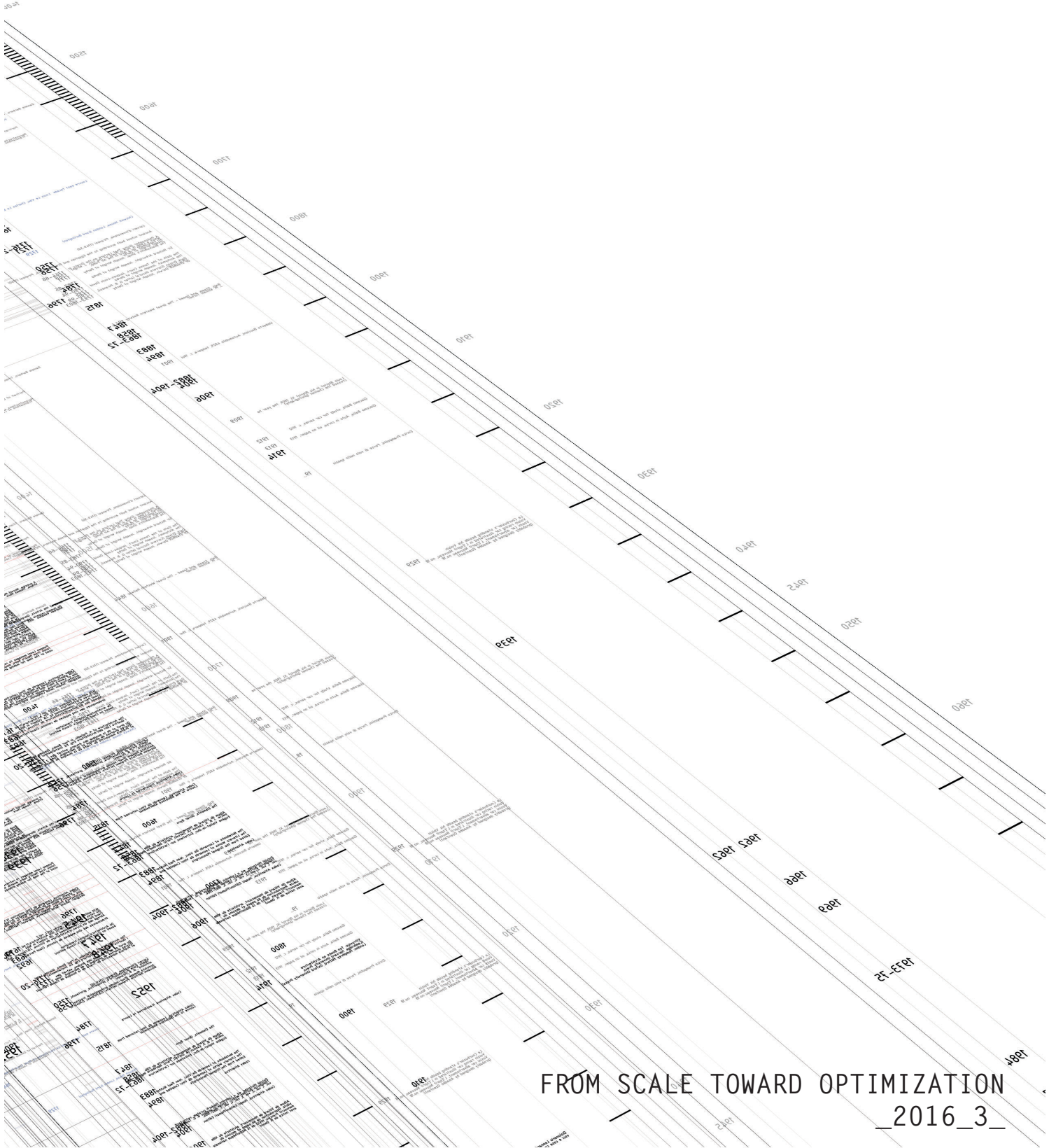


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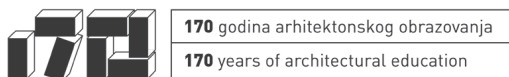
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BEYOND SCALE. IMPRINTING OF EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE ARCHITECTURAL AND ARTISTIC FORMS

A B S T R A C T

As a starting point this paper questions the actualization of the concept of the atmosphere in contemporary architectural and artistic research both in theory and in practice. The concept of the atmosphere points to the possibility that the architectural and artistic practices directly operationalize their interests in the problems of everyday life and everyday culture. Architectural and artistic atmosphere are realized in the ratio 1:1, thus surpassing conditions typical for both disciplines separately. Usefulness of the scale of 1:1 is the potential for interdiscursive exchange because it includes the experience of the physical body in space and represents a medium through which the social reality is engraved into the space. We propose that the production of the atmosphere could be a mechanism to imprint everyday life into architectural and artistic forms through *real-size-multimedialworks*.

INTRODUCTION

Architectural form was founded on proportional systems that derive from the size and proportion of the human body through the largest part of the historical development of architecture. From Vitruvius to Le Corbusier, the measuring and proportional systems of architectural elements were set up directly based on the dimensions and proportions of the human body. As one of the most influential models for guidance of architectural principles the Le Corbusier's *Modulor* presents aesthetic and practical standard, or the very guarantee for a successful achieving of *structural soundness, functionality and beauty* which Vitruvius sees as the ultimate task of architecture¹. Relying on the human body as a proportional system of architectural space is not based only on ergonomics, but also on the ability to *understand* architecture through comparison with the dimensions which we are familiar with. Measuring of the space by the dimensions of the human body or by its parts (thumb, elbow, foot...) and construction in its proportional system throughout the history of architecture, ensured the perception of the space as *suitable, adapted to man and secure*. However, this reference to the static characteristics of human body for the development of an architectural form and its connection to the ground gives limitations for conceiving the response of architecture to dynamic processes of the contemporary context. Paul Virilio argues that we need a fundamental change of architectural thought that can follow contemporary conditions of everyday life, in order to bring the human habitat into a dynamic age of the body in movement.²

The new dynamic image of reality, which was first revealed by natural (at the beginning of the last century), and then by social sciences (the middle of the last century), gives a change of its character as a rational and determined to multiple, temporal and complex one. Therefore, acting in this reality within the discourses, especially creative ones, moves from a fixed and stable (where the order dominates the disorder and chaos) to a new series of dynamic systems in which order and disorder are pulsing at each other continuously. This fine balance is on the verge of the chaos, where there is a certain stability that enables existence, but there is also an orientation towards the same chaos that overwhelms us with creativity (as a proof of the existence)³. Architecture is thus seeking new ways to reconcile the dynamic nature of its own context and the static nature of its physical form. This search demands new perspectives in the connection between the human body and the scale of architecture. Le Corbusier argued that the human body will always be relative to the idea of architecture, but contemporary post-human cultural theories showed that architectural thought has been restructuring toward understanding of the environment in new categories, different from foregoing dominant anthropocentric perspective. On

the other hand, this shift can be seen as a move from the physical categories of a human body to the categories of human perception and comprehension, as new etalons (measurement standard) for architecture's scale and proportion. By studying the structure of natural phenomena, scientists and theorists find continuous scalar iterations in relationships part-whole.⁴ The existence of the same mechanisms and the principles on the different scales, i.e. levels of the organization of matter and organisms in nature, introduces the concept of relative proportions, or proportions in a constant shift. In these interactions of scale, *relations between parts and the whole* become important instead of the entities themselves. In the next iteration, a part becomes the whole, and the whole becomes a part. Relocation from the entities to the relationship, is a legacy of theories of the 20th century, both in the natural and social sciences. Consequently, in architectural design, the *relationships* as the building blocks of the architectural structure are recognized. These can be seen in terms of the physical dimensions of the architectural space, as a number of different ratios through which a complex work of architecture is designed, dedicated to different levels of perception, depending on the observation distance. But the invisible relationships, invisible in the physical appearance domain are those that hold the structure together.⁵ This structure of invisible relationships is what we reveal through the experience of space, which can further be explored through the concepts of *perception* and *atmosphere*.

We argue that this new benchmark for conceiving architecture could be a production of atmosphere that is related to (real) size of human perception and comprehension. Instead of dimensions of human physical body, the new proportioner refers to 'dimensions' of human comprehension. Architectural *atmosphere*, as well as architecture itself, is a structured system of signs, a complex communication and cultural construct for manufacture of visual, behavioral, and spatial semantic. The phenomenon of atmosphere in architecture is achieved through intervals of constitution of individual and collective everyday. To understand the world (which we are a part of), we develop knowledge about it, through which we *scale* the reality, according to our cognitive capacities. Although the perception i.e. experience of the world remains irreplaceable, we reduce the complexity of the world through the cognitive models of different discourses. The notions of the scale and the relationship to the human body, that modern architecture constituted are now being transformed from fixed and linear to relative and dynamic concepts like *emergence* and *assemblage*.⁶

Refraction of reality through perceptual and cognitive apparatus of man which are explored by phenomenological theories already includes a man in understanding or exploration of the world and architecture. The preservation

of complexity is one of the main priorities for contemporary theory (of culture, including architecture). Through the concept of the atmosphere in architecture it is possible to preserve the incongruent nature of the architectural work which consists from different material and immaterial properties. Since it involves the experience of the human body in the (architectural) space, the atmosphere always involves the scale of 1:1 (*real-size-media-work*). Through the complexity of spatial factors, the construction of the atmosphere preserves all the properties and potentials important for multi-sensory experience of space. In this way the atmosphere overcomes a scale and at the same time becomes a medium through which the social reality may be embedded in artistic and the architectural forms. The contemporary concept of architectural atmosphere becomes very important, both in theory and architectural design. In current debates, authors often talk about the character and atmosphere of their design works, and not so much about the expressiveness or the proportions of the form. Many theorists and philosophers refer to this concept as a key one, when it comes to interpretations of contemporary architecture. The similarity of the architectural atmosphere and the atmosphere in installation art is most obvious in conceptual phase of the work. The contemporary definition of the concept of the atmosphere is based on the phenomenological aspects, and it requires human experience. The space is not perceived as an abstract, neutral space, but as a lived experience. Teresa Brennan begins her work, *The Transmission of Affect*, with the question whether there is someone who walked into a space and not “feel the atmosphere“?⁷ With such an introduction, Brennan refers to the experience of architectural space that is close to everyone, each of us has experienced at least once to be overwhelmed by the spatial atmosphere, immersed into the space. The atmosphere in contemporary architecture becomes a model of thinking and designing, but establishing relations with installation art can further develop both discourses. Installation art in its concept and dimension becomes a medium in which architects set, try out and confirm the new concepts. As the most famous representatives of such forms of research, we can highlight the installations of meteorological architecture by Philippe Rahm, the pavilion *The Blur Building* for the Expo 2002 by Diller & Scofidio or Zumpthor’s Swiss Pavilion for Expo 2000 in Hanover. This architectural research through experimentation with art installations represent new paradigmatic models for planning and thinking in architecture.

The assumption of this study is that the use of installation art in architectural design, and exchange between these two related disciplines can improve responses of design practice on contemporary culture. The research of the atmosphere enabled new relationship between the subject and the object, dedicated to all the senses.

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT OF CREATIVE PRACTICES - PROBLEMATIZATION OF EVERYDAY LIFE

The need to form an interdisciplinary platform of knowledge today is not reserved for the architects only. Establishing connections between different discourses provides a basis for the development of each individual discourse. These intersections of specialized, fragmented knowledge relativize the interiority of disciplines, and thus makes the ossified facts more flexible for interpretation and exchange. “But the purpose of getting beyond the discourse in the search for connection with other forms of knowledge is to get back and develop the primary discourse and not to abandon it”⁸.

From the perspective of interdiscursive exchange we can follow common trends in the development of models of thinking. As we explore the knowledge which is provided by each discourse individually, we focus also on how this knowledge can be transferred and modified outside of its own framework. Philosophical platform of Gilles Deleuze offers the most dynamic model for the perceiving of the reality. “Special perception and affection of philosophy or science, necessarily fit with percepts and affects of art, the scientific one as well as the philosophical one”⁹. Deleuze describes the world as all extended chaos through which every thinker, scientist, artist makes his own cross-section, which introduces the plane from which everything arises – plan of immanence. The plan Deleuze is referring to, has two sides: “extensibility and opinion, i.e. (its) two powers, the power of being and the power of opinion”¹⁰. Between opinion and being, architecture is placed as neutral, non-defined, and yet active and effective on both plans. Separating science, art and philosophy, Deleuze talks about their interdependence, which finally builds the multi-layered nature of architectural discipline. The attempt to develop knowledge from design process, is especially important to architects, since through the act of creation it is possible to form a new knowledge platform, that unites knowledge from different discourses.¹¹

Design procedure establishes the relationship between the interiority and exteriority of the discipline through the systems of relations between the socio-cultural structure of the city, philosophical and aesthetic principles of the discipline, physiological and functional requirements of the human body and technological processes of materialization of the space. Architectural theory problematizes the terms and conditions for establishing these links, but they are seldom appointed and interpreted by the architects in design strategies. At the end of the 20th century (from the beginning of the eighties), architects have sought incentives from other disciplines, especially through the research

by design methodology. The debates and interdisciplinary gatherings with the aim of expanding the boundaries of the discipline have been organized.¹² Bernard Tschumi is among the first architects and architectural theorists who elaborated issues of limits and the autonomy of architecture. After modernist and postmodernist theoretical premises, his criticism of rational approach to the understanding of the world is especially important, because it points out the importance of irrational forces that lead our comprehension of the world. In this regard, the author criticizes the efforts made by the architecture to close into itself. He describes an architect who is frightened of the outside world, full of danger, and begins to dig a burrow where he could be an undisputed master. Tschumi criticizes the unwillingness of architects to confront the forces that will take over their products, in which they are overseeing the external forces in design procedure. According to him, in order to achieve the capacity for habitation, the architect should count on the life that will occupy a designed space, he should incorporate irrationality of that life in the space itself. Otherwise, if the space is not allowed to be taken over by the external forces – it remains dead, and architecture closed.¹³ Developing in the climate of postmodern theory which criticizes the logo centric tradition, contests the notion of progress, and irrationalizes historical processes, the architectural theory has attempted to redefine the ethic/aesthetic/technique relationship, through his own authentic way for the last half of the century. A small number of architects have managed to carry this burden of freedom, but thanks to them, architecture has been stepping forward to other discourses – to art, philosophy and science. The discovery that it is possible to explore the meaning through the artistic act and its effect, brings together poetics and philosophical questions. In his book *What is Philosophy?*, Gilles Deleuze offers an active relationship between art, philosophy and science through the spatial metaphor of cuts of all extending chaos, which represent human efforts to understand the world and to belong to it.

Everyday life represents one of the most important premises of contemporary culture, that there is no reality by itself, but that shaping of every culture is based on “the struggle over the meaning.”¹⁴ Everyday life, as an area of common life from day to day, filled with routine and repetitive activities, has been ignored for long says Ivana Spasic, stating that even the famous Plato’s metaphor of the cave can be taken as a form of criticism of everyday life.¹⁵ Since chained people are sitting and watching a game of shadows on the wall, thinking that this is all that exists. The definition of ‘daily life’ depends largely on the theoretical position from which it is viewed. In contemporary theory there is a number of different approaches on this concept. Joe Moran suggests

two main perspectives how the culture studies see everyday life: as a ritual and as a mass consumption.¹⁶ The first approach is influenced by the ethnographic notion of ritual as partially formulated, symbolic act that reflects the culturally and existentially designed productivity.¹⁷ Michel de Certeau suggests the need of “operations” that invert the image we have about the society. For him, the hero of modern times is an everyday, anonymous man in noway exceptional.

*Common hero. Scattered person. Uncountable walker.*¹⁸

Certeau problematizes everyday practices and tactics of the individual by which one resists to power and the system. According to Certeau, each ‘energy’ – like reading, walking through the city, watching television or spending some material goods – which is usually considered a mere passive consumption of something imposed, or at best, granted, is actually a kind of ‘production’. What the user does with the product offered is never predetermined. In addition, the symbolic consumption is not apolitical, since there is an ongoing struggle between two global sides. One side (the dominant groups, the system, power) is trying to impose a set of meanings, as they support the *status quo*, while the other side (oppressed, powerless, everyday actors) resists that.

In this work we establish relations between art and architectural design, in order to open architectural design practices towards critical potential of research in interdisciplinary and hybrid practices. We question the possibilities of these openings through the analysis of the notion of *atmosphere*, which is common for both disciplines, through the manipulation of scale. Scale thus becomes the critical point for opening the possibility for one discipline to influence another. Through the exploration of the atmosphere, we examine art and architectural practices that are based on the experience of the body in the space. When the scale of architectural and artistic objects coincide, a possibility of direct exchange of ideas between two similar discourses arises. Not acting within scales characteristic for design in each discipline, but going away from the scale as a medium, a field of interdiscursive exchange opens.

REAL-SIZE-MEDIA WORKS - CONCEIVING ATMOSPHERES IN ARCHITECTURE AND ARTS

Aaron Betsky refers to the need to find architecture beyond building¹⁹ in the Manifesto of 2008 Venice Biennale. Experimenting with form, construction and space, we discover a new encounter with the problems of the modern world; we discover a new manner of feeling like at home in the world.²⁰ In

addition to the question of phenomenological grounds of the discipline, according to Ćorović and Blagojević, Betsky encouraged the participants to reevaluate different aspects of architecture in relation to the questions of space perception, atmosphere, environment, light and climate.²¹ In addition to that, Ole Fischer analyzes the need for “critical” thinking in architecture in relation to research of the contemporary notion of the atmosphere.²² Fischer argues that “new pragmatism” introduced into architecture a new form of reading, through an active participation of the user.²³ Ákos Moravánszky also problematizes a growing interest for the environment in which the visitor “immerses” (*immersive artificial environment*). This interest is reflected in great popularity of installation art which attracts enormous attention.²⁴ Atmospheres, or according to Šuvaković, “spatial-temporal-behavioral events”,²⁵ become the joints of architectural and art concepts.

This installation *Digestible Gulf Stream* of Philippe Rahm, represents both an architectural experiment and an art installation. Climate factors are here understood both as ecological and cultural at the same time.²⁶ The atmosphere is defined between the subject and the object.²⁷ The very notion of atmosphere of a space was introduced for the first time in the texts by Hermann Schmitz, a phenomenologist which uses this notion in relation to the theory of perception. Borch calls Schmitz and Böhme pioneer thinkers in the philosophy of atmosphere.²⁸ Böhme calls the notion of atmosphere as a colloquial, but nevertheless talks about potential of its use. The problem is represented in the ambiguity: we talk about a tense atmosphere on a date, a cheerful atmosphere of the day, refer to the atmosphere in the city, restaurant and scenery. The notion of atmosphere, as stated by Böhme, always refers to the spatial feeling. We also talk about the atmosphere of 1920s, of the bourgeoisie atmosphere or the atmosphere of the night. Böhme believes that environments or atmospheres could be designed.²⁹ Contemporary research by Christian Borch direct us to significant political and social connotations of the notion of atmosphere³⁰, which significantly increases its role in the modern culture.

The new relationship between artistic and architectural concepts, which is realized through mediation of the notion of atmosphere, represents the subject of numerous researches. Historical development, transformations and determination of the notion of the atmosphere in the theory of art were defined from the introduction of environmental art in 1960s to contemporary transformations of this notion into related notions at the end of 20th century. The idea of the atmosphere in environmental arts has been conceived from the beginning through an active participation of the viewer (visitor). The environment

can not be seen, it needs to be entered, experienced. In each of these situations, the visitor is expected to complete the work of art. The complete meaning of the work of art is obtained through the interaction with the visitor. Attempting to turn the viewer's role from passive to active, Kaprow represented the reflection of a wider cultural change, which was to be spread during 1960s.³¹ James Turrell is often considered to be a paradigmatic example of an environmental artist. Light and space in his works represent both, the subject and the aim. His installation emphasize phenomenological characteristics of perception, and before directing to "here and now", they stop the time and detach us from the real space.³² Hill states that Turrell's installations represent the famous Le Corbusier's idea that architecture represents a dance of forms in light, arguing that he uses light better than any architect, even Le Corbusier.³³

A lot of architects also problematize the notion of the atmosphere. Peter Zumthor, in his texts, indicates the primary significance of architectural atmospheres. Zumthor treats atmosphere as an aesthetical category, and emphasizes two notions as primary, in relation to the atmosphere of an object and the manner in which we perceive and experience the space. The first one represents our emotional sensibility through which we experience the atmosphere. Emotional sensibility is the form of perception which functions as a form of spontaneous response.³⁴ According to Zumthor, immediately after entering a room, we already develop feelings in relation to it. Even if the space does not appear to be affirmative for us, we develop a feeling towards it. The next notion Zumthor emphasizes is corporeality; namely, our encounter with the object is always physical, bodily, as he believes. We develop an impression towards the object immediately, feel its material and haptic qualities, hear the sounds, see the light, feel the temperature and smell, etc.³⁵

Phenomenological and hermeneutic theories in architecture, declare that the notion of the atmosphere consequentially triggers the question of perception. The atmosphere constitute the image of space, and not the space itself. A relevant notion of "space experience", which is always an experience that involves multiple senses, is thus defined. Juhani Pallasmaa states that a space experience, which involves multiple senses is not just a series of images, but also an encounter with an object, approach and opposition, movement and bodily identification. Thus Pallasmaa calls architecture an art of the view, adopting Baumgarten's idea that perception of atmosphere is generated in both mental and sense experience. The atmosphere is the mental background, experiential feature or characteristic, which is stretched between the perceived object and subject.³⁶ The power of architecture lays in its capability to empower the experience of the reality, and its imaginative dimensions arise from this intensified and re-sensitized feeling of the reality.³⁷

Philippe Rahm's projects represent the model of the relationship established between the architectural design and installation art through a contemporary discourse on sustainability. As Fischer points, the main characteristic of Philippe Rahm's architecture is that it cannot be viewed, but can be felt.³⁸ He also emphasizes that if architecture wants to be more than a design and planning service, and art more than decoration, they both have to be founded on the grounds of conceptual thinking, experiments and discourse.³⁹ This is exactly the way in which Philippe Rahm integrates architectural responses into technical solutions which offer the appropriate type of comfort, thus offering a model of sustainable behavior in the space. As Rahm states, when we are cold or hot, we do not search only for the external causes in order to improve our comfort, but also internal, physiological causes in our bodies.⁴⁰

Experiments-exhibitions, such as *The New Olduvai Gorges*, *Digestibile Gulf Stream*, or *The Domestic Astronomy* show, as Rahm states, experiments with architecture which substitute functional and symbolic limitations with openness, in terms of using space and possibilities of its interpretation.⁴¹ Researching new forms of designing and using space, Rahm encourages the user to new forms and ways of perceive the space. As Rahm states that his work is no longer experimental, but it applies his experience gained through exhibitions onto real projects. Thus, his practice can be divided to the period of research and the period of application. Of course, there are always new researches on new topics which could be applied to new projects.⁴² In his research, Rahms also refers to Peter Sloterdijk and Bruno Latour, who state that a man is no longer in front of an object, but included into an object. Men's activities have brought to global warming and other consequences on the planet. The state of the atmosphere is the consequence of men's actions. Thus world is no longer perceived as an object outside of us, but as completely connected to us.⁴³

CONCLUSION

Artistic forms of environmental arts refer to a wide field of artistic practices, which is the reason why these practices are often described as theatrical and experiential. The idea of applying environmental arts practice in architectural design comes from the need of the user to be immersed in the space. The term of atmosphere is recognized as a common goal of both creative practices (art and architecture). Both practices are focused on the viewer, who is immersed into the space which surrounds him, but also keeps a certain percentage of his own identity as the viewer. Atmospheres are designed having in mind an active participation of the viewer. This participation is a part of the entire idea of the work of art, whereas the entire design process is directed towards the user, his requests and needs. The relation which is established here is the relation between

the architect/artist, the user and four-dimensional space, so called space-time. As Pallasmaa states, a window does not represent architecture, but a possibility to direct the view through it, to let the light inside, which turns architectural elements into sensible architectural experiences. Le Corbusier argues similarly when he states that we always have to say what we see, but, above everything else, and which is a harder task, we have to see (perceive) what we see. The atmosphere is not sufficient to be examined only through theory, it is necessary, as it was demonstrated through examples of art and architecture, constant research through design.

In the contemporary world, disciplines of performing arts are assimilated to a great extent within global performative rituals of everyday life. The border between the real world and idealized, separated, autonomous world of art becomes less clear. Spaces of our homes become environments in which rituals of contemporary world take place. The author-architect has to be devoted to these rituals in his design process, in order to be able to design atmosphere of semantics that can be discovered.

Art and architectural design are traditionally connected with specific scale, in which the design process is developed. But in contemporary moment, the influence of culture in all the discourses is manifested through wide interest in everyday life, which resulted with active design in real-scale 1:1 (*real-size-multimediasworks*) and with deleting the boundaries between life, art and architecture. In that way, scale becomes not just a design tool, but rather a design method for active participation of creative practices in culture. The production of the atmosphere is thus a potential for imprinting of everyday life into architectural and artistic forms, through *real-size-multimediasworks*.

NOTES

- 1 Vitruvian Triad: the structure must be solid, useful, beautiful (*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*). Vitruvius, *The Ten Books on Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, 1960)
- 2 Claude Parent, Paul Virilio, and Mostafavi Mohsan, *AA Documents 3: The Function of the Oblique: The Architecture of Claude Parent and Paul Virilio, 1963-1969*. (London: Architectural Association, 1996), 13.
- 3 See in: Žil Delez i Feliks Gatari, *Šta je filozofija?* (Beograd: IK Zorana Stojanovića, 1998)
- 4 "there is a recurrent part-to-whole relation, in which wholes at one scale become parts at the next larger scale." Manuel Delanda, "Emergence, Casality and Realism." *Architectural Theory Review* 17/1 (2012): 3-16.
- 5 Stratimirovic and Kordic propose that altered scale as a tool presents the possibility for inner world to appropriate the outside scenery, to form one territory of architecture. Tatjana Stratimirovic and Milena Kordic, "New Belgrade Scenery: Scale and Territory" (paper presented at the International Conference on "Changing Cities" Spatial, morphological, formal & socio-economic dimensions, Skiathos Island, Greece, 18-21 June 2013), 1380.
- 6 See in: Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987)

- 7 Teresa Brennan, *The Transmission of Affect* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2004), 1.
- 8 Milena Kordić, "Modeli kontinuiteta: Epistemologija projektovanja unutrašnjeg prostora" (PhD
diss., University of Belgrade, 2014), 51.
- 9 Delez i Gatari, *Šta je filozofija?*, 168.
- 10 Delez i Gatari, *Šta je filozofija?*, 62.
- 11 Aleksandar Kostić, "Plato in the architectural studio," in *Theory by design*, Antwerp: Artesis
University College, 2012), 30.
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faces – The Dynamics of Architectural Knowledge", 20th EAAE Conference *Four faces – The
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- 15 Ivana Spasić, "Svakodnevno i političko: kontrapunkt, otpor ili temelj?," *Političke perspektive,
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- 16 Džo Moran, *Čitanje svakodnevice* (Beograd: Biblioteka XX vek, 2011), 23.
- 17 Moran states that in the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies since 1960s there has been
a significant influence of ethnographical understanding of everyday. For more on the research on
subcultural groups and recognizable forms of "symbolic creativity" see: Paul Willis, *Common
Culture: Symbolic Work at Play in the Everyday Cultures of the young* (Buckingham: Open
University Press, 1990)
- 18 Michel De Certeau, *Invencija svakodnevice*, prev. Gordana Popović (Zagreb: Naklada MD, 2002), 49.
- 19 Ljiljana Blagojević, „Metodske, konceptualne i sadržinske osnove reprezentacije prakse
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