

## **Un mundo aparte** **La autonomía arquitectónica como libertad artística**

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### **Resumen**

Entendida tradicionalmente, la arquitectura es una profesión de servicios responsable de la calidad del entorno construido para satisfacer las diversas necesidades de la vida humana. Sin embargo, desde finales del siglo 20, la arquitectura se ha convertido en un ámbito de excepción; en una especie de 'mundo del arte' relativamente marginal en cuanto a la sociedad en general. Con sus eventos 'comisariados' que implican 'exposiciones' de 'instalaciones' y 'performancias', la arquitectura es cada vez más materia de museos, galerías y bienales: espacios autónomos separados de la vida cotidiana. Incluso cuando es construida para dar cobijo, la alta arquitectura se limita cada vez más a edificios de 'alto perfil' que sirven para la creación de imagen y para atraer turismo. En el ámbito de una profesión de servicios, la autonomía implica 'auto-regulación' o 'autogobierno' en la toma de la responsabilidad pública. En el ámbito del arte, sin embargo, autonomía significa una mayor 'libertad artística'; una liberación —y la abdicación— de responsabilidad pública. Mientras el desplazamiento de la arquitectura hacia la reflexión artística ha dado lugar a la obtención de una mayor libertad creativa para una pequeña minoría de profesionales de vanguardia, se está ampliando al mismo tiempo el abismo entre 'arquitectura' y 'edificación', marginando así la primera. Además, como Duchamp demostró, cualquier cosa puede ser arte (y el arte puede ser cualquier cosa), y la semejanza de la arquitectura con el arte se traduce inevitablemente en su misma absorción por el arte contemporáneo; en su fin como disciplina 'autónoma'. ¿Veremos pronto exposiciones de 'arte arquitectónico' patrocinadas (irónicamente) por los mismos promotores inmobiliarios privados que cada vez más determinan el diseño de las ciudades? ¿De qué manera el arte arquitectónico sirve a los intereses del capital cuando ya no se centra en la construcción? Mi trabajo consiste en una crítica social del precio a pagar por la libertad artística en la arquitectura.

**Palabras clave:** arte, museo, arquitectura, sociedad, autonomía

## **A World Apart** **Architectural Autonomy as Artistic Freedom**

### **Abstract**

Understood traditionally, architecture is a service profession responsible for designing and overseeing the construction of the built environment to suit the diverse needs of human life. However, since the late 20th century, architecture has been reframed as a realm of exception; a sort of 'art-world' that is relatively marginal to mainstream society. With its 'curated' events involving 'exhibitions' of 'installations' and 'performances', architecture is increasingly the stuff of museums, galleries and biennials: autonomous spaces that are separate from everyday life. When still constructed as spaces for human occupation, architectural quality is increasingly confined to 'high-profile' buildings —often museums— that generate media buzz useful for branding and tourism. In the sphere of architecture as a service profession, autonomy entails 'self-regulation' or 'self-governance' in the assumption of public responsibility. In the sphere of the art-world, however, architectural autonomy means greater 'artistic freedom'; a freedom from —and hence an abdication of— public responsibility. While the ongoing displacement of architecture from design-action toward artistic reflection has resulted in the gaining of greater creative freedom and artistic license for a small minority of vanguard practitioners, it is simultaneously widening the gulf between 'architecture' and 'building', thereby marginalizing the former. Furthermore, since Duchamp proved that anything can be art (and art can be anything), architecture's resemblance to art inevitably results in its very absorption by contemporary art, and hence its end as an 'autonomous' discipline. Will we soon see exhibitions of 'architectural art' sponsored by, ironically, the very same private real-estate developers who increasingly determine the design of cities? How does architectural art serve the interests of capital when it no longer focusses on building? This paper is a social critique of the price of artistic freedom in architecture.

**Key words:** art, museum, architecture, society, autonomy

“An artist can make a cart with square wheels, but an architect can’t.” —Louis Kahn

### Artistic Freedom

What are architecture’s disciplinary limits? How much freedom of expression is possible in architecture? Why can an artist make a square wheeled cart, but not an architect? Should architects be granted the same freedoms as artists?

It is curious, firstly, that architecture is so often compared to fine art when, as an applied art rooted in one of the three basic necessities of shelter, food and clothing, architecture would seemingly have much more to do with gastronomy or fashion. Yet Kahn’s succinct distinction reveals the degree to which architecture is commonly understood as being somehow close to fine art, even though, from the point of view of autonomy, they are fundamentally different. Autonomy lies at the very basis of the distinction between fine arts, which do not involve utility of any kind, and applied arts, which are utilitarian by definition. Add to that the fact that architecture is, like engineering or medicine, a *service* profession burdened with immense public safety responsibility —unlike fashion, gastronomy, or sculpture— and we have a discipline that is even more limited in terms of its freedom. It’s a wonder that an “art” of architecture is able to exist at all.

Yet, since the emergence of postmodernism, an entire branch of architecture has come to be “reframed”, as it were, into a fine art. This has caused architecture to effectively bifurcate into, on the one hand, a productive “service sector” that builds largely for private clients while staying largely out of the media spotlight; and on the other hand, a more aesthetic, polemical and “arty” architecture that is marginal in terms of output but which dominates the limelight.

Autonomy is understood differently in each of these architectures. In architecture-as-service, autonomy concerns the capacity of professional associations to *collectively* auto-regulate or self-govern their affairs, whereas in architecture-as-art, autonomy concerns the limits of an artist’s *individual* freedom of expression.

During the last decades, as the reach of media has expanded exponentially, architecture has joined the litany of spectacles designed specifically to be consumed through media, thus changing its reception. Architecture is culturally received and understood today as something rarefied and exceptional; as iconic artworks that stand apart from the rest of the built environment. In fact, as portrayed in much media, the world of contemporary architecture increasingly resembles a sort of “art-world”. With its “curated” events involving “exhibitions” of “installations” and “performances”, architecture is increasingly the stuff of museums, galleries and biennials: autonomous event-spaces that are separate from everyday life. Little wonder, then, that the museum, especially the art museum, would become the most-valued architectural project, and that *architecture* museums themselves would emerge as a new type of cultural institution. While such architecture-as-art opens up a space in which architecture can become much more experimental and conceptual, it simultaneously marginalizes architecture in the public eye; distancing it from the more politically complicated and messy “business” of actually shaping real buildings for real needs or desires. “Events like biennials...constitute important opportunities for young practitioners and function as a kind of autonomous zones [sic] of experimentation, relatively free from the practical dimensions of everyday architectural practice. Architecture desperately needs such laboratories today”<sup>1</sup> argues Joseph Grima.

For architecture, artistic autonomy entails precisely a freedom *from* —and hence an abdication *of*— professional practice and public responsibility. A professional body is granted autonomy in the form of collective self-regulation precisely in exchange for taking on public responsibility, while artistic autonomy is granted to artists on the basis of the modern right to individual freedom of expression, which is a right that professional associations often require their members to rescind in the name of professional unity. The more a profession becomes about celebrity and individual artistic freedom, the less power it has as a collective. In architecture, the trade-off for greater artistic autonomy is less professional autonomy; a sign of our neoliberal times.



Fig. 1.

Peter Eisenman, one of the most vociferous proponents of artistic autonomy for architecture, puts it very succinctly: for him, architecture is nothing more and nothing less than “a state of exception”<sup>2</sup> from the norm. What Eisenman wants for architecture is nothing short of “an expansion beyond the limitations presented by the classical model to the realization of architecture as an independent discourse, free of external values—classical or any other; that is, the intersection of the meaning-free, the arbitrary, and the timeless in the artificial.”<sup>3</sup> His position is entirely consistent with his House VI (Fig. 1), in which a column skewers the dining table and a glass strip divides the couple’s bed, apparently against their wishes. Eisenman’s stance could be summed up as “architecture for the sake of architecture; client be damned”. As the antithesis of architecture-as-service, or indeed as Vitruvian commodity, House VI is architecture-as-art par excellence. Conceptual considerations were placed ahead of utilitarian ones in this “post-functional” work.

Architecture is today more autonomous in the “artistic freedom” sense of the word than it has ever been before. The number of curated architectural exhibitions and the number of architectural museums have grown dramatically worldwide since the 1960s, when only New York City’s Museum of Modern Art had an architecture department. Today, there is a growing number of architects whose highly conceptual gallery installations tour a growing international circuit of architecture museums. Architects such as Phillippe Rahm, Jimenez Lai, Didier Faustino or Andrés Jaque, to name but a few, are known much more for their installations than for any buildings, and this is changing the very nature of architectural writing and scholarship, which is focusing greater attention on museum exhibitions and discursive events. But are these autonomous architecture-as-art exhibitions displaying square-wheeled carts, as it were? Isn’t this “art” in the strictest sense?

### **The Expansion of Art**

Since Duchamp, anything can be art, even, ironically, industrially mass-manufactured products purchased from building suppliers such as a urinal<sup>4</sup> or fluorescent lighting tubes,<sup>5</sup> products which professional architects frequently specify for even the most ordinary of buildings. If anything can be art, and art is no longer defined by the criterion of mastery or craft, then art has evidently become a completely “open” discipline. This “expanded field” of art contains many more art forms beyond traditional easel painting and pedestal sculptures: abstract art, expressionist art, conceptual art, installation art, land art, performance art, video art, and more recently so-called urban art or street art. Perhaps “architectural art” could be seen as a new category to be added to this list. Of course, when anything can be art, the question “what is art?” becomes impossible to answer based on any intrinsic properties. It becomes necessary to search *outside* of art itself.

The context of art par excellence is the “art-world”. The institutional theory of art defines art as anything that circulates as such within the art-world; whatever museum directors, curators, critics, collectors, benefactors, and the museum-going public consider to be art, be it a Brillo box, a can of artist’s shit, or an unmade bed. Arthur Danto defined art thus: “To see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry—an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an art-world.”<sup>6</sup> Contemporary art’s openness coupled with circularity illustrates the inherent futility of attempting to transfer artistic autonomy to other fields.

It is significant, moreover, that artistic freedom is a relatively recent, modern phenomenon; that art was not always autonomous. As Christopher Wood explains:

*Autonomy, which is a synonym for freedom, is a privilege that artists tend to enjoy only in modern societies. Free or sovereign artifice is a powerful force. In traditional societies that rely heavily on poetic language, carved and painted figures, and buildings to generate the mysteries of state or cult, art is granted relatively little autonomy. In the West over the last five hundred years, art gradually lost its connections to state or cult, and the idea that the fine arts might be liberal arts, and therefore permitted to run free, emerged as a compensation.*<sup>7</sup>

But at the same time, the very concept of artistic autonomy can ironically be coopted and made to “serve” certain interests beyond art, and here I’m not referring only to art-market financial interests. It is well-known, for example, that the CIA enlisted abstract expressionist art as a US propaganda weapon during the Cold War. “The glamorized and popularized art of abstract expressionism became the avant-garde wedge used to pierce the European suspicion that Americans were only capable of producing kitsch.”<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, very few today question the legitimacy of art’s autonomy. It is generally accepted that within modern society, there should be a special space reserved for art —whatever that is— along with the transgression, provocation, and tomfoolery that form part of modern and contemporary art. There is no potential harm in any of this, of course, precisely because art takes place largely outside mainstream society and inside the bubble of an art institution. Art can be highly autonomous precisely because its special spaces are separate from the concerns of normal, everyday life.

This is not the case with architecture —at least architecture understood more traditionally as buildings. Architecture exists in the public realm, so it has to be built with safety, security, and solidity in mind. Since buildings must endure structural loads, the forces of weather, and wear and tear from use, they must be structurally sound, waterproof, and user-friendly (unlike House VI). Building architecture is not served by being as autonomous or as frivolous as art since public responsibility demands public confidence in the profession. The recompense for all the public responsibility and technical knowledge that building requires is precisely autonomy in the form of professional self-regulation.

### **Architecture as Art**

Why, then, is artistic autonomy the ideal of so many architects today? What advantages does it offer architects? Since this is a more individual kind of autonomy, the possibility for attaining personal fame and notoriety are much greater, and in a mediatic age, this matters greatly. As sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out, renown or prestige is another form of capital —symbolic as opposed to financial— which circulates in a field of restricted production guided by a set of values that are inverted with respect to the field of mass-produced goods:

*This relatively autonomous universe (which is to say, of course, that it is also relatively dependent, notably with respect to the economic field and the political field) makes a place for an inverse economy whose particular logic is based on the very nature of symbolic goods – realities with two aspects, merchandise and signification, with the specifically symbolic values and the market values remaining relatively independent of each other.*<sup>9</sup>

In architecture-as-art, as in art itself, the accumulation of symbolic capital takes precedence over that of financial capital. Financially motivated artists and architects are shunned as sell-outs in the art-world, whereas “starving artists” who pursue art purely for art’s sake are compensated with symbolic capital. Museums, galleries, critics and curators are agents with the power to consecrate symbolic capital, which can eventually affect values in the monetary economy.

International art market players —dealers, collectors, etc.— closely observe art’s symbolic economy knowing that prestige eventually translates into a financial value that can be speculated with, as certain “prestigious” artists have learned to exploit. In architecture, however, there is no comparable international market, so the only thing that can be hoped for from any symbolic capital accrued through exhibiting in architectural institutions is to eventually receive prestigious architectural commissions, such as museums or houses for art collections.

Indeed, at the most fundamental level, art is produced by artists precisely in order to be exhibited and collected, whereas this is not so for architecture. Exhibiting work is understood as a *secondary* activity in architecture, so unlike art, institutional space is not the primary space of architecture. This fact which stems from an inherently practical problem:

*While art museums typically collect and exhibit finished products, most architecture museums have found it physically impossible to collect, let alone exhibit, the ‘conventional’ products of architecture. Given the difficulty of exhibiting buildings, architecture museums have conventionally displayed representations of the architectural process in their place. Drawings, documents, models, and other artifacts have come to populate the archives and galleries of museums as proxies for buildings and as expressions of architecture.*<sup>10</sup>

This secondary aspect of architecture exhibitions explains why these are so often seen to be little more than marketing instruments in the eyes of many critics. When the architectural object, still largely understood to be a building, is exhibited through representations, these can all too easily be seen, rightly or wrongly, as advertising for the architect’s brand. This does not happen with art precisely because art is useless, which makes it appear, on the surface at least, to be free of ulterior business interests. Most professional associations do not allow architects to actually advertise their firms in media, precisely to uphold professional credibility.

It is only with historical, archival exhibitions that drawings, models and other representations of buildings do not smell of architectural advertising. Such exhibitions, often displaying the work of architects who are either deceased or retired, are more scholarly and academic in comparison with exhibitions of work by practicing architects. This may explain why, in more recent years, exhibitions by architects whose career is specialized in exhibiting in museums and galleries choose not to exhibit architectural representations at all, but artifacts related more obliquely to architecture. The irony here is that by doing so, their work can superficially resemble art more than architecture. In the exhibition “Phantom. Mies as Rendered Society” by Andrés Jaque at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona in 2013 (Fig. 2.), a number of items normally stored in the pavilion’s basement—a utilitarian space which never existed in the original 1929 pavilion—were put on display in the pavilion’s spaces of representation. Among them was a vacuum cleaner that is normally used to clean the pavilion, inviting comparison with the work of Jeff Koons.



Fig. 2.

Another exhibition by Philippe Rahm at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark, consisted of domestic objects displayed at different heights or temperature zones within the gallery space. Among the objects in the exhibition was a bathtub, inviting comparison with Marcel Duchamp’s Readymades.

Thus, it would appear that *contemporary* architecture exhibitions superficially resemble either advertising if involving representations, or else contemporary art if involving installations. Only archival architectural exhibitions somehow appear proper to the discipline. What does this say about the nature of architecture?

Perhaps the gallery space is in fact not a natural habitat for contemporary architecture. Perhaps architecture belongs more properly in the lived spaces of the city. Indeed, we are also seeing urban public space being used more and more for ephemeral exhibitions of architecture, especially in the form of temporary pavilions. Events such as the annual Serpentine Galleries Pavilion, in which a contemporary architect is invited to design and construct a summer pavilion on the Hyde Park grounds of this London museum, or the MoMA PS1 Young Architects Program, which similarly displays ephemeral constructions, are a definitive attempt to, on the one hand, define a form of architectural exhibition that appears neither overly academic nor overly self-promotional, while attempting to avoid confusion with contemporary art by belonging more properly to architecture as building and construction. Curiously though, both MoMA and the Serpentine are *art* institutions, so it seems that leading architecture-as-art programs reside outside the institution of architecture per se. Perhaps this is a sign that architecture is indeed becoming absorbed by art as a new modality, undermining architecture’s very own—albeit more limited—autonomy. Which architect doesn’t dream of being recognized as an “artist”? The pull of art-world fame is irresistible.

Many artists themselves have “built” ephemeral pavilions and spaces, moreover, further blurring any division between the disciplines. From Mario Merz’s glass igloos to Absalon’s domestic “cellules”, artists have long experimented with ideas of shelter and space; some, such as Donald Judd’s furniture pieces, even attempting to make themselves useful. But of course art can never be used; only admired. Artful constructions by architects are only distinguishable from art if they are able to be put to use. Utility, which drastically restricts artistic autonomy, is in fact the defining factor in the distinction between art and architecture. Artist Sol LeWitt wrote:

*Architecture and three-dimensional art are of completely opposite natures. The former is concerned with making an area with a specific function. Architecture, whether it is a work of art or not, must be utilitarian or else fail completely. Art is not utilitarian. When three-dimensional art starts to take on some of the characteristics of architecture, such as forming utilitarian areas, it weakens its function as art.*<sup>11</sup>

### **Architecture as Science**

Art is not the only autonomous field with which architecture is flirting, however. Another field, this one tied more closely to the notion of *academic* freedom rather than artistic freedom, is science. Again, like its artistic counterpart, architecture is an *applied* science, not a pure science, which is the empirical study of nature. And, as with art, we are currently witnessing a certain “scientization” of architecture. This has to do largely with the fact that scientific and technological research leading to new inventions is being highly promoted and funded by industry. STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) research has proven itself to be indispensable in the race to gain a competitive edge in globalized capitalism; so much so that a branch of architecture-as-science has emerged. The construction sector is after all one of the highest emitters of carbon dioxide along with the manufacturing, transportation and agriculture sectors, so there is moreover a pressing need to improve the energy efficiency and sustainability of building construction.

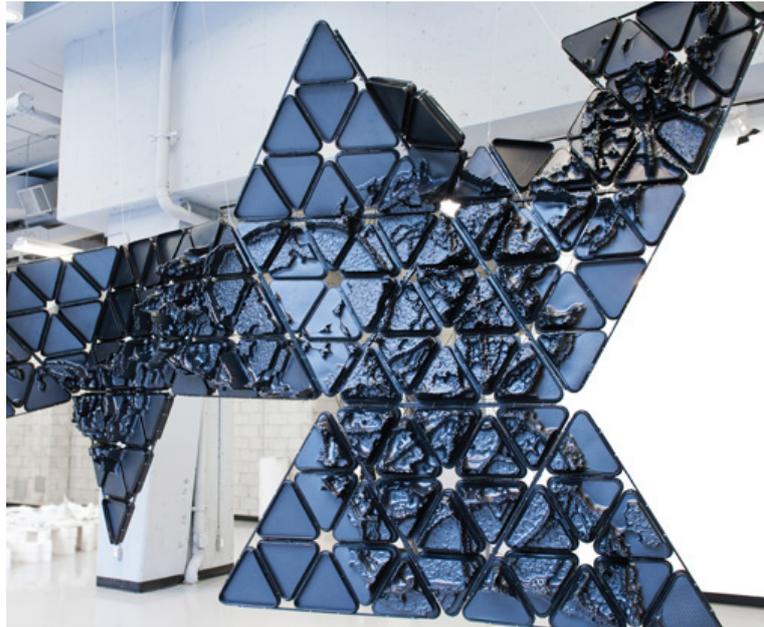


Fig. 3.

What is curious, however, is the degree to which the art paradigm remains prevalent in architecture even when it takes a scientific turn. For example, the research undertaken by architecture-as-science outfits such as Terreform ONE (Fig. 3.) or Cloud 9 tends to be exhibited in gallery spaces and published in popular fantasy, design or lifestyle magazines rather than in serious scientific journals, which is where peer-scrutiny and validation takes place in the sciences. It would seem that architects-as-scientists are more interested in the current media attention that science and technology enjoys than in its actual rigor and methodology. Thus, even when it fancies itself as science, architecture aesthetizes its objects, just like when it dabbles in art. It would seem that architecture’s formalism is inescapable, no matter which discipline it emulates.

### **The Economy of Autonomy**

Architecture, then, is caught in a paradox with respect to autonomy: on the one hand, since it is imbricated within a highly complex techno-capitalist world, its practice demands interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary knowledge and experience, diluting whatever autonomy it ever possessed while promulgating art- and science-envy among many architects. On the other hand, global capitalism’s own “luxury” market relies entirely on the circulation of exclusive symbols and brand identities, which is what more autonomous architecture-as-art deals in. In the end, whether the tendency is toward greater artistic autonomy or less, architecture always has to serve somebody, to

paraphrase Bob Dylan. As Vincent Pecora succinctly puts it: “autonomy is nothing more than a specific effect of social relations.”<sup>12</sup>

Is there a way to circumvent this paradox? Could autonomy not be used to build up, say, *social* capital instead of symbolic cultural capital? Can architecture’s symbolic dimension resist becoming coopted in such an endeavor? There are numerous examples of architects’ attempts to circumvent this paradox.

One example is the tendency among many younger architects to form collectives that work participatively with disadvantaged communities rather than for the public or private sectors. These collectives, with names like Zuloark, La Col, Recetas Urbanas or Assemble, sideline the question of autonomy altogether, seeing architecture as inextricably linked to utility and appropriation by a community of users. Often working hands-on, be it in the form of alternative groups such as squatters or as bona fide NGOs, these architects eschew not only artistic autonomy but also the wide separation of labor that separates elitist black-collar architects from blue-collar workers.

In this alternative economy, renown becomes something by which collectives can advance their socio-political agendas. Assemble Studio’s recent winning of Britain’s Turner Prize for the rehabilitation of the Granby Four Street neighborhood in Liverpool, for example, which caused consternation in the international art-world, cleverly used the Turner Prize gallery exhibition of 2015 as a “showroom” to display, promote, and even fund-raise through the sale of goods crafted by Granby Four Streets residents. This is not the first time that an exhibition in a museum gallery has been turned into an actual retail space: A 1980 exhibition by the Canadian artist collective General Idea at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, consisted of a work titled “The Boutique from the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavilion” (Fig. 4.), in which a functioning retail shop shaped like a dollar sign and replete with a salesperson made General Idea publications and multiples available for sale to the public. A more recent example was the Russian Pavilion’s exhibition at the 2014 Venice Biennale titled Fair Enough, which consisted of a mock trade fair promoting fictional products and services derived from Russian architecture of the past century. In each of these blatantly commercial and crass art-installations, the privileged social status of the exhibition gallery is exploited in order to transgress an established societal belief: that architecture, and especially art, are autonomously positioned above vulgar everyday commercialism.



Fig. 4.

Autonomy itself can also be exploited, or turned on itself. An example of this is the Office for Unsolicited Architecture, spearheaded by Ole Bouman.

*Perhaps the time has come to design not as solicited by client, site or available budget, but to design unsolicited architecture and find clients, sites and budgets for it. [...] The autonomy of architecture once meant hermetic seclusion from reality, but now we know that it is a matter of becoming inclusive beyond any client expectation.*<sup>13</sup>

As a kind of architecture that is not commissioned by a client, but that is initiated by architects themselves in an entrepreneurial spirit much in vogue now, the Office for Unsolicited Architecture actually works in much the same way that artists do. However, rather than create art objects for sale in the art market or for display in museums, these architects effectively make “public service” proposals for the improvement of neighborhoods and public spaces, relying on alternative sources of financing such as crowd-funding. Artistic autonomy in architecture, the

Eisenman brand of which was heavily criticized for being anti-social, here leads to architecture as a form of social-activism that claims autonomy only to employ it in the service of a “public-interest architecture”, as Thomas Fisher has termed it.<sup>14</sup> Thus, it would seem that there are, indeed, other ways of claiming autonomy for architecture than making square-wheeled carts.

## Conclusion

If, as is often said, contemporary art is a critical mirror that is held up to society, what appears in that mirror is largely the physical manifestation of society: the built environment. If architecture belongs to the built environment, then architecture cannot itself be another mirror.

Thus, if architectural autonomy, understood as “artistic freedom”, means a refusal to be instrumentalized as a “service”, it must be asked if architecture is itself best served by such a scenario. We know that even the most difficult autonomous modern art has been made to serve interests outside of art, be it as American propaganda in the Cold War or as a way for corporations to whitewash a public image tarnished by greed. When architecture refuses to serve utilitarian needs, it merely ends up serving other needs instead. Utility and appropriation by users are precisely what, for better or worse, makes architecture distinct from art, and without that distinction, architecture risks becoming absorbed by art, the open field par excellence. Architecture then ceases to exist as a *unique* discipline that is semi-autonomously inter- and multi-disciplinary. Such a scenario might mean greater fame and renown for an elite avant-garde, but it would come at the total loss of architecture’s collective autonomy and its historical identity as a professionally applied art.

Many corporate interests are in fact well-served by architecture-as-art; interests that would be perfectly happy for architecture to retreat completely into the museum gallery and concern itself only with esoteric ideas. Architecture defends public interests better when it is directly involved in building and development, even if it has to make painful compromises, than when it exists in a supposedly more pure and virtuous state inside a museum. Such a pure architecture may be more autonomous and artistic, but it would be less effective at actually shaping the built environment, leaving this task entirely to the corporate sector. Adolf Loos’s aphorism “Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument” rings very true indeed. Perhaps a cart with round wheels is not such a bad thing after all.

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  2. Peter Eisenman has said: “I wrote recently that any discipline is made up entirely of ‘states of exception,’ that what inevitably defines a discipline is transformation from the norm”, going on to say that autonomy is one of his “favorite words”. Gómez-Moriana, Rafael. “Peter Eisenman interview”. *KLAT Magazine* #04, Autumn 2010, p.75.
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  4. Citing British artist Grayson Perry, Sarah Thornton points out that “the 1964 edition of Marcel Duchamp’s *Fountain*, the one found in most art museums today, is not a readymade at all but a sculptural replica, handmade by an Italian potter to look like a 1917 mass-manufactured urinal.” Thornton, Sarah. *33 Artists in 3 Acts*. London: Granta Books, 2014. p. 305.
  5. Joseph Kosuth points out, interestingly, that “when someone ‘buys’ a [Donald] Flavin he isn’t buying a light show, for if he was he could just go to a hardware store and get the goods for considerably less. He isn’t ‘buying’ anything. He is subsidizing Flavin’s activity as an artist.” Kosuth, Joseph. “Art After Philosophy” (footnote 12) in Harrison, Charles and Paul Wood, eds: *Art in Theory 1900-1990*. London: Blackwell, 1992. p.849.
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Fig. 1. "House VI" by Peter Eisenman, Cornwall, CT, 1975. Photo credit: Richard Powers for Thames & Hudson. Source: [http://www.katherinesalant.com/imageLib/large/258\\_01.jpg](http://www.katherinesalant.com/imageLib/large/258_01.jpg)

Fig. 2. "Phantom. Mies as Rendered Society" by Andrés Jaque, Pavelló Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona, 2013. Photo: courtesy dpr-barcelona.

Fig. 3. "Biocity Map of 11 Billion" by Terreform ONE, Venice Architecture Biennale, 2014. Photo source: [http://www.terreform.org/projects\\_urbanity\\_bio\\_city\\_map.html](http://www.terreform.org/projects_urbanity_bio_city_map.html)

Fig. 4. "The Boutique from the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavilion" by General Idea, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, 1980. Photo: courtesy AA Bronson.

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## Biography

**Rafael Gómez-Moriana**, arquitecto por la University of Waterloo (Ontario, Canadá) y master por el Instituto Berlage (Amsterdam, Países Bajos), es Adjunct Associate Professor en la University of Calgary, donde dirige su programa de estudios en Barcelona, y enseña en CIEE Barcelona. Su campo de investigación se concentra en la recepción cultural de la arquitectura en la medida en que está condicionada por los medios y el turismo. Ha sido profesor en la University of Manitoba, donde fue director de la Architecture 2 Gallery, y en la escuela de arquitectura de Carleton University, y ha impartido conferencias en la Architectural Association de Londres, la ETSAB, Umeå University, la Universidad de Belgrano, y la Bienal Internacional de Arquitectura de Buenos Aires, entre otros. Colabora en las revistas Mark Magazine y Azure, y es blogger en [criticalista.com](http://criticalista.com).

**Rafael Gómez-Moriana** studied architecture at the University of Waterloo (Ontario, Canada) and the Berlage Institute (Amsterdam, Netherlands). He is Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Calgary, directing its Barcelona term-abroad program, as well as a lecturer at CIEE Barcelona. His research looks mainly at the social and cultural reception of architecture, particularly as conditioned through media and tourism. He has previously taught at the University of Manitoba, where he was director of the Architecture 2 Gallery, and at Carleton University School of Architecture, and has lectured at the Architectural Association, London, ETSA Barcelona, Umeå University, the Universidad de Belgrano and the International Architecture Biennial of Buenos Aires, among others. He is a regular contributor to Mark Magazine and Azure, and blogs at [criticalista.com](http://criticalista.com).