, choose materials, fulfill a program, etc., but the end result of all these efforts hinges solely on the quality of the intention.

Architecture is an irrefutable event. It occurs in certain moments of creation when the mind, preoccupied with the

\textsuperscript{234} Le Corbusier’s real name was Charles Eduard Jeanneret, but he became better known as Le Corbusier—as if he were a character in a play produced to promote new architecture and a new type of social development by means of architecture. As Le Corbusier, and with a background of certain exclusive ideas (the machine, the five points for a new architecture and the four basic principles for the contemporary city, constituted the base for a new type of urbanism), Jeanneret had the power to gain the attention of a great audiences and students and subsequently the opportunity to project the shapes of the future. By 1922 he had already designed a project for “A Contemporary City for Three Million People”; in 1925, a vision for Paris, “Plan Voisin de Paris”; and in 1935, a vision for The Radiant City—the plan of a residential district. See \textit{The ideas of Le Corbusier: on architecture and urban planning}, edited by (1981), 94, 101, 102.

\textsuperscript{235} In 1923 Le Corbusier published \textit{Towards a New Architecture} (In French: \textit{Vers une architecture}). See “What is architecture,” \textit{The ideas of Le Corbusier: on architecture and urban planning} (1981), 17–21.
strength and practical convenience of a work, is suddenly uplifted by a higher intention... and sets out to express the lyric powers that animate and delight us [...] this higher intention defines architecture.  

Fig. 2.15 - Plan voisin for Paris, Le Corbusier (1925).

After his trips to Brazil and Argentina, Le Corbusier understood a new type of urban project, different from those he projected before. With his plan for Rio de Janeiro (1929) and Algiers (1932-42) he expressed new interests in l’homme réel and regional cultures based on local customs and geographies. In these projects, modern architecture and engineering extend their reach to vast colonial and post-

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colonial territories and assume a new cosmological significance in their struggle with primordial nature. In both projects he became more sensitive to local topographies, and expressed greater absorption of private life through monumental, collective forms.\textsuperscript{237}

New urban concepts continued to emerge during and after the Second World War. The first was that of New Monumentality and the second the Team X (promoting a complex urban philosophy). Others came after them.

\section*{2.3 - The performativity of projecting (imagined spaces)}

Yes, surely! And if others can see it as I have seen it, it may be called a vision rather than a dream.\textsuperscript{238}

—William Morris, \textit{News from Nowhere} (1890)

It is not in the aim of this thesis to extend this exploration to describe each single movement and each new architect/urban planner as I did with Le Corbusier. Individual cases and the ideas that came with them began to overlap and to become less and less distinguishable from a radical initiative in terms of the true


sociocultural and -political project. It is important to draw the connection between the avant-garde and the influences that existed during that time, in both America and Europe, to establish that these connections have always existed between art and architecture—connections that allow us to discuss and project the society of the future by means of “new” urban conditions and architectural forms. Now, as I have presented the main routes that have impacted in the production of art and architecture since the Second World War, I want to briefly present some crucial projects that were never realized but that existed in representational form. All of these projects have had the power to intervene into traditional architecture and to formulate new questions for its discourse and practice. These projects have also influenced other territories of knowledge such as philosophy, sociology and anthropology, all also connected to the main concerns of performance studies. It is relevant to understand that all these proposals as drawings or models were produced as performative things to provoke thinking and reflection (communication), and, eventually, to transform reality. The performativity of each proposal had repercussions in other territories beyond the mere space of the architect and the artist. That new space is the shared space, which informs and borrows, in both directions, from other territories of knowledge. These drawings and models might be seen as performances of the indiscipline because they resist conventional and passive thinking of the discipline but still use the same codes that the discipline utilizes. The proposals question and provoke from the very essential
aspect of the core nature of each practice (art in tension with architecture). All of the projects that are relevant to analyze from this approach are projects that somehow have pushed the field, and for the advantage of this thesis, have expanded the domains and concerns to reshape the discipline in terms of ideas and practices. Although many of these projects were never executed they served to implement new politics and new visions, and in doing so, they created new desires (or images or ideas) to pursue.

In his outstanding book *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, James C. Scott analyzes high-modernist and authoritarian state planning and traces some clues to discover why certain projects within such parameters have failed. Although many of the proposals since the avant-garde seem to materialize (in different levels and different circumstances), all of them were produced under an uncertain context (and some of them might have been appeared initially as extremist). The risks that many architects and artists since then have taken to realize new proposals offers a much more fertile and provocative opportunity to stress the idea of performance. All these drawings and models that present a “future plan” are part of the ideological performance of architects and artists described in this chapter.

Architects and artists perform by means of their (re)presentations. The risk that defines performance is part of the soul of challenging work. Performance and PS
explores the challenges that performance introduces (and therefore questions) to the way architects and artists do.

To problematize the vision and the planning of the high-modern (future), James Scott writes:

The power and precision of high-modernist schemes depend not only on bracketing contingency but also standardizing the subjects of development. Some standardization was implicit even in the noblest goals of the planners. The great majority of them were strongly committed to a more egalitarian society, to meeting the basic needs of its citizens (especially the working class), and to making the amenities of a modern society available to all. Let us pause, however, to consider the kind of human subject for whom all these benefits were being provided. This subject was singularly abstract. Figures as diverse as Le Corbusier, Walther Rathenau, the collectivizers of the Soviet Union, and even Julius Nyerere (for all his rhetorical attention to African traditions) were planning for generic subjects who needed so many square feet of housing space, acres of farmland, liters of clean water, and units of transportation and so much food, fresh air, and recreational space. Standardized citizens were uniform in their needs and even interchangeable. What is striking, of course, is that such subjects—like the “unmarked citizens” of liberal theory—have, for the purposes of the planning exercise, no gender, no tastes, no history, no values, no opinions or original ideas, no traditions, and no distinctive personalities to contribute to the enterprise. They have none of the particular, situated, and contextual attributes that one would expect of any population and that we, as a matter of course, always attribute to elites. The lack of context and particularity is not an oversight; it is the necessary first premise of any large-scale planning exercise. To the degree that the subjects can be treated as standardized units, the power of resolution in the planning exercise is enhanced.\footnote{James Scott, “Conclusion,” \textit{Seeing like State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed} (1998), 346.}
More than simply evaluating the feasible and practical aspect of the exercises modernism offered, Scott includes the dimensions of the proposal that are never clearly incorporated in the process of the development of a project. The most important has to do with the “real” client. Architecture operates by default to a general or standard (client) when configuring public space. It is impossible to design a public space for every, and each type of, individual. Sure, you can customize depending on the client, but that difference is very problematic in terms of a universal and democratic project. In ideological terms, public space means democracy, and, as such, it has to respond to a generic. This is a problem in the world of mass culture and production. The design has to respond to many types of clients, and therefore has to be standard. If the project has to be customized (which could be the case) then the project will become elitist and this constitutes a paradox in the social aspect (that of certain value for a collective project) already discussed here. This paradox is even more evident if analyzing this phenomenon from the field of PS. All these aspects that Scott suggests are reasonable concerns if analyzing the problem from a sociological or anthropological level. Being an anthropologist, Scott suggests that each individual and therefore each project (or product) has to be different so as to satisfy the real requirements that each person has. In a strict sense, this might be true, although that concern is not really abstract in terms of a user. The user can be anyone who more or less meets the standards of that consensus established by a general agreement. The differences are part of a
political and cultural project that is beyond the absolute control of art or architecture. Even if it is true that these practices could contaminate and interfere with the policies and customs of a certain context, it is also true that they are produced and reproduced to an extent that has to deal with the collective rather than the private individual. Utopia is about the social. In talking about architecture and renewal Nathaniel Coleman suggest that:

The usefulness of utopia, for thinking through architectural problems, is that it provides architects with a plane from which it is possible to consider and invent wholes (utopias of a sort) even though these are not intended for total realization. Because the distant location of utopias suggests limits even as it encourages and expanded horizon of potential for projects, envisioning projects in this way could have a positive benefit for architecture, especially by returning the social dimension of utopia to architectural thinking, which is shed when excesses of positivist orthodox modernist theories and practices became anathema.240

Coleman continues, alluding to the idea of utopia introduced by social theorist Karl Mannheim who argued for it as the “lifeblood of social imagination,”

Philosopher Paul Ricoeur, elaborates on Mannheim’s ideas by arguing that utopia is a concept (even a force) with both a positive and a negative side, each counterbalanced by ideology which itself has positive and negative dimensions counterbalanced by utopia. In general, according to Ricoueur, utopia is progressive and ideology is conservative. The constitutive dimension of either utopia or ideology counterbalances the pathological dimension of the other. For my [Coleman’s] purposes, Ricoeur’s most important insight is that utopia can be constitutive. With this in mind, the relation between utopia as constitutive—suggesting comprehensible

patterns of social life—and architecture, as an arrangement of configurative patterns, reveals that the potential for complex order in architecture has a utopian character.241

Utopia pushes for a comprehensive intervention in the social project. Even if related to standardized types of housing, such as both high-rise buildings and/or social blocks, architectural vision presupposes an understanding of a broader context that certainly should contain the local contexts for which those projects are realized. Architecture, as any other complex project of culture, needs to incorporate much knowledge from other fields to propose a coherent proposal. Visionary architecture represents the imagination of a sensitivity that exists within a certain specific context. From this approach, it is obvious that the architect would consider the reality of the location where the project is proposed to exist. Visions are always imagined, in some degree, related to the forms that we know of the present and to the forms that we know from the past. It is by these means that we (as architects) articulate and rearticulate ideas to propose a new world. By combining different issues and images of the present is that we (as architects) can envision the future.

One interesting point that Coleman suggests through his reading of Ricoeur’s notion of utopia concerns the performativity associated with utopia. The constitutive scope of utopia is certainly tied to the revolutionary social concerns of architecture, and architecture is thusly tied to the configurative forms that can

241 Ibid.
house those constitutive contents. From this perspective, utopia, when combined with architecture, offers a true challenge for the development of society. *SCL2110* aimed to combine a certain level of utopia with the consciousness of the real (that which was immediately present) in Chile during 2010. If the projects are never to be executed, nothing different from what has happened before will happen in the future. Those projects for SCL2110 work at the level of implementing new ideas or desires. Following are some relevant proposals of visionary architecture developed since the 1950s and up to the late 20th century. Although each proposal could be the matter for a new chapter, it is perhaps relevant just to present few of them as images of possibles and impossibles for the future.²⁴²

²⁴² Among these revolutionary individuals and groups it is relevant to highlight these names because of the radicalism they proposed: Le Corbusier, Team X, Utopie Group, Constant (Fig.2.16), Cobra, Situationists, Yona Friedman (Fig.2.17), Buckminster Fuller (Fig.2.18), Cedric Price (Fig.2.19), Archigram (Fig.2.20), Archizoom, Superstudio (Fig.2.21) who believed on architecture as tool to transform realities and societies. After them, the group of Post-modern and Deconstructivist Architecture. Since the 90s the radicalist thoughts have shifted to confront issues in relation to the development of new technologies (forms), constructions systems (processes) and sustainability (local and global repercussions).
Fig. 2.16 - *Studio*, Constant (1967).

Fig. 2.17 - *Spatial City*, Yona Friedman (1960)

Fig. 2.18 - *Dome in Manhattan*, Buckminster Fuller (1960)
Fig. 2.19 - Fun Palace, Cedric Price (1961)
Fig. 2.20 - Walking City, Archigram (1964)

Fig. 2.21 - Continuous Monument, Superstudio (1969).
2.4- On performance design & architecture: issues on the performative and of performativity in shaping contemporary culture

If the body is one site of performance analysis, objects are another. —Barbara Kirshenblat-Gimblett, *Performance Studies* (1999)\(^{243}\)

As discussed in the previous section, the architect works with the visualization of the future, and through the representation and presentation of different thoughts the architect communicates his or her ideas. This mechanism of ideological transmission is part of a disciplinary language/coding/practice that has developed from drawings and cardboard models to sophisticated rendering mechanism: 3D animations of virtual reality, prototypes of efficiency and so on. The formulation and representation of architectural projects (understood as complex objects) are more often regulated by standardized systems of codification most often related to the process of production—similar to what happens in the world of industrial design. In order to address these issues of design within PS it is necessary to understand that industrial designers have to address each problem from many different angles, and be aware of new forms, new materials and new manufacturing processes beyond the existing methods of project implementation. In broad terms of performance, designers (architects or artists) need to manipulate

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a wide range of sociocultural and -political concerns that link to the demands of people.\textsuperscript{244} Although there is still much architecture that is unique and customized for a certain specific client, a large part of its actual production is restricted, mass produced and denigrated to certain standards of edification, in part, because many projects are determined by efficiency (low costs, time frame and material productivity). Much of the data that needs to be incorporated in design is focused on optimizing the characteristics of a building in terms of its functionality, its structure, its technologies and its materials (resistances, sustainability and weathering). Performance, from this angle, is restricted by the terms of the object that are meant to solve the standards expected (and that have to be considered) under predetermined regulations and needs.

Much of the exploration and scholarship that engages the concrete intersection between architecture and performance refers to similar concerns; those of generic standards of optimization. In fact, one of the first publications on the topic was the \textit{Progressive Architecture} issue of 1967. This issue discusses the notion of “performance design” as an emerging direction in the practice of architecture. The editor Jan Rowan stated that the designer (in this case, the architect) finds him- or herself increasingly divided between intuition and reason, between art and technology.\textsuperscript{245} Rowan states that the practice of architecture is

increasingly changing to absorb the technological developments and standards in construction. Although he highlights the role focused in the artistic side of the discipline, he questions the new milieu of productivity in relation to architectural regularizations and standards. Performance gives to architecture a dimension of efficiency that was not clearly a concern or an issue prior to the Second World War. Much of what has been developed since the 1950s in terms of product serialization comes with the need to solve the demands and requirements of large populations. In this sense, architectural solutions (mass produced) are no longer dreams about the possible or the impossible but about the solution to concrete, real needs (that have nothing to do with the perhaps vague, metaphorical and poetical side of life). The emergent industrial design milieu pushed the traditions of architecture to new standards of productivity. This shift in architectural practice makes distinct the discipline (and the product: the building) from any artistic speculation. In the magazine’s “progressive” ideas, Rowan questions the essential aspect of the architect:

Most architects become architects not only because they like to build buildings, but also because they like art. The urge to be an artist is rooted deeply in the subconsciousness, if not the consciousness, of the majority of practitioners.²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

For Rowan, most architects struggle against reason and reality, raising interesting questions in the procedures they employ to do their projects. (The standardization of many of the architects’ solutions display a mechanical attitude
to their careers, transforming it, sometimes, into only a job.) A radical architect is
the one that engages essential ideas about the practice and the methods to produce
it. For Roman, performance design247 might replace the more intuitive and less
rational approach to the discipline. Performance design, then, means the
optimization of a rational thinking. He wonders about the ambiguity of the idea
(performance-design) to highlight the constant conflict of the architect
simultaneously wanting to be part of civilization and desiring to subvert it.248 In
this sense, he questions not only the role the architect has to play, but also the
goals that attend the game. For Rowan, performance design introduces new forms
and new methodologies to the analytical procedures of the design process, offering
new opportunities to the field. These opportunities now rely in a system of
components. Architecture is more about parts, and the design is about the quality
and the performances of those parts.

Architecture is considered embedded within a system of reproductions, as
if space could be reproduced (and mass produced) to the infinite. Performance
design offers a new dimension to the building sciences and consequently to the
field of architecture that focuses on the standardization and optimization of life,
central to the utopian project of modernism. This dimension also offers a means by
which to rationalize ambiguous desire. Modernist visions where related to the
productivity of a machine; buildings were to be considered the artificial artifacts to

247 "Performance Design" is understood now as a design based on “reason” and reality.
248 Ibid.
optimize life. This is the paradoxical space that performance offers to any of the fields related to space production (and cultural shaping): at the same time that architecture is about the optimization of its effects, it is also about the representation and the signifiers that comes with these effects (architectural design, urban design, product design, etc.).

Concurrent with Roman’s introduction of performance design in this issue of *Progressive Architecture* was Derrida’s formulation of the active role of punctuation: linguistic spacing. For Derrida, punctuation enacts its own performative utterances and therefore induces a state of becoming through text. The space between words becomes the space of movement and of enactment; the punctuation of a text “speaks the articulation of space and time, the becoming-space of time and the becoming-time of space.”249 After two decades of establishing spatiotemporal ideas within language, through punctuation, Derrida suggested the notion of architectural performativity.250

Derrida’s linguistic innovations emerged at just about the same time of a new shift in architecture: deconstructivism, housed in the world and concerns of postmodernism.251 Derrida was connected to many of the architects of that time,

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251 Much of the deconstructivist thought was influenced by Jacques Derrida. The scenario is the postmodern world that was propelling ideas about fragmentation, distortion and
including Bernard Tschumi and his contemporaries. Derrida’s proposal also connects to the performative utterances proposed by J. L. Austin in his seminal book *How to Do Things with Words*.²⁵² The spaces of the text are also similar to the spaces left between the spaces of architecture. This is the space to be and to become in terms of the effects. The performative utterances now are transcribed to spatial actions by means of the built environment.²⁵³ The performative in architecture, when applied to, or read through, a PS perspective, shifts the dimension of performance and of the performative to the characteristics of the object. In other words, PS could analyze materialized object to find another type of performance. The performative in or of architecture considers much more than the performance of materials (of the object), pointing toward the possibility of thinking this sense of performance in terms of its resistance and its role to construct (a building).

The notion of performance design Roman proposes in *Progressive Architecture* restricted the broad spectrum of concerns that performance could include in the project of design (which becomes a possible project of PS); instead
of opening them, it only approached the technical or functional (rational) aspect of it. This thesis proposes a step beyond the mere efficiency of the design to consider design in relation to the production of culture—a much more subjective context and process. The true efficiency of a building, in order to be “successful,” needs to go beyond materials and methodologies of production to include as well the more abstract irrational and emotional dimension of life (the humanistic side)—meant to accompany any valuable artifact. The performative in architecture, as the interpretation of a possible and also impossible script, enables the (architectural) object to shape the spaces of human culture.

For David Leatherbarrow, the essential aspects of buildings become clearer if one supposes that the actuality of the building consist largely in its acts, its performances.\textsuperscript{254} Leatherbarrow proposes that the building discloses itself through its operations and formal receptions of its audience. In other words, the design of a building unfolds a certain performance that is beyond the mere performance of its materials. The building as an object performs in relation to the ideas that exist with it in terms of desires and cultural concerns, constructions of the possible by means of the organization of materials’ performance. Performance is the organization of perception.\textsuperscript{255} By paying attention to performance, spatial constructions will

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{255} Rodrigo Tisi, \textit{Arquitectura Como Performance: Estaciones del errante}, Master thesis on Architecture (1999).
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\end{footnotesize}
contribute to a new understanding of the ways buildings are imagined, made and experienced. Architecture is molded through activities and practices that are standardized by the roles that we perform through the living moments of life. Spaces are designed and constructed from these premises. Now, the ideal dimension of the new possible becomings invert and subvert existing methods of space representation and reproduction. Performance as an active tool for projection contributes to establishing new possibles: new activities, new situations and new experiences. Of course, these new possibilities are all connected to a broader umbrella of forces and concerns tied to the sociocultural and -political system in which we live and share.

Performance as a fertile engine that “expands” different practices of cultural concerns can contribute to the shaping of new complex scenarios of and for life. All produced constructions can now begin to be seen from another angle

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257 To discuss cultural performance Jon McKenzie asks about the performance of performance studies and he states that “[…] performance can best be distinguished from other performance concepts by its challenge to efficacy. That is, at the heart of its movement and generalization, Performance Studies scholars have constructed cultural performance as an engagement of social norms, as an ensemble of activities with the potential to uphold societal arrangements or, alternatively, to change people and societies. While performance’s efficacy to reaffirm existing structures and console or heal peoples has consistently been recognized, it is its transgressive or resistant potential that has come to dominate the study of cultural performance. It has long been its cutting edge. From the happenings, rock concerts, and political demonstrations of the 1960s to the drag shows, raves, and Culture Wars of the 1990s, cultural performance has been theorized as a catalyst to personal and social transformation.” See Jon McKenzie, “The Challenge of Efficacy,” *Perform or Else: from discipline to performance* (2001), 30.
that is related to the impact of the object (or product) on the broader scope of culture. This assumption presents the (sometimes unreachable) ambition that is behind performance.\textsuperscript{258} One could assume that buildings work for us, but, also, that they work to construct what we call a society with a certain culture. Architecture, art and design shape the perception that we have of the world.

The discourse of performative design has also been explored in realms of architectural engineering. This shared space of analysis also explains concerns related to cultural systems that we exist within and that we respond to. “High-performance”\textsuperscript{259} in these terms means to have more benefits (of high impact) by means of the rationalization and optimization of the energies when building space. The word \textit{performance} (within the architectural milieu) is focused on the efficiency of the construction of buildings—and all the procedures that go into understanding the scope of a building’s parts. But, in terms of its functionality, \textit{performance} suggests new and fresh possibilities opened to the construction of new types of \textit{events}.

\textsuperscript{258} Andrea Ruby definition of performance (in relation to architecture) is indeed about the “ambition” of the project. See the \textit{Metapolis Dictionary, of Advanced Architecture} (2001), 472.

\textsuperscript{259} High-performance is used in the field of design to test and evaluate the performance of a specific design under certain specific context. This term is also used in architecture especially when referred to issues of site specificity and sustainability.
Fig. 2.22 - To really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder, Bernard Tschumi (1978).\textsuperscript{260}

\textsuperscript{260} In 1978, as part of his "Advertisements for Architecture" project, Tschumi notoriously captioned a photo of a man being pushed from a window with the following: "To really
Bernard Tschumi writes that there is no space without event and no architecture without program. The shelter for the existence of events, in terms of architecture, is regulated by the solution of certain functions and spatial requirements. The programming of a certain object or a certain space can, in terms of Tschumi’s contribution, reveal an expected situation. Events cannot be designed or planned, but when imagined, they will exist if the spatial conditions are available. From this perspective, architecture can be designed in order to house a need; it can be programmed as required to give “space” for activities and functions; but it also can be shaped to provoke an event (or many events), as in an encounter of individuals. Events are about the congregation of people; they, as time-space-place–based moments, interpret the space to share (something).

appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder.” He followed this with "Violence of Architecture," the essay from which the above quote is taken.


See Tschumi’s ideas about the program on architecture and the notion of time when experiencing a building, in *Architecture and Disjunction* (1996), 99–170.

See the shared ideas of performance, art and architecture proposed in first chapter.
Fig. 2.23 – Object-Subject, Rodrigo Tisi (2011).
In her discussion of performative objects, Kristina Niedderer states that the identifying the efficient functionality that certain objects maintain is the first step towards understanding the possible performatives those objects might perform. From a design standpoint, function is the basic constitutive of any performative object.264 If the design is successful in terms of its use, and if it has a fluid “connection” (or “communication”) with the user, then the object performs accordingly. Objects that perform surround us; they can perform “well” or “poorly” (and any state in between). All of those “object performances” are more or less successful if we, as users, understand them and legibly react to them (Fig.2.23). The notion of the performative is also applicable to performances of space. Spaces perform in the way that we use them—the way we perform with them—and, surely, an individual can also perform against or in opposition to the purpose of the project or the space it creates.

Professor André Lepecki wonders about the notion of the performative object when he analyzes dance and the objects that exist with it. For Lepecki, the centrality of objects provokes a tension with the body of the dancer, similar to the constructive tension that exist with the user of a commodity. Lepecki explains objects as commodities that command our actions. At the same time that we are organized and controlled by the existence of objects, he explains the performativity that is driven by them. Alluding to Giorgio Agamben’s proposition

about “apparatuses,” Lepecki explains the apparatus as “a thing that commands.”

This reading of objects is extremely radical when we confront it with architecture. Movements and displacements through architecture are indeed constructed and driven by the characteristics of the design. Objects and architectural objects (and spaces) control the relationship we have with the places that we inhabit, not only because of their functionality but because of the performativity that results when we utilize them. But Lepecki also explores the object in relation to actual performances that utilize objects. The performances do not consider the functionality or the “identity” of the object as what it is, but just as a thing with no meaning, no function and no value. This approach establishes that the object changes its significant (dependent) value when we are not engaging with it (in terms of its performance, meaning, using it as per what it was designed). The commodities Lepecki suggests could be subverted to shape new perceptions of the object that surround us in life. In transforming these commodities into cultural makers (or producers) of life we might be able to install and provoke new

265 Apparatuses for Agamben are things (or dispositifs) that command. He states: “I shall call an apparatus literally anything that has in some way the capacity to capture, orient, determine intercept, model, control or secure gestures, behaviors, opinions, or discourses of living beings” see Girogio Agamben’s What is an apparatus? and other essays (2009).

266 André Lepecki, Unpublished lecture, Interdisciplinary Seminar on "Embodied Performance," UC-Davis, California, delivered February 2011.
possible events and to establish new and unexpected programs within architecture.

Objects push our life.267

Something similar to this potential of subversion happens with Niedderer’s Social Cups (2007).268 Neidderer designed special cups as performative objects to provoke social interaction. Her assumption is that artifacts can stimulate the user’s behavior by means of their function, can cause mindful reflection and interaction.

The social cups were designed to actively explore the social interaction, within which they are used, and to make the user aware of this interaction within which they are used, and to make the user aware of this interaction and reflect on it. The shape of the cups resembles a champagne glass without a stem and base. Instead, the cups each have a little connector that enables them to be connected and thus stand. When at least three cups are connected, they form a stable unit. In this way, people are encouraged to explore their interactions when using the cups.269

In both Niedderer’s and Lepecki’s examples we understand the performance of objects and consequently the capacity of them to “connect” with individuals (users, performers, spectators) and to drive human actions, reactions

267 For Superstudio for example, the explanation of design and architecture is in relation to the objects and monuments that we have designed. They criticize the cosmetic and the errors of massive productivity on things that might be not necessary for human satisfactions. They are inspired to improve social standars and quality of life. “They discarded the role of the creator, the designer, the architect. Instead, the group moved to espouse the complete reversal of the normative condition, to swith roles, to find architecture in one’s own life.” See Peter Lang and William Menking, “Only Architecture will be Our Lifes,” Superstudio: life without objects (2003), 25.
268 “Social Cups” is a project of industrial design realized by Kristina Niedderer that consisted of special collective cups to promote social interaction. See Niedderer, “Designing Mindful interaction: the category of the performative object,” Design Issues Vol. 23, Number 1 (2007), 10.
269 Ibid., 3.
and responses. This also determines the level of subjectivity and emotions users invest in the objects. In Niedderer’s *Social Cups*, the performati\-ve quality of the object is connected to its functionality and to the “content construction” that comes with it and discloses from it (sociocultural and -political values). Functions represent a script that is predetermined by both objects and spaces. This force, the program (in architectural codes), constitutes the DNA of any artifact; in consequence, it displays its standardized or commoditized identity to put it in Lepecki’s words. This irrational force that accompanies objects also constitute the base of our desire for them. Of course, this also relates to the fact that a capitalist society produces plenty and more of them, providing a solution to meeting existing needs while also creating new ones. The transaction of objects supposes the “acquisition” of a certain personality, time, status, and so forth… as if an object could have the power to erase personal decisions, genuine identity and transparent desire.

Architecture is a means to improve living conditions, but sometimes poor designs and poor buildings act against this presumed quality of life (which at this point is already standardized). Unfortunately architecture, industrial design and any type of design (including art) involve the issue of money.\(^{270}\) This argument is not to say that architects and designers and artists need money to imagine or to

\(^{270}\) As discussed in the previous chapter, in paper architecture only ideas are discussed. Here the issues of the discussion are based on concrete projects or architecture and or industrial design.
design “good” or quality pieces, but they certainly require it in order to execute their projects. Creative disciplines that have a goal imbricated within the “cultural” construction of society (in any level, even in the political level) require the support of a certain economy to further develop the designs meant to happen (their construction). By introducing the dimension of economies, I am also considering the need and possibility of (spatial) reproduction in relation to the “conscious” production of many different “objects.” Short-term projects might provide needs through standardized means, and therefore will require one type of “quick” approach, an efficient one that has a clear, short-term goal. A long-term based project might require a different “situation” for its development: first, in terms of the economy, and secondly, in terms of its returns (as a possible commodity within that economy). The commodification of objects is only explained by mounting constructions of need. The short-term project (with its proven strategies of implementation) is sometimes much more powerful just because of the economic return it promises investors. As presented, feasibility seems to be another crucial term when thinking about performance (in terms of architecture and design). What is feasible and what is not? What is the result? And how can we measure the success in one design’s performance?

One of my intentions is to understand the capacity of architecture to create, or at least initiate, the formation of a communicative space—structured not mechanically, to fulfill predictable functions, but more in the fashion of a musical instrument, which can send reverberations through other levels of culture and help to embody them. Restoring a communicative role of architecture
is a necessary step toward restoring its role as the topological and corporeal foundation of culture.271

With Dalibor Vesely’s thought we are moved, again, to the world of architecture that has to deal with issues of hermeneutics and poetics. This is perhaps the most valuable and significant aspect of architecture (and perhaps the one that cannot be bought), and is clearly related to the construction of culture. It is also through this dimension that the field of architecture has much to offer the field of PS. As previously stated, the work presented here explores the relationship between artistic and cultural creative practices named in the broad sense as performance, and the communicative aspects that the practice (of architecture or art) involves when projecting concrete space. Architecture can borrow many of the (performative) strategies that are utilized in the production of the contemporary art world, so as to project culture through the shaping of different forms (that induce behavior). The discussion then is again focused on the meaningful ambition behind the project—the active provocation architecture creates when embedded within specific contexts. In relation to the concerns of cultural critique, the re-presentation of ideas by the installation of new spatial forms supposes the shaping of an audience (users). This shaping of an audience is also embedded in a cultural context in which architecture plays a fundamental role in the interpretation of the

sociocultural and -political scenarios that deal with the contingency of certain required spaces.

The desires and hopes for certain values, of certain individuals (or groups of people) are the most powerful leitmotifs for architectural thinking. It is evident that we must connect these ideas with those of the performative object. It seems to me that architectural practice always had the understanding of the performative as a tacit must. The fact that architectural goals were not described explicitly as “performative” does not mean that the practice did not implicitly incorporate this degree of performativity. Ultimately, the performance of architecture is much more complex that the performance of an actor, a musician or a dancer because the body of a dancer or an actor or a musician can be controlled or adjusted by the same dancer, actor or musician. In architecture, the body of architecture (which interprets the body of the user) is the one that has to control or adjust the performance. In other words an artifact or an object produces the performance (that artifact is architecture). The embodied artifact is much more fertile yet finite because of the cultural codes and needs that we perform with it.

Performance becomes a powerful resource to develop a new methodology for reconstructing the discourse of architectural concerns and hopes. The entire social dimension that could be built with architecture is better understood by means of certain critical apparati: new technological environments, the role of media, the massive consumption of objects and spaces all demand that an
architect/designer be much more aware of the transformations of culture that we share. Cultural forces—of which architecture is a victim—regulate the possibilities and the feasibilities of a possible new environment to shape (Fig.2.24 and Fig.2.25).

Fig. 2.24 – *Performativity I*, Rodrigo Tisi (2011).
Fig. 2.25 – *Performativity II*, Rodrigo Tisi (2011).
2.5 – Comprehensive project: B + T + S + P + PL + M (+ L)

Since 2005, I’ve been implementing a pedagogy with my students that comprises six critical points to explore the dimension of performance in the architecture’s practice. This pedagogy approaches a general theory of architecture’s practice through an analysis of the performative aspects of design so as to understand and discover new possible ways to approach architectural performativity. I’ve organized these six points (+ one) in an equation that shapes the performative dimension of the proposed project proposed, operative to an object of any scale: $B + T + S + P + PL + M (+ L)$, wherein the letters stand in for Body, Time, Surface, Program, Place, Material and Love, respectively.

Further, this theory considers not only what the project is but also what it does. This simultaneous tension/relational between the is and the does is what becomes relevant for architects when thinking about performance, and for performers, when thinking about architecture. These six aspects are very tied to the previously discussed significance of utopia as a conceptual means to develop what a project would do and could be. This theory is also offered to evaluate the ambitions of a “projected future” by means of the objects that we, as architects, designers or artists produce to explain our thoughts. In the studios, students and professors constructed prototypes that allowed us to investigate and test the many
different components of performance that emerge when thinking about shaping the real.

Fig. 2.26 - Students at the School of Architecture UNAB, Spaces of/for Performance II (2007). 272

The ultimate goal of this general theory is to make evident the need for a (pro)active collaborative process of production when projecting space. As architects designing permanent or impermanent structures, we require useful mechanisms and teams to analyze and develop our proposals. There are many

272 Various different studios of Spaces of/for Performance were realized, beginning in 2005, in different Chilean universities’ Schools of Architecture, including Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, Universidad Andrés Bello, Pontificia Universidad Católica and Universidad Diego Portales.
representational tools, including digital simulations, scaled models, and full-scale prototypes, capable, all of them, to explain what the project could be. As a presentational form, performance provides a guiding paradigm for testing and evaluating the architectural object from conception to production to execution, and to the ensuing consideration of its effects. This is all embedded in a set of cultural parameters that surround the project at its time of being produced. Performance forces the architect/designer/artist to be conscious of and sensitive to the environment that requires (or will receive) the project.

Performance is not concerned with what a project of architecture is, but of what it does or produces after its presence (architecture is concerned with what the project is in terms of signifiers, forms, materials and structures).\(^{273}\) In this sense, this pedagogy considers a certain expansion of that frame to provoke an awareness of the implications and the ambitions (usually bigger than the scope of a single project) that emerge when incorporating a performative thinking with the design process and its realization. In analyzing the designs combined with the scope of performance (in the broad sense), architects multiply their theoretical concerns of the effects of their designs. A project is no longer interesting because of how it is constructed but because of how that construction behaves after its presence is

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realized (at any level and on any scale). Performance contributes to the analysis of
the “qualities” of the spaces provoked by their design. It analyzes them by means
of the impact to the environment and the response of people. When introducing
performance to the process of design the architect/designer/artist expands his or
her domain of practice to become something more hybrid: performitect
(performance + architect).\textsuperscript{274} The performitect is a character that plays a role to
depict, and questions and envisions a possible future by means of the manipulation
of sociocultural and -political concerns.

I have organized the critical points in this equation to connect to the issues
of the performative and of performativity, which ultimately offer a new twist to the
processes of space design and production. These points extend the perspectives of
how to approach and understand a design proposal and, presented as a
methodology, contribute to develop a comprehensive project that expands the
scope of the field’s practices. Indeed, one important statement of this equation is
that performance is to be designed even if it is comprises no instructions or rules
or script to guide it. Vitruvius suggested something similar in his ten books of
architecture, something that will produce a healthy impact according to the

\textsuperscript{274} I discussed these ideas with my PS colleague Dorita Hannah, PhD. Dorita Hannah,
Mette Ramsgard and Brandon Labelle, and I shared a panel on the Prague Quadriennal of
Theater Architecture (PQ2007) titled performitecture. For more information see booklet
with the program of the event. This concept attempts to express the need of a shared space
(of practice) to include the dimension of performance within the discipline of architecture,
and consequently its “product.”
architecture’s performance.²⁷⁵ In book III, chapter one of De architectura, he compares the human body directly to the body of a building by doing an analogy.²⁷⁶

Dalibor Vesely comments in “The architectonics of embodiment” that there is a good reason to believe that creative architectural thinking is possible only in collaboration with other disciplines, such as philosophy, astronomy, music, geometry and rhetoric. Otherwise, the sometimes strange and difficult formulations of architectural manifestos remain enigmatic and often controversial.²⁷⁷ This is why it seems to be so pertinent this dissertation to offer a “theory” based on parameters of other orders than those traditionally used to understand performance within the field of PS. The innovation of these new parameters speaks to an era in which technologies have transformed the notions that we have about space, place, time, limits, borders, and so on. In a 2008 article for the Journal of Architectural Education I wrote:

A performance-centered approach interferes with typical modes of architectural representation by including the performative (and

²⁷⁵ The word Architect derives from the greek “master” and “builder.” In his ten books of architecture Vitruvius composed a treatise to “build” accordingly. He declared that any architectural structure must exhibit three qualities: firmitas, utilitas and venustas, which means that must be solid, useful, and beautiful. Although his treatise could be understood as an engineering concern it was more related to issues of landscape and craftsmen. See Thomas Gordon Smith. Vitruvius On Architecture (2003).
therefore active) potential of the body within spatial reception and evaluation. The body is not simplified as a stand-in for all bodies (as in most architectural representations), but is considered one that individually and expressively occupies and observes space. This suggests a new way of examining experience, where architectural performance is understood as a series of unique and unrepeatable acts. It also challenges the repeatable mechanisms of representation that architects normally use to construct reality. At another level of complexity, performance exists only in agreement with cultural context: “performance does not depend on an event in itself but on how that event is received and placed.” In this way spatial performance cannot be evaluated without considering the manifold modes of its “cultural” reception. In order to assist students in considering the performative dimensions of architecture I asked them to reflect on 6 points in their approach to the design of a project: body, surface, program, time, place and materials. These parameters constitute the equation for a Comprehensive Project: \( B + S + P + T + P + L + M = C.P. \) Instead of a fixed result, the goal was to open the student’s work to the many different issues related to various criteria of performance (as action, operation/interaction and evaluation), and to demonstrate that all these criteria should be considered in order to have a complete project. Through spatio-temporal enactments, students test architectural parameters by dealing with real constraints that allow them to build on actual observation during the process.\(^{278}\)

These six critical points comprise a “general theory” to design performance, methodologically informing the facets by which to analyze any design. I have developed this equation as “procedure” that helps to improve the techniques architects use during the process of projecting (designing) space. These points constitute the “factors” to be solved within the larger equation, ultimately yielding a comprehensive project.²⁷⁹ It might sound odd and perhaps naïve to work with a formula to elaborate upon and construct performance. Yes and no. Yes, because performance cannot be measured in terms of purely objective parameters; there is always a dimension that trespasses the purely rational. No, because each factor of the equation is open for debate. The equation proposes that the “user” explore and define each factor as required according to his/her own interest. Thus, the six factors can be explored and defined by both objective and subjective perspectives.

In terms of methodology, this characteristic gives to the equation a closed but at the same time an open structure of and for analysis. Even if they are considered from only one perspective, these critical points constitute “objective” means by which to analyze the object of the performance in question. They represent the rational order of the mathematical exercise of an equation, which

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²⁷⁹ This notion of a comprehensive project is inspired in the personality of Buckminster Fuller who had a thought in a global design had the intention to “make the world work for 100% of humanity, in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation without ecological offense or disadvantage of anyone.” See online publication of the Buckminster Fuller Institute: http://challenge.bfi.org/ (1 April 2011).
corresponds to the processing of a certain “objective” data. But, at the same time (and from another perspective), they are, indeed, factors that are very subjective because they can be constructed and re-constructed as cultural parameters change from time to time and from place to place. Each factor could work with a variable definition depending on the nature of the project to be developed and solved. These simultaneously rational and yet irrational entries are malleable and adaptable, as each definition of the term is and should be always be reconstructed or revised: What does Body mean? Surface? Program? Time? Material? Or, Place? What do all of these concerns mean for both architecture and performance, and PS? How can a project incorporate all of them together? Combined in different ways and at different levels, they provoke the performative aspects of the object and allow for its performativity.

Of these six factors proposed, only four of them commonly appear in an architect's process of projection: 1) Surface, defined as a variable that limits and shapes space, the one factor that ultimately transmits place to us; 2) Program, defined as the declaration of a certain necessity, functionality and usability with regards to the constraints and existing (or not) configurations of place; 3) Materiality, defined as the possibility to provoke and shape experience by means of the coherent use of matter and material (physical or psychological); and 4) Place, understood as the state of the social, political and cultural context where the
project is situated, understood through the cultural conventions that describe a certain context.

Now, as this thesis is about performance, and therefore implies the consideration of body and time, the equation prioritizes those factors that the architects rarely project. Body is generally understood as a default in terms of physical characteristics and distinct measurements. However, Body as well as Time are fundamental elements used to establish and to perceive experience. These two concepts are fundamental for performance. Time is crucial because it describes the extension of experience (which does not last forever). This thesis goes further to propose the incorporation of these two factors into the standard systems of representation that architects normally use. The question now, then, becomes: How to present and represent Body and Time when projecting and presenting a project? Body and Time, are in my opinion, core elements to include in the design process. We (architects/designers/artists) assume that man-made objects are created at certain times and under specific circumstances to satisfy certain purposes, to fulfill certain needs or to create new ones (which are also factors in our consideration of “art”).
2.5.1 - BODY

The body is understood as a cultural construct responding to specific scenarios and customs. In this sense, it can also be understood as a dynamic object that is capable of inverting, subverting and producing spatial conditions. The architectural body is therefore *double*, incorporating the human body and that of the proposed artifact.280

In today’s cities, public space is increasingly dependent upon restrictions performed on the body. In different situations occurring in the city, people, and their actions, are determined and ruled by spaces designed for specific uses. These spaces are more and more controlled and ruled by conventions. In this (infertile) landscape of actions, flows and patterns of movement within the shared space of the city are constantly reshaped and restricted by means of architecture. Most of the architecture of the city has become a product (as a commodity) of mere reproduction. Bodies are established under certain specific norms and certain specific standards. Bodies “respond” to those regulations that society installs—ideologically, politically, culturally, economically and so on. Control and productivity tends to standardize the production of space and therefore to restrict the body. The production of space shapes the body and transforms it into a social construct. The productivity of space specifically within the parameters of

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capitalism has transformed the body into another standardized subject/object within the cultural milieu that we share when describing capitalist society.  

The materialized forms constructed by society represent the body. The body as a form subsequently represents the perversion of a superimposed dominant order:

The body has the power of concrete presence, and (yet) its absence can be its power: because it is elusive, because it always exist only at the margins of the disciplines, because it oscillates between seemingly allowing itself to be reified and commodified on the one side, and in ekstasis rejecting the powers formed by civilization on the other, because of this elusiveness, it will always remain the opening through which resistance to repression and exploitation can erupt into the (physical) forms that are designed to restrain such resistance.

Certain spaces are designed for specific users but not, for example, for vagabonds, anarchists or protesters. It is perhaps in the contagion of “bad behavior” that we can find new experiences for the body. The body, as the main factor in the equation of a comprehensive project, plays an important role in determining the success of the spaces in which we live but, also, at the same time, has the power to ruin them. By means of the (living) body we can understand the space of order as well as the space of disorder. Despite this, however, the body

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281 Henry Lefebvre, Production of space (2001).
seems to be forgotten because it represents far more than the goal of a unique design.

Contemporary society is continuously re-shaping the body to construct new social values around it. In Richard Sennet’s *Flesh and Stone* the body plays an important role in understanding the fabric of urban environments. Sennet analyzes the live body in action and within the public space of the city to search for “democracy” by looking at the movement, the contact and the sensorial experience of confronted bodies of public realm (diversity). He highlights the friction among different bodies that represent society. The spatial relations of bodies obviously make a great deal of difference in how people react to each other, how they see and hear one another and whether they touch or are distant. The body’s definitions are indeed constructed by cultural parameters.

In architecture, the body is generally understood as the user. It constitutes the subject and represents the cause and the reason to defend the existence of objects. Architecture shapes the body to many different scales—from a chair to a building to city. Body and object, together, interpret the complex being that means body in architecture. Many other characteristics and orders, that are more subjective and that relate to signifiers have to be considered when working with active and passive bodies.

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To understand Body, we must also understand the notion of presence.\textsuperscript{284} The idea of presence is crucial to performance because it is related to the phenomena of perception. Presence works precisely within the nature of “actions” and “events” and is a main element in the establishment of performance. Presence involves time, which is crucial for the existence of performance. As Patrice Pavis states in relation to issues of the body on stage, presence is the actor’s greatest asset and the audience’s greatest experience. His argument highlights the direct (physical) communication between bodies (audience and actors). This notion of “contact” constructs the moment of performance’s perception.\textsuperscript{285} Of course, objects that are organized in the environment that surround us also shape presence.\textsuperscript{286} Object's

\textsuperscript{284} Presence is the state or fact of existing, occurring, or being present in a place. See The New Oxford American Dictionary, Oxford University Press (2001).

\textsuperscript{285} With this desire to generate different experiences in the (user’s) body, we see different attempts from architecture, for example the Pantheon in Rome or Frank Lloyd Wright’s architecture. Lloyd Wright proposed a spatial continuity that allowed a free-flow "form" through space. His houses incorporated a continuous ambience that connected all interior spaces. In reality this path "of freedom" has concentrated on the design of a circulation to promote a “connected” and continuous temporal dimension of space, much different than the disconnected multilayered situations that normally happen in a conventional plan of a building. Lloyd Wright’s ideas will become more evident with the fluid space of New York City’s Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. The space is indeed a problem for the goal of functional architecture, here to display and exhibit art; but it was a real success in terms of the movement of the audience. Many of these ideas of free plans and free programming were already inspiring modernist architecture after the Second World War. This “free flow” also suggests a level of “concrete” touch among bodies. The choreography designed by the space can play a fundamental role in producing the “encounter” among individuals. Eroticism has been left aside by many thinkers that project space; as far as the physical, design is mostly only concerned with issues of bodies’ dimensions. Though the body uses its corporal senses to perceive space, and contact remains the principal objective among the projection (or plan) of a body, and between bodies moving in space.

\textsuperscript{286} This point about presence, and to understand objects and their presence around us, is also crucial. Why? Because objects “talk” about us, objects describe us. The organization
presence also talks present (or “display”) the absence of living bodies (which are sometimes understood as other objects, just think about massive productivity).

Objects play a fundamental role in what the body experiences (and what the body is). Objects, then, could be perceived as other types of bodies (artificial elements with their own “life” that are placed around and among other “living” bodies).\textsuperscript{287}

To explore this notion of a body on stage (no “display”) Erving Goffman offers an of objects and different objects, the arrangement of space, in a certain context, describe the presence of our bodies. Here, it is important to link a reflection on something that is of great value to performance studies and of course performance in general terms when thinking about its execution. Presence is also understood by absence. Much work done in PS explores the notion of absence to discuss issues about presence. Objects and actions declare the “presence” of existing or not existing bodies. These ideas have been explored in depth by many PS scholars including Diana Taylor, Peggy Phelan and José Muñoz, as well as Fred Moten and many others who have given important input in this direction. In other contexts, for example, Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler. The point in this dissertation is not about the absence of a body, it is about its presence; that is why architecture and art is projected for the existence of the other bodies that perceive it. Now, it is correct, in terms of absence that there seems to be a paradox because architecture (and design in general) “speaks” about a certain body, a certain present body that “uses” architecture and the objects around to live life (things that have been designed, including art). The discussion about presence-absence is a discussion pertinent to architecture because it helps to construct the experience and the perception of space architects and designers shape. Someone could read and therefore experience and act on space after understanding it; and to understand it, it is not always relevant to have a present body but the “aura” or the traces of it. An empty space is not really empty, as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o argues against Peter Brook’s empty space. By its presence architecture denotes the presence of a body, a living body (or a dead one in the case of a pyramids for example). The presence of certain things around us explains the “context” and therefore the conditions that certain bodies have to carry out a living (or a death).

\textsuperscript{287} “Objects too have a life in them, maybe not as in a Toy Story movie when dolls and action figures leap off shelves and discuss their faces, but in the way they sustain social practices just as those practices sustain them.” Objects live with us as other bodies. See Harvey Molotch, “Lash-Ups: Goods and Bads,” Where stuff comes from: how toasters, toilets, cars, computers, and many other things come to be as they are (2003), 2.
approach to consider the phenomena of conscious perception and the role a certain body plays within socially contextualized characteristics.\textsuperscript{288}

In reference to the city, urban presences could be associated to objects, that have singular unrepeatable conditions and that mark the collective territory of the city.\textsuperscript{289} Urban presences are to be defined by the ability of certain elements of urban space to appear and stand out as specific landmarks in the city landscape, meaning, by the ability to (re)present themselves within the urban stage/setting. These significant landmarks are of great interest because they constitute the places we recognize within the city. The collective and individual activities contribute to the definition of urban presences since city life evolves around them. Urban presences present themselves through physical appearances or façades as ornamental constructions, akin to the appearance of an individual or an object in the space of the stage. Urban presences are established as interpreters of communication for citizens. Each presence states its specific argument almost as an narrative script would. Urban scenography proposes a script that establishes these presences’ roles in space, just as that which occurs when we imagine the

\textsuperscript{288} With his approach to the individual “acts” Erving Goffman contributes enourmously to how we see and understand the role of certain “characters” that orchestrate our daily life activities. Ultimately Goffman highlights the presence of bodies performing with certain consciousness, this is relevant to understand and see performance in an environment that is not theater. The performer, in his or her approach, acquires a level of theatricality that explains his or her “appearance” or visible role in a social milieu. This idea could also be associated with the presence of certain buildings or spaces in the social “ambience” of the city, composed by multiple types of constructions (multiple characters).

\textsuperscript{289} See the explanation of the concept of urban presence in \textit{Escenografia Urbana}, edited by Rodrigo Tisi and Renato Bernasconi (2010)
space of a stage, and they exist solely for the participation and presence of the spectator/urban user and have the explicit capability of transmitting or interpreting a specific “text” to the city’s user (this is something related to what I have explained in chapter one; spaces transmit and therefore urban presences interpret that of which has to be transmitted. Urban presences are recognized by perceptive experience and not through the conscious and rational intentions of a designer. They are a result of cultural constructions that consider signifiers and values adopted by collective belongings. They could be, of course, a response to an architect’s concerns in terms of creating a feasible solution or provocation through the means of space (i.e., how to project the mental and perceptual construction of desire).

A public environment is converted into an urban stage set when a users’ perception relates with the elements, the space and the people that inhabit the public space. That complex and temporary relation requires that significant presences exist. The place that urban scenography constructs results from a hierarchical order imposed and quickly understood by the user of the city. Everyday life gives urban space dramatic significance that becomes monotone from the repetition and indifference of many cultural situations that take place over the course of time. Thus perception and action in public space become relevant through their ability to transform the elements and people of public space, and to create moments of experience given over to fantasy and illusion that are far beyond mere function.

Like urban stage/settings, each urban presence should depend on a scale adapted to the public and collective context of the city. The scale of the presences is regulated by the effects of the context and goes beyond the simple fact of its size. The presence evokes more than what it objectively and formally is. The presence makes and stimulates the artificial environment of the city, activating it. Urban presences make up the material body of a collective discourse.
The architect almost always presents a solution to the problem of the body based on ergonometric concerns, functions and behavioral conventions. As architecture recognizes the significance of the presence of the body and reconsiders how to shape space around it, performance studies could be a fertile milieu by which to expand the capacity of architectural production in terms of actions, activities, rituals and functions. PS, like architecture, is also concerned with the production of culture and hence might contribute to the field of architecture by analyzing its productivity in a broad cultural sense. The body is the last object to receive attention within this line of production but also the most important one. Embodied practices (as a result of culture and perception) are shaped by architecture. As an inclusive term, performance refuses to remain static and therefore produces a tension between the active spaces of bodies, contexts, cultural parameters and customs, and the calm and stillness typical of architecture.

290 Neufert’s Man measures “function” for the formal aspect of space and for the characteristics of its dimensions. This notation demands a sense of size and “performances” in space. The space performs and the user performs with it by decodifying its own code and that of the objects around it. The issues mentioned here are closer to the people that architecture is made for, “the users.” These issues expand the notions of architecture into parameters of: significance, role, play, context, time and certainly experience. These are notions not often explored in the customary practice of projecting a conventional building, but rather of living in one. See ”Man, the Universal Standard,” Architect’s Data edited by Ernst Neufert and Peter Neufert (2002), 15.
2.5.2 – TIME

Time, as a relative phenomenon, is perhaps the most challenging element for this “equation”. The building process slowly materializes architecture, which, as a generally fixed object, tends to perform even more gradually. Architects have to be aware of how space is activated through movement and experienced across varying temporalities specific to culture, location and circumstance.291

Time plays a crucial role in performance. Time shapes performance. Combined with Body, Time represents a key element in the exploration of this general theory to design performance (by means of architecture, design or art). Architectural forms influence the presence and behavior of the body within specific spaces and under specific circumstances (time parameters). Design forms are all always referred to notions of a body’s presence and are often adjusted according to the perception of experience by means of objects. Art shapes performance in terms of an event that, in some cases, could be related to “spectacle,” and, in some other cases, to imperceptible actions—each dependent upon the nature of art or the performance. Notions of time challenge the concrete materialization of a project through the feedback of people interacting with it. In this sense, performance—as an interplay of active forces on a certain time—becomes an analytical tool for evaluating the effects generated by the design (of

To understand time as a concept pertinent to shape space, we must understand experience and that the body is not capable of completely experiencing a space on its own but can only realize this through the medium of time, of a trajectory. Time is related to movement. Actions and trajectories are relevant concerns when thinking and designing architecture.292 Movement and body displacement implies a temporary lapse. The use of “design” presupposes temporal use. It is a necessary contrivance to distinguish between the concept of time from that of space, while knowing that they are always inseparable binaries. The perception time means a continuous progression of events and happenings in which all changes take place. The perception of such changes subsequently allows for the perception of time. Architecture in both permanent and impermanent situations establishes different scenarios where all those changes—or events—of life happen. It is within a space-time-continuum that all statements of time are

292 As time relates to the actual “presence” of a body, and because the point of time here explains this direct connection with movement, the concern of time in space clarifies the “existence” of something (movement explains it). In this respect, movement is a category of analysis that should be considered in the analysis of all the factors offered in the comprehensive equation: Body, as movement is related to acts and actions of different scales in and within space); Surface, as movement is driven and shaped by limits; Program, as movement indeed describes the type of activity executed in a certain space (a kitchen is different from a class room and they both have to consider different types of movements); Place, as movement describe the possibilities to explore and live on a certain place; Material, as it describes movement in terms of a permanent or ephemeral construction. The life of something comes from this, related to the transformation of characteristics, evolution, transformation: movement. The last factor of love raises the question of movement in terms of contributing to make something better, to grow. Again, movement is embedded in the 6 (7) factors offered by this thesis.
relative because each statement constitutes a construction from the relational point of view of the observer, which is relative to the observed object as a consequence of movement. In this sense, understanding time as the description of a series of events happening (experiences) at a certain place, or through the observance of certain events, becomes an object of analysis.

In an interview with Bernard Tschumi, Enrique Walker asks Tschumi about the re-direction of his architectural work after 1975, with regard to what was happening at that time. Tschumi responded:

The dust was finally settling after the events of May 1968 in Paris and a new wind of inventiveness was rising in London, in particular around the Architectural Association. After all, May 1968 had a major effect on the questioning of culture and society, which invariably affected the questioning of architecture. The ideals of the modern movement had already developed into corporate modernism and fairly stale academic ideologies. The social and cultural upheaval of 1968 was as much a symptom of the prevalent dissatisfaction of the time as a cause for further questioning.

The phenomena of time could also be seen in terms of the use and the weathering of a building (or an object). Marks and modifications to existing structures also describe the course of time. What remains from the past is a trace or imprint of an

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293 In January 11, 1988, *Time Magazine* writes in the front page “1968: the gear that shaped a generation.” The events of 1968 that revolutionized Europe (in France as well as Prague) signify also a moment of shifts for the “American” society based in all the ideologies and the sociopolitical concerns. The society experienced a change that revolutionized rights and projects of humanitarian value.

event, not the thing itself as it existed when present. The event remains only in the memory and therefore can condition the perception successive events. Likewise, the experience of the present in architecture is not really of the present but of the past (a building was projected and built during another time, different from the present of its current use). The past is not a specific and limited period or a time that is over and done with; rather it can be seen as “what has come to be” in the present.\footnote{Mohsen Mostafavi and David Leatherbarrow, \textit{On weathering: the life of buildings in time} (1993), 116.} Architects shape the future by means of a present charged by the past. Memory helps us to perceive and project the course of time.

We can be conscious in our interpretation of time because of radical changes taking place on space. The modern combination of time-space could be better understood by incorporating the idea of information, open to the action of the local upon the global, which gives rise to greater indetermination (and instability) in our understanding of the universe. This has allowed us to introduce the influence of combinatorial and diversified, universal and individual information (and its dynamical effects) into spatial expressions of processes.\footnote{Refer to definition of time (information-time-space) in \textit{The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture} (2003), 606.}
2.5.3 - SURFACE

Architectural experience is predicated on an understanding of the spatial conditions negotiated by material boundaries that locate place and action. In addition, surface constitutes an interface between user and building, providing many different possibilities of spatial communication through limits.297

Architecture has to be understood as embedded in a broader framework than the surface of an object or image, both in terms of engaging with the social context in which it tangibly exists and in terms of sensorial engagement, through the time and experience of its use.298 To understand surface as a concept pertinent to shape performance, we must understand the ideas of limit and skin. Architecture is composed from the organization of different limits; architecture is in fact a problem of borders and boundaries that restrict open space. Architecture represents a second skin, a skin that occurs after the skin of the body (and after clothing). Body adopts the skin of suits, for instance, items produced and standardized according to size (S [small], M [medium], L [large] and XL [extra-large]). Clothing functions as the man-made surface of the body, composed of different types of fabrics (natural and artificial). This clothing presents the body differently through different modes, types and shapes; a social presentation, as Goffman would argue.

298 See the Introduction to Architecture and Perticipation edited by Peter Blundell Jones, Doina Petrescu and Jeremy Till (2005), xv.
Architecture also has something to do with a layering or covering of the body. Architects shape buildings and structures to have different characteristics depending on the material they use. Architecture encloses the body, determining it, determining content, as a means of control through form. Different surfaces create different limits that provoke different types of perception. Surfaces allow architecture to communicate with its users. Interaction with space is a phenomena constructed by surface (and the boundaries that it represents). Understood as a limit, surface performs to produce atmospheres to be read and experienced by the body. But, contrary to the standardization of the body, the study of surfaces and their relation to different bodies can open up new scenarios of architectural construction. New forms and new shapes of surfaces can present and induce a new type of body, and therefore a new kind of situation within space.

Objects are indeed constructions shaped by surfaces (as buildings, and our experiences of them, are shaped by their surfaces). Those surfaces are the skins (or layers of the space in which we live) and, therefore, represent the boundaries of the contained spaces that construct the presence of architecture. In Skin: surface, substance and design, Ellen Lupton describes the skin of objects to state the mean by which contemporary designers approach the surfaces of products and buildings as similarly complex, ambiguous forms. Manufactured skins are richly responsive
substances that modulate the meaning, function and dimensionality of things. All these skins are also mass-produced to satisfy different standards and needs. Places are composed and constructed by the organization of different limits, which are “displayed” by surfaces.

Architects such as Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron focus on the condition of skins, layers and shells in their architecture (Fig.2.27). The exterior skins of their buildings, or facades, are often inscribed with the imaginary; the result is a tattooed skin of glass and concrete.

![Image](image.jpg)

**Fig. 2.27** - *Eberswalde Technical School Library*, Herzog and de Meuron (1997-1999).

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Skins and surfaces both describe an interior, or what is behind them, by means of they look. Discussing the look of architecture, Witold Rybczynski identifies three distinct reasons for the intimate relationship between dress and décor: First, the technical: décor, like clothing, incorporates fabrics. Curtains, swags, and window treatments are made of silk, damask, stain, brocade wool, velvet—and so is clothing. Woven materials are used in tapestries. Inevitably, the dressmaker’s techniques find their way into décor. The connection between décor and dress can be even more intimate. Second: the social; both homes and clothes convey social values. The material(ist) “display” of pretentious, luxury spaces speaks beyond how we may identify ourselves outside those spaces, i.e. whether or not we are artists. Our homes, like our clothes, communicate who we are, or at least how (we wish) others perceive us. Third: the perceptive; we can perceptually consider architecture, interior design and fashion design, although three different fields, from the same vantage point. It is primarily by the sense of sight and touch (and sound) that we perceive space, and architecture is organized by these perceptival facts. A building—no matter how useful or well built or beautiful—that is not sympathetic to the way that people dress risks looking not merely anachronistic, but really odd. Like it or not, architecture cannot escape fashion.300

If we look from bodies to buildings we can see through their “face”: who they are

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and what they do. The skin of the body and the facade of a building, as limits, can also be manipulated to shape meaning. The notion of clothing, as a manipulation of layered surfaces, does that (Fig.2.28).

![The Inmortal Tailor](image)

**Fig. 2.28** - *The Inmortal Tailor*, Alba D’Urbano (1995-1997).

Surface is also a concern in the engineering of contemporary architecture and product design. The development of new technologies, structures and materials have collapsed surface into one hybrid element that is transformed into the limits of the objects that we experience. Surfaces are also shaped by the
different needs for a structural solution in order to project the limits and the functional aspects of space. Surface could be understood as topography and therefore constitutes a continuous territory for operation.

2.5.4 - PROGRAM

Program is not only established through objective data, but is further shaped by experience and certain cultural practices. Rather than a static set of prescribed actions, program fluctuates; questioning, inverting, and re-shaping given emplaced activities, especially in a contemporary culture where things are in constant flux.301

To understand program as a concept pertinent to shape architecture, we must understand “functions” and “events” that happen because of different spatiotemporal needs and circumstances. Objects and their organization within different spaces contribute to shape the experience that we have of different places. The notion of program explains the intention of a place or object and therefore explains the condition or setting in which the body is located. In his chapter “Sitting in the City,” David Leatherbarrow discusses Joseph Rykwert’s ideas about meaning and building. Leatherbarrow suggests that the two conditions should be seen as one, that architects should think about the body within an interior in the

same way that they imagine it within the environment. Both actions and places become objects of design and, therefore, induce a simultaneous pre-visualization of a project of “performance”. People perform in spaces and with objects. The notion of program induces the participation of the user (or the “audience”) of space.

Bernard Tschumi has declared that there is no space without events and that there is no architecture without program. For Tschumi, architecture and its social relevance and formal invention are a consequence of the events that happen. The events that unfold in time suggest the variations of different programs in architecture. Program suggests an exploration between expected form and its expected use. For Tschumi, programmatic context versus urban typology, urban typology versus spatial experience, in which to consider programming implications. Although one could say that program defines space, it is also true that rituals and practices also shape the notion of programmed spaces.

Contemporary programming suggests “open” possibilities to shape and re-shape behavior. This is what the “customized” possibility of contemporary productivity offers to the client (user) of objects and space. With this the program is adjusted to satisfy the needs of certain users. Of course this is also explained

302 David Leatherbarrow, “Sitting in the city,” Architecture Oriented Otherwise (2009), 143. For further exploration of Rykwert’s ideas see “Meaning of Building” in The necessity of artifice (1982), 9–16
304 Ibid., 147.
because of the commercial possibilities that this suggests in terms of constructing (buildings) and selling experiences (program). To compose means to create program. Architects invent new uses of space by composing new fragments of experience (given by the program). Program is not the same thing as function but it is related. Program is more than function because is not direct and has more than one voice (space can be used by more than one person, even is the space is designed for one single individual). Programs are mutable and transformable in time.305

The notion of behavior and restored behavior306 can be of great value to understand the importance of program in architecture. The programming of space is related to human activities—“functions”—and to the existence of a certain functionality projected by the objects that surround our spaces. Daily-life activities, routines and rituals require the existence of certain objects and spaces

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305 See the definition of “program” in The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture (2003), 499.
306 Restored behaviour stands for a repeated action that is the same but that indeed is different each new time that it is performed. Think for example of a theatrical script that has to be performed in a certain environment. The script and the piece are “always the same” but, because of the repetition in different occasions and different moments and with different audiences, this same piece transforms and adjusts to the particular circumstances of the new performance. Although the piece is the same, it is indeed different. A movie does not have this variation. This is similar to what we see in daily life routines when we repeat them over and over, different activities that constitute the rituals that we perform for living (and working). All these activities are the same but yet they are each time different. From this angle, there is an “automatic” thing/issue associated to performance too. See Richard Schechner (1985) with regard to the relationship between cultural practices and rituals to understand restored behavior. “Restoration of Behavior,” Between theater and anthropology (1985). This book also shares many of the ideas of cultural anthropologist Victor Turner who wrote the foreword to Between theater and anthropology.
pre-shaped. Activities can be designed and therefore can be performed. The “function” of architecture is what modernism states as the difference between something designed and art. For modernists, architecture and industrial design should work for something, to do something. As objects of architecture and industrial design are realized for use, they incorporate and explicitly communicate the “essence” of a certain space. This happens within a temporal structure, within time. Program depends on when the activities realized occur, within a certain frame of time and with a certain group of individuals. Program is also a phenomenon tied to notions of participation.

2.5.5 – PLACE

Place is explored within a specific constraint of time and location. Studios of architecture normally understand place as a fixed location. By understanding place as the evidence and result of time, students confront a more interesting set of variables rather than the obvious parameters of “contextuality.”

Place has to be differentiated from notions of space and site. In Art the notion of place is better shaped by ideas of site-specific. Any site-specific work (of

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307 I do not necessarily agree with this point because I think that art’s function is related to the soul and therefore has a no clear objective (or form) by which to interpret that need. Architecture has the goal to satisfy human need in all the dimensions that cultural conventions tell the architect.


309 Some differences are that space is a much more complex phenomena that does not necessarily draw in material forms. Space is composed by abstract ideas that are
art) that has a direct relationship to its context, whether architectural or landscape-oriented is understood as a site-specific piece. The work takes sense from the place where it is located and is (in most cases) meant to activate the forces of site (material forms). Site-specific refers to the physical attributes of the place where the work it is located. Today, the site begins to be seen not only in physical terms but, also, as a spatial and cultural construction defined through social, economic and political concerns. Place could be organized by what is designed by architecture (this could certainly include objects). To describe the nature of site-specific Miwon Kwon writes:

Site specificity used to imply something grounded, bound to the laws of physics. Often playing with gravity, site-specific works used to be obstinate about “presence,” even if they were materially ephemeral, and adamant about immobility, even in the face of disappearance or destruction. Whether inside the white cube or out in the Nevada desert, whether architectural or landscape-oriented, site-specific art initially took the “site” as an actual location, a tangible reality, its identity composed of a unique combination of constitutive physical elements: length, depth, height, texture and shape of walls and rooms; scale and proportion of plazas, buildings, or parks; existing conditions of lighting, ventilation, traffic patterns; distinctive topographical features.

represented by materialized forms. Space is tied to notions of time. In the context of this equation, and for the efficient project, the notion of place is closer to the idea of site that is understood as by material parameters (and borders).

Place is not static. Although it is constituted by defined characteristics of site, it is full of forces that shape, in different ways, the notion of a dynamic space. The concrete boundaries and the material features of site contribute, in one aspect, to the data to be considered to define place. Kwon continues:

The event in this context was to be singularly experienced in the here-and-now through the bodily presence of each viewing subject, in a sensorial immediacy of spatial extension and temporal duration (what Michael Fried decisively characterized as theatricality), rather than instantaneously “perceived” in a visual epiphany by disembodied eye. Site-specific work in its earliest formation, then, focused on establishing an inextricable, indivisible relationship between the work and its site and demanded the physical presence of the viewers for the work’s completion. 311

An analytical approach to place could combine surface and program to highlight the materiality of topographical dimension so as to describe issues of identity and local cultural practices. Expressive manifestations of culture are strictly tied to the local characteristics of certain spaces that define a community in social terms. Contemporary philosophy has explored this dimension, particularly that of Jeff Malpas, who states in Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography (1999) that the notion of the self and mind are directly tied to “external” conditions connected to place. Human life is indissolubly related to the places where life occurs. Places influence us and certainly give form to what we perceive and therefore do. People and places interconnect to constitute a collectively understood

311 Ibid., 9.
form of time-space, which consists in the now. Perhaps the most relevant characteristic of this approach is that the individual relates to the sense of one’s place, and, subsequently, place responds to that specific sense of location.\footnote{In \textit{Poetics of Space} Gaston Bachelard further discusses the notion of personal experiences (spaces) by looking and exploring a house. See \textit{The Poetics of Space} (1958).}

Architecture always responds to the idea of place. Artificial projections of place can re-shape new perceptions and new dimensions of experience that involve new usability and new customs. By changing and re-shaping place architecture has the power to define new forms of cultural expression. Site-specific interventions are directly linked to notions of shaping architecture. Site-specific though, assumes that there is always a place where to install the work. Architecture does not start from scratch but can construct the notion of a new \textit{being or becoming}.\footnote{After Martin Heidegger’s seminal work \textit{Being and time}, which describes the notions of situation, he establishes a close relation between the philosophical thinking and the essence of architecture. In “Building, Dwelling, Thinking” he describes the interconnected relations between the gesture of architecture and the basic experience being. See “Phenomenology,” \textit{rethinking architecture: a reader in cultural theory} (1997), 100–19.} The object of architecture, as it gives house to the personal, can interfere and inspire new moods and therefore new actions in life. Architecture is an engine that contribute to start something, just think of a land that has a river… all of a sudden, with the installation of some geometrical traces, to match a desired grid, and with the construction of few buildings, that land then becomes a city.\footnote{See Rem Koolhaas’s description of the initiation of Manhattan: “The island’s landscape ranges from the flat to the mountainous, from the wild to the placid; the climate seems to alternate between Mediterranean summers (outside the walls is a sugarcane field) and severe (pelt-producing) winters. All the components of the map are European; but, kidnapped from their context and transplanted to mythical island, the are resembled into}
2.5.6 - MATERIAL

Materials not only shape concrete forms, but also produce effects. They, therefore, construct experience. The adoption of new and unconventional materials can create new possibilities of spatial interaction.\(^{315}\)

Rather than depending on an intuitive and empirical understanding of material properties and performance, architects begin their work confronted with engineered materials. The history of modern architecture can also been understood through the lens of developed materials. This began during the beginning of the 20\(^{th}\) century. Decisions about building determines the quality and characteristics of materials and vice versa, materials determine and also affect buildings. With the proliferation of different systems of production, metal structures, glass, and concrete structures, materials have been developed and standardized to meet new needs. Architects and designers and artists have to think about the properties and performance these materials offer.\(^{316}\) Materials have gradually emerged as offering the most immediately visible and thus most appropriate expression of a building’s


\(^{316}\) Michelle Addigton and Daniel Schodek, “Materials in Architecture and Design,” *Smart materials and technologies for the architecture and design professions* (2005), 2–3.
representation, both interior and exterior. As a result, architects think of materials as part of a design palette from which materials can be chosen and applied as compositional and visual surfaces.\textsuperscript{317}

Material could be understood through two main dimensions. The first is the physical. This dimension includes mortar, glass, plastic, wood, steel, titanium, ceramic, fabrics, paint, and so on, but also includes drawings, renderings, models, thoughts, natural lights and so on. The material architects use to construct buildings vary as analysis adjusts its definition to explore what really constitutes material when designing space. This explains the first most classical approach about pre-existing materials and forms to shape what we envision. However, there is also a second dimension that is immaterial. As performance is related to the organization of perception, we should include in this point all the data that comes from the possible user of the design to inform part of the process of materializing and constructing a building. Much of the perceptual data defines the selection of different types of material.

Material constitutes an important component to shape the notion of place and its situation (program-body-time experience). By means of material it is possible to build in the broad sense. As matter, material means content and the subject that shapes that content. The process of re-shaping the physical world (as a consequence of the development of digital technology) means developing

\textsuperscript{317} Ibid., 4.
intelligent, reactive materials that identify the environmental or functional singularities occurring around them and react with them. As new materials are invented and technological advances are made, design and architectural practice has moved from working within the limits of static materials to transforming them into dynamic elements by combining laminating, casting and weaving. It is theoretically possible to produce materials to meet specific performance criteria. Speed of transformation demands from designers a nuanced understanding of materials and fabrication techniques.

The above factors provide a practical way to approach both the tangible and the intangible aspects of an architectural intervention through the parameters of body, surface, program, time, place and material in order to achieve a comprehensive project. Architects manipulate space through form, matter and content, and as they do so (within a certain cultural milieu) they struggle to construct the immaterial by means of the rational concrete. A critical approach to these six elements suggests new methods to do, therefore introducing new issues to consider when exploring the impacts of architecture on people. The equation emphasizes performance’s constant communication or dialogue between the performer (dynamic object of architecture) and the recipient (user of that object who is also dynamic and not stable). The experience, then, is the result of the

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318 See the definition of “material” in The Metapolis Dictionary of Advanced Architecture (2003), 419.
performative condition generated by the project. The task of a comprehensive project is to secure these *performative auras* as an effect of the intervention. Performance Studies expands the “preoccupations” of architects from the speculative (designed) and finished (constructed) artifact to the effects generated (performed) through modes of occupation. This posits an open, fluctuating and continuous paradigm in which a conjunction between material and immaterial “performances” makes the perceived space of the *live* as the final other important element active in architecture (in the present).

Before concluding this general theory of factors, which I suggest, exists in any project (from performance to architecture), I would like to offer a seventh factor—that which exists in the in-between, bracketed within the equation. I realized this “extra” factor after completing 4 years of research for this project, and after the earthquake that happened in Chile at the end of February 2010. The theory of the comprehensive project was revised (or updated) last year. The extra factor to consider is the L that stands for *Love*. The name of this factor is inspired by Alberto Pérez-Gómez’s *Built upon Love: architectural longing after ethics and aesthetics*. Pérez-Gómez explains that “true” architecture is concerned with far more than fashionable forms, affordable homes, and sustainable development. Architecture responds to a desire for an eloquent place to dwell—one that lovingly
provides a sense of order resonant with our dreams.\textsuperscript{320}

\textbf{2.5.7 – LOVE}

This seventh factor (of Love) results from all that I experienced after the events of 2010.\textsuperscript{321} At the beginning of that year I had an important project about to happen: SCL2110. The project was the conclusion that pushed the theoretical side of this dissertation toward a “practical” side.\textsuperscript{322} After the earthquake, everything was stopped and in most cases consequently cancelled. Energies were to organized to re-build and people contributed to the collective initiatives that took place to overcome the adverse situation. This strange natural order that evolved from a natural force demanded that I (and certainly that everyone) become more conscious about what had happened and what we were doing. Quickly I understood that there was a new space to work on, a concrete empty space to \textit{share}, that could help and could support all the people who had been damaged (on both a pure material and emotional levels).

As an architect, designer and artist, I understood in a much more complex

\textsuperscript{320} The book explains the “relationship” between love and architecture in order to find the points of contact between poetics and ethics—between the architect’s wish to design a beautiful world and architecture’s imperative to provide a better place for society.” See Alberto Pérez-Gómez, “Architecture and Human Desire,” \textit{Built upon Love} (2006), p. 3–8.

\textsuperscript{321} The 8.8 earthquake was on February 27th, 2010 followed by three tsunamis during that same night and early morning in the following day. The earthquake literally destroy a big part of the south of the country including areas such as Rancagua, Talca and Concepción.

\textsuperscript{322} SCl2110 was meant to open during March 2010 but had to be postponed until September 2010 because of the earthquake.
way the aim behind the *Proyecto Eficiente*\textsuperscript{323} and which was elaborated through my proposed equation as an opportunity to project new possibilities to improve life, not only on a coherent material, functional and phenomenological level but also on one that was perhaps more important but more difficult to explain: the emotional level. I was moved to understand the full dimension of all those spaces and things that we, as architects, promote to *do* when we design. At that point the question was not only on how to continue with *SCL2110* when all the attention and all the good-will efforts were re-directed to the tragedy. The question was more of how to really *do* something that would have some impact in the moment that we were living because of the tragedy. I understood that *SCL2110* needed to incorporate decisively a new dimension in order to happen. After the earthquake I was certain that I needed to start promoting a new level of concern among architects, artists and urban designers. This concern was much more relative (as the Einstein equation) than the six simultaneously objective and subjective factors already presented. This new concern focused attention on the *other’s* hope and will. That other could be also related to the user or the client. Instead of calling it

\textsuperscript{323} Omar Khan and Dorita Hannah, the editors of the *Journal of Architectural Education* where I first published an earlier version of this chapter, translated *Proyecto Eficiente* to “comprehensive project.” The sense of “comprehensive project” is not very close to the meaning of *Proyecto Eficiente* that I initially envisioned. I meant “efficient” in a very complete sense, that the project will only be efficient if it does something “good” to or for the individuals who *touch* or engage it. Of course, this sense of efficiency, like love, is very difficult to measure. I intended, however, that the factors used to explore a project should *do* good things to the receiver. In other words that the project should strive to improve life in all its dimensions: functional, practical and emotional. I thought: *anything done with love will offer good things as a result.* I thought that anything that is done with love won’t hurt the generations that come after us (think of sustainability).
generosity I decided to call it Love, inspired by Alberto Pérez-Gómez book, *Built upon love: architectural longing after ethics and aesthetics* (2006). My new postulate, after the events of 2010 and after the completion of *SCL2110*, is focused beyond the solution of the initial desires and needs of the initiative. My proposed goal shifted to consider also a level of great generosity in order to *do* and to *affect* the “receiver” or the “participant” of the project in very good way. Pérez-Gómez writes in his book:

> Architecture engages the inhabitant as true *participant*, unlike the remote spectator of the modernist work of art or the consumer of fashionable building—*cum*—images. If this engagement is not obvious, it is partly because architectural meaning has been “explained” through a deceptively simple assumption that confuses our human quest for happiness with hedonism. Love, in its multiple incarnations of desire, is as open-ended as life itself and remains the ground of meaning even in times of obsessive materialism.324

The events that happened in Chile and the success of *SCL2110* taught me something that I feel now is crucial, though perhaps sounds naive: that a project that should belong to others; that this is the project of architecture. This is related to the responsibility that we all have to our environment, not only in terms of a fashionable concept or concern: sustainability. It is a must that we become cautious with and conscious about what is happening with our cities and our societies. Polluted spaces and cities result as a consequence of lives that produce

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and that are dependent on all the commodities we (allegedly) require everyday. Despite the fact that all these commodities are designed with some level
“sensitivity” to improve life, and to make it more efficient. This responsibility that I understood is tied to the idea of a civilized citizen who, in times of democracy, should perform tasks and roles to help to contribute to improve the conditions that we will have in the future. The real scope of the Proyecto Eficiente equation is to think and to debate about how to shape a better environment—the real ambition after the events of 2010 became how to project a better life.

As an human being, I was moved by all the things that were carried out and happened as a result of the natural event in Chile (similar to what happened to me after I saw the Twin Towers fall in New York in 2001). As an architect I felt the desire to help. I wanted to improve something with a quotient of love; I wanted to return something to where I live and where I was raised and where I also belong. All these emotions are connected to the desire of building a better future, much more participative and much more open to produce new type of citizens (civilians).

[T]he materialistic and technological alternatives for architecture—however sophisticated and justifiable they may be, in view of our historical failures—do not answer satisfactorily to the complex desire that defines humanity. As humans, our greatest gift is love, and we are invariably called to respond to it. Despite our suspicions, architecture has been and must continue to be built upon love.325

Pérez-Gómez interprets the relationship between love and architecture in order to find points of contact between poetics and ethics, between the architect’s wish to design a beautiful world and architecture’s imperative to provide a better place for society. This is how he seeks the origins of architectural meaning beyond the traditional, often polarized understanding of aesthetics as an 18th-century science of beauty and ethics and as a collection of normative rules, clarifying architecture’s quest for beauty and the common good.326

Traditional orders and traditional buildings belong to an ideological system that establishes in different ways the power of institutions. In this respect, one could argue that these orders construct a repressive environment that must be confronted in order to promote the diversity of different guidelines required to establish a new type of public—democratic—space. The public is something existential; being a public, as John Dewey argued, is doing the work of the public, which is, in the end, a form of democratic politics. In 1927, Dewey looked to the local as the place where engagement and access to authority is possible. A larger public, what he called “the great community,” is built upon the habits and accomplishments of local publics. Urban critics tend to focus on the diversity of public space and publics within those spaces. This is important, but equally so are the questions of access to political institutions and the opportunity to give voice to

326 Ibid, 4.
public concerns. My thesis here still insists that architects and performance-based artists (by means of design and of performance) should have a fundamental role in establishing new modes of development. That “mode” should incorporate the sensitive aspects of both disciplines to impact decision making performed at the level of a local policy. Often, local policies concerning the configuration of public space fail, not because of the initial idea that moved the proposal to re-shape that certain space but because the transformation of it takes place without a clear vision (or role) from a sensitive perspective in order to establish a coherent public plan—from a perspective of love.

Architecture (and X design, understood as a field offering opportunities to the field of architecture) has been described as frivolous practice. Our happiness and misery is dependent upon the quality of the environment that we share—the furniture, the walls, the buildings, the parks and the streets that surround us are fundamental objects that contribute to shape our emotions (beyond the socio-cultural-political system that perform upon us). Alain de Botton, in The Architecture of Happiness, explores the idea that we are heavily influenced by the environment that surrounds us and that we are in relation to where we are. For

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him the architect’s role is to clarify this potential. De Botton explains his point through the philosophy and the psychology of architecture that aim to change the way we think about our homes, our cities and ourselves:

The failure of architecture to create congenial environments mirrors our inability to find happiness in other areas of our lives. Bad architecture is in the end as much a failure of psychology as of design.\textsuperscript{329}

From this angle performance, and PS, might also be questioned. How can the effects of the objects designed to shape how our environment affects us? Is it possible to extend the goal of performance to promote felicity? If so, how?

Performance contributes to enhance architecture, this could be how, architecture, in its full capacity and scope, contributes to PS to find new answers to describe and explain the things we do and produce. Architecture adds a new type of analysis connected to the human dimension that we all share, and that is related to the emotions that we have because of the events that we experience in our life.

Architecture helps us to place and somehow shape them, but this is not because of architecture per se but because its performance, its role and the way it works for us, giving us some moments of experience.

The experience of satisfaction, after understanding this shared responsibility with the others following 2010, inspired me to incorporate the last factor of the equation to complete the comprehensive project presented here. The Proyecto Eficiente depends on many different objective and subjective ideas and is

\textsuperscript{329} Alain de Botton, \textit{The Architecture of Happiness} (2006), 248.
completed with the emotional level that is difficult to grasp and sometimes
difficult to reach, because of the rapid pace of the culture that drives us, and that
we sometimes forget about. The essence of Love could work as a very powerful
force to re-shape urban situations and conditions (composed by people and places)
that we currently have and that we interact with. All the things that surround us are
there because we have desired them, we have thought about them and therefore,
projected them to existence.

Eloquent myths, poems, stories, and philosophical accounts from
multiple traditions have described the nature of human space as
the space of desire. Regardless of culture, age, wealth, and social
status, humans suffer a lack, which is also a gift. Unlike other
animals in our planet, we have an essentially linguistic being that
keeps us “apart” from the world. Throughout our lives we
constantly look for “something,” something that is missing and
that might complete us—be it the physical presence of another,
the acquisition of knowledge, or the experience of art and
architecture. This lack is always present. It does not disappear
with the fulfillment of practical needs or with the possession of
goods. Despite its paradoxical nature it is perhaps the most
obvious manifestation or our spiritual specificity.  

To conclude this chapter I recall José Muñoz’s Utopia. He constructs the
true queer to suggest a possibility for the future, to think and project the social. He
describes queerness as a “structuring and educated mode of desiring that allow us
to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present.”  

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330 Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Built upon love: architectural longing after ethics and
331 José Muñoz, *Cruising Utopia: the Then and There of Queer Futurity* (2009), 1.
are still not constructed in life. He suggests that there is, beyond the rational queer, a space ready to happen but never in the present. That is the will of hope that can be fulfilled with ideas about an optimistic and a better future. As I reflect upon SCL2110 I think about Muñoz’s moving words:

The here and now is a prison house. We must strive, in the face of the here and now’s totalizing rendering of reality, to think and feel a then and there. Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for that minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds.  

Desire could be a great energy to provoke change and love can make all the changes that we decide to perform. By incorporating Love (and generosity) into the solutions that we design we will push for a better environment, one that could become more sustainable because nothing that has love will harm people. What could be more efficient: a future with love or one without it? Performance is all about the consequences of certain actions. Actions with love and different from actions done just because the sake of it. We are all able to perceive this energy (of love), in this respect, an action with love reaches everyone because every one can receive it. This concern is of course broad again (as the rest of the factors of the equation) and can be explored by studies on other directions as for example; of

332 Ibid.
healing and psychology, where performance and performance studies also promote some thought.\textsuperscript{333}

2.6 - \textit{Spaces of/for performance or the configuration of urban “scenery”?}

Architecture is a profession that depends on the external forces of political and economical order. It is the role of the architect to negotiate and to manage these forces in order to execute personal beliefs and ideas, representative of the needs of individuals and therefore society. Where a system of facades or a spatial order becomes explicitly prominent, there is an element, to configure space, that has potential of transforming it into an existential place. A street that has a very defined facade provides a continuous plan, a “backdrop.” A landscape where vertical planes can be clearly read, especially when the horizontal plane is open and invites one to take the role of spectator, also have theatrical potential because of the scale and “perspective” it projects. But performance (in its broad sense) is beyond the domains of theater, and the “stage” of life is beyond the material constructions realized inside and outside theatrical space, performance is infact, indeed, even beyond the environmental theater presented by Richard Schechner.

\textsuperscript{333} Recent publications such as Karelisa Hartigan’s \textit{Performance and Cure} (2009), Angela Hobart’s \textit{Healing Performances of Bali: Between Darkness and Light} (2003) and the anthology compiled by Carol Laderman and Marina Rosenman, \textit{The Performance Of Healing} (1996), offer another angle for this issue. This approach now goes back in time to the rituals and the ceremonies studied by Victor Turner and Richard Schechner.
There is explicit “theatrical” approach—freedom—taken in certain temporal urban structures via modes of publicity such as graphics and billboards. But also more permanent constructions have a level of theatricality implicit on them. This prominent presence is displayed because of forms and scales that constitute the “look” of the architecture that interprets in the landscape and functionality of the city. Besides their histrionism, these structures recognize the “transitory” and “ephemeral” qualities of theater. In some cases of course the ephemeral constitutes years, as something that is ephemeral in the city could be not really ephemeral for (indoors) theater. The city-scape of the city is constantly transformed through time.

In here, the symbolic, emotional and subjective factors also exist. These spatial gestures on space, are influenced by the culture of images that we share, as presented and in architectural language the facades solve all of these. The installation of certain images (and surely certain buildings) create an image of a city full of that which is spectacular, that which draws on the idealization of a society that is regulated by the capitalist standards of consumption. It is probable that, unconsciously influenced by these factors, the inhabitants tend towards one determined “theatrical” performance: towards capitalism and a hierarchical order of power that connects the political with the economical with the ideological. Elements such as the private freeway, the luxurious skyline, transformed railroad tracks, piers and ports converted into parks, alleys, obsolete industrial facilities,
and others have their own poetics, a metaphorical message that, combined with a preestablish or pre-imposed order, function as commodities to be consumed. They constitute the pieces of a script that could be desired and “theatrically” exploited.

Fig. 2.29 – *World Trade Center*, New York (1973-2001).
CHAPTER 3

Desires of/for Public Spaces in Chile

As this dissertation is concerned with the intersection of architecture and performance, understanding that performance is primarily an “act” based on the arts as well as other disciplines related to cultural productivity, this chapter will discuss issues in the fields of architecture and art in conjunction with those in the territory of Performance Studies (PS) to think about the future of our cities. Embracing what this dissertation has explored thus far in terms of thinking and projecting “shared” space, here I revise some projects that have occurred in Chile over the last hundred years. These architectural constructions will serve as the basis to understand ideas taking place during the Bicentennial, as well as my proposal: SCL2110. The idea is to center a body of practical work in order to illuminate, and make material, the thoughts presented throughout this dissertation; to analyze about the city, its culture, and its future. Asking, “where is the limit between theory and practice?,”334 this chapter presents the “practical” to realize the principal concerns that could connect PS with the world of architects. The analytical contributions, in relation to performance and space, of PS to the field of

334 Hal Foster comments in the introduction of the book La Postmodernidad that the principal characteristic of postmodern culture is based on the resistance to conventional divisions between theory and practice. In this sense PS seems to be a field that interprets this condition after modernism. To be postmodern does not mean to be not modern but to be an assumed modern. Hal Foster ed., La Postmodernidad, 9.
architecture is of great value, since architectural projects are always and all the time political, sociocultural, and economical projects. The complexity of my SCL2110 project provides an example of performance and PS theory applied to architectural design. SCL2110 considers issues of social desires, identity, and collective will and understanding in a way that is beyond a conventional material proposal characteristic of the field. An urban project that carries out “solutions” on different levels (of ambition) should consider many factors, which are sometimes barely considered (in respect to urban planners and architects). Employing a performance studies lens to the field of architects is an appropriate and much needed method in order to raise questions, and provide (possible) answers, about the process of designing public realms and ultimately city culture through collective forms.
3.1 The Context, the Bicentennial, and the Projects

I would like to invite all of you to make a great effort in working towards a Bicentennial with more beautiful, less contaminated, more expedient, dignified, friendly and cultural cities.
—Ricardo Lagos Escobar, President of the Republic of Chile (2000-2006)

The Bicentennial is a symbolic icon in our national history, a celebration and an occasion for all Chileans to share a reflection on our country.
—Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President of the Republic of Chile (2006-2010)

The Bicentennial celebration will unify all Chileans and is not only going to make us feel proud of our history, but it will give us energy to project us into the future.
—Sebastián Piñera, President of the Republic of Chile (2010-present)

In 2010, Chile celebrated 200 years of independence. Many celebrations took place to commemorate this important date for all Chileans but none of them implemented (or presented) a concrete project (or proposal) with a vision into the future. Instead, what was done for the celebrations were only projects of infrastructure. What was promoted to celebrate 200 years of independence was only conceived conventionally, thus projecting us into the future with “expected” buildings that the city and the public needed, but that do not transform anything substantially. None of these infrastructure projects addressed questions about the mid and long-term vision of our culture, nor did they hold a comprehensive vision about the “new” spaces Chileans should or could have in the future. Instead, the
projects presented by Comisión Bicentenario reflected what is required by the growth that we are experiencing as a country (through our cities) and as a society (through our culture); there was nothing really provocative, or ambitious. SCL2110 initiated a debate about the future in this crucial moment of celebration.

After the SCL2110 exhibition, the Minister of Culture (Luciano Cruz-Coke) announced in the last Architectural Biennial (November 2010), that the fields of architecture and design will now be part of the new project of Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes. With SCL2110 and this decision announced I wondered: “what is going to last,” from our culture and our city, one hundred years from now? My vision, and my question about the future, was inspired by the revolution of avant-gardist ideas and also by a historical Chilean political figure Benjamin Vicuña Mackenna, who had already envisioned a Santiago of the future by the end of the 1800s. Vicuña Mackenna was a “founder” of the city that we experience today. His ideas about the future informed what we have now. In a way, SCL2110 is a project which reflects hopes to improve what we have, and hopes to realize what we could be.

If we want to think about the future of our country then we have to look back in time and understand that contemporary society is a product of what was done in the past. The fast growth that we have experienced as a nation is part of

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335 Comisión Bicentenario was created as a government division in order to coordinate and promote different projects in celebration of 200 years of independence.
what we have envisioned in the recent years and what we have desired to achieve through political decisions. The city we live in today is the city that was projected 100 years ago. Germán Hidalgo, talking about the landscape of Santiago, quotes T.S. Eliot’s line in his article, *Panoramas de Santiago*, “The past should be altered by the present as much as the present is directed by the past.”336 For Hidalgo, all the landscape that we have and experience in our city today is something that was generated a hundred years ago. What we see and perceive is something that was “started” a century ago. Of course there is no strict way to measure this result or quantify “evidence,” but we can certainly see and feel the effects. This is what a project is about, an idea of the future by means of forms that we can recognize from now and from before. Architects have a vision and imagine the future by means of the present and the past.

A good starting point to discuss Santiago’s current condition is the Centennial and all that has happened since then. With this specific frame of events, one could make a comparative analysis of the present situation in order to learn and make relevant proposals for the city and its future. Here, I would like to concentrate on the nation’s two main cities, the city where our government is housed (i.e. the political capital, Santiago) and the city where the national congress

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and the Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes (CNCA)\textsuperscript{337} is located (i.e. the cultural capital, Valparaíso).

Santiago and Valparaíso together constitute a large portion of the growth of the nation. Santiago represents the center of politics and the economy and Valparaíso represents the center of our culture and heritage. These cities house Chile’s main connections to the rest of the world—the airport and the seaports are there, accordingly—and thus, connect us to the global network of principal ports in the rest of the world. To these facts, it is also important to add that this region contains the most dense concentration of inhabitants in the country: Santiago’s metropolitan area, and the fifth region of the country where Valparaíso is located, comprise a little over a third of the entire country’s population (approximately 5,500,000 inhabitants).\textsuperscript{338} In this sense, a project in this “capital zone” is quite important, because it can make a direct impact on a significant number of people that live in Chile and play the principal role as an “audience” of the country. Santiago and Valparaíso together have the power to become a new relevant center for trade, social interaction, and culture in South America. A recent publication in

\textsuperscript{337} Consejo Nacional de la Cultura y las Artes translates to the National Council of Culture and Arts. The organization plays a fundamental role in the development of “cultural projects.” Until November 2010 the Cultural Council did not make architecture, design, or the city a priority.

\textsuperscript{338} According to the last census in Chile (April 2002), the population of the entire country had reached 15,116,435, of which a third is located in the central zone of Chile, between Santiago (5,428,590 inhabitants) and Valparaíso (276,474 inhabitants). Source INE (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas) online: http://www.ine.cl/cd2002/sintesiscensal.pdf (2 January 2011).
the New York Times puts Santiago and Chile on the map of global cultural destinations and declares that the first city to visit in 2011 should be Santiago.339 South America has had an international presence because of the political and economical developments in Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and Venezuela, but never before because of the Chilean assets (it seems that now could be our time).340

Argentinean architect Jaime Sorín, in the introduction to the book Buenos Aires 2050, Imágenes del futuro / Decisiones del presente,341 presents us with the core subject of how to think about a capital city’s future, in this case, in a time of national crisis and in relation to the Argentinean Bicentennial. Since 2001, Argentina has experienced a deep economic, social, and political crisis, the aftermath of which lasted up until the celebration of its Bicentennial, in May 2010.

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340 Just think about Barak Obama’s recent visit to Santiago during March 2011. The president of United States visited Chile as part of the strategy implemented by the USA within the region of Latin America. For more about the visit and the points mentioned by Obama go to BBC news: http://www.bbc.co.uk/mundo/noticias/2011/03/110321_obama_americ_latina_gira_promesas_lav.shtml (2 April 2011).
The question Sorín poses in his introduction addresses a state of uncertainty—how to visualize a possible project in such an adverse situation. On 27 February 2010, our country suffered a tremendous and catastrophic earthquake—an 8.8 on the Richter scale (Fig. 3.1). An event of this magnitude is an emergency situation demanding urgent attention beyond normal daily needs (finding solutions for now-homeless citizens and locating missing people), that also presents a unique opportunity to re-shape or re-consider the way certain projects have been realized and are now being executed.

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342 His work was also part of a series of presentations realized by OLA. The mission of OLA is to observe the current processes of reform and change in Latin American nations in order to create new opportunities for multiple projects and narratives of public debate in the region. It is also among the objectives of this observatory to promote a dialogue between the United States and Latin America, including the creation of many different opportunities for regional leaders to express their views directly to a U.S. audience. The OLA also has some current programs on development; one of them is the “Construir Bicentenarios Latinoamericanos” (To construct Latin American Bicentennials). This program deals with the study of the Bicentennials in Latin America. The study understands them as an opportunity for action, by doing research in a comparative and multidisciplinary way in which governments and civil society can join forces to construct and to celebrate their bicentennial commemorations. The program strives to promote historic moments in order to address urgent issues of social inclusion and institutional reform. The program works in conjunction with the Bicentennial Program of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urbanism (FADU) at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina. More information of OLA at: [http://www.observatorylatinamerica.org/home_eng.html](http://www.observatorylatinamerica.org/home_eng.html) (17 February 2011).
Although the earthquake certainly inspired new public discussions regarding the country’s major needs in terms of catastrophic events (rather than the projects intended to exist for centuries to come), I think it is of great importance to use this pivotal time-space combination (the Bicentennial and the earthquake) to perform a wake-up call among many of the professionals, politicians, and investors that are related to the future design of the city (as well as the individuals and the society, in general). This crucial moment exhibits the city and its culture as a whole, a subject of debate. It represents a moment to pause, to reflect, and to discuss our current time—what we have gained and what we can be in order to
make a better city and society out of the “crisis.” The trauma of the earthquake can teach us something.

In the prologue of the SCL2110 catalogue, Francisco Brugnoli\textsuperscript{343} writes about our own “crisis” in Santiago, but not in the strict sense of the problems generated by the earthquake, nor in the sense of the economical and political concerns that Sorín points out about Buenos Aires (Chile is currently “stable” in those terms):

Like its contemporaries, the city of Santiago questions itself about its ability and effectiveness against the violence that it is subjected to: vandalism, immigration, communication and even abandonment. Amidst these issues understood as ‘crisis,’ which must also be understood as channeled wishful thinking depending on the culture of each person, there are others in the field of the ideal world aiming to establish the model of perfection: utopias.\textsuperscript{344}

With this paragraph Brugnoli refers to the ideal scenario of utopia that serves as an important speculation for the future: SCL2110. He suggests the importance of an image, an image that is also related to the wish of people. That is the image that “performs” to provoke ambition and desire onto us. Brugnoli presents the event (earthquake) as an opportunity to wonder and debate images of utopia for the public spaces of the city. He is aware of the earthquake and states that the severe consequences of it are not only referred to in the destroyed

\textsuperscript{343} Francisco Brugnoli is a well-known contemporary artist from Chile. He has been part of the relevant scene of art since the dictatorship. He is the current Director and Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Santiago that belongs to the University of Chile.

landscape of our cities (in the south of the country), but also to the one destroyed
in our memory (we are a country that has suffered a lot, from natural disasters to
human injustices under a dictatorship). The earthquake impacted and transformed
the image and the memory we have of the cities and their cultures. Brugnoli
continues:

Parts of our urban landscape have disappeared, causing another
quake in our imagination, which is also already accustomed to the
meaning of this condition. As a vacuum of the imagination, then,
the instinct of survival opens in the need for completeness. Utopia
is presented as the need for a solution to the frightening movement
of the crisis, which like any movement prevents us from conformity
by forcing us to release our foot from a reassuring floor. But the
crisis is also an opportunity to face the possibility of the reality of
our desires, especially if it coincides with certain dates, or numbers,
of millenarian character, the bicentennial, and even more if we enter
the magical sequence that leads us to the third sequential.345

It is clear, at a time of crisis that the image of the uncertain has to be
replaced or completed with a new image. The effects of the earthquake are of great
impact in terms of performativity, they provide new opportunities to realize
desires, solve needs and project utopia. The population of Chile responded to the
catastrophic image with feelings of unification and hope. Perhaps that is why in his
preface Brugnoli suggests the word “desire.” He points out a “possibility,” one of
perfection impelled by a desire and (utopic) vision.346

345 Ibid.
346 Brugnoli also asks if we can think about utopia today and if we can, how so? These are
questions that for him are highlighted in SCL2110 where, as presented, many architects,
artists and theorists explored how to respond to this desire (for the year 2110). He argues
Sorín and Brugnoli speak to us from academia, a place full of ideas and theories where one is able to think, explore, and debate without radical constrains (perhaps only ideological limits). Their expertise (as architect and artist) pushes for a cross-cultural project and debate that envisions the future. Yet rather than making us think of the country’s future (in 2050 and 2110), what Sorín and Brugnoli are ultimately doing with their corresponding words is making us dream. From this angle, the words and the images suggested constitute a powerful performative body that can move us (Chileans or Argentinians) towards a concrete goal to be executed in future (mid and long term). By suggesting different possibilities for “projects,” the work compiled in *Buenos Aires 2050: imagenes del futuro / decisiones del presente* and *SCL2110 arte | arquitectura | performance* desires to become something more than a mere idea of architectural or artistic dimension.

To finally frame the context, I recall a conversation amongst Pedro Celedón (art historian), Sebastián Gray (architect), Ezio Mosciatti (architect) and José Pablo Diaz (visual artist) that took place in Santiago in 2006.\(^{347}\) This conversation raised important questions about art, architecture, and urban culture in Chilean cities. This was the time in Chile when many of the principal projects

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\(^{347}\) Pedro Celedón; Sebastián Gray; Ezio Mosciatti, and José Pablo Diaz, “La Otra Ciudad,” *Pausa* 7 (2006):11–20, a publication of the National Council of Culture and Arts, Santiago.
for the bicentennial started to happen (under the government of former President Ricardo Lagos). The meeting emphasized above all, the always-transforming characteristics of culture in order to define a specific context: Chile. The culture of the city assumes, on the one hand, the characteristics of certain places and the customs performed in those places that arise with the “architecture” of those spaces, and, on the other hand, the practices and experiences we share within them—the art of experiencing space.

The conversation above appears in an article titled: “La Otra Ciudad,” in Pausa magazine, which is a publication of the National Council of Culture and Arts in Chile. The article intends to explain the activation of an urban consciousness through artistic and architectural contributions—both art and architecture being understood as “cultural” contributions relevant to society. For Gray, the issue was about the city in itself, he proposed “the city” as a topic to discuss culture. For Celedón the issue was about the original idea of the city; the polis of open and public spaces. As they presented it, culture can have the power to transform the society that we live in. The article suggests that art does not only address an aesthetic issue, but that it is also capable of molding perception and, consequentially, our perception of the cultural landscape—in the broad sense.

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348 This was a time of a more consolidated democracy after dictatorship. More debates about the public, about the city, and about culture started to happen in Chile. Lagos’ government was a clear moment of a radical new “culture” in the country. His government was also very ambitious in term of social and cultural issues.
349 “La Otra Ciudad” translates to The Other City.
Another approach to this dimension of public surroundings is the one mentioned by M. Christine Boyer about cognitive landscapes:

The capacity to orient oneself in a given environment is based on the ability of the neurological system to discern invariance in continuous transformations. Thus Kepes reasoned, art could aid an individual to achieve an equilibrium, to rediscover the invariant harmony and equilibrium beneath the constant flux and transformations of life.

Art cannot only activate consciousness, but it is indeed a way to comprehend the world. Art is as important as logic or reasoning to a particular understanding: art and science are ordering activities of the human mind. This seems to be extremely crucial if we think about the order (of space) that informs architecture. The architecture of the city strongly influences the experience we have within and of it. With their correspondent sensibilities, artists and architects contribute on these two levels to identifying and characterizing the spaces that the city could offer and what we could experience within them. Projects, developed in these two dimensions, help us to apprehend the world we live in. Accordingly, Boyer suggests that it would not take long to apply this symbol-making process to the image of the city. It is important to consolidate certain images of the city (certain images of society), but also to incorporate new ones to evolve. The goal is a visual representation in which the most advanced knowledge of space is synchronized with the nature of visual experience. The questions are not anymore

351 Ibid., 28.
about architecture detached from art but a significant experience that combines both. Only the integration of these two aspects of order can make that language of vision what it should be: a vital weapon of progress. Though Kepes conceptualized this approach to art in 1944, hence also of architecture and the city, it has increasingly been taken into account over the last many years. It is still a new and fertile approach, an interesting tool to rethink ‘urban planning.’ There have been increasing occurrences of ‘exemplary’ cities that endow their public spaces with the work of many artists, not simply with the constructions of sculptures and monuments, but especially by holding events around those sculptures and those monuments; from New York, to Paris, to Barcelona, to Berlin, to Shanghai, and so on. This strategy aims to create memorable, ephemeral, situations that relate to a specific moment in time. ‘Exemplary’ cities inspire their public space with performative schemes—as events may be understood—and with the production of experiences that hopefully make cities distinct and unique. We have seen this happening over the past 60 years in major European cities and across the Americas; to mention a few: Bilbao, Chicago, and Brasilia. In these cases, local authorities have taken the initiative to pursue public art projects. Alternatively, in Chile, Gray sustains that what unifies the country is the lack of

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352 Ibid., 29.
353 In New York for example, we could highlight the work of artists such as: Richard Serra (*Arc* 1981), Christo and Jean Claude (*Gates in Central Park* 2005) or a more recent one, Olafur Eliasson (with his waterfalls over the Hudson River in the summer of 2008).
vision to think about the city. He then argues from this perspective for an urgent and necessary intervention of proposals within the context of local government. This is something similar to what Alfredo Jaar commented during SCL2110, that the local politics where not really pushing for a development in this direction. Jaar suggested that the most interesting cultural projects during the Bicentennial in Chile were coming from individuals; in a local publication, El Mercurio, he said that Dislocación and SCL2110 were the most relevant projects in this respect.

Art and architecture are visualized and constructed with images of desire, real and possible as well as impossible. Consequently art, like architecture, suggests a capacity to dream and construct a possible new world. However, Boyer states:

Today, the key to creative work is symbolic transformation: the translation of direct experience into symbols that sum up experience in communicable form […] this means that the traditional concept of the image as a mirror held in front of us is obsolete. The new patterns are pictures of processes. They reveal hidden movements: images of movement within us and beyond us.

When the subject of discussion is the city and life itself, the incorporation of movement to ones analysis is vital for dreaming about and then constructing the

354 Celedon, Gray et al., “La otra Ciudad,” 13–16.
355 Dislocación was a project of art curated by Ingrid Wildi with the occasion of the Bicentennial in Chile. The project congregated international and national such as Ursula Biemann, Thomas Hirschhorn, Lotty Rosenfeld, Camilo Yañez and Alfredo Jaar. For more: http://www.dislocacion.cl/ (3 April 2011).
possible, because, though the world has to be imaginable, this does not mean it is or has to be static (through one image). This is the real contribution of applying performance studies to architecture: the time-event component that considers bodies on a specific space-time axis. This dimension is rarely incorporated in architectural thinking when projecting solid forms. Movement translates in spatial sequences, in actions, in situations that soon transform into the architecture of experience and so, it becomes THE art of temporal act fixed to performance. If art could bring back equilibrium to the experience of the city, performance—conceived as the contemporary art par excellence, as the art of experience—seems to be the answer to the search for the shape of the experience to construct a better future.

This presents us with an analytical panorama for Chile’s Bicentennial in accordance with that which occurred during the nation’s Centennial a hundred years earlier. On one hand, it is important to read the Bicentennial as something that relates to what is presently happening among the cities mentioned, while on the other, there is a circumstance that encourages questions about the actual feasibility of developing and realizing new projects in reality. The understanding of our history, especially of the Centennial, can have not only a critical purpose but also be used as a strategy for projecting: if embedding remembrance in the infrastructure is one way of making it an organic part of the urban landscape, another way involves using the past, quite literally, to create the future, as a tool of
urban renewal. Either way, this chapter offers a critical commentary on the urban reality we experience in relation to our own national setting. In its relation to the city, the Bicentennial allows us to reformulate certain aspects of public space, particularly those concerning the everyday, reasserting that public space is intended to serve the anonymous population that inhabits it. These public spaces are the ones that will define us as the citizens of the future, from the Chilean cities to Chile as a nation.

The Chilean Centennial in 1910 was a very important celebration for our country. The delegation moved the festivities to Valparaíso from Santiago, since on 14 September 1910 the main port offered different parades in honor of the international guests that came to Chile to celebrate. At the same time as the official festivities, the rest of the society also celebrated the Centennial in different taverns and circuses around the country. The main celebration took place in between Valparaíso and Santiago. Its relevance marked an important moment in the realization of new, large urban infrastructure projects. At that time, Pedro

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359 The 18th of September was actually the date of the first meeting of the government’s national ‘Junta’ and is not the Day of Independence. Strictly speaking the independence of Chile officially occurred on the 12th of February in 1818. However the initial ‘Junta’ of the government was the first autonomous form of government since the Spanish conquest to take place in central Chile. Since then the celebration happens every 18th of September.
360 Information found in the official governments website:
361 Some highlighted projects of the Chilean Centennial of Chile are: Alumbrado public y alcantarillado en la ciudad de Santiago, Santiago’s Parque Forestal (ground was broken in 1900), the Catholic University of Chile’s main building (1902), the statue of the virgin on ‘Cerro San Cristóbal’ hill (1908), the trans-Andes tunnel linking Chile with Argentina.
Montt, President of Chile (1906–1910), and soon thereafter his successor, Elías Fernández (from August to September 1910), contributed to the development of important projects for the centennial celebration, many of them envisioned by Benjamín Vicuña Mackenna. One of the big improvements realized on the occasion of the centennial was the lights for the city (Fig. 3.2), the transformation of Santiago and Valparaíso from a town to a city was without a doubt one of the most relevant investments.

(1909), Mapocho Station (1909), the Palace of the Courts of Justice (1910), The Museum of Fine Arts (1910), remodeling in the area of Cerro Santa Lucía (formerly known as Huelén; 1910), the San Borja factory, which incorporated the first gasometer (1910) and the Centennial Fair itself (1910). As is traditional in Chile, the military celebrated with a parade in the ‘Parque O’Higgins.’ Both events and the construction of important infrastructure celebrated the centennial. Source: The Government of Chile on its website for the Bicentennial 2010.
Las iluminaciones eléctricas en Santiago.

El número más popular, indiscutiblemente, de las fiestas del centenario, ha sido el de las iluminaciones callejeras. El pueblo se ha sentido transportado a los parajes fantásticos de los cuen-

Fig. 3.2 – City Lights for Santiago (c.1910).
These projects soon became urban icons, and up until today have been significant in creating a seal and signature for the city and those who live within it. These icons have helped shape the memory Chileans have of their actual surroundings. Ironically, neither one of these two presidents lived to see and celebrate on 18 September 1910 as both died just before the celebration. Emiliano Figueroa, as Vice President of the Republic of Chile, ended up being the person who led the hundred-year commemoration of the country. It is worth pointing out that at that time the Chilean population had reached 3,250,000, a little over half the present-day population in the Central Valley. The projects envisioned for the centennial celebration were inspired by images of European cities and in many cases influenced by Chileans who had the opportunity to travel abroad. Perhaps one of the most emblematic buildings of the centennial was the Mapoco Train Station designed by architect Emilio Jecquier (Fig. 3.3). The transformations that took place during the Centennial did not just involve the image of the city, or mere aesthetics, but also the content behind that image.

362 As Vice President, Emiliano Figueroa was the person in charge of leading Chile’s Centennial celebration. He was Chile’s leader from 16 September through 23 December 1910.
The completed projects were emblematic because they helped to transform Santiago (and Valparaíso) from what was more of a village to a principal capital city (and a principal port). All of the projects envisioned for the Centennial aspired to reflect the importance of a hundred years of democratic republic and of a modern free nation. The ideas were embodied by revolutionary projects never seen before in the context of our country. In their article “Santiago 2010, un campo de tensiones,” José Rosas and Ricardo Abuauad state that the Centennial marked an occasion of unprecedented growth in Chile. At that moment, Santiago

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364 José Rosas is Actual Dean of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Urban Studies at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile.
365 Ricardo Abuauad is the Actual Director of the School of Architecture at Universidad Diego Portales.
graduated from being a town to becoming a city with a “grandeur” based on the paradigmatic European cities of the time. Rosas and Abuauad expound on the Centennial’s historical importance, describing it as a coherent moment in the growth of the country and the consolidation of important urban projects. On the occasion of the Centennial, the country entered a race of development that is slowly paying off a hundred years later. One could think of this situation in terms of Linda Pollak’s description of performative identity:

“A performative conception of identity has to do with an understanding of identity continually being produced. Rather than the meaning of a space existing in an a priori, “black and white” sense, it is developed performatively, that is happening, in the way it is in the world, becoming a process.”

The Centennial also constitutes a process of identity, of growth in that direction, a process of space and time that belongs to us. The Centennial developed performatively on time. The Bicentennial, as Rosas and Abuauad argue, presents us with a moment of frustration, in which many of the projects that we thought could make a difference in our current local scenario, have ended up not being feasible or even imagined, for reasons of structural contingency, different political or economical priorities, or poorly organized politics that influence policy decisions:

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One hundred years later, with a more mature and complex institutional framework in which technical skills are strongly developed, most of the major Bicentennial projects find themselves facing a struggle in being materialized. The proposals to renew downtrodden areas, replace outdated or obsolete infrastructures used to create public space and even modernize the present transportation system that we have, which had sought to position Chilean cities (especially Santiago) in the complex setting of urban marketing, proved to be overly complex and ambitious, too demanding for an economic, institutional and legal framework that was not really available.\(^{368}\)

The obstacles arising now with the Bicentennial projects did not occur during the Centennial a hundred years ago. Everything indicates that at that time our country had a greater ability to integrate new ideas and was better organized for the realization of complex projects—or is it possible that the urban projects of a hundred years ago simply were not as complex? Either way, there was a will to come through with them. The authors continue to warn us of the Bicentennial’s precarious situation: the leadership of these important public projects often faltered when faced with difficulties.\(^{369}\) Rosas and Abuauad argue that the realization of these projects in Chile has been problematic for the entire last decade, not just in the months before the celebration. There are many examples: a major one being the Mapocho old train station that was converted into a cultural center and was never fully completed in terms of its architecture and the “cultural” plan program. The quite strange and not very “serious” attitude that characterizes the Bicentennial is of accepting the failure and non-completion of large-scale projects

\(^{368}\) “Santiago 2010, un campo de tensiones,” 78.
\(^{369}\) Ibid.
(it seem that these projects are done most of the time because of political opportunism). Just a little while ago, the current president of Chile, Sebastian Piñera, who took office in March 2010, unexpectedly announced that the construction of the second phase of Gabriela Mistral’s Center (GAM) would be stopped because the funds will be going to another venue: Teatro Teletón. This

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370 An interesting detail on the name of this “cultural” center is that under the government of Michelle Bachelet the building was called Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral (CCGM). The building has a long story in terms of the politics and the development in the country. The building was built under the government of Salvador Allende to house the third international conference of the United Nations: UNCTAD III. After the conference took place the building was named Centro Cultural Metropolitano Gabriela Mistral with intentions to become the principal cultural center of Chile open to all chileans (in the aim of socialist Salvador Allende). Then the dictatorship came, dictator Augusto Pinochet transformed the building into a center for military operations after the bombing of Palacio de la Moneda (official house of government). Under dictatorship the building was renamed to Diego Portales in reference to the minister of 1830. Diego Portales is recognized as an important politician in the history of the country but is recognized as a dictator. In democracy, the building was reconceived to become again a cultural center, this is why the government of Michelle Bachelet called for an architectural competition to renew it. With this intention she wanted to go back to the initial idea of the building, which was to become a cultural center after the UNCTAD meeting, in this occasion the name proposed was CCGM as explained before. Unfortunately the timings and the schedules for the reconstruction of it were not managed accordingly to dates of her period as president therefore, she was not able to inaugurate it. Then the actual government came into power, Sebastián Piñera inaugurated the new building on September 2010 but as Centro Gabriel Mistral (GAM). The word culture is not anymore considered in the title as it was the aim of the original building. For more information about the GAM see the website: http://www.gam.cl (2 April 2011) and an article published on La Tercera local newspaper: http://masdecoracion.latercera.com/2010/08/21/01/contenido/10_929_9.shtml (2 April 2011). For the history of the building read David Maulen and Miguel Lawner’s article: http://www.arteycritica.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=373 (2 April 2011)

371 These news were announced on June 2010. This move can be easily understood in terms of politics. The new president wanted to secure success in terms of popular approval and Teatro Teletón is linked to Don Francisco, a major TV figure in Chile that has a TV program (Sábado Gigante) that reaches most of the population of Chile and Latin America. (In fact, the TV program had such success 10 years ago that it now airs in Miami.) For more about the cancellation of the funds see La Tercera local newspaper:
“cultural” impasse was strongly criticized by Cristián Warnken in his article about the “Ninguneo.” The new cultural center, originally intended to be inaugurated in the celebration of the Bicentennial, opened only on its first phase. Furthermore, it was inaugurated as Centro Gabriela Mistral (GAM), omitting the term “cultural.” Perhaps with this new name, the center can now have more freedom to house different types of events that are not really linked to “proper” culture. In her participation during SCL2110, RoseLee Goldberg asked: what is a “cultural center” anyways? These days the new “center” of events is figuring out what to do with the program of “cultural” events. Some important names are listed to visit this year, among others Jerome Bel.

This ongoing failure in core projects is even better evidenced in the capital’s new transportation system: Transantiago (Fig. 3.4) Unlike the models of

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373 Something similar happened with Centro Cultural Estación Mapocho, the “cultural” center now is more of a convention center for different types of events. This raises an interesting question for performance and performance studies: which are the events that have a cultural connotation that are linked to culture in the broad sense or to the expressive culture (related to local arts). Certainly there are many events that could be seen and understood, as only events without a real “artistic” input but that are certainly part of our culture anyhow. After many critics to the procedures on the implementation of the new GAM president Sebastián Piñera ratified the funds for the second phase which now expects to open more square meters in 2013, for more: http://www.gam.cl/noticias/presidente-pinera-confirma-fondos-para-segunda-etapa-del-gam/ (2 April 2011)

374 This question was discussed in her presentation at Centro Cultural Palacio de la Moneda where she presented her proposal and the work she has done with PERFORMA in the city of New York. Her presentation was on 24 September 2010.

375 For more see the program at: http://www.gam.cl/archivo/actividades/ (2 April 2011)
Bogota or Curitiba, the coordination of Transantiago’s phases has not been executed correctly; they have not been implemented in coherent steps, nor have they created a simple training guide for users (as the project demanded). It was “forced” to change an entire system of public transportation in just a couple of weeks—if not days—when it was not at all ready.\textsuperscript{376} Transantiago’s performance failed.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{transantiago.jpg}
\caption{Transantiago (2006).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{376} The Transantiago was inaugurated in 2006 as a Bicentennial project and Ricardo Lagos forced the inauguration under his government to have his name attached to the progress. The project was not ready because it was not tested in all its technological complexities. We currently have many problems with the system, and the population of Santiago, as well as the rest of the country, is still paying (monetarily) to fix and keep the system working.
Chile’s Bicentennial projects, in theory, and from this point of view show be quite ambitious. But still, even the complexities to be solved with Transantiago, it seems for the coherency of the country that we have, that the transportation system should be a good transportation anyways and that we do not need to celebrate a bicentennial to have a “good” transportation system. As stated, this is an infrastructure project that the city needs because of its grow but not because of a “vision.” Many of the projects of which we have become victims of today were initiated by the previous governments of Ricardo Lagos (2000–2006) and Michelle Bachelet (2006–2010). The previous governments stated that urban implementation projects are ventures of continuity, however some of them, today, do not exist as they were originally planned. To justify this, the current government leads its citizens to believe that these urban projects were poorly designed from the beginning (which does not make sense because a poorly designed project can be avoided before its execution). The idea here is not to highlight the inconsistency in failing to face up to errors, but rather the problem of a non-continuity of political ideas that require continuation, especially understood from the governmental sphere. In addition, the government fails in other aspects of futuristic vision that sustain the kind of will that pushes certain groups and networks for such developments to work (or happen). In other words, the government seems unable to imbue certain projects with that ‘something’ that will
guarantee their prevalence despite political changes—aside from reasonable, strategic planning. It seems that the projects are evidencing a short-term vision that has to be executed fast. Other thing observed is that something as trivial as information fails to circulate, which can result at the end in having no rational, nor emotional, connection to proposed projects, and therefore having no reason to pursue them if they are threatened. The relationship between this failure and the leadership behind the projects to be implemented is important and has to be adequate to the circumstances (bicentennial), as far as goals, content and illusion (of the population) are concerned.

3.2 The Centennial

One of the leading figures of the Chilean Centennial period was the politician and historian Benjamin Vicuña Mackenna, who in 1870 had already proposed his own vision of Chile and the city of Santiago. To fully comprehend

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378 For example, his ideas proposed the channeling of the Mapocho river and the planning and part of the construction of the road Camino de Cintura around the existing city, which defines the suburbs from the city’s center; the construction of marketplaces and schools, the transformation of poor neighborhoods in the south area, the consolidation and expansion of the drinking-water and street lighting systems, the aperture of streets and avenues, the consolidation of other channels and rivers that affected Santiago and a new and more modern slaughterhouse.
the extension of his thinking, it is important to understand his tremendous character:

Benjamin Vicuña was a multidimensional man, perhaps one of the most versatile Chilean author of the XIX century. His contemporaries saw in him a prodigy, someone moved by some sort of manic creativity, pushed by a protein force. His capacity for work, his omnivorous diversity of interests and his industrial production as a writer bordered the implausible.379

As Manuel Vicuña astutely explains in the biography of Vicuña Mackenna, we are talking of a man that has the correct disposition to envision the future, and to attend to anything that could provide him with the knowledge or networks necessary to fulfill his goals. Accordingly, he is referred to as someone who:

[…] read with massive eagerness whatever was within his reach, acquiring a vast literary culture, as well as scientific. He never ignored the practical potential of any knowledge, attending to river canalization, urban development, immigration and colonization, public education and the press industry, mine exploitation, and in general, everything related to the economic and social potential of natural resources within the nation.380

His idea of converting the Cerro San Cristóbal into a large green lung of fresh air for the city of Santiago was visionary. In those years the hill was a place with a rocky landscape, largely devoid of vegetation. However, his proposal of transforming the San Cristóbal hill into a large public park took shape over time. In 1916, Alberto Mackenna and Pedro Bannen, led a campaign to expropriate the

380 Ibid., 12.
land of the hill to proceed with Vicuña Mackenna’s plans. This example suggests the sense of continuity in time necessary for any urban project, especially those of sustainable development that are part of a transformation process.

Centennial projects are identifiable by their prolonged presence over time. Surely at that time there was much less technological development and yet the implementation of each project was never easier or different than it is now. Urban projects have always had a complexity and today that complexity is still evident.

Vicuña Mackenna, as Santiago’s mayor (1872–75), started the most ambitious modernization program of the nineteenth century under the utopian aim of transforming the capital of Chile (a village with its history unknown to many) into the Paris of the Americas. But as I mentioned before, this transformation was not just the imposition of an image, it was a matter of content, of message over the years to come after the centennial. There was an intention behind this particular form that exceeded the pure aesthetic or functional matter of the project (Fig. 3.5). To envision these projects was to envision a social structure, a political regimen, a public space policy.

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Throughout his life, Vicuña Mackenna defended popular sovereignty.\textsuperscript{383} He was an active member of egalitarian society, that fleeting political laboratory of modern associative experiences as a republican actor.\textsuperscript{384} In other words, he was aware of the importance of the cross-disciplinary work that any public project requires. He supported the citizens’ participation and was extremely conscious of the collaborative aspect needed for any modern enterprise. Of course, at the time that might have worked at another level or extent, but those are still features that a hundred years later are crucial to any plan, and their lack are precisely the weaknesses of the Bicentennial agenda that we witness today. Because the

\textsuperscript{383} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{384} Ibid.,158.
political advisors and officials thinking about these ideas have failed us, it has not been possible to create the Chile that had been envisioned for the Bicentennial celebration. But was Chile really envisioned for the Bicentennial? Many of the projects being carried out possess details that are not insignificant when one looks at the results. Perhaps this is because of the similar deficiency we have in managing complexity and establishing continuity for the teams that develop them—in reference to Rosas and Abuauad’s criticism. There is a chance element to them, with poorly designed networks supporting them. It seems as if today, the issue of political and economic opportunism is much more important than the good of present and future public spaces. It could be argued that when it comes to major projects (as is the case in other countries), contrary to what common sense sometimes suggests there is incentive to act only when a political and/or economic reward exists. The projects presently being implemented by the government may be necessary for the coherent development of the city, but they do not necessarily accomplish, reflect, self-criticize with ambition, the future.

The important growth the city has experienced demands, logically, more infrastructures, but it is equally important to provide more quality public spaces, in different forms from a park to a public building, no question. Aside from the fact mentioned earlier that logic and rationality aren’t enough for envisioning the city and understanding the real meaning of our landscape—and therefore of these sorts of projects, models or strategies, or lack thereof—derives in the paradoxical loss of
any content whatsoever that the political or economical move itself might have intended.

For just as everything takes on a political meaning, politics itself becomes invisible, so too when everything takes on a sexual meaning, sex itself becomes invisible, so too when everything becomes aesthetic, the very notion of art disappears.\(^{385}\)

In Neil Leach’s terms, the excess (of ambition) and rapidness of information surrounding Chile’s Bicentennial projects denotes that politics has been aestheticized to a sheer shell, a quick glimpse, and therefore has been reduced to mere images—a proliferation of ribbons being cut only for the sake of cutting ribbons. In other words, many of these projects have been taken under the wings of the Bicentennial, but are not necessarily—or not really intended to be—the ones that will drive the country into a new stage of development. We have failed even at doing that. For just a quick example, one can think of the Chilean pavilion in Expo Shangai (Fig. 3.6).

![Fig. 3.6 – Chilean Pavillion in Sevilla (1990) and in Shangai (2010).](image)

In an article published in July 2009, Alejandro Aravena (a well-known young Chilean architect), in addition to criticizing the Chilean choice of building a pavilion, asks the essential question of “What are we exhibiting inside? According to WHO?;” the concept was to exhibit the best of the city, its people. There starts the problem. It is true that the pavilion has a multitude of communal spaces as a building—the pavilion is an architectonic cliché that incorporates almost everything that has to be incorporated in order to be politically correct. But that is not the problem. Instead of striving to sell an image, we could have shared with the planet a relevant knowledge, perhaps some relevant aspects of Chilean culture, improving our image as a consequence and not as a purpose itself. Instead, its political aestheticization exposes the pavilion as devoid of real content; we were just thinking of selling an image: “Chile hace bien.” Rather than considering the content behind the image, the pavilion was unable to grasp and share meaning or substance, or bring forward any originality, and consequently contained no real authenticity. The same description could be made for the cultural centers the

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Bicentennial was supposed to inaugurate: What is going to be exhibited? What is the long-term “cultural” plan? How this is related to the local and the social?
Again, performance studies can shed some light on how to explore the answers to these questions. Architecture and political decisions are acts that can be analyzed by the lens of performance and the methods that performance studies uses to understand culture. All these projects with both cultural centers and relevant infrastructures, talk about, and express a certain Bicentennial-stress-of-culture and potentiate a country of “bigger” scale in terms of its society. The society somehow also re-presented by these attempts of progress.

Obsessively, everyone was looking towards the 2010 ‘target’ to do something in the occasion but unable to ask in something after it, a consequence: What would happen next? Much of the current government's economic effort for the celebration came to an end and the projects are no longer being infused with the same energy as before the celebration. In fact, the bicentennial is gone already (this is another problem, as a society we tend to forget very fast). The current politicians have not been able to think of a future national plan, nor have they begun to work in the mid- or long-term sense. The earthquake is used as a big excuse to focus exclusively on solving problems in the short term, but Chile is more than an earthquake—in fact, we are used to them because this country has a history on natural disasters.

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388 These questions are interesting in terms of the performativity implicit in these actions of progress.
In this regard we should look back to Vicuña Mackenna and also give credit to the vision, or at least the visionary discourse, of former President Lagos (of course, there are other leaders who also led major projects in their time).

Recently, Chileans have witnessed large urban infrastructure projects: highways, transportation systems, hospitals, schools, museums, cultural centers, parks, bicycle routes, etc. Many of these projects have also been necessary due to the overwhelming growth the capital has experienced in the last few years. These infrastructure projects do not necessarily correspond to flagship projects, which would have made us recall the Bicentennial as we recall the Centennial.389

389 For further research on the Bicentennial Commission’s projects, I recommend the Book: OBRAS BICENTENARIO (2005), Preparándonos para el Bicentenario, de la gestión estratégica del desarrollo urbano lanzado en el 5to. Encuentro Internacional de Concepción. Also see: “Chile 2010, visión de ciudad Bicentenario” published by the Chilean Government in October 2005. This edition was created by: “la dirección de Planeamiento del Ministerio de Obras Públicas.” For updates visit the following website: http://www.bicentenario.gov.cl/inicio/ver_publicacion.php?id_publicacion=14

Maria Paz Cuevas (newspapers PUC) writes about six emblematic projects of the Bicentennial (in the journal Foco 76, 5). It lists 214 works for 2010 in 26 Chilean cities throughout the country. The entities involved are the Ministries of Public Works, Telecommunications and Transportation, Housing and Urban Development and of National Heritage. The projects involve 4 billion pesos from the National Treasury and 6 billion dollars of private funding. The historian Miguel Laborde suggests, in the Catholic University’s magazine UC #87, that a hierarchical and prioritized selection of relevant bicentennial projects should have happened. The most emblematic projects presently are: Parque La Aguada: flooded pools making up a 60 hectare park in the Zanjón de la Aguada. Swimming pools in a park for winter and summer; Recovery of railroads within the city: Metro connectivity. Estacion Central Station on Line 1, Franklin Station on Line 2 and the Nuble station on Line 5; Centro Yungay, Fourth phase Parque los Reyes: From the Esperanza Street area and west to help revitalize the area and its real estate development; Renewal of San Diego: New streets and 2 hectares of green areas to help in housing construction. The idea is to give greater value to the poorest sectors of Santiago; Conversion of petty San Eugenio: new district, 45 acres at the end of the street exposure; Santiago Public Library to help consolidate the Matucana district, Santiago’s new cultural circuit; Centro Cultural Palacio de la Moneda Cultural Center; Dome at Parque
Opposed to the Bicentennial, in the early twentieth century, two important projects were constructed in the Cerro San Cristóbal Park: the Lick Astronomical Observatory (1903) and the monument to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (Fig.3.7).³⁹⁰

Fig. 3.7 – Monument to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary (1908).

From then on the hill became an important point of reference in the capital city’s landscape and more importantly, in the memory of Chileans living there. The hill became the city’s Metropolitan Park after the arrival of capital’s zoo and the funicular railway (Fig. 3.8). Presently, the hill is a key tourist attraction in the capital. Many foreign visitors visit the hill for the panoramic view of Santiago’s landscape it offers and to escape the chaotic world of the capital's concrete city. With the progressive implementation over time of Cerro San Cristóbal as a model, one could argue that expansive ideas, designed and coherently developed over time, consistently turn into reality. In square footage, the Metropolitan Park of Santiago is potentially the most important green area of the city and it has yet to be completed.

From city hall, Vicuña Mackenna inspired great urban ideas that he did not necessarily end up instituting. It should be noted that his thinking and vision inspired the transformation of yet another hill in the city of Santa Lucía (Fig. 3.8), located in the very place where Pedro Valdivia founded the city. Today the Santa Lucía hill offers a place for the people of Santiago to disconnect:

With the transformation of the hill [Santa Lucía] as a public walk, it was possible to think that it wouldn’t be necessary for artists to be the mediators between the city and its inhabitants, from that moment, the city offered itself an spectacle. The access to the

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391 The funicular opened in 1924 on the initiative of Mayor Alberto Mackenna.
392 After SCL2110 there is a proposal by Bernard Tschumi Architects to activate the San Cristóbal hill future project, into the most important metropolitan Park in Chile and hence possibly create South America’s most relevant park. It could be the largest one and now it is only used at 30% of its capacity.
views of the city was guaranteed, which is equivalent to saying that the panorama would be alive, building and transforming itself in time, in front of its citizens.393

This is how the Chilean architect, Rodrigo Perez de Arce,394 who is involved in several projects in the cities of Santiago and Valparaíso describes it: “What Vicuña Mackenna did at that time was to propose feasibility driven by a desire (a European cityscape). Desires do not interpret anything other than the ideas that made them possible. Desires starts with an actual observation and are articulated through the speculation of a code.” In fact, to see the city from above, from the walk recently created, meant standing on the replacement of painted panoramas, just how the governor supposed. As a result, it seems relevant to ask ourselves how much of this order imposed on the city was a consequence of the visions of Santiago taken by de Santa Lucía 25 years earlier by the North American marine James Melville Gillis.

394 As architect Rodrigo Perez de Arce explains in the article by Maria Paz Cuevas about the six most emblematic Bicentennial projects, Foco Magazine 76, No.1, Santiago 2006, page 76. Rodrigo Perez de Arce has been in charge of various urban and architectural projects in contemporary Chile. He was also the architect of the renovation of the Mapocho Train Station Cultural Center, of the renewal of Plaza de Armas in Santiago, the Santiago cathedral, and also of the reformulating and organizing of the Port of Valparaiso with the design of a dry port on the outskirts of the oceanfront. Translation by the author.
Could we think in a continuity of wills, despite the different medias?\footnote{Germán Hidalgo, “Panoramas de Santiago,” Revista Universitaria 90 (2006): 13.}

Both authors, Perez de Arce and Hidalgo, relate the observation of Santiago—through paintings or panoramas, or directly—with the will of those who change the city, those who mold it according to their desires. The ability to observe and desire is essential for any “construction,” as shaping something demands both a critical eye and ambition. Can we apply this idea to San Cristóbal hill today? Where is the critical and striving eye that can unfold its latent potential? Are we even looking? Or are we blinded by routine, and narrow-minded short-term economical frames/goals?

For its Centennial celebration, Chile received major gifts from abroad. During the days following the Centennials, some of the invited delegations donated impressive monuments both to the capital (Santiago) and to the port (Valparaíso), immortalizing the presence and passage of the guests that came to Chile for the celebration.\footnote{Information found in the official governments website: http://www.chilebicentenario.cl/bicentenario/centenario/ (14 February 2011).} For example, the nations of Italy and France each celebrated their participation by giving us one monument (Fig. 3.9). These monuments later became true emblems of the collective imagination of the city and all Chileans (similar to the story of the Statue of Liberty in New York City). These objects in
the urban landscape play a significant role in shaping the place that hosts them with their symbolic weight.\footnote{Here one might speak of urban landscape through the special provision of certain distinctive elements of the urban environment. In the Dictionary of Advanced Architecture, published by Actar, the landscape of the city is defined as the following: “If the city is a landscape, buildings are mountains.” This status of buildings and monuments as mountains portrays them as truly the referents of today’s urban landscape. A monument or monumental building has the ability to be recognized. If one understands the tension between signifier and landscape, one can see that symbolically buildings and monuments represent entities like power, moments in time, situations, etc. In this sense, it is understood that these elements are no more than the shapers of a dreamt environment. To find more information on this subject see the research done at the Theater School at the Catholic University of Chile “Urban Scenography: The city, Visual Identity”, 2000. But then this investigation became the book \emph{Escenografia Urbana} edited by Rodrigo Tisi and Renato Bernasconi (2010).}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{monuments.png}
\caption{Monuments given by the nations of France and Italy to celebrate one hundred years of independence (1910).}
\end{figure}
As pointed out in the conversation in *Pausa* magazine referred to above, a city’s expression (through its constructed forms) is also of importance when the existence of cultural projects is up for debate. We can pause here and briefly comment on the value of the intangibility of the city the authors in *Pausa* magazine mentioned. As M. Christine Boyer states: “it becomes evident that we need to look beyond logic and a symbol-processing paradigm to understand how the mind works and how the landscape/cityscape generates meaning.”

Significance is part of the intangible but can be embodied or interpreted by objects or spaces (or monuments). Robert Venturi, in his text inspired by Las Vegas, refers to the value of the building as a sign (Fig. 3.10) and affords a certain importance to the concept of the monumental seal. Signs, icons, and different forms of culture can come to represent cities.

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But Venturi does not only discuss the aesthetics of signage but rather describes the value of iconography inhabiting our cityscape (as a product for consumerism). Monumental buildings and historical landmarks act as specific icons and symbolic “seals” that lead us towards recognizing our territory. The building as an icon creates a common space for everyone through the shared knowledge of their signification (Fig.3.11).

Fig. 3.11 – Telefónica building in Plaza Italia (1990).

400 There are many buildings in Santiago that are recognized by the population as icons. One of them is the Telefónica building located in Plaza Italia and that is characteristic because people associate its image with the image of a cellular phone. Telefónica is a multinational tele-communication company based in Spain. Refer to Fig. 3.11
The Bicentennial in Chile is an opportunity to create more of these types of landmark icons, which can perform by creating what we are as Chileans. It is important to highlight that it really has to do with a much more complex configuration of a scenario—the city (and its public space) is an influx organism that is always adjusting itself to house the cultural requirements of society. Identity and significance are a part of the collective value we assign to a monument, it is that value behind the object that matters. A monument may materialize these ideas in a certain landscape, as for example in our Plaza Italia where the Baquedano monument represents the “union” of Chileans. It is then definitely related to public space, not strictly in terms of property, but in terms of how inhabitants relate to it—how they use it, how it rests in their imaginary, and so on. The social aspect is crucial and acts as the agglutinant. In these landscapes identity is paramount: Who are you? Who are you seen to be? How do you see? The dynamics of these questions are structured by social order of political and economical power.\(^{401}\) This social component is directly related to experience, to time and place, to movement and as a result to performance.

The seal mentioned earlier could also be interpreted as a type of branding. In today's world, brands hold a relevant commercial value. An iconic seal for our country—or several of them—would allow the creation of a brand at a national and also an international level. ‘Chile’ could be sold (neo-liberal capitalist

\(^{401}\) Mark Dorrian et al. *Deterritorialisations...Revisioning Landscapes and Politics* (2003), 72.
force),\textsuperscript{402} states Magdalena Krebs\textsuperscript{403} when discussing the value that brands have in terms of heritage.\textsuperscript{404} For Krebs, brands carry a value capable of being traded in the marketplace (Fig. 3.12). When we are presented with branding and heritage, it could be that through our patrimonial icons—obviously needing preservation over time—we can hold onto our national identity and solidly differentiate our competitors (“friendly” nations). Chile’s seal is important in the nation’s moment of economic leadership to highlight the nation becoming as and economic leader in the region (southamerica). This comment is also opens up questions about development and better environments without political and capitalist forces. It is important to note here that we are constantly being nourished by heritage and therefore can continue to build with it (a culture, a “brand” an economy: are all of these related on a neoliberal world?). What heritage does, if we look more closely at what we truly possess, is create a place that is socially more coherent for a group of individuals (in terms of belonging). Furthermore, Olaya Sanfuentes states that heritage does not only appear in culturally institutionalized places (museums and cultural centers) but that it also appears in the streets. Heritage, according to

\textsuperscript{402} President Sebastián Piñera is ranked #437 in the list of the The World's Billionaires see: http://www.forbes.com/lists/2010/10/billionaires-2010_Sebastian-Pinera_YLRC.html (2 April 2011)

\textsuperscript{403} Architect from Pontificia Universidad Catolica of Chile. Since 1983, she worked for the DIBAM (Dirección de Bibliotecas, Archivos y Museos) in the Documentation of the Cultural Patrimony Department and in 1988 assumed the directorship of the CNCR (Consejo Nacional de Conservación y Restauración). She was member of the ICCROM in Rome (International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property) from 1995 until 2003. She is the editor in chief of Conserva magazine of CNCR and a member of the DIBAM board of directors.

\textsuperscript{404} Magdalena Krebs, “El patrimonio es una marca,” \textit{Foco} 76 (2008), 16.
her, contributes to the creation of a shared identity and the values held by the community.\textsuperscript{405}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chile_products}
\caption{“Products” of Chile, landscape and wine.}
\end{figure}

From this point of view, places that have a seal, those with a “brand,” are those that represent us and that make us marketable abroad—but why is it necessary to sell ourselves out? It seems that the neoliberal world regulates all of the decisions when it comes to designing cities. The seals of the nation (built by the Chileans themselves as opposed to brought in as gifts from outside nations) may be the monumental “spaces” for the transmission of a Chilean identity over time. These quantifiable spaces help us build the moments of urban experience that identify us qualitatively. Luis Eduardo Bresciani, the former director of Urban Development for MINVU (Ministerio de Vivienda y Urbanismo) states that:

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The growing globalization and homogenization of cities has made physical heritage a source of identity and has given it a competitive advantage at the level of urbanism and real estate, particularly when we protect and recover this ‘stock’ built with such beauty and architectural value. These areas provide value to our cities and a quality of life to our collective public space that ultimately transforms them into public goods and makes them subject to the preservation of urban planning.406

As mentioned, in Chile, and mainly in Santiago, many of the places that were shaped by the Centennial celebration projects are presently the major landmarks with which we now identify. These landmarks have “value” in the wide scope of the word; they also mean money. Similar to what occurred during the Centennial events, one hundred years later the Bicentennial in Chile is yet again a great opportunity for debate and the proposal of events based on the “brand” of our nation (identity and/or economical issues). Discussing the branding of a city in a contemporary and neoliberal setting on the one hand assumes an understanding of the marketing of cities in a global context, and on the other makes us realize that such a seal or label would distinguish the country from others. It is frequently understood that, due to rapid economic growth, there is a tendency towards the regularization and the standardization of spaces. However, as discussed in the 2001 Prototype Seminar in Architecture that took place in Porto, Portugal—the European cultural capital of that year—the fact remains that the city, far more than the nation and in different ways from the region, is still the stronghold of culture,

of specificity in an increasingly dissolving globalization.\textsuperscript{407} It is important to not only be aware of this, but to then decide how to operate in terms of cityscapes, to ask: How does the city perform?

We know several cities with seals exist: from New York to London to Tokyo and so on. Coincidentally, each one of these represents a center within each of their regions (North America, Europe, and Asia). They are “model” cities for Santiago because they also signify centers of political and economical flow. Recently our country has been recognized for its extraordinary “performance” within a Latin American context, based on economic (and political) importance,\textsuperscript{408} markets, and investments, with Santiago as the emblematic city representing the Chilean economic boom. In their article “Las ciudades entran a la cancha,” Luis Fuentes and Carlos de Mattos argue that Santiago is fortunate because it has been

\textsuperscript{407} Martins Baratañ, Paulo, Tavares Pereira, Luis and Gerrit Confurius. 2002. \textit{PROTOTIPO#007} special issue on the seminar in architecture 2001 “Performing the City”, Space-Craftsmanship: Lisbon, 30.

\textsuperscript{408} This also constitutes a paradox; a great part of the Chilean population recognizes the economical wealth because of Pinochet’s dictatorship. It seems that the imposition of order and capital to perform a “successful” democratic milieu are the ingredients to consider establishing for a coherent stability in terms of markets and politics. As the then finance minister, Alejandro Foxley, said in a 1991 interview: “We may not like the government that came before us. But they did many things right. We have inherited an economy that is an asset.” All four civilian governments since 1990 have maintained the new, more market-oriented economic and social models inherited from the military regime. Although there were changes at the margins after 1990, the point of sharpest and deepest positive change was unquestionably 1973 and immediately thereafter, not 1970 or 1990 as sometimes argued. For more see Robert A. Packenham and William Ratliff’s article: “What Pinochet did for Chile” published on January 30, 2007 by the Hoover Institution (Stanford University): http://www.hoover.org/publications/hoover-digest/article/5882 (2 April 2011) also, The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) informs that Chile is 20 in the global rank to attract investments: http://www.thisischile.cl/frmContenidos.aspx?ID=64&sec=93&eje=Negocios
fueled by the country’s economic stability. However, it is not clear what is desired in terms of the city’s image and its future projects, particularly how this economic stability improves and supports the lives of the city’s inhabitants. In other words, the article suggests that presently Santiago is more a product of the country’s economic success, rather than the “performance” of its regional authorities.⁴⁰⁹ Valparaíso is a special case in this regard because it has not experienced the real estate speculation that Santiago “enjoys.” We are only now starting to see some movement towards this type of activity there. Valparaíso is a city with extraordinary potential for tourism (Fig. 3.13). It contains a unique port that could be shaped as a cultural and touristic attraction (as many cities have done with their ports: Bilbao, Barcelona, Buenos Aires, New York, etc). While the government is aware of this, it has no radical projects moving in that direction. This is a concern because it implies that the city does not have a clear plan for the future and, further, that it cannot count on a platform for coordinated and adequate management if a vision for the future materializes. This has also been expressed by Abuauad and Rosas in their comments about the Bicentennial and is also an issue to consider in the proposals for SCL2110.

The image campaign held by the Chilean government over the last few years, as an attempt to create a brand, clearly demonstrates a lack of vision for the actual progression of our cities. Our country is marketed with beautiful postcards of our natural assets—our extreme landscapes and environmental diversity—turning Santiago into a space of transit for passengers that can’t wait to get onto the boats or planes that will take them to those “extraordinary” natural experiences. But doesn’t Argentina have these natural resources as well? For that matter, doesn’t this valuable commodity appear in some other countries of the world? And what does nature say about a culture anyway? (Society does not live
In those extraordinary settings; a natural landscape does not really describe “culture.”) In some ways, these images constitute something similar to branding products, in this case one could understand Chile as the brand and Santiago and Valparaíso as some of the products that could be offered under that umbrella (an image of the natural or “extreme” landscape known now as eco trends).410

Is Chile as a brand capable of competing in a globalized context, and how well are its products rated? Is the choice of supplies coherent with the global competition? What do our cities have to offer as distinct products in an extremely competitive tourist market? Does our urban planning reflect these considerations?

The image-nation strategy is not the solution, but just an example of the Chilean authorities’ approach to the projection of our cities. Perhaps that is why the Bicentennial projects were in many cases just major projects of infrastructure necessitated by our cities growth. Meanwhile, there has not been any serious discussion about the cities themselves or the projects that will produce something different or more than a mere functional solution. The government has not understood the real value behind cities—both tangible and intangible, beyond the economical factor. Though it has become common that Santiago is well-rated as far as a place for global business goes—it is safe, clean, and orderly—a tourist might prefer to go to Buenos Aires as the city seems to have so much more.

410 Globalization adds instability in geometric proportions. When the competition is between brands and not products, a global brand can land any time, with huge resources, and take the place of local enterprises that seemed invincible. See Eugenio Tironi and Ascanio Cavallo. *Comunicación Estratégica; Vivir en un mundo de señales* (2004).
“culture” to offer. Going back to Aravena’s comment on the recent Expo Shangai, the only goal of the image-nation strategy is to sell an image. Because this is its sole purpose, Chile becomes a victim of the aestheticization that Leach anticipated: the detachment of those images of Chile from their original complex cultural situation. The images are fetishized and judged by their surface appearance at the expense of any deeper meaning.  

Santiago—like other cities in Chile, and especially as our capital—should have a seal of its own with coherent global exposure, but not as part of a shallow advertising strategy of image selling. The development of the seal should be as a consequence of excellent urban planning, a consistent and outstanding city project—or city projection—as well as an intelligent advertising plan similar to that of the major global cities already mentioned. According to estimates, Chile has the resources to implement major urban projects, but the low profile that characterizes us, along with our shortsightedness, does not make such projects viable. The Bicentennial is an excellent excuse to demand building a project that lives up to the moment Chile is living through, the kind of future Chilean citizens and their subsequent generations deserve. We would have to continue to build what is still pending, possibly resisting the uncontrollable progress that does not have a plan aside from the short term. The marketplace and short-term business

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models have destroyed our landscape because the real cost behind Chile’s economic acceleration is “significance.” The question is not so much whether a castle is “authentic” or not, but whether we can any longer claim the capacity to grasp its authenticity (through an image of a possible country). In a culture where capitalism absorbs our heritage into the framework of commodified tourist “experiences,” the line between authenticity and inauthenticity becomes somewhat blurred.\footnote{Ibid., 5.} Chile's image abroad could not only be sustained by its economic index, but could be strengthened by a consistent image of content. Much of today’s real estate speculation, a product of economic progress, is a trigger for urban renewal. The problem is that they are not very well planned with the contexts and urban spaces where they are going to be embedded (Fig. 3.14).\footnote{As an example, the Costanera Center Project is a commercial hotel and office center where the tallest building in South America is being built with an investment worth 400 million dollars. President Ricardo Lagos partook in the inauguration. More information available online at: http://www.plataformaurbana.cl/archive/2006/03/06/costanera-center-el-sueno-de-paulmann/o http://www.costaneracenter.cl/ccenter/index.html (28 September 2008).}
The Bicentennial, as did the Centennial, represents a great opportunity for speculation and for new cultural and urban ambitions. But good intentions are not enough. What really matters beyond a proper government plan (that should be the task at hand for any government) is that the community itself implements its ideas. Here we continue to what was referred to before as social power. As the sociologist Manuel Tironi explained in a radio interview about SCL2110, perhaps one of the biggest failures of the Bicentennial was due to that fact that

\footnote{Carolina Urrejola and Matías Del Río, Interview with Manuel Tironi, ZERO radio (broadcast 4 July 2010, Santiago).}
former President Bachelet didn’t introduce Chilean citizens’ participation in the public Bicentennial projects. Though her government agenda was particularly keen on the subjects and policies involving citizens, she failed to change the way urban planning was implemented. Now again, in Aravena’s words on the pavilion matter, “we lost a unique opportunity of being in the right place at the right time, with sufficient knowledge in order to exercise leadership.”415

Bachelet was in the right place—as president—at the right time, with the right knowledge and disposition towards citizens, participation, and policies. This association between authorities and citizens is crucial to generate meaningful and coherent projects. By involving people, the country is also building other types of heritage, not only about the material-physical space of the city but also about the popular practices. Here is where the value performance studies places on cultural “performances” could contribute to the consolidation and construction of a new heritage (characteristics that are unique of Chileans and Chilean cities).

Nan Ellin responded to the conditions of modern urbanism—function and rationality—with what the author defines as vulnerable urbanism. What is important in his definition is condensed in the following:

Emphasizing process rather than product, relationships (or context) rather than isolated objects, and complementarity rather than opposition, these approaches and the landscapes they generate might be considered a vulnerable urbanism […] a

vulnerable urbanism highlights the role of users since the process of buildings continue with inhabitation and appropriation.\textsuperscript{416}

Process, relationships (content and context), complementarity (multidisciplinary approach and association) and the role of users (citizen participation) generate exactly the kind of landscape one would have desired of the Bicentennial. This definition of landscape encompasses more than the local projects of infrastructure and brings forward the authenticity that the physical space cannot convey by itself.

As a result of a terrible earthquake of 1906, the Centennial was used to address the rebuilding of the cities, unleashing an unusually constructive impulse in both Valparaíso and Viña del Mar. This situation made it easier to introduce new materials and architectonic schemes imported from Europe and the United States, which were adapted and reinterpreted according to the local context, providing a response to the geographic, material, seismic and cultural conditions of Valparaíso and Viña del Mar.\textsuperscript{417}

Today, the 2010 earthquake has had a similar effect in terms of damage and destruction on small towns in the south of Chile and on important cities such as Concepción and Temuco. Santiago, though it suffered, is not really a catastrophe zone, which speaks very well of the way we construct cities. Though

\textsuperscript{417} Ferrada, “Valparaíso, 16 de agosto de 1906: El desastre que sirvió como motor de desarrollo” in \textit{CA Magazine}, 126: 45-47
an earthquake is a terrible and destructive event, it can be seen optimistically as an opportunity to rethink and even improve the affected city. In Valparaíso’s case, a hundred years ago, survivors had to learn how to recover from the disaster (Fig. 3.15). The port of Valparaíso is in a state of serious decline. Much of the splendor of the port is only a romantic memory. Valparaíso needs a major injection of energy and vitality.

Fig. 3.15 – Earthquake in Valparaíso (1906).

Being 100 kilometers away from Santiago, the contrast is enormous. In a material sense, the city has serious problems with conserving and preserving its
heritage. However, our intangible heritage in the port city still exists. If the support is not provided to preserve this heritage soon (tangible and intangible), we will barely be able to save and further recuperate this city. Fortunately, the 2010 earthquake had no major effects in the area (Valparaíso), but the tattered and damaged city certainly still screams for reconstruction. The appointment of the city as a World Heritage Site in 2003 and as the cultural center of Chile (named by UNESCO) deserves to be respected. Valparaíso is now the extreme opposite of Santiago, and while Santiago develops economically, Valparaíso only grows more poverty-stricken. The branding of a renewed Valparaíso certainly seduces the authorities, but for some reason they have been unable to resuscitate this port. The National Council of Culture and Arts’ building, the Metrotrén (subway), and the Dry Port for containers, among several others, were good initiatives, but which of all these projects is the most coherent for the city? The National Council of Culture and Arts in this region has no cultural institutions with which it can hold a dialogue, the closest possibility is in Santiago or the proposed Ex-Cárcel Cultural Center, which still needs to be built (Fig. 3.16). The Metrotrén maintenance cost is so expensive that prices have been hiked, driving citizens to use the far less expensive, traditional, system of inter-communal buses that they can afford. This represents a series of absurd projects when it comes to the project’s original intentions or their ability to respond to context specific situations and the needs of their population.
Fig. 3.16 – Ex-cárcel Cultural Center, Jonhattran Holmes et al. (2009).

Fig. 3.17 – Ex-cárcel Cultural Center, Oscar Niemayer (2008-2009).
The Oscar Niemeyer Cultural Center (Fig. 3.17), which was planned in 2008,\textsuperscript{418} had no dialogue with the social context of Valparaíso and precipitated a Bilbao effect (Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao) in the middle of one of the characteristic hills of the city. The project was stopped by the local community. Similarly, the Plaza Sotomayor project, encompassing an area extended to the edge of the port, incorporates palm tree avenues that reveal a desperate tool for a renewed look of consumerism that certainly does not correspond to the typical port. This project has been suspended. Both of these examples never materialized—not because the authorities came to their senses, but because the people rejected them. It is worth noting, in order to contrast such projects, that in recent times Valparaíso has had one of the highest poverty rates and is probably the city with less comparative growth in the nation.

The Bicentennial Commission, created in 2000 in the government’s eagerness to encourage the active participation of Chilean citizens in its process, launched the “Bicentennial Seal” in September of 2004, an award of distinction that seeks to promote the implementation of significant projects of a certain patriotic spirit at a national and local level.\textsuperscript{419} The initiative intended to entail the active participation of the people, but did not work. The Bicentennial is an

\textsuperscript{418} See a publication on Plataforma de Arquitectura, May 3, 2008: http://www.plataformaarquitectura.cl/2008/05/03/el-proyecto-de-oscar-niemeyer-para- valparaiso/ (2 April 2011)

\textsuperscript{419} From the catalogue published by the Executive Secretary of the Bicentennial Commission and the Executive Director of the Bicentennial Commission, Santiago, 2008.
opportunity to make proposals above and beyond those of infrastructure, beyond projects that only answer the unresolved problems the city of Santiago has had since its 1952 plan.

The former presidents told us that the Bicentennial Commission would like to contribute not only to infrastructure, but that the ambition is also to build a nation of free citizens, of solidarity, of citizens equal in their rights and opportunities.\textsuperscript{420} As stated in the Supreme Decree No.176 created by the Bicentennial Commission of Chile in 2004: “It is the duty of all Chileans, especially the youth of this country, to dream, to create, to imagine, to innovate and to discover the new spaces that the nation has begun to create for everyone.\textsuperscript{421}

This statement highlights the opportunity that the Bicentennial offered young Chileans. Since I cannot speak from a place other than that of an architect and technically from that location as an “artist of space,” I propose that we concentrate on the disciplinary practice of architecture and on the occasion of architects in their professional and their academic realms. As a young academic I

\textsuperscript{420} Michelle Bachelet’s thoughts in the editorial section of the catalogue published by the Executive Secretary of the Bicentennial commission and the Executive Director of the Bicentennial Commission, Santiago, 2008.

\textsuperscript{421} The Bicentennial Commission was created through a Supreme Decree on 16 October 2000 by the Government of Ricardo Lagos. This commission advises the President on everything regarding the design, programming, and coordination of policies, plans, programs, projects and activities which enable the country to achieve its fullest potential in the commemoration of the two hundred years of independence. Comprised of a group of prominent national figures, the Bicentennial Commission collects the dreams and proposals of all Chileans, especially young people, with activities designed to stimulate active citizenship, and by developing programs to channel and coordinate the efforts that all sectors of society develop in the name of this celebration. The Bicentennial of Chile offers a unique opportunity to think and project.
would say that the Bicentennial is an important moment for reflection on what we have been and what we might be in the short, mid, and long term. The array of questions inspired by a university setting represents a fertile platform where one can imagine and devise a possible future through the study, analysis, comparative criticism and proposal of cities, in relation to what we are. As professionals involved in designing the concrete world of the city, we greet the Bicentennial as a moment of sensible, reflective, and integrated practice: What an opportunity! (I thought). Economic development represents a unique opportunity to do. Many of the public projects of city, for the same economic reasons that regulate the marketplace, have become secondary to the present real estate development in the private realm. Although the potential does exist, neither Santiago nor Valparaiso have a project for ambitious public spaces.

What has Chile to offer in terms of urban culture? In Chile’s recent history, we have unfortunately not been consistent with the ideal of the city, an ambitious philosophical project. The cities in question, located in the center of the country have suffered an incoherent evolution. Santiago has its pollution and overpopulation; Valparaiso has its poverty and decay. The markets and public policy in Chile have added very little to a dialogue about what an ideal Chilean city would be. The market has been cruel to the actors participating in the proposals for the city and the logic of the business place has sometimes over ridden common sense. From this perspective, the Bicentennial presented us with a
greater challenge to not only construct a city that shelters us and interprets us as Chileans, but fulfills us, satisfies our desires as citizens. As Nan Ellin suggests: “the goal of intervention, then, it is not to resolve conflict or to produce clearly intelligible landscapes but to generate places of intensity with the lovely tensions they embody.”422 The moment has arrived to rethink the city centers we have. Santiago grows and overgrows, while Valparaíso is on pause or even worse, decays.

Although the reality is never this black and white, this is the paradox that exists in the Chilean Bicentennial (great opportunities without relevant and ambitious projects): the over development of the capital city and the neglect of a port city, which in its glory was the most important port in the Southern Pacific. As already stressed, the Bicentennial gives young architects a unique opportunity to develop projects that pay attention to our heritage with a goal of propelling it forward into the future, an opportunity to discuss perceptions of urban culture and what we want of it, but most of all, how to move in the direction of urban consolidation (maintain and develop heritage through practices related to material forms), since these projects and these moments—Centennial, Bicentennial, and so on—are opportunities to accelerate the process to that end. To ponder the future of a city is to consider the future of a society. Thus, thinking and further developing our capital center, which is living now in a state of extreme polarity (a lot of

422 “A Vulnerable Urbanism,” 229.
investment in Santiago and concrete decay in Valparaíso), is to be an important topic for any Tercentennial goals.

This bicentennial year began with two powerful events: the earthquake of 27 February mentioned above, and a change of government in which the right wing won the highest seat for the first time in the 20 years since the dictatorship ended. These are two reasons to think and rethink how we would like to mobilize SCL2110 from now on. Without a doubt, the earthquake caused enormous destabilization in Chile because of the widespread damage to property and the loss of life it entailed. An earthquake symbolizes a breakage, but also a space. The void inside a crack in the wall opens up a new way of seeing a project. A great amount of collaborative work has been motivated, catapulted into action, by the event of the earthquake. Although it was a moment of tragic loss, with all due respect to those who suffered most, I believe that a project like SCL2110 is still pertinent. SCL2110 is about conceiving ideas for the future of Chilean cities and exploring ways to implement those ideas. After the earthquake, SCL2110 was concerned with filling in the void created by the destruction with desire and dreams that are based on solutions beyond those needed for survival. In a similar way as the event of the earthquake, the change of hands in the government presents us with a great opportunity and for new projects. From this point of view, I believe that SCL2110 can contribute to supporting and sustaining a greater project conceived at this very particular moment of two extraordinary forces in Chilean history. The
Bicentennial thus becomes a moment for clear reflection by both the newer and older generations of architects and artists.

The professional and academic worlds can both provide space for opportunities as proposed in the Supreme Decree No.176. SCL2110 is a way to remain involved in the development of our nation. It is not only about speculative operations, which for political and economic reasons most often turn out to be short term, it also entails creating ways to resolve the issue of experience and desire through these speculative operations (a good use of common sense and reason). The principal idea of this chapter is to propose a joint perspective from academia in relation to the professional and practical world in order to jointly devise and propose the spaces of the city we are living in. From the politician, to the lawyer, to the economist, to the sociologist, to the urban planner, to the engineer and the structural planner, it is necessary for all of us to integrate and to coordinate our contribution. Being the architects or designers or the artists that we are at MESS423, we become responsible parties by making all these interests converge on a project with respect and sensibility. The city is a living body that is dependent on many agents, architects being an important one of them (among other individuals). In Chile, architects have not been capable of coming forward to suggest ideal public policy in relation to the public space of the city. Our architecture is renowned for its residential production: elite housing developments

423 Studio of architects, artists, engineers and designers that work with possible and impossible projects. See more at: www.mess.cl (3 March 2011).
and the Elemental housing group are well known abroad. With the exception that Elemental has encouraged some public policies mainly geared towards social housing, there has been hardly any work done towards the development of public space. Chilean architects have a great need and a great opportunity for disciplinary integration. Our academic system has taken some steps towards applying this integration in architecture itself, but more integration has already occurred in other fields. The areas of knowledge related to urban space must take a step towards the postdisciplinary era in which the multidisciplinary can become a symbol of interrelated ventures that are capable of resolving complex issues. This attitude aims to promote disciplinary practices in relation to professional practices:

Just as the modern city separated functions in its quest for machine-like efficiency, so modern practice divided and subdivided over the last century in architecture, planning, landscape architecture, interior design, industrial design, and graphic design, each with its circumscribed responsibilities, professional organizations, journals, and academic departments. Productive collaborations among them have been all too rare and their precious talents and energy wasted over turf skirmishes is a tragedy and embarrassment, going a long way toward explaining the sorry state of our built environment as well as the crises suffered by the design professions.42

Although one often understands the need for collaboration, the fact is that many of the current projects have failed due to problems of knowledge integration, coordination, management, and consequently poor implementation. It is a problem for which we all (professionals) share responsibility and that we must all help to

424 “A Vulnerable Urbanism,” 226
correct. Rather than generate perfect objects and separate programs and functions, Ellin’s “vulnerable urbanism” aims to build relationships. The attention thus shifts from objects and centers to the border, the interstices, and the “in-between” spaces.\textsuperscript{425} This approach to architecture and landscape has a direct impact on the people that work with them, both the objects and the people have to be molded from that in-between space where all things interact and connect. Performance works in, with, and across boundaries.\textsuperscript{426} It is peripheral to all disciplines and to all situations, and appears precisely in their intersection, because performance is by definition an instance of relationships and effects. Unfortunately, the work of multidisciplinary collaboration has not been applied as much as it should be and so the present state of things should be seen as an opportunity to consistently, and from now on, develop collaborations. “In contrast to the modern attempt to eliminate boundaries and the postmodern tendency to ignore or alternatively fortify them […] by allowing diversity [of people, programs, constructions, technologies, and so on] to thrive, this approach seeks to reintegrate [or integrate anew] […] In contrast to the modern fear of change, we surrender to it.”\textsuperscript{427} Hence, in our time, we surrender to performance.

\textsuperscript{425} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{426} Jon Mckenzie writes: “performance studies scholars have constructed cultural performance as an engagement of social norms, as an ensemble of activities with the potential to uphold societal arrangements or, alternatively, to change people and societies.” See Mckenzie. \textit{Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance}, 30.
\textsuperscript{427} “A Vulnerable Urbanism,” 230.
I find that the goals I have been outlining should be of the utmost importance to young people as they are the ones that, along with newer generations, will enjoy (or not enjoy) that which is being conceived and constructed today.

3.3 SCL2110: (Im)possible Project

It is important to define the term visionary in the context of architecture. There is a long and noble tradition of visionary architecture; it is often unbuilt and sometimes might be unbuildable. It may take the form of polemical drawings, models (real or virtual) or texts about buildings or whole cities. Architects create such work for many reasons, some to “inject noise into the system” (to quote Archigram), some for political ends, some to pursue their own idiosyncratic architectural languages and some with pedagogical aims. Such architects often form cliques and coteries, finding comfort in the company of like-minded designers. Some gain control of schools of architecture, making them centres of visionary discourse at certain times. Often groups of visionary architects develop projects that can be seen as contributing to a meta-conversation.428

—Neil Spiller, Visionary Architecture

Visionary architecture “performs” in order to expand the field of architecture; it pushes the “restrictions” of expected projects to the limits of what they could be or become. Visionary architecture continues to question the essences of the discipline and provokes the practice of the architect. What the quote above suggests is that visionary architects push the borders and the barriers of disciplinary thought by means of different types of representation (most often

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drawings, models, and 3D renderings). Coincidentally, these representations when built become the *presentation* of their architectural thoughts. In other words, architectural thinking can be presented by means of a construction that represents that thought (or embodiment by a building). Architectural constructions speak to people, and therefore to society, as effectively as the drawings and models speak to specialists and intellectuals that understand architectural codes. When people come to externalize being or to impoverish their own psychology and emotions, when they try to ignore ethical and moral questions, or when they no longer trust what Hannah Arendt called the “supreme human capacity,” then it is time for a dose of utopic vision.429

Similar to what happened during the Centennial as conceived by Benjamin Vicuña Mackenna (who was not an architect, but a politician who promoted a new vision for the development of Santiago), for the celebration of the Bicentennial *SCL2110* displayed many different visions of how to reconsider public spaces that exist in Santiago and Valparaíso. The impetus to present these projects was (as explained in the introduction of this dissertation) in order to produce a debate about the current state of public space in Chile. Furthermore the goal was to instill in the debate discussions of architecture, art, and performance in relation to the cities, and to find a concrete role for performance in urban design. The project aimed to consolidate certain places that have a symbolic value recognized by all.

Chileans. These spaces could (re)present us abroad by means of our urban culture, our thinking, and our visionary proposals for the context architects and artists have in Chile. In the introduction of the catalogue designed for SCL2110, I wrote:

The project SCL2110 has six main guests with the input of another fifty local exhibitors. These six main guests are creators that have projects that range from the visual arts to performance to architecture. Each one has been invited to envision a project in order to contribute to the city. The project had to solve issues related to urban culture and the development of public space in the city. The main guests were:

Bernard Tschumi, distinguished architect and former dean of Columbia University. Tschumi established a very particular concept in contemporary architecture based on the notion of “event.” He won the Parc de La Villette in Paris under the government of Francoise Mitterand. To Bernard Tschumi, I have assigned Parque Metropolitano of Santiago, understanding that this park has an enormous potential to be the leading park of the Americas because it is almost five times larger than the Central Park in NY and only thirty percent of its capacity is being used. This park is placed literally, in the center of the city, connecting five districts (Recoleta, Independencia, Providencia, Vitacura and Huechuraba). However, it only has two access points. The park currently has only one front (towards Vitacura and Providencia); the other side (towards Recoleta, Independencia and Huechuraba) is “the back.” It is possible to visualize much more interesting and important relationships in relation to the urban grid, as well as, in the context of a new system of programs and uses for the life of the city, in relation to leisure time. This proposal should assume that the city will grow in another direction that is not only about the functionality driven by economic or technocratic development.
This project installed on Parque Metropolitano of Santiago considers 6 towers and 6 tunnels. With Parque Atmosfera Tschumi's mission is to connect the two sides of Cerro San Cristóbal and as a consequence provoke new approaches to the park (for the 5 districts that surround it). More importantly, the new structure of tunnels and towers (connected to them) are proposed to recycle the air of Santiago, on the understanding that in Santiago, Chileans suffer from major air pollution. For BTA the proposal also means positioning Chile of the twenty first century within the global landscape of developed cities. In this occasion with a city that is self-cleaned by induced storms (the towers provoke them). Parque Atmosfera suggests an environmental cleaning of artificial rains caused by air pressure controlling.
Vito Acconci is a well-known visual artist, poet and, now also, architect. Vito Acconci is interested in the encounter of people, and works with the relationship of the body in relation to his own body and other bodies. His research involves the expansion from many different mediums: from a white page moves to his body, from his body moves to video, then to performance, then installation, then to urban space, then to buildings: “architecture.” This “move” between different mediums is very interesting when analyzing issues of encounter between people “as” performance. I have asked Vito Acconci to work with Plaza Italia, the place of encounter of all Chileans. This type of space (of encounter) is very complex because it should also consider the possibility of missed encounters: Plaza Italia is also a place for dispute and differences in our society.
This text proposes to construct a multiple center at Rotonda Baquedano, Chileans use this space when they meet, when that happens Plaza Italia appears. The project is based on social differences and in the need of social spaces to gather. Plaza Italia is symbolically a territory where people feel represented, regardless of their social class. The project proposes an underground system of nests that could become popular meeting venues, and for different groups of people. That is, each site (or nest) is designed for a specific group of people. Each of them meets another in a system of walkways and bridges that organize the overall structure. The project aims to build a society of diversities, composed of different social groups, not in an individual or totalitarian way.

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Then we have Lot-Ek, Ada Tolla and Giuseppe Lignano, distinguished Italian architects that also live in NY and teach at Columbia University. They work with recycling structures in series; they use all sort of containers. I thought, what would happen if Lot-Ek designed a new transportation system for Valparaíso, which should consist in the integration of funiculars, trolley buses and subway? Valparaíso is gravely deteriorating and its main infrastructures are literally going through a process of decay. While several (private and government) investments exist, they have not been able to restore the port city of Chile, which used to be the main port of South America in the Pacific (before the Panama canal opened). As a World Heritage city, I am convinced that a well-designed transportation system could be the driver of new types of urban development that could benefit the whole city’s population. Valparaiso has a very strong and distinct component in its landscape: the funiculars. They could be a recognizable icon of its landscape: the image of Valparaiso’s funiculars and hills is probably the image (of a Chilean city) that most travels outside of Chilean territory, traveling around the world as postcards.
This project proposes a field of color over Valparaíso’s topography. Lines of different colors are the new paths for public transportation; they connect the hills with the city plan. The project provides a solution to an integrated system of transportation connecting “ascensores” with trolley buses and the Metrotrén (subway) that exist today. The system of axes considers: air parks, bike paths, shopping areas and zones of cultural activity, which do not exist in the city today (hills topography). The new landscape of color increases the amount of public spaces that Valparaíso has, which is sometimes very narrow and intricate because of its hills. The integrated proposal aims to strengthen the cultural heritage that represents the city of Valparaíso.
Diller Scofidio + Renfro was formed by distinguished New York architects who do exemplary work in architecture based on the visual arts and performance. They have a portfolio that includes among objects and sets, the design of installations and ephemeral interventions in terms of light construction, new materials, and experience. Their first interventions, in the form of installations or pavilions, interested me in terms of addressing how to celebrate our Bicentennial. This is why I have asked them to make a proposal between the Bulnes Boulevard and Plaza de la Ciudadanía, with the objective of commemorating the Bicentennial: a sort of temporal installation to celebrate the two hundred years of independence that would push us to think of who we are, what we have been, and where we could go.
Fig. 3.21 – *Public Sky*: Diller Scofidio + Renfro’s proposal for SCI2110.\textsuperscript{433}

\textsuperscript{433} This project is placed between the Axis of Paseo Bulnes and Plaza de la Ciudadanía (Citizenship’s Square). The project installs a window that gravitates over the principal ‘public space’ of Chile, just in front of La Moneda (government house). The proposal invites us (all chileans) to reflect about our country and our future. The screen that floats upon us display the changes of global climates. The proposal considers public participation using cellular phones, to adjust and adapt the images to be seen. Likewise, images of local history and contingency are projected onto the sky of Chileans.
Along with all of them we had the participation of the Chilean Alfredo Jaar, who is in the same league of the distinguished international architects/artists invited. Alfredo Jaar does important work in terms of the global context (of art). Through his documentation work, Jaar invites us to think about a proposal with a social agenda. Alfredo Jaar works towards denouncing the atrocities of some realities committed on this planet. He highlights the corrupt systems that restrain people’s freedom. Since Jaar knows what is or could be Chilean, we have asked him to work with the area between El Mercado and La Vega Central, understanding that there exists a possibility for an urban landscape that could be related to the popular culture of Chile. Alfredo Jaar, for being Chilean and for understanding the popular (of Chile), was in charge of proposing a new landscape to dream on this area.
The project linking the Mercado Central and LaVega proposes a moment of national reflection on all the Chileans with the occasion of the Bicentennial. The proposal makes us think outside of the normal debate where we have been between two poles (left or right). These two extremes represent the differences of a polar society, sometimes sick and with little tolerance. The metaphor of the bridge that Jaar proposes invites us to think about a possible “connection” that might be required among Chileans. These connections will provoke a better, more complex and consolidated society. This gesture suggests a growth of the country in terms of the new generations of Chileans, which should be more united and less divided in political, social, and cultural terms.
Finally, we have the performance art historian RoseLee Goldberg. She has an interesting trajectory in the field of curatorship and cultural enterprises. She is currently the head of Performa, a group that organizes a live art biennial in New York. Performa uses the city to bring together different performance artists from all over the world. She gained experience in the gallery of the Royal College of Arts in London and at the Kitchen in NY. I asked her to work on ideas for a curatorial program of the new cultural centers that will soon be inaugurated in our country (which are also related to the celebration of the Bicentennial), one in Santiago and the other in Valparaiso (Gabriela Mistral Center and the Ex-Cárcel accordingly).

Fig. 3.23 – HUB: RoseLee Goldberg’s space at MAC, SCL2110.435

435 The project linking the Mercado Central and LaVega proposes a moment of national reflection on all the Chileans with the occasion of the Bicentennial. The proposal makes us think outside of the normal debate where we have been between two poles (left or right). These two extremes represent the differences of a polar society, sometimes sick and with little tolerance. The metaphor of the bridge that Jaar proposes invites us to think about a possible “connection” that might be required among Chileans. These connections will provoke a better, more complex and consolidated society. This gesture suggests a growth of the country in terms of the new generations of Chileans, which should be more united and less divided in political, social, and cultural terms.
Along with these main guests, we had the important and valuable participation of a group of Chilean architects and artists that have very interesting work. Their work is at the intersection proposed of art, architecture, and performance. Among them are names that refer to practice but also to theory, among others they are: Enrique Zamudio, Pablo Rivera (Fig.3.25), Sergio Rojas, David Maulén, Viviana Bravo, Spam, Co-op, Emilio Marín, Supersudaka, Pepe Guzmán, Nicolás Sanchez, Laura y Marta and Sergio Valenzuela (Fig.3.26). They all contributed to the debate with practical work and work presentations. In addition to all of them, we also had distinguished international lecturers, scholars, and professors from New York University (Diana Taylor, José Muñoz), Columbia (Enrique Walker and Zachary Colbert), MIT (Sergio
Araya), Massey University (Dorita Hannah), Roskilde University (Olav Harslof) University of Copenhagen (Brandon Labelle), and Harvard (Michael Wang), as well as the presence of lecturers, scholars, professors and students from the academic institutions that support us: Pontificia Universidad Católica, Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María, and Universidad de Chile.\footnote{All the translations here, have been done by the author of this thesis.}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig3_25}
\caption{Toma, Pablo Rivera (2010).}
\end{figure}
Fig. 3.26 – *Local Artist and Architects*, Emilio Marin et al. (2010).

Fig. 3.27 – *Public Sky*, Diller Scofidio + Renfro (2010).
As you can see, until now, the project is big and involved great coordination, management, and negotiation for its execution. In the end, this project aspires to emphasize and demonstrate the relevance of associative work and collaboration as a way of confronting a complex project in which many individuals must participate. Thus SCL2110 becomes a type of model for the impulse to rescue the spaces of the city that we have (and that we also dream). As architects and artists, we want to be able to share and to contribute to the process of development and growth of the city by means of the sensibility that is characteristic in our practice. All of our guests have agreed to think with us in this grand gesture of generosity. The thoughts highlighted in this catalogue range from practical issues to theoretical ones. They all frame the proposed combined discussion of the fields of art, architecture and performance.

In this way, it is possible to understand that SCL2110, which started in 2006, has not been an easy project. Anecdotally (and hopefully serving as a lesson), I can say that I presented this project to FONDART two times before I got the funding (in 2009). At this point, I am convinced that these types of self-commissioned projects succeed only because of the conviction that one has for their execution. Only with this initial force (like an engine) and with a very strong dose of perseverance were the results achieved. Thus, to the extent that this is clear (perseverance), the project will be materialized, however impossible it may seem. It was always clear to me that it was absolutely necessary for this project to happen in Chile and during the Bicentennial. It was hard to push it forward, many people did not understand, or believe in it (because there is always something to say from a comfortable position). I believe nothing is impossible. Strictly and in personal terms, this project also marks the end of my thesis in performance studies. SCL2110 establishes a project of associativity in Chile that did not exist and that calls for the need to combine significant world-class figures from the professions of architecture, art, and performance, with local professionals, academics, and students. There is no doubt that there could be other types of associativity (or collaboration). I think that what SCL2110 offers here is a milieu of great interest to some practices of contemporary architecture and contemporary art that are not yet named or even consolidated in Chile. People doing this kind of work are part of an “alternative” or “peripheral” circuit. Abroad this is not the case. It has been thirty years since
experts have been working in these areas and thinking in terms of the associativity proposed (it is currently a very strange thing in Chile): how can one bring someone from abroad to talk to and share ideas with locals? How can we acclimate a guest to the local “cultural” dynamics that are different—one from a first world country to one that is en route? There is certainly a paradox here. It is obvious that the associativity between institutions is also very necessary and another big problem. How can we have associativity with these types of structures? And finally, if there is associativity between people: how can one work as an architect associated to a visual artist, a designer, an engineer, an urban planner, etc.? This project is, in all of its dimensions, a project of associativity and therefore it is very difficult to measure its results as a project because it emerges as an intercrossed concern (and won’t have a result only in one dimension). This project, throughout its development, redefines itself. And this is how a small group of people, four coexecutors and four assistants, were able to lift, shape, and move forward this very ambitious project. Questions remain unresolved. And it is likely that after this introduction and all the material that is presented here that there will still be paradoxes. However, we can say that we did it. 437

As presented in the previous chapter, utopia is an idea related to those projects that search for something else, beyond the possible (or as some might say, beyond reality). Many different forms of representation can contribute to expressing desire and give rise to ideas that might seem impossible. SCL2110 is not a utopic project, because it was completed, but it is certainly an event that promotes utopic ideas (such as, how can we think about the spaces of the year 2110?). The event promotes a possible utopia. The execution of SCL2110’s projects could happen, and are only restricted by the forces of structures belonging to other orders such as the cultural, the economical, and the political.

In 1969, debating “moderate” utopia, Superstudio called for “an architectural model for total urbanization.” Their writing consists of a manifesto that became well known by the end of last century because of their radical idea about territory. They proposed a “continuous monument” over the earth.

For those who, like ourselves, are convinced that architecture is one of the few ways to realize cosmic order on earth, to put things to order and above all to affirm humanity’s capacity for acting according to reason, it is a “moderate utopia” to imagine a near future in which all architecture will be created with a single act, from a single design capable of clarifying once and for all the motives which have induced man to build dolmens, menhirs, pyramids, and lastly to trace (ultima ratio) a white line in the desert.

Eliminating mirages and will-o’-the-wisps such as spontaneous architecture, sensitive architecture, architecture without architects, biological architecture and fantastic architecture, we move towards the “continuous monument”: a form of architecture all equally emerging from a single continuous environment: the world rendered uniform by technology, culture and all the other inevitable forms of imperialism.

Performance has a characteristic force that appears when a certain attitude exists. The performer (of architecture) has to display many “desires” and confront many “forces” that sometimes seem to be adverse. Some other times, these forces could be of great value because they represent “fuel” for the execution of a project. The realization of an artistic or an architectural project (in any form) can be understood as a performance. And if it is the case that an architect decides to do a

438 Peter Lang et al. Superstudio: Life Without Objects, 11
440 Ibid.
performance with his/her proposed thinking, then the project will have high levels of performative characteristics.

An architectural rendering or a 3D model of a possible space is intrinsically performative because it transmits ideas by means of a “gesture” or an action that has to be installed or placed (in Superstudio’s terms). That act is an act of performance but also an act of architecture, or it could even be a manifesto.

I have posited a need for “communication” when presenting an (im)possible project. I have also presented the many different dimensions that the concept of “performance” could adopt or develop inside the process of doing or thinking about architecture (and art that is related to architecture). Finally, it is time to point out that you as the reader have perceived some goals (or dreams) motivated by desires and displayed through the materialization of the SCL2110 show and the thesis as laid out here.

3.4 To Display

How should a project be described? How should it be displayed?

Conventional forms of representation are associated with drawings, 3D renderings, models, video animations, photo-collages, descriptive texts, and so on. The question of representation is a fundamental question for every architect that needs to communicate something about his or her project to a client (or audience). This point is also relevant for some artists today because, most of the time, artistic
projects that are not conventional, such as a site-specific installation, lighting environment, or even performance, need to be explained and presented to curators and funders before the works are executed.441 Before discussing issues of display and how to display a project (in relation to what happened with SCL2110), it is relevant to revise some ideas in relation to the exhibition space itself, understanding that the place where a presentation occurs influences the communication of a project proposal.

In examining issues of exhibition space, it is interesting to revisit what has happened in galleries and museums at the end of the twentieth century. Certainly there is no neutrality in the gallery or museum space. There is no such thing as the “empty space” discussed by Peter Brook.442 Although his comments referred to the theatrical “black box,” his point is in relation to the construction of another space over an existing one: the stage. This is the space suggested by the theatrical event that takes place by the arrangement of different elements in the space of the black box: the actors, the props, the lights, the sound, the backdrop of the stage and even the audience—in sum all that is required to establish “the space” of theatrical

441 For the purposes of this dissertation, the artist is also someone that presents artistic works by means of codes (texts, symbols, icons) and other representations, “art:” drawings, paintings, engravings and installations all mixed. See the work of Chilean artist/architect Juan Downey in the catalogue of the exhibition done by Telefonica Foundation to commemorate the Bicentennial. Downey, Juan. 2010. El Ojo Pensante. Santiago: Fundación Telefónica.
442 In discussing issues of theatre, Peter Brook argues about the empty space is the space where anything could happen. It is the perfect space for heterotopias in Foucault’s sense. Theatre as an “empty” cage can work with this notion to create the illusion of something real that is absolutely disconnected from reality, in this sense the heterotopias offered by Foucault and discussed before could be placed on the stage.
perception ruled by a script. It is in Brook’s sense of theatrical possibilities that the “stage” is empty before the construction of experience. In other words, Brook’s ideas complete the space with the pieces of theatre on stage.

In talking about exhibition spaces like the gallery, Brian O’Doherty stated that by the late ’70s there was a direct relationship between the content and the context of the gallery space. Furthermore, such spaces of exhibition signified something more than mere art to the audiences that experienced them because they were charged with sociological, economical, and aesthetical values that corresponded with the particular time-place situation of the exhibition. When experiencing “art” or “architecture,” there are external forces (cultural conventions and local beliefs) that shape the experience. The spaces of galleries and museums became core spaces for the presentation of architectural thinking at the end of the twentieth century.

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443 See Brook, Peter. 1968. *The Empty Space*. For Brook there are four types of theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, and Immediate. The stage only works under these situations. The theatrical context of his statement is just the opposite of what the exhibition space in a gallery or a museum means, especially after modernism.  
444 Brian O’Doherty published *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (1999) after publishing a series of articles in *Artforum* (since 1976). O’Doherty raised questions in relation to the economical, sociological, and aesthetical factors that rule the “contested” space of the gallery. In doing so, he also presented questions for artists about the way they construct their work in relation to the gallery space and the institutional system of the art world in which they are embedded.  
445 The contemporary culture of architects has used the traditional spaces for exhibition, such as museums or galleries, to present their thoughts and ideas. The exhibition space had a new value after the conceptualists came onto the scene. “Ideas” were presented for the debate of artists and intellectuals in a space declared for just such an activity: the exhibition space that was named for it. In the ’60s, older buildings were recuperated and transformed into big “alternative” exhibition spaces—the most common being the
In his book *Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of the Gallery Space*, O’Doherty states that the white set mounted for an exhibition space is intended to present art as “detached” from reality. With his polemic chapters, he argues that the empty and white gallery space is produced only for the “presentation” of a commercial object that has a certain value for cultural “enterprise” (business). He explains that this space is designed to eliminate any awareness of the outside world. O’Doherty writes:

A gallery is constructed along laws as rigorous as those for building a medieval church. The outside world must not come in, so the windows are usually sealed off. Walls are painted white. The ceiling becomes the source of light. The wooden floor is polished so that you click along clinically, or carpeted so that you pad soundlessly, resting the feet while the eyes have at the wall. The art is free, as the saying used to go, “to take on its own life.” The discreet desk may be the only piece of furniture […] Art exists on a kind of eternal display, and though there is lots of “periods” [late modern], there is no time.446

But the characteristics of the space are not all that O’Doherty is discussing. He also posits ideas about space and visitors. He asks himself, who is the spectator (also called the viewer, the observer, the perceiver, or the participant)? He continues:

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“The viewer feels…”; “the observer notices…”; “the spectator moves…” He is sensitive to effects: “the effects on the spectator is…” He smells out ambiguities like a bloodhound: “caught by these ambiguities, the spectator…” He not only stands and sits on command; he lies down and even crawls as modernism presses on him its final indignities.447

The city provided materials, models of process, and a primitive aesthetic of juxtaposition—congruity forced by mixed needs and intentions. The city is the indispensable context of collage and of the gallery space. Modern art needs the sound of traffic outside to authenticate it.448

In the last two decades of the twentieth century, the script of museum presentation became hybrid and pluriform.449 The visitor became part of a broader form of presentation that included installation, lighting, sound, new media, website interaction and so on. What is promoted in a space with these characteristics is no longer a linear script (the conventional form of an exhibition discourse) but new ways to reach an audience, its “experience” and ultimately its attention (and by the end of the twentieth century, many times with a commercial agenda behind it). This might be the explanation of why too much of what is presented in galleries or a museum now has a form that is recognizable and accepted as an immaculate piece of decoration for an economical transaction. There is, of course, another type of art that uses the exhibition space of the gallery or museum but that it is not primarily intended for commercialization. The reason to place this type of work in a “conventional” space of exhibition (gallery or museum) is to debate in a

447 Ibid.
448 Ibid., 44.
coherent “context,” the goals or ambitions of the disciplinary practice. Artists and architects can use gallery spaces to engage one another, through mediums of representation, the implications of certain projects. To use an exhibition space (white and “detached”) to debate the practices and ambitions behind certain projects of art or architecture is also to demonstrate a claim on the space of audience attention, which in the case of SCL2110 happens to be other artists or architects.

In discussing the role and the characteristics of twentieth-century museums, Julia Noordergraaf states:

The late twentieth century museums do share one characteristic: they use some type of spectacle to attract attention to themselves and to their offerings. The explanation of this development lies in the emergence of an experience-oriented economy.\(^{450}\)

Noordergraaf argues that contemporary museums face increased competition from other venues offering visual entertainment, in particular theme parks, shops, and department stores. The development of the contemporary museum has made it increasingly difficult to determine where the museum ends and the gift shop begins. Besides spectacular display techniques, museums (and stores) have learned to mass-customize their offerings. Noordergraaf continues:

The comparison of the late twentieth-century scripts of museum presentation and commercial presentation showed that they employ the same strategies to offer their “guests” a long, attractive and “experiential” stay.\(^{451}\)

\(^{450}\) Ibid., 242.
\(^{451}\) Ibid.
With this approach to the merchandise, I suggest that the presence of ideas within the “cultural” context of a show represent the literal installation of ideas within a context of colleagues and authorities. This display context (to show something) also suggests the construction of desire. When presenting ideas inside of an exhibition space, the presentation itself transforms into an object of speculation and desire for its audience. If the show displays strong ideas and inspires others, it perhaps becomes more visible within the circuit intended for that debate. A show of polemical ideas can sometimes irritate thinkers and practitioners: this is what happened with *SCL2110*.452

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452 Here I recall a moment in *SCL2110* when RoseLee Goldberg was presenting at Centro Cultural Palacio de La Moneda and a known local artist, Mario Soro, shouted from the audience. Other similar situations happened with the presence of Vito Acconci and Alfredo Jaar.
In chapter two of his book *Exhibition Design*, David Dernie explores different projects about exhibition design related to performative space. He argues that this type of exhibition is connected to matters discussed in recent trends within the philosophy of language.453 This category of design is also connected to what was presented in the first chapter about communication and actions, as well as the consideration of certain ideas involving the body, perception, space and time concerns, as were explored in the second chapter. Performative space is an opportunity to explore exhibition design that considers the display of ideas in

terms of interactivity and, in a more broad sense, that also includes participation and does not ignore context. As Dernie explains,

> Performativity is one of the most significant developments in contemporary exhibition design since it reaches beyond the semiotics of exhibition display and develops the notion of experience design in the recognition that the body plays a fundamental role in communication and learning.\(^\text{454}\)

For the exhibition design of *SCL2110*, we considered bodies and their (free) movements throughout the exhibition space. This was a fundamental consideration for the exchange of experiences between spectators and for the way in which the content of the show was received. We let individuals “perform” different associations with the exhibition space, the content itself, and the participation of other spectators. The exhibition considered high levels of participation through different forms of interaction. The content had to be explored. The exhibition in itself became an artificial body of content that interacted with the bodies visiting the show as they performed different actions. The exhibition experience became an encounter with the moving bodies and the space of the event itself. Equipped with different technologies, this space was designed to interact with the visitor (here, thought of as the client).

Conceived as an exhibition designed under different parameters of performance, *SCL2110* focused on the experience of an active audience rather than treating spectators as passive contemplators. We wanted to manifest dynamic

\(^{454}\) Ibid.
content that was not fixed or determined; in order to do so we needed to find new ways to approach the notion of display. The performative exhibition incorporated different levels of technology, such as immersive displays and digital environments that presented the content of each project, to structure but not constrict the participant’s experience. The show was only about “possible” projects that were presented as art or architecture. The display construction was aimed to reach an active user (Fig. 3.29). As noted by Dernie, physical interaction was key because it helped the visitor to learn the content of the show while he or she interacted with movements and sound.

Fig. 3.29 – SCL2110: DS+R’s diorama installation (2010).
The built environment of SCL2110 required a complex visual system in order to allow the spectator to navigate through the many proposals. The display presented a full “atmospheric” comprehension of the projects that were planned for the public spaces of the future. The challenge was to find a way to present the projects within the same space, embedded in the same places of the city, but in the future. This required the development of high levels of interaction and navigation. Consequently, we developed special software that constructed the interactivity and the atmospheres of the spaces required, in order to “communicate” the planned
spaces. What SCL2110 implemented in Chile for the first time was a participatory exhibition environment in an effort to learn about conceived architectural projects that could exist in the public spaces that Chileans recognize as theirs, and in with which they identify.

![Fig. 3.31 - Lot-ek's diorama installation in the opening night (2010)](image)

The exhibition presented an imagined future for Santiago and Valparaíso by having the user (a common citizen visiting the show) interacting with it. The spectator of the future was in real time in the gallery space, but at the same time
was in the future of the spaces projected on screens that rendered the virtual space of the future. The visitors of the museum were now the visitors of future public spaces in Santiago and Valparaíso.

Because the body uses the mechanics of space, we required the incorporation of an interface that connected the body and space in real time with the time-space of the proposed future architecture. This interface was in some cases a special dolly (like the ones used in film productions) that allowed the visitors to navigate the space of the future for them(selves). This technology was developed with electronic engineers. The spectator controlled camera devices to navigate through the space as they desired. This navigation also incorporated sound to produce a complete immersive environment. The exhibition was then a significant contribution of creative collaborations between architects, artists, designers, and engineers, who developed sophisticated mechanisms to present the projects in a more “user-friendly” fashion. In the context of the exhibition space, normally a spectator not trained in interpreting the codes of architecture or art does not understand what is in front of them. The installation built for this show, however, had the concrete goal of engaging the spectators through performance. Participants had to interact with complex technology and other spectators (as well as participants of the show) in order to gain information about the different

\[\text{455} \text{ The engineers that collaborated were from } \text{Universidad Técnica Federico Santa María} \text{ from Valparaíso. We also had the contribution of a specialized group congregated for the development of technological innovation: GLED.}\]
proposals. *SCL2110* was not interested in a being another passive show or in conventional display—this was all about the “possible” future.

To summarize what was mentioned earlier in terms of exhibition spaces, content, and context, *SCL2110* wanted to advocate and inspire thoughts and ideas about the intersections of art, architecture, and performance. The exhibition was mounted in the Museum of Contemporary Art with the understanding that the museum space was the most important site for this level of debate within the art (and architecture) world in Chile. The *SCL2110* team installed a spirit of collaborative work among architects and artists that had not before existed in Chile, while also inspiring active participation in the deliberation regarding the design of Chile’s current cities and its culture. The presented projects for the future of Santiago and Valparaíso at the Museum of Contemporary Art (which is housed in the *Universidad de Chile*, the public university of the country) clearly demonstrated *SCL2110*’s desire. By making central and visible what was considered alternative (and perhaps invisible), *SCL2110* achieved a lot of attention from different sectors of the local “culture.”

Certainly the exhibition had to go

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456 In terms of “performance,” the show was displayed in many different local newspapers such as *El Mercurio, La Tercera, La Hora, La Segunda* or local magazines such as *Paula, Que pasa, Terra, Alzaprima* (of Universidad de Concepción), *RCH* (of the National Cultural Council of Culture and Art), *CA* (of the Council of Architects), *AOA* (of the Architects Association Offices) and so on. Beyond articles, the project was also discussed on radio programs such as *Divertimento* and *Terapia Chilensis* as well as in the radio of *Universidad de Chile* and *Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile*. Beyond all of this, it was also displayed on a TV program in ARTV (3 special programs were devoted to the project).
beyond the elitist space of the museum. The aim to present *SCL2110* in a more “user-friendly” manner (by means of interactive technologies) grew from the desire for a larger audience than the experts and intellectuals that frequent the exhibition space. *SCL2110* had to perform to gain an audience beyond the walls of the Museum of Contemporary Art. After all, the project was for the public spaces of the city and for the standard individuals that live within them. *SCL2110* went beyond to other mediums of public communication, such as the media, in its many different forms. It is clear that contemporary exhibition spaces, and their exhibitions, now have to solve the issue of visitors as consumers. Additionally, another characteristic of the contemporary visitor, which is much more important to consider in the design, is their behavior related to the “product” that he or she will “experience.” New methodologies of design incorporate this notion as the “solution” for the visitor/client that will ultimately consume/buy the project. In the case of *SCL2110*, the client was the common citizen using the city. In order to have that product (the public spaces of the city), the client has to demand it in front of local authorities, which are the ones that could, in the end, implement the proposals presented in the exhibition space. This is how the space of art becomes the space of desire. The Museum of Contemporary Art is now a space, a home for the desired city architecture and the desired culture citizens imagine for their society.
Writing about the implication of the museum space and its visitors,

Noordergaaf asserts:

One could say that there is a limit to activating participation by the visitor in the museum’s activities; the museum still has a role as mediator between objects and visitors. In spite of the fact that museums take greater care to meet the demands of the public, they still have to help visitors to formulate their objectives. It also means that museums, in both their physical and virtual manifestations, still have an important role to play in the presentation and experience of our cultural heritage in the twenty-first century.\(^457\)

The hybrid, postmodern museum script thus offers visitors a great variety of choices in exhibition, food, merchandise and information offered simultaneously and accessed at will. Within the opening hours of the museum, the visitors can thus shape their visit according to their own preferences. It can be argued that the hybrid museum functions a bit like the internet, where visitors can make connections between various activities or types of information in a random, personal order. The difference is that surfing the net is largely a virtual experience, whereas in the museum-as-experience the visitor’s physical presence is required to make the experience work. Nevertheless, the confrontation with the internet and other digital media has influenced the way we perceive reality, just as the diorama and panorama changed our view of the world at the turn of the twentieth century.\(^458\)

The notion of a “contemporary” display suggests that the content of a show is decoded in a different way than it once was. The encounter is no longer a linear, scripted experience driven by eyes and ears, but a space that incorporates issues of

\(^{458}\) Ibid., 242.
movement on (a virtual) plane. SCL2110 developed many different dioramas
(Fig.3.32)\textsuperscript{459} to display the proposals for the future.\textsuperscript{460}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{diroamas.png}
\caption{Dioramas: as a 3d model and as a 3d virtual model.}
\end{figure}

During the nineteenth century, panoramas were a popular medium for artistic
methods of representation.\textsuperscript{461} These constructions could remind spectators about a
past event, a certain landscape, or evoke them to dream by simply using them as

\textsuperscript{459} A diorama is a representation of a scene in a three-dimensional full size or scaled
model. These are most commonly used in museums of history to evoke ‘vividly’ a certain
historic event that happened by highlighting a particular environment (Fig. 3.32–
Diorama).

\textsuperscript{460} For further information about the display see the Catalogue \textit{SCL2110 arte \&
arquitectura \& performance} (2010) or visit the interactive website of the event:
www.scl2110.cl

\textsuperscript{461} “[T]he panorama is […] a real mass medium for the 19th century […] the man of the
19th century needed, more than ever, to be persuaded by an image that could impact him
with all its reality and likeliness […] That was the role of panoramas that started at the
decline of the 18th century, developed during the 19th century and anticipated the movie
theaters of the 20th. The large-scale format in addition to the 360 degree vision, are
distinctive of these kinds of pieces” (Hidalgo 2006:12–13).
entertainment. Panoramas were meant to be all-absorbing images due to their 360-degree views and large-scale layout, which was intended to recreate the way landscape was perceived. In the end, panoramas were presentations of an image for contemplation. It can be argued that behind Vicuña Mackenna’s project for the city of Santiago laid the idea of constructing an articulated system of places from where to contemplate the visual “order” that he wanted to install in Santiago’s landscape. This is a consequence of the “romantic” view promoted by some European cities, such as Paris or London, which were models for urban planning at the end of nineteenth century.

The dioramas of SCL2110 refer to our present in a more dynamic and inclusive way (because they refer to the participation of an audience) than a contemplative panorama of the city. In the case of the exhibit, the idea was to construct the landscape of the cityscape within the presence of the people that inhabit it. The dioramas were a response to a moment of presentation when public projects are—and should be—oriented towards the consumption of experiences, in a varied palette of situations. Rather than the traditional blueprints and models intended for architect’s eyes only, the dioramas contained a special performative device that shared the project in an accessible manner. The project was a living object within the life of the city. The art or architecture that SCL2110 promoted was more oriented to spaces of participation that we do not have, despite being a more common of contemporary urban culture.
This is the worst of times to downgrade our expectations for public life. From concerts in Central Park to protests on the Mall, to politics and performance in the streets and squares of six continents, public space is working. Public space allows for shared experiences that can give rise to the mutual respect—however grudgingly—that is the basis of a thriving metropolitan culture. It may or may not be the best times for public space, but it is a compelling era. Toxic industrial sites are reclaimed, utopian new districts are laid out, manmade islands appear in the river, plazas are put in the sky, and memory, of the good and the unspeakably bad, tries to design its way into the hearts and minds of future citizens. In looking at all this change, it is imperative to try to grasp what is and isn’t working, and how “24/7,” “innovation,” “adaptive reuse,” “process,” “urban landscape,” and “public” are more than catchwords, but integral to unprecedented opportunities.462

In SCL2110, this notion of “public” and “shared” space has been reinterpreted with first-rate technology in search of a unique project presentation method that can create an atmospheric situation that will really engage the “user” of the city’s public spaces while they visit the show. Because the show had to “perform” on many different levels, we studied various options to determine how best to construct the ambience of the spaces projected. We decided to use the chroma-key effect, a technology that is most of the time used in photography, television, and cinema. The chroma-key requires a set (Fig. 3.33) in a more

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theatrical way that incorporates a backdrop, certain props (the dolly, some cameras, and screens), lighting, and sound effects.

![Images of a theatrical setting with a backdrop, cameras, and screens.](image)

**Fig. 3.33** - Chroma-key effect used to develop 3d virtual Dioramas for SCL2110.

*SCL2110* built a system of (re)presentation “in real time” by using this technique. It created a three-layer hub that helped to “materialize” the space of the project by juxtaposing the images and sound, and thus structured the perception of the spectator. This “collage” resulted in a three-dimensional situation where there was a landscape layer (an image of the place that was assigned to each proposal), then a chroma-key layer where visitors could move and walk by, and then a project layer, where the actual proposal of art or architecture was displayed (Fig.3.34). These layers were simultaneously overlapped on the screen, which was placed on a dolly, and so, while some people were watching the space and walking through
the layers of the backdrop (the chroma-key), others could be looking at the overlapped image presented on the screen that contained the imagined future. The screen moved through the space, via the dolly, while presenting the 2110 project (this illusion is generated by the collage, the montages of video, 3D renderings, and sound).

**Fig. 3.34** – Layers developed for each diorama: 1. Landscape, 2. Visitors/Audience, 3. User/Viewer of the project (2010).
These images of the future are then presented by people of the present walking in the room of the museum and in real time. Now, the people visiting the show are no longer mere spectators since the screen can be moved through the virtual project embedded on the landscape of the actual site (public space). The
spectator, who now is a participant, can select and decide which parts of the project to navigate; the dolly moves on a rail through the space (Fig. 3.36).

![Fig. 3.36 – Navigation mechanism developed for SCL2110 projects (2010).](image)

With the navigatom mechanism implemented for SCL2110 the user can choose which frames of the future he or she would like to observe, as well as appreciate how the landscape is modified by the other participants in the room (which are also participants of the future proposal). The dioramas created for SCL2110 were extraordinary mechanisms performing the future for all to see. The whole problem of simultaneous representation and presentation of architecture is now solved by means of artistic and participatory forms. To talk about
representation through performance, as our model of diorama does, could be a
great contribution of performance for the architectural world. Performance helps to
communicate the proposed project and to stimulate presence and consciousness
while we experience space. The architect can shape that experience by using
artificial constructions that induce participation. In this sense, architecture depends
and relies on performance and the performance of space. What stimulates me as an
architect, and an academic within the field of Performance Studies, is that there are
so many possibilities of working with the term (and practices of) performance
when thinking and projecting space. Performance can be understood by the
material actions realized in space. These actions can be of people living and
experiencing space, while it can also be of objects or the characteristics that shape
the actual space. Performance is an amalgam of behaviors in both directions: space
> individual and space < individual.

Here is where a new possibility of creating a project that is not ruled by the
conventions of traditional architectural methodologies arises. Performance, in the
broad sense, can contribute in different forms to the actual configuration of live
spaces. Cultural institutions in Chile have not yet considered (or perhaps
understood) the real potential behind performance (beyond the world of theatre
and the visual arts) for methods of presentation and production. (Im)possible
projects such as SCL2110 have a triple challenge. The first one is related to the
consciousness that should exist around it: the project has to be communicated
because it is “different” and perhaps new. The second challenge is related to the satisfaction of certain desires: in this case to design a new type of public space. The third challenge is to solve the conventional constraints behind the project: constraints regulated by the museum context (as suggested by O’Doherty—economics, social context, and aesthetics). For anyone that is used to executing projects, this argumentation will not sound different from what normally happens when someone does or has to do. The radical difference is that now, the same three things have to be combined and solved for the purposes of a fourth one: the effect after the participant leaves the space, which will regulate memory and therefore the continuing existence of the project. The desire (understood as the ambition to have something or to be someone) and the constraints (restrictions to the execution) have to point to the principal actor of this equation (the audience).

3.4 Parts of the Display

*SCL2110* was a “multimedia” event that was structured by the construction of five main experiences: an exhibition, a seminar, a catalog, a website, and a survey. Only with the mixing of all five components did the project gain the full performative scope required to transfer the ideas behind it. *SCL2110* values the performative aspect of an exhibition (and all that comes with it!) because it could be of great interest for the audience to understand what the project is, or wants to be, in real terms once outside of the exhibition space where it is displayed.
*SCL2110* worked with the theatricality implicit in many cultural forms and through them it considered various scenarios. The richness of a static image, in terms of what a city is or could be, cannot be compared to one of action. The moving images of the city that we normally experience in our different activities can have an effect much more powerful than that of the museum exhibition. In the end, *SCL2110* was proposed with real concrete life and within the public spaces of the city. The thesis then emphasizes that the project should be experienced through or by means of other cultural forms. Mark Dorrian writes about theatricality and landscapes:

One of the fascinations of the landscape/theatricality juxtaposition is its potential to complicate and problematize the more familiar and straightforward models of the relationship between visuality and landscape…

… But equally intriguing is the power of theatre as a disconcerting representational domain poised between fiction and reality, a power heightened in theatrical installations occupying or creating ambiguously “real” landscape conditions.\(^{463}\)

With these words, Dorrian suggests that the theatrical construction (of landscape) of the quotidian could be of great value in creating a perception of ones surroundings. Thus *SCL2110* cannot be seen as a single object (or single exhibition), or be treated as one. The proposal carried out multiple “events” within the event of the exhibition—most of these events where also mounted in a theatrical form. Accordingly, a show of this kind was not a mere display of

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\(^{463}\) Mark Dorrian, *Deterritorialisations… Revisionning Landscapes and Architecture* (2003), 188.
proposals in the way drawings, paintings, sculptures, videos, installations, and performances are traditionally presented in an exhibition space and therefore its discussion can not be limited to the conventional spectator-artist relationship. Understanding the city through concepts such as experience and events we can understand landscape through a theatrical point of view. A public project, if it wants to be grasped by its future users, cannot be conveyed in terms of specific and technical jargon and representation. The proposals of SCL2110 were produced by people and for people, the interventions were inspired by the physical site and its cultural context as well as social, historical, and virtual concerns. Accordingly, they may not be discussed by representations (nor through technical forms of plan and sections). As I have suggested earlier, architecture, as an urban matter, has to evolve and it should not be considered a static concept that could be presented by other static forms. Architecture is not a static shell that contains activities; it is an experience and cannot be fluently expressed through fixed representations. Performance then appears to give traditional or conventional representations a hand.

As already mentioned, the exhibition was expanded to include a conference about urban culture. These reflections were intended to provoke new visions and types of thinking in relation to urban design. The conference included relevant names from the academic world, but also from the political milieu. It occurred in conjunction with the exhibition, simultaneously coordinated between the Museum
of Contemporary Art and the Cultural Center of Palacio La Moneda. The debate transpired in the auditorium of the latter institution, the epicenter of the politics in Chile. The interest in this particular location stands in relation to the governmental area and La Moneda (the government palace in Santiago). This part of the multifaceted event was planned to ensure the participation of the artists, architects, academics, and politicians invited to the event. We also had the chance to constitute round tables and provocation panels with external advisers for SCL2110. Local and international experts discussed different matters with local “authorities” in order to generate a wide range of opinions, coherent to the voices that have power in and influence in regards to the construction of the present city (Fig. 3.37).

Fig. 3.37 – Seminario DS+R, Centro Cultural Palacio de la Moneda (2010)\textsuperscript{464}

\textsuperscript{464} In the session of 29 October 2010, panelists invited to discuss DS+R proposal in the Eje Bulnes in front of La Plaza de la Ciudadania of Santiago were: Diana Taylor, Manuel Corrada, Milena Grass and Humberto Eliash.
In addition, the catalog described the theoretical and conceptual framework for the event, as well as contained full documentation of the projects proposed. It also includes a series of interviews conducted during my investigation (the process of writing this dissertation) and articles developed for external advisors. This compilation is meant to generate (over time) a tangible legacy, a useful resource for consultation and reference for future generations of Chileans interested in its cities and its culture.

The website was a vital performing element for the project. The website reached many different people and was the initial platform to communicate the event to a broader audience. It contained all there is to know about the event and also incorporated dynamic systems of data updating that were crucial when the exhibition and seminar were taking place. The website served as a communication platform for the participants of the event for the duration (the show ran for two months). Once SCL2110, in its third version, concluded, we started to transform the website to present a new platform for future events of similar scope in Chile (this is what we now call the 4.0 version). A survey was conducted through the website and through advertisement signs in the subway to invite people to participate and comment about the projects proposed (although we had participation the reception was not as much perhaps the answering system required to use individual cellular phones).
As discussed in this dissertation, citizens’ participation played a fundamental role in the debate of the Tercentennial city in particular (and of any public project happening now, in general terms). For this purpose, the project developed an online and mobile phone voting system. This last component, essential to the successful performance of the event, was tested in previous versions of \textit{SCL2110} (1.0 and 2.0). This survey documented the public’s opinion about the proposals displayed in the exhibition, multiplying exponentially the implications and the repercussions of this Bicentennial event.

\textbf{Fig. 3.38} – SCL2110 previous versions: 1.0 (2006) and 2.0 (2008)
In conclusion of this chapter, I recall Neil Leach’s thoughts about fascism and architecture in response to Foucault’s notions of space and power:

“I think that it can never be inherent to the structure of things to guarantee the exercise of freedom. The guarantee of freedom is freedom”. [...] All that architectural form can hope to achieve is to hinder or prevent a certain politics of use. Architectural form in itself cannot be liberating, although it can produce “positive effects” when the “liberating intentions of the architect” coincide with “the real practice of people in the exercise of their freedom.”

SCL2110 as an event, as a debate, and as an (im)possible project cannot guarantee the exercise of freedom, but it can use it and promote it (it certainly performed it). SCL2110 provided a platform where people could exercise their freedom of speech, of desire, and of vision—if they wanted to (Fig.3.39).

Fig. 3.39 – And you how do you imagine Santiago in 2110? (2008).

CONCLUSION

The Construction of Display

Architecture is the simplest means of articulating time and space, of modulating reality, of engendering dreams. It is a matter not only of plastic articulation and modulation expressing an ephemeral beauty but, of a modulation producing influences in accordance with the eternal spectrum of human desires and the progress in realizing them. The architecture of tomorrow will be a means of modifying present conceptions of time and space. It will be a means of knowledge and a means of action. The architectural complex will be modifiable. Its aspect will change totally or partially in accordance with the will of its inhabitants...

—Gilles Ivain, Formulary for a New Urbanism

We will build a global mind.

—Bruce Mau and Jennifer Leonard, Massive Change

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I am starting this conclusion again. After my last email conversation with Professor André Lepecki regarding the original text and this conclusion, I decided it required an adjustment. We exchanged some thoughts about the conclusion in general, but also in relation to a specific point instigated by the Bruce Mau quote cited above. Here is the exchange:

On Thu, Mar 31, 2011 at 1:33 PM, Andre Lepecki wrote:

I am intrigued by the question of consciousness, and the bombastic (as always) statement by Mau on the “global mind” [...] (!! aya ay!). I understand what you are saying, but politically I do not align myself with this project of the global, of forming the global mind, always so associated to neoliberal capitalism and its “designed” formations of desire and its objects (thus the need to misbehave to find a “local/loca-miente” to go against the force of the globalized mind).
all the best, almost there,
a.

On Thu, Mar 31, 2011 at 1:59 PM, Rodrigo Tisi wrote:

I see your point André! and believe me, I am aligned with you (no capitalist mind, this view is beyond that). I want to clarify what I mean. I have an answer for what you said: Why do you relate capitalism to a truly global mind? Why can’t it be just because of human evolution (interior force, energy, “awareness” or love that align all together?). As you do, I also resist capitalism...of course, no question! I think that the point is not to understand the “global mind” in terms of markets but in terms of energies. Imagine that all the markets are equal and because they are equal they do not need to exist anymore. Now, the platform is the same for everyone, but yet, everyone is different, true democracy, no problems, no restrictions. It is truly the one self self with others selfs selfs. This or that, me or you, it is ok, we are different but we have a similar conscious...a similar “value” with us, we are all the same, but different (basic of DNA stuff). All the people is
connected but not because of productivity (not anymore in terms of capitalism) but because of human evolution, the productivity of them looks for a -bienestar- universal (no injustice).

abrazo,

On Fri, Apr 1, 2011 at 9:06 AM, Andre Lepecki wrote:

hi rodrigo–you got the answer!
And this is where we differ. I am becoming old and grumpy and totally AGAINST the global, and very suspicious of “consciousness.” I want the local and the non-conscious. I want singularities and a-personal events. I want immanent unfoldings and not designed minds. etc. It is a matter of disagreement and positions. Your answer is totally a good one in that regard!
getting there, getting there...
abrazo
a.

On Fri, Apr 1, 2011, at 1:16 PM, Rodrigo Tisi wrote:

This is a great input André. I see your concern, and again, believe me I will adjust the conclusion because I do not want to be misunderstood. This dissertation is about the design of objects and places (spaces) to change the way we are thinking and doing things, I am interested in the design of objects and places (spaces) that truly do something, eventually, that will change injustices, differences, restrictions, and so on. I am interested in an object and place (space) that will contribute to transform the fucked up society we have (capitalist order), say sustainable, eco, friendly, etc. type of design thing. The object of architecture has to operate with other restrictions, it depends on/of other forces (in this case politics, ideologies, and markets). I think that performance and performance studies help me to negotiate with these concerns to think on a hybrid object, a hybrid project, it is not about 100% performance and not about 100% architecture. In other words I am
not a 100% architect and I am not a 100% performer. I am someone in between. It is a question about where and how to do think and practice from here. Does it make sense?

The epigraphs I have chosen reflect the main concern of this conclusion, indeed this dissertation. In its entirety, this dissertation is concerned with both the objects+places (spaces) of/for the future, and a project of the past: SCL2110. The present is about the past and the future, but it is also about experiences and stories that shape us and motivate us in this present. Again, for me, it is time to wonder: which future? As illustrated in the first epigraph, penned by a member of the Situationists, the future is perhaps about a unitary project/force (a project of hope) to which we all have to (or could) contribute. We need to insist and to talk even more about individual participation and the spaces for it. Consequently, this dissertation is also about “contributions,” it intends to help shape the spaces we have (or should have) now and in the future—in a very broad sense. One could say… what a big and ambitious project! How does an architect operate in a milieu like this? How does an artist operate in a milieu of (im)possible images? This is about practices that should not be restricted to the construction of “space” by

Email conversation between André Lepecki and author of this thesis, 31 March–1 April, 2011. This email conversation between the author and the advisor was about the dissertation conclusion. This is about how we perform! After the last email I called André Lepecki to have a phone conversation. The full email conversation has been edited down to show what really matters here. This is a click in the last part of the “creative” process.
means of material (and immaterial forms), and that, which at this point of the dissertation could also be read as conventional forms. The traditional architect (and/or artist) is perhaps not really effective anymore. Traditional forms and traditional institutions are not efficient (bureaucracy is everywhere and of course it is not really helpful). There has to be a shift, and soon. A reader might find my work a little bit esoteric. I do not have the means to demonstrate the opposite, but the intention is for all to have access to my argument, my hopes, and my desires for this work. From the point of view of this dissertation, the intellectual (for the sake of intellectualism) is not very helpful either. What is needed is a new type of practitioner, and new type of theory to be implemented. This “new” theory will inform “new” practices (or at least will transform or revise existing ones). Performance and Performance Studies contribute to this revision, to this direction. In order to improve our lives with the force of a more idealistic character, this dissertation has suggested that we need to explore and search a new type of urbanism, by revisiting the essential questions and concerns driving human existence (the desire for place and belong). Architects (and/or artists) have to join politicians, in order to infect the institutions and reshape the belief systems that rule, command, and organize us.\textsuperscript{469} We certainly need more participation, true and effective participation. Architects (and/or artists) need to claim the possibilities, be assertive in sharing ideas about the world we have and that we are shaping.

\textsuperscript{469} Refer to André Lepecki’s point about the object’s command in Chapter II.
Architects (and/or artists) have to participate in the “political,” “economical,” and of course the “cultural,” atmosphere that regulates society. Many of them have already done this. Architects (and/or artists) have to become critics of the environment we have and critically engage the environment we are shaping; they must demand a revision, a reshaping of space and approaches to urban design, to ensure people enjoy public places (on all levels). In the future, people should be able to adjust and manipulate spaces as they need and require.  

Lepecki is right to be concerned about the world “consciousness” suggested by Bruce Mau and Jennifer Leonard. Does a project of the future need to be about capitalism (or at least consider it)? NO, but in terms of Mau and Leonard perhaps, yes. My answer is yes and NO. Yes, because it seems that we are all embedded within capitalism, a system powered and ordered by forces and beliefs that society has constructed for multiple reasons. The forces of capital thus regulate our individual operations too. In order to work and function we have to deal with them. I think that Mau and Leonard are envisioning a future that could be improved, and about a present that has to confront society’s actual problems in order to provide solutions. Design, in their terms, has a role to play in this future. Design can help to raise consciousness about contemporary social problems. And once we are aware of those problems, we can reshape and redesign new structures in order to

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470 But the option to manipulate and adjust space as required also means the need of the disintegration of other evident barriers such as the economical and the political ones (that normally exist in spaces that belong to society).
solve those problems, to make a better place in the future. I think that Mau and Leonard see that the only place to be, to provoke change, is from within this political/economical/cultural platform (actually represented by the city and its society in the forms of neoliberalism). Jeremy Till insists that architecture depends on forces that are outside of the exclusive domain of the architect.\textsuperscript{471} To apply and extend Till’s point, I truly believe that relevant art, the art that can provoke change, also depends on forces that are outside its own domain. Now this is why performance is so relevant. Performance helps to \textit{act} with and without consciousness with these forces, in between and against them. Performance depends on the audience and on the rules of the context. The response is also NO because capitalism has distorted and has destroyed “natural” processes of evolution. But someone could say that capitalism is good, and that person might as well be correct.\textsuperscript{472} This “Unitary Urbanism” and this “conscious” proposed here (and that concerns Lepecki) is related to the possible things that architects and artists can do. My contention is that we can help to design a better society, but how we do that? For that, indeed, the postulate of this dissertation is to say that we in fact need more \textit{performance}, more sophisticated performances that will truly have an impact of some sort in order to reshape society for the better. I am also suggesting that the new type of practice should consider the conscious but also the unconscious that is not programmed and that performance also presupposes. For a

\textsuperscript{471} Refer to Jeremy Till, \textit{Architecture Depends} (2009).
\textsuperscript{472} Refer to the economical grow of Chile as presented in the previous chapter III.
controversial goal like the one proposed here, outdated and rigid structures are obsolete, of course. But still, it seems that we still need to work with them. Under circumstances such as the ones that many of us share, economical restrictions, freedom is of course restricted. How to do then? It is in here (this place, this city and this university) that capitalist forces still exist.

My project is not concerned with providing a simply fashionable solution (that could be associated to the high brow elite of art and architecture), but with applying a powerful understanding of need (of many needs), in any effort to project (the best) performance. The world is feeling the consequences, and suffering, because of bad decisions, bad politics, bad understanding, bad design, nonsensical architecture, and pointless art. This dissertation considers the design of objects and places (spaces) in an effort to change the way we are thinking and doing things. I am interested in the design of objects and places (spaces) that truly do something with us (to us), and that eventually will help to change injustices, differences, restrictions, and so on. The “spaces” imagined here will help to shape a better society. I am interested on objects and places (spaces) that will contribute to transforming the institutions and the orders ruled by capitalism. The performances highlighted here might also be “sustainable,” “eco,” and “friendly” design; design that improves the quality of life, of humans beings and that is “aware” of the current contingencies about global and local problems. Performance thought through the lens of performance studies helps us to think, act, and
negotiate these facts and concerns by also shaping moments and experiences. In doing so, performance studies encourages me to analyze hybridity through a project that is not 100% performance (art) and not 100% architecture.

Does the city itself perform? And is it just another stage for performance? The question highlights the continuous state of ‘performance’ that exists within the realm of actions and activities that represent the city. As presented here, spaces, as well as the people living within them, indeed are always performing. This observation could also be understood as the basis for an eternal provocation, for further performances and events to happen. The city, as a machine that constantly produces performance(s), is all the time giving us spaces to do things as it functions, fluxes and evolves with us. The city is built with a variety of conscious and/or unconscious performatives—forms that could also be considered for the planning of better places (spaces) in which to experience life in the future.

Many of the events that appear in everyday life, could be received as performances that take place over other ‘invisible’ performances that exist as well, all the time, but are provoked by different signs, symbols, and signifiers.473

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Because this dissertation generates theory about the architectural performativity\(^{474}\) of built spaces, from the ‘private’ to the (urban) ‘public’ space, from the individual to the collective, *Architecture as Performance: the Construction of Display* proposes a new dimension of consciousness when developing spatial forms. Ultimately, what is on display in city spaces is the existence of moments, temporal situations (scenarios) constructed to carry out life, in various forms such as leisure, work, (gender) roles, tasks, games, plays (as in theater plays), love, and so on—all of which are established and shaped by a capitalist society that rules the design and production of spatial solutions, imposing “productivity” and functionality where we live; conventional and not conventional, new and not so new. Here again we find the problem concerning certain-inevitable evolution while dealing with capitalist agendas. In other words, how to build an environment that promotes equality or at least approaches fairness? How can someone approach a project of such scope? How to do something at this level and without failure?

The sensitive approach to the practice of architecture that I propose could also be understood as a “measured” activism against the conventions that are normally conceived to ”work” (in an automatic manner) with architecture when

thinking about space, when designing place. The thesis here postulates that designed space should always be the end result of a creative process that, when transformed into an “act” (the gesture of doing space, which afterwards, consequently, provokes and houses other—human—acts; performances), explores unconventional questions of human existence according to the contingencies and the requirements of contemporary life. This approach is presented at the beginning of this dissertation through the exploration of avant-garde forms, which were most of the time propelled by performative acts, attitudes, and spatial gestures of radicalism to provoke a change of some sort. With the presentation of social and political issues, attitudes on space (by means of spatial “material” gestures) and ideas about utopia came into play as consequences of desire for spaces (both possible or impossible). This is a step in the history of architectural methodology, which moves toward a substantial output of radical new visions for social and political transformation in order to “solve” the present by looking what we have done and learnt from the past (to look with hope the future).

The previous chapters had the challenge of attracting the attention of both performance studies scholars and architects by looking to different “actions” performed (sometimes as art) within and on the spaces of and for the quotidian. The valuable thing about these radical perspectives, in the forms of thoughts (projects) and/or concrete actions (performances), is that many of them were developed to change, or at least rethink, possible new realities. This challenge
demanded a “rational” balance between thoughts coming from the field of architecture and of PS, as well the utilization of “practical” examples that would illustrate issues and concerns from both fields. This view insists on the ‘shared space’ proposed at the beginning of this dissertation, which is offered by the field of performance studies. This shared space highlights the potential produced by this combination and, in more “practical” cases, the need to combine theory and practice in order to cultivate new areas of knowledge and practice (for both architecture and performance).

To contribute to this exploration of theory and practice in relation to architecture and performance, it is then relevant to analyze the “performance” of architecture and the performances that take place in the spaces “built” by architecture (these are the real situations we inhabit everyday). Our awareness of spaces is sometimes diminished (or inexistent) because we are accustomed to them. A consistently conscious performance, through all steps of spatial design, is necessary for the expansion of architecture’s role in society. The incorporation of performance to the process of space design could enable a much more fertile result of projection by giving “practical” feedback. Performance studies gives architects a milieu in which to detect, recognize, and analyze the results of architecture (“spatial performances”) on many different levels. In doing so, performance theory suggests a meaningful and complex system of possible layers, contents, and approaches to be included when thinking and practicing architecture (as well as
other arts). This dissertation aims to promote the idea that architectural and artistic practices should revisit the live and temporal dimension that performance supposes, the sometimes invisible (or irrelevant) aspects denied within rigid and constructed forms (think, for instance, of the methods used in architecture that assume a present body that is absent during the design process). The empty space of the blank page, in Acconci’s terms, is ready to be shaped by the presence of living bodies; the space expands by means of other mediums (not just bodies). Acconci’s brilliance in performance, his most extraordinary “performance,” is to move from one medium, to the other, to the other—always considering space constraints (public and private). He consciously decided to move into design and architecture to provoke “real” encounter in between people.

The “sensitive” approach I have offered as an approach to the construction of space involves the consideration of different forces that are related to the emotions, signifiers, and desires we have. The proposition here is to promote the building of desired places by looking at ideal plans (as the utopias described before suggested). This is what SCL2110 tried to implement—a conscious notion of performance (and affects) when designing and presenting new places/spaces for society. The proposal to combine ideas borrowed from the field of performance studies and the field of architecture suggests a type of urbanism that starts with regular people who use, have access to, and participate in the space of the city and
society. This could also be read as a claim for a method that discontinues systematically producing spaces built without sense, without character, spaces that are sterile due to a standardized system of production. Of course, many of these projects are just about economical and political speculation. As we are still humans, I believe that the cityspace should still contain designated places to promote encounters among individuals, stimulating collective and democratic expressions as well as popular manifestations of all sorts (the local and the unconscious suggested by Lepecki). The performative acts of architecture presented in SCL2110 pushed us to remember that we, as architects and artists, can contribute to thinking about a collective belonging for everyone (in the city). From this angle, performance contributes to the configuration of space as it is focused on the combination of different layers of information that activate human existence, from materiality to the perception of immateriality. Performance studies has a relevant role in contributing to the analysis of both these forms and our perceptions of them. Therefore, performance “elevates,” the gesture of the (traditional) project because it gives more dimensions, more signifiers, to it. In doing so, performance theory can provide the means and motivation to reshape architectural methods to include active participation that then offers more complex ways of designing urban

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475 In this respect it is relevant to reflect on all the technological developments that have invaded the way we act and communicate with people. Technology has also offered new ways of access to information and spaces that before were the privilege of some. The exploration of technology is in itself more matter for a new step after this conclusion.

476 Inspired in Perfect Acts of Architecture (2001). Refer to the exhibit at the MOMA and the ideas on Chapter II.
culture (not only by means of the material). Performance offers the affective dimension of “participation” to the rational operation of building space. With the pairing proposed here, an interesting paradox arises and then remains on an eternal loop: architecture houses performance and performance—instantaneously—shapes the existing architecture. The questions of design that exist in all types of spaces and objects are revisited with performance to include this eternal continuum of forces, which are most of the time produced and organized to manipulate perception. As an architect that organizes the space of a house, of a building, or city, I strongly believe that many other people have to join the project of spatial production (and now it has to be beyond philosophy). Architecture organizes spaces for the perception of performance and also for the execution of performances. Performance theory values the organization of perception, which is all about the inclusion of unexpected forces/orders.

Many of the events that take place in quotidian spaces are not really considered important to conventional architectural forms and yet, as we have revised through this thesis, they are disciplined by several forces, structures, spaces, and objects, arranged in particular ways. The consideration of events is actually in constant conversation with the practice of architecture, Tschumi did contribute to that aspect.477 Now, and from a more performance studies point of

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view, we find an angle related to those urban vernaculars described by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett in her text, *Performing the City: Reflections on the Urban Vernacular*, about events in New York City:

> Performance is also central to the production of the urban vernacular, for performance produces spatial form. By performance I mean everything from hanging the laundry out to dry to hopscotch or, lion dancing during the Chinese New York holiday. Activities produce distinctive spatial forms, some of which acquire independent architectural manifestations.478

If understood from this angle, one could see that design is always actively provoking something in the user or at least helping the user to perform in same way. Surely, there are some objects designed to perform in a singular routine way, while others are out there to be reinterpreted by the user—provoking a new way of performing (something unexpected). The notion of participation is crucial to understanding such a phenomenon. “Participation” is a word that has been used consistently over the last few decades. Hans Ulrich Obrist proposes (via Yona Friedman479 and Giancarlo de Carlo480) that in the beginning of postmodernity the

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478 The urban vernacular is definitely a consequence of performance forces. It is the temporal dimension shaped by actions and objects placed in specific circumstances that are, the majority of the time, not considered in the “formal” planning of architectural order. See Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1999. “Performing the City: Reflections on the Urban Vernacular.” In *Everyday Urbanism*, eds. John Chase, Margaret Crawford, and John Kaliski, New York: Monacelli Press. 19-21.

479 Yona Friedman suggests the active “participation” of citizens in order to think about tomorrow. See Friedman, Yona. 1977. “Las utopías sociales” in *Utopias Realizables (Utopies Réalisables)*, Barcelona: Gustavo Gili. 22-34
notion of participation was very “authentic,” but then it became politically instrumentalized and often degraded. As presented by Ulrich Obrist, de Carlo suggested that the notion of participation is no longer inspired in what was the aim of it, in the emblem of the ‘60s. De Carlo states:

If you consider the era of the 60s, there were at the same time two things which were very important. One was the rebellion of the students, and the other one was a new consciousness in the trade unions. During that time, I had made two projects: one was for a housing complex in Terni, and the other one was the urban plan for the new centre of Romini, both based on the idea of participation. Then after that moment a more bureaucratic period began, when participation became something very formalistic and stupid. The problem to me had changed: the question was how to make an architecture which can intrinsically be participated, and this becomes a question of language. How can the language be such that it favours and pushes participation? I think that this question still has to be explored, in many different fields: so I believe that the crucial issue is to use language that people can understand, penetrate and eventually use. So the process in my opinion takes a lot longer to form. Participation is something that you should start—and this is something that you should not forget—it last forever.

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480 His strong political beliefs have limited his portfolio of buildings. His ideas remained untainted by postmodernist beliefs through the journal Spazio e Società Spazio - Formerly: Space and Society Quarterly, published by MIT Press between 1978 and 2000. He was also the precursor of the International Laboratory of Architecture and Urban Design (ILAUD) between 1974 and 2004. In the early 60s Giancarlo de Carlo was a member of Team 10 along with Alison and Peter Smithson, Aldo van Eyck and Jacob Bakema, among others. For more see: http://www.team10online.org/team10/carlo/index.html (2 April 2011)


482 Ibid.
For de Carlo, the idea of participation changed and the questions of participation are now related to an architecture that could intrinsically be participated with, responsive and active. In terms of what was presented before, this issue of participation is also a concern related to a question of language presented in chapter I and II. How can the language of architectural design favor and advocate participation? For de Carlo, the crucial issue is to use the codes that people can understand, and eventually utilize. This is very provocative since (architectural) design (in the broad sense) has to explore in those codes in order to communicate, but if there is nothing new to communicate then no new explorations are worth. The process of building architecture takes a lot longer than the events that takes place within it but could be shorter than the results of its spatial formation (specially if we think on permanent structures). Architecture works as a provocateur of action (fast or slow). It is a reminder to participate in the creation of multiple spaces over the structured ones distributed to organize the everyday life. This is why this thesis insists on the importance of an “expanded” architectural design method that has to be consistently envisioned in order to provoke and “communicate” in each specific time while it evolves. When a system is understood as evolving over time, what becomes important are the transformations it undergoes, and all transformations are the result of energy—or information—moving through it.  

483 See Kwinter, Sanford. 2002. “The Complex and the Singular” in Architecture of Time:
With this observation and thinking about energy and “information,” I recall Jon Mckenzie’s words during his 2006 presentation on *Performance, Design, Terror and Love* at the end of the Performance Design symposium in Rome. In the face of conflicting views and notions of performance, Mckenzie suggested questions that examined our perceptions of a much bigger space: How would one design global love? A love both private and public? Both intimate and remote? All of these point to the exploration of an active space that can contribute to this *shared* direction, this “global love.” The understanding and the manipulation of the performative dimension of spatial situations is a great contribution from the performance studies field to cultural and creative practices such as architecture (and other arts).

Is it possible that performance and performance studies moves to establish a new dimension of values and concerns when designing space? If so, performance can serve as an engine for change, and indeed, a radical change. With this assumption, one could think about improved architectural sites with greater access and the ability to represent and house different people. In short, one can envision spaces that contribute to the shaping of a more balanced, more unified, society.

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485 Here, it is interesting to think of all the relevant and multiple actions performed by many space “activist,” emblematic examples are *Cobra* (1948), *Lettrist Group* (1946), then the *Situationists* (1957) and more recently *Ant-Farm* (1968).
From this angle, architecture’s performance consistently considers different objectives (political, functional, symbolical, emotional, and so on) by thinking through issues of “needs” and “musts,” as well as “desires.” As an engine for change, human performance and artificial performance (that of built space) have the power to consequently contribute to creating a different state; one that is organized by forces centered on the fragility of multiple everyday experiences rather than the experience of “unique” moments. The “consciousness” suggested in this dissertation—in hopes that it will be inspiring for other architects (and artists) invested in producing better scenarios for urban existence—this general theory is offered to aid in the concrete but also in the performative dimension of any act realized in spatial terms, thought, built, and/or suggested by means of engaging in a certain (design) practice. Practice is a performative act that can imply a method which is habitual, customary, or routine. A professional practice, then, is the customary performance of professional activities. This approximation suggests that two lines of inquiry exist that can help to clarify the nature of architectural practice: What are architecture’s professional activities? How are they customarily performed?

Practice is the embodiment, indeed the expression, of the practitioner’s everyday knowledge. In practice, the architect does
not refer to textbooks or procedure manuals to determine how best to behave.\footnote{See Cuff, Dana. 1991. “What is Practice?” In \textit{Architecture: The Story of Practice}. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 4.}

Ultimately, this point highlights the current contingencies in a shared social space that interprets our cultural needs and desires in a participative environment. Because performance only exists in the present,\footnote{Refer to the Peggy Phelan’s “The Ontology of Performance,” quoted in chapter I.} it is an injection that provokes (a temporal) change—after the stimulation intended to produce change, performance tends to disappear. The \textit{SCL2110} projects were performing only when they were on display, after that, they “disappeared.”\footnote{During the time of the exhibition many articles appeared in different mediums, including newspaper, magazines, radio, and TV programs. The projects of \textit{SCL2110} were also present in the perception of people outside of the museum, the space where they were presented.} In mixing the practical and the theoretical, one finds many opportunities to \textit{do} things (projects, texts, shows, performances, exhibitions, buildings, and so on). Tschumi’s proposal for The Metropolitan Park of Santiago, a machine (architecture or environmental infrastructure) embedded in the hill which would clean the atmosphere and therefore increase the quality of life in Santiago, is an extraordinary provocation. Vito Acconci’s proposal for the democratic space below street level, and organized in different hubs, is also provocative to the point that the project proposes a shift in the understanding of “true” democracy and the “monuments” that are above us. RoseLee Goldberg’s ideas about the link between education and performance
artists to provoke new situations for city life infuses conversations with new
ergy, pushes for ambitious local changes.

Hybrid Objects / Hybrid Projects

If Unitary Urbanism refuses to separate theory from practice, this is not
only in order to promote constructions (or research on constructions by
means of models) along with theoretical ideas. The point of such
refusal is above all not to separate the direct, collectively experienced
playful use of the city from the aspect of urbanism that involves
construction. The real games and emotions in today’s cities are
inseparable from the projects of UU just as later the realized projects of
UU should not be isolated from games and emotions.489

—Unknown (Situationists), Unitary Urbanism at the End of the 1950s

Imagine a new society that is composed of one large universal institution
(there are no “real” differences, per se, but there are many differences because here
democracy really exists). This place has many people working (with no uniforms)
for a single and shared goal, that of felicity. The tasks are to recognize lack and to
achieve the collective will for a shared bienestar.490 In this space, people would

489 Text for a Unitary Urbanism at the end of the 1950s. This text is unsigned but was
published by the Internationale Situasioniste #3 (December 1959). See Andreotti, Libero,
and Xavier Costa, eds. 1996. Theory of the Dérive and Other Situationist Writings on the
City. Barcelona: Actar, 83.
490 Bienestar (in Spanish) stands for wellness and welfare. Yona Friedman understands
society as environment. For Friedman the shapes of the environment inform the shape of
society. The complexities derived from this homologation suggest something further. This
thinking is provocative; it makes us think about rules, laws, and norms. How much of this
could be reestablished by architects/artists and or designers? What if architects/artists not
only think about the possibilities to interfere with politics and “markets,” but also with the
learn through a process of execution that is constantly evaluated by a group of peers. People would contribute with their work towards an evolution of some humanitarian sort. This institution would be composed of orders in a “diagonal” system that organizes people doing their tasks with great generosity (for the others). This institution is similar to the result that might occur from the combination of the space given by a large, “supportive” and “intelligent” institution (university) and the space given by a truly democratic one (government)—the state would not be considered a problem anymore. The

491 Oblique Architecture is a style of architectural design, which Paul Virilio and Claude Parent pioneered in order to work with gravity and heaviness (as favorable forces). Oblique Architecture creates a situation in which every dimension and direction of space becomes a possible modification of the body. This conception of the built environment, which resonates strongly with the “posthumanist” discourses, seeks to engage the body with the environment at every turn. But taken in context, Virilio’s larger concerns with “the contraction of distances” and the loss of the human body, the project of creating environments which readily call people to interact with them in unique ways brings about a different type of assemblage than that of the cyborg body. His description of the artist Stelarc’s body modifications relates them to Mengele’s dream of biology as the “art of creating monsters,” and as an offense to human ecology in the sense that this post- or trans-human body pays no respect to proportionality, and in fact tries to change proportion by enhancing speed, stamina, and size; the posthuman is an attempt to escape the confines of the earth. In this light, Virilio’s architecture (and by extension, many other parts of the human milieu) which calls the subject into an assemblage, does so in a way to return human-scale to a world that is quickly attempting to render it obsolete. By interacting with an environment, not to surmount it, but to live in it, the function of the oblique seeks to undo the disregard for freedom that is the product of regulation. Taken from Crepuscular. See Digital Arch Research Studio: http://architecturehabitat.blogspot.com/2010/09/oblique-plan-return-to-physical_19.html (2 April 2011). For more, see Virilio, Paul. 1996. “The Oblique Function.” In Architecture Culture 1943-1968, ed. Joan Ockman, 408–11. Also see Limon, Enrique. 1996. “Interview.” In Sites and Stations, Provisional Utopias: Architecture and Utopia in the Contemporary City, eds. Stan Allen and Kyōng Park. New York, NY: Lusitania; Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia Distributor.
combination of these institutions, would act intelligently for the good of everyone. The image proposed here is a milieu where all the people work by means of shared ideas, needs and acts. All the people would be truly “productive” and hold a sense of shared will (production here is not understood in capitalist terms, but in terms of real and effective participation). Felicity does exist because people perform felicity on others by doing certain things (indirect performance). This unique institution would solve the differences of space and all the distinctions that establish differences among the different groups of society. The interesting paradox of this place is that indeed differences would exist (they should exist!), but not in the terms of having or not having the access to do this or that, to be here or there, to say this or that, or to act in this or that way. This institution would promote and respect each individual’s identity and their differences (they are all equivalent). The paradox is that the institution would exist in a single space that is shared by the inhabitants of its city-institution. Architectural concerns would no longer be relevant. Architecture would no longer exist as a practice, because everyone would be, in a performative sense, an architect of reality.

With theory and imagination (propias del arquitecto that has a sense of what performance could be), the discipline of architecture finds new challenges to build upon. The ideas offered here should be considered simultaneously from two angles. Performance studies offers a hybrid form of knowledge that shakes up the conventions of theory with practice. This hybrid theory leads to the hybrid project,
and the hybrid object (practices) that works on at least three simultaneous levels accordingly: aesthetics, programs, and signifiers.

In this dissertation, I have explored a theoretical framework of ideas and concerns related to art, daily life activities, and cultural practices that I hope can illuminate and contribute to the field and practice of architecture in a different way by means of a “shared” project (that has ambition). The exploration proposed offers a fruitful and productive space in which to investigate the real ambition that is behind a concrete project of architecture. Because the ultimate point of the dissertation is to promote performance and, with it, a new sensitive approach to spatial configurations (architecture/art and urbanism), the thesis advocates the development of a methodology that could give architecture a sense and dimension of the utilization of performance theory. Consequently, these thoughts provide different dimensions that could contribute to operating with performance in order to propose new social orders, a project for different architectures for the societies about to come. This approach differs from a conventional macro-planification method, which dominates urban planning and therefore markets speculation by means of the use of land in short-term basis. My approach insists on incorporating a more human (sensitive) dimension in all the rational processes of creation (design); these sensitive dimensions are the ultimate goal and the key issue in the creation of space. Here, I would like to suggest expanding these concerns to new

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492 In the sense of a Unitary Theory proposed at the begging and in terms of Andreas Ruby’s definition for performance in architecture. See chapter I and II.
possible lines of research that would simultaneously help extend and problematize the field of performance studies in terms of space, which can be envisioned as a new step for another “Unitary Urbanism.” The Situationists already illuminated many of these ideas and concerns by the end of the 1950s. They promoted an approach to understanding and planning the city that was much more focused on experiences, and therefore connected the individual in terms of time/space.493

This dissertation has also explored the notion of “desire” and its role in the understanding of utopia to propose different possibilities and impossibilities. The idea is to insist on an associative plan and a collaborative project that consists in the reflection of spaces that somehow represent, display, and construct life. The paradigm of architecture in relation to performance is evident, fertile, and still ready to be developed in many more sensitive directions. As presented, these thoughts foster a dimension of the project that is more related to the exploration and construction of the impossible, by means of possible material forms, permanent or ephemeral.494 The meanings of performance within the field of architecture are indeed multiple and intertwined, and are irreducible to a simple,

493 “The Situationists, who seem to have had difficulties getting on with “everyday” citizens, preferred to experiment on themselves, analyzing the factors affecting their mood, behavior, and choice of route as they wandered or “drift” (dérive) through the city. See Sadler, Simon. 2001. “The Naked City: Realities of Design and Space Laid Bare.” In The Situationist City, Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press, 20.
494 Many new materials have been developed in the last decades with all the technological improvements. Examples of that development exist in many different levels from research laboratories to industries, think of the Media Lab at MIT or the Boeing Industries. For references in smart materials see: Addington, Michelle and Schodek, Daniel. (2005) Smart materials and new technologies: for the architecture and design professions. Amsterdam; Boston: Architectural Press.
succinct definition. The ideal scenarios that these architectural practices offer serve to provoke a desire for new shapes of a more comprehensive environment.\textsuperscript{495} Performance contributes to developing new types of discussions, and new types of issues to consider when projecting solutions,\textsuperscript{496} as well as, encouraging a new way of thinking and imagining the future by considering it flexible and unexpected forms.

The combination of multiple forms (theoretical and practical) contributes to establishing a complex way to \textit{think} and \textit{do} performance, and therefore to promoting new forms and paradigms through critical feedback (in both directions). The observations presented here inform and attest to the need for a connection between the field of architecture and performance studies. Space is an ephemeral act (even if constructions are permanent). I have mixed general ideas about both the field of architecture and of performance studies in order to think about “solutions” to repair and solve \textit{practical} concerns when planning for a better future. This projection appears by means of “weird” and not “so weird” performative gestures (can we talk about prudent acts of activism?). Many of these gestures are presented and represented by different mechanisms of re-presentation.

\textsuperscript{495} Refer to Buckmister Fuller and his ideas about environment. See catalogue for the exhibition \textit{Starting with the Universe} at the Whitney Museum of American Art from June to September, 2008.

from a text, to a drawing, to a model, to a 3D rendering, to a performance, to a building, to a city, to a landscape, to an artificial environment and to the universe (paraphrasing the show about BuckMinster Fuller’s at the Whitney during 2008).

The ultimate goal of this dissertation was to understand the project of/for the spaces we want, by including new parameters and dimensions that are not often considered when building the social: body (of people), time (of people), and love (in many different forms of people’s affects). These ideas have given rise to points about architecture itself—about architectural design in terms of concept, content, and context. Tschumi points out that there is no architecture without an idea, or a diagram of that idea (concept), and no architectural space without something happening in it (content). The context is reciprocal to the intentions driven by the concept, and the content can also be found to be indifferent (or in conflict) to the form proposed by architecture:

Architecture resembles a large contemporary city, in which no overriding system predominates over all the others, but, on the contrary, the inherent tensions and differences lead to alternatives and sometimes new modes of action […] conflicts, confrontations, and contaminations between concept, context, and content are part of the definition of contemporary urban culture, and therefore of

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497 Urbanism as a design practice should be considered from the bottom up, from the individual to the collective, to claim for the spaces that we require and want for our society. This type of urbanism also has to come with a quote of “consciousness” to explain people what they can do and how to reach (im)possible goals.
499 Ibid.
architecture. Theory is a practice, a practice of concepts. Practice is a theory, a theory of contexts.500

More questions arise when thinking about the city and art (and culture in general) that highlight other sensitive dimensions opposed to the rational and pure rational-effective ones that are most of the time found in conventional practices (such as traditional architecture). The thin line drawn by the tension between theory and practice represents a problematic position when doing performance. Does performance have to be understood by academia? Or by practice? Or by both in a comprehensive manner? And if it is from both points of departure, where is the space where it collapses? Is academia really connected to the power forces that are driving our culture in terms of the politics and the economies? Are these ideas really pushing to reshape our society? How? Or is it that the state (and capitalist forces) regulates where to invest in “development”? And then, how do you do work that truly involves both in order to be effective?501 Where shall we start? Where shall we stop? In this way, much of the academic practice, and therefore also the theory, produced in the academy can be understood as a valuable

500 Ibid., 15.
501 I think that one true and fertile reference very close to the process of the studies I did at NYU was the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. It is well known how this platform of encuentros (encounters) encourages the rise of ideas between academic and artistic practices. The Institute has grown very fast in the course of the last 10 years and it has stimulated to provoke some changes in terms of identities, rights and memories. The SCL2110 initiative was an attempt to do something similar but different in another context, and with other issues, to resist some architectural practices and some chaotic city transformations. There are of course many others examples of institutions that are connected to academia and that try to provoke change.
component to developing a “performative” gesture of, and toward, knowledge and actions (with knowledge). Consequently, this dissertation has explored the theoretical concerns that guide a practice that is inspired by performative acts and performativity. The practice is then again a tool to expand and develop the theory. This is how SCL2110 provided important feedback to the ideas created during the theoretical process of developing the body of knowledge for this dissertation over the last four years. With this said, I believe that it makes sense to offer a double conclusion: one of theoretical work and one in practical form (both hybrid). The practical presentation recently happened (SCL2110), and now it constitutes a body of knowledge propelling my theory forward, which is interpreted within these pages.

To conclude I will recall Laurie Anderson’s 2002 interview with Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio in the D+R’s architecture studio. The main part of the interview was focused on DS’s “hot” project, which had just been completed in the summer of that year: The Blur Building (2002). In the words of Diller, the intention for the Swiss Pavilion was to produce a building that would present an “anti-heroic architecture” in the form of a spatial effect, an atmosphere, a blur: a cloud! The blur building was a reaction to the new orthodoxy of high-definition and stimulation technologies. It created a low-definition space.\textsuperscript{502} The building

proposed was “scaleless, formless, massless, colorless, dimensionless, weightness, odorless, centerless, featureless, depthless, meaningless, spaceless, timeless, surfaceless, white-out, white noise.”

Fig. 3.40 - Napkin Sketch of the Blur Building (1998).

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See a fax from Diller + Scofidio sent to the Extasia Team dated 28 December 1998. This letter is presented in the BLUR book accompanied by a napkin sketch that explains the cloud. See Blur: the making of nothing. New York: London: Harry N. Abrams
Why conclude this dissertation with a cloud? The *Blur Building* attempted to open up a new dimension in architecture (as have many other constructions made for special exhibitions throughout the history of architecture). In this case, the “opening” is in relation to experiences and the mediums utilized to construct those experiences, which in terms of (new technological) architecture are not common: a fog. Think of the *Seed Cathedral* also another type of sustainable “green,” but still, for sure different from what Chile did in the Expo Shangai 2010.504 The *Blur Building* constitutes a paradigm in the field of architecture because it consistently and deliberately incorporates the dimensions of performance in many divergent directions and the “theme” proposed is essential to both, architecture and environment (consider that the fog literally penetrates the body). The cloud performing as a building, as a revolutionary thinking in terms of space design and as a display to present the negation for a “proper” architecture, also highlights the resistance to standards and conventions. Diller Scofidio’s gesture is in fact a suggestion for a new type of bubbles of architecture, eager to take off. Under which concerns? And with which parameters? For sure is not about facades, nor about rigidity or stability, nor even spatial hierarchies. The fog is the literal element used to ponder a new “ambience,” a new atmosphere that attempts to change the “permanent” on architecture. The *Blur Building* performs by embodying the development of a new kind of perception. Architecture is no longer

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out there to be seen (fog invades the senses and therefore collapses spatial perceptions that might otherwise be preconceived—the game of architecture is different from this point of view). The *Blur Building* is about a “climate” that could be adjusted and synchronized to wind velocity, atmospheric conditions, temperature and so on. The “cloud” is adjustable as required in terms of the environment that it needs to construct, similar to what Tschumi did for the Metropolitan Park of Santiago with his *Parque Atmósfera* for *SCL2110*.\(^{505}\)

This dissertation has explored performative practices and gestures among architecture and the arts in the sense of performance. There are many different possibilities and new relations that can be established by applying the word performance and the ideas explored by the performance studies lens (when thinking when thinking combined with architecture). The Performance Studies field offers a fertile milieu to expand upon creative practices (and the processes they entail), to revisit and rediscover new issues and concerns by means of the hybrid objects produced. The result of this new set of approaches and concerns clearly establishes new paradigms that push design practices in all new directions that might, reciprocally, be of value to PS. The biggest contribution to performance studies made by this dissertation I believe is the establishment of new links between architecture and performative (art) practices and the proposition of new ways to understand the “design” of the environment we share from individual

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\(^{505}\) Refer to *SCL2110* catalogue, 260-269
to collectives milieus. Now, let’s go back, let’s think again about a life without objects, a life organized with spaces only. These spaces are constituted by hybrid objects… there is no more possible value on a “singular” object only in singular individuals. Objects are now embedded in the space, people manipulated them as required. Space is one big object programmed for the expected and the unexpected.

*Pd. If the fields of Performance Studies and Architecture still need to expand in some other direction, to another fascinating level or space, then we might as well think about the environment and the DNAs: one environment, many places (each individual has one). Let’s then think about one space of multiple identities, a space truly connected and melt with other spaces somewhere near the sky.506

506 For a new drift again, see Vito Acconci’s recent piece about Antartica as an appendix to this dissertation. This piece was performed at the Whitechapel Gallery in London the
Come into the dark. We can’t see anything, we’ve never been to Antarctica, there’s nothing to remember. Slip inside an Antarctica of the mind. In the dark, we lie back and sleep, we dream of Antarctica. But then we pinch ourselves and we know we’re not dreaming; we are seeing something after all, we’re seeing all there is to see. It’s dark here, one-sixth of the year, it’s almost dark another third of the year. So let’s build a building of light: it could be a bundle of light, loops of light -- or it could be points of light, the ends of extending tubes of light, like periscopes of light. When a plane comes in, these lights guide the landing. But nobody comes here much; those lights won’t be necessary most of the time. Think of the building as a landing field: not for planes really, but for information – information from the skies comes down to land here, information can be pulled down from the stars. We don’t need light to watch the skies; let’s build a building last week of March 2011 as part of an evening of performances called “Art Plus Drama.” All the credits are of Vito Acconci and Acconci Studio.
that turns on and off – the lights turn off, and we disappear into nothingness as we watch the lights of the sky.

But your eyes get used to the dark after a while, and the land here is white. The world here is a sheet of ice; it’s too white, too bright, to sleep. Think of this world as a white sheet of paper, a blank page. Get past dreaming and doodling; we can use that page to make fictions on, for one thing, and to make calculations on, for another.

So let’s start again. Come out in the snow, come out and play in the snow – not snow really, but snow-after-the-snowfall, snow as the hard implacable fact of ice. Surf the ice, slide and glide over the ice. The building-on-stilts is dead – there’s no need for telescoping supports, no need for the building to rise over the ice as the ice accumulates; long live the building that rides the ice, long live the building that floats. Let’s build a building that is a balloon, a balloon that is a building. Let’s build a building that rolls with the punches. It’s a balloon-within-a-balloon, a sphere-within-a-sphere; as the outer sphere turns and shifts while rolling over the ice, the inner sphere remains stable, horizontal. Now that we’ve gotten the building rolling, there’s no stopping it: the building splits like an atom, the building floats out of itself, the building separates into a complex of buildings –
let’s build a city of balloons. Sometimes the balloons roll apart from each other, like space-capsules, like personal spaces; for passage between them, a tubular bridge telescopes, stretches, from one to the other – let’s build a city of molecules. Sometimes the balloons come together, bump into each other like ships in the night; each balloon is a shape-shifter, one swells while the other shrinks: when the breaking point is reached, each balloon breaks to make passage between them – let’s build a city that lives like a virus. Let the virus combat the health of the ice.

(Step back for a moment and survey what we have from afar: in the dark, on the snow, we’re building balloon-buildings lit from within – when one balloon-building melds, for the time being, with the other, the colored lights of one swirl through the colored lights of the other, and vice versa. What level of impact is required? How much energy is spent? Think, analyze, diagram, calculate…)

But we’re getting woozy; our skin is numb, our muscles and joints are numb, our minds are numb – it’s too cold to think here. Let’s begin again. Brave the cold, come outside into the cold. Let’s build a complex of buildings that have skin like an animal. Since these skins will be manufactured, and made of plastic or carbon fiber, there can be a fur that’s braided and knotted, to stop the wind -- a sealskin that’s pleated, folded, corrugated, to divert the wind – a reptile skin that’s flexible,
pliable enough to be pushed in and pulled out to trap the wind, repel the wind. Let’s build a building that wraps around itself – a building that swallows itself – a building that turns inside out of itself. Fixed within frost, in the face of the wind, we go into the buildings and live as if, in the middle of a raging ocean, we were inside the belly of a whale.

(The building is like a glow inside a mountain, a secret world inside the mountain, undetected from the outside. Each room is a different kind of light, a different color of light; it’s the light that makes the room, shapes the room – the room doesn’t need walls to separate itself, it’s the light that separates the room. We walk from room to room, from hard light to soft light, from still light to variable light, from one color into another. Once our work is done for the day, we have some time to relax. The light is composed of images; just as, with audio-speakers surrounding us, we can be in the middle of music, we can be here in the middle of a movie, a movie that’s as palpable as the air we breathe, a movie that is the air we breathe. Instead of being entertained, we have entertainment slipped under our skin, instilled into our bones. The air here is heated in such a way that we can float in the air, like the floating build we’re inside of. In the middle of Antarctica, Antarctica floats out of itself for a while, away from us, and leaves us in a world-in-itself, that becomes a world of our own.)
APPENDIX B

Vito Acconci/Acconci Studio

ANTARCTICA FOR 2 (OR MORE, UNTIL IT'S 1 TOO MANY...)
(Lights on the podium.)

(W:) Come into the dark...

(M:) No, we can’t see anything, we’ve never been to Antarctica, there’s nothing to remember...

(W:) So slip inside an Antarctica of the mind: in the dark, let’s lie back and sleep, let’s dream of Antarctica...

(M:) But then we pinch ourselves and we know we’re not dreaming; we are seeing something after all, we’re seeing all there is to see. It’s dark here, one-sixth of the year, it’s almost dark another third of the year...

(W:) So let’s build a building of light: it could be a bundle of light, loops of light— or it could be points of light, the ends of extending tubes of light, like periscopes of light. When a plane comes in, these lights guide the landing...

(M:) But nobody comes here much; those lights won’t be necessary most of the time...

(W:) Think of the building as a landing field: not for planes really, but for information— information from the skies comes down to land here, information can be pulled down from the stars...

(M:) But we don’t need light to watch the skies; let’s build a building that turns on and off— the lights turn off, and we disappear into nothingness as we watch the lights of the sky...

(W:) But your eyes get used to the dark after a while, and the land here is white: the world here is a sheet of ice — it’s too white, too bright, to sleep...

(M:) So think of this world as a white sheet of paper, a blank page. Get past dreaming and doodling: let’s use this page to make fictions on, for one thing, and to make calculations on, for another...

(W:) So let’s start again. Come out into the snow, come out and play in the snow...not snow really, but snow-after-the-snowfall, snow as the hard implacable fact of ice...
(M:) Let’s surf the ice -- slide and glide over the ice...

(W:) The building-on-stilts is dead: there’s no need for telescoping supports, no need for the building to rise over the ice as the ice accumulates -- long live the building that rides the ice, long live the building that floats...

(M:) Let’s build a building that’s a balloon, a balloon that’s a building...

(W:) Let’s build a building that rolls with the punches. It’s a balloon-within-a-balloon, a sphere-within-a-sphere: as the outer sphere turns and shifts while rolling over the ice, the inner sphere remains stable, horizontal...

(M:) Now that we’ve gotten our building rolling, there’s no stopping it: the building splits like an atom, the building floats out of itself, the building separates into a complex of buildings...

(W:) Let’s build a city of balloons...

(M:) Sometimes the balloons roll apart from each other, like space-capsules, like personal space-bubbles; for passage between them, a tubular bridge can telescope, stretch, from one to the other...

(W:) Let’s build a city of molecules...

(M:) Sometimes the balloons come together, bump into each other like ships in the night: each balloon is a shape-shifter -- one swells while the other shrinks...When the breaking point is reached, each balloon breaks to make passage between them...

(W:) Let’s build a city that lives like a virus. Long live the virus that combats the health of the ice...

(M:) Wait: stop – look – listen...Step back for a moment and survey what we have from afar: in the dark, on the snow, we’re building balloon-buildings lit from within – when one balloon-building melds, for the time being, with the other, the colored lights of one swirl through the colored lights of the other, and vice versa...

(W:) Questions rise to the surface, like tiny flies: what level of impact is required...how much energy will be spent...Think, analyze, diagram, calculate...
(M:) But we’re getting woozy; our skin is numb, our muscles and joints are numb, our minds are numb – it’s too cold to think here...

(W:) So let’s begin again...

(M:) Brave the cold, come outside into the cold...

(W:) Let’s build a complex of buildings that have skin like an animal... Since these skins will be manufactured, and made of plastic or carbon fiber, there can be a fur that’s braided and knotted, to stop the wind...

(M:) Or a sealskin that’s pleated, folded, corrugated, to divert the wind...

(W:) Or a reptile skin that’s flexible, pliable enough to be pushed in and pulled out to trap the wind, repel the wind...

(M:) Let’s build a building that wraps around itself...a building that swallows itself...a building that turns inside out of itself...

(W:) Fixed within frost, in the face of the wind, we go into the buildings and live as if, in the middle of a raging ocean, we’re inside the belly of a whale...

(M/W together:) The building is like a glow inside a mountain, a secret world inside the mountain, undetected from the outside. Each room is a different kind of light, a different color of light; it’s the light that makes the room, shapes the room – the room doesn’t need walls to separate itself, it’s the light that separates the room. We walk from room to room, from hard light to soft light, from still light to variable light, from one color into another. Once our work is done for the day, we have some time to relax. The light is composed of images; just as, with audio-speakers surrounding us, we can be in the middle of music, we can be here in the middle of a movie, a movie that’s as palpable as the air we breathe, a movie that is the air we breathe. Instead of being entertained, we have entertainment slipped under our skin, instilled into our bones. The air here is heated in such a way that we can float in the air, like the floating building we’re inside of. In the middle of Antarctica, Antarctica floats out of itself for a while, away from us, and leaves us in a world-in-itself, that becomes a world of our own...

(M goes off the podium, leaving W alone.)
(W:) I’m alone now, this is what I wanted all the time...I’m outside. I’m out in the cold. I have to move to keep warm. I can’t let my face freeze, I can’t let my face freeze. So I’m spreading my mouth out into a grin. I’m wrinkling my nose. Now I’m stretching my lips down over my mouth. Now I’m puffing out my cheeks. Now I’m pressing my eyes closed. Now I’m cupping my hands over my face. Now I’m pulling at my lips, my eyes, my nose...I’ve settled down. I’ve built a cave out of the snow. I’ve built a cave around me. My realization is: I’ve been trapped by a roof-fall. I’m buried alive. I have to stay where I am, I have to stay where I am. I can’t risk any movement. I mustn’t shake the house down, I mustn’t shake the house down. My thoughts are: I hear ghosts. But no, no, it’s only the reflection from a passing plane – a plane does come here now & then, after all. The ghosts can’t get me. It can’t happen here. See: I’ve tied black cotton across the doorway – it hasn’t been broken. I’ve shaken powder over the floor – it hasn’t been moved. No, there isn’t a trace of you. I have proof: I’ve proven you aren’t here. Soon I’ll signal. I’ll signal for help. Soon I’ll send my message. I’ll fly a kite. I’ll wave a flag. Soon I’ll whistle. Then I’ll keep quiet again, to see if there’s any response...

(All the while she’s been talking, W has been working herself into tears: she’s crying now. M comes back to the podium...)

M: There...There...This isn’t real, it’s only a rehearsal, we’re only playing, this isn’t real...

(Lights out.)
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