

MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE AND CONVERSION: FROM PARADIGM TO INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ANTI-MUSEUM

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Abstract. *The majority of art museums all over the world have found their accommodation in buildings whose primary function and service, at the time of construction, was completely different. Conversion was more a rule than an exception during (not so long) museum history, and it is unambiguous that typological structure of renaissance and baroque palaces have had dominant influence on museum organization and structure. The further important step forward, considering museum accommodation in historical buildings, happened after the Second World War, with reevaluation and representation of old artistic works by means of new architectonic tools. During the late seventies, reaction of artists to contemporary prevailing trends in museum architecture resulted in creation of numerous unconventional museums, placed in abandoned industrial facilities, warehouses, powerplants, on the margins of official culture, as a contrast to the overdesigned museums as sites of luxury and entertainment. Not long afterwards, the network of museum institutions has accepted the vital elements of this "parallel cultural system" concept and reaffirmed conversion as an equally worthy solution for collection accommodation and temporary exhibition space. In this paper, we have presented the history of conversion as a part of museum architectural typology evolution, advantages and disadvantages of conversion, as well as the contribution of conversion to the sustainable urban development.*

Key words: *conversion, museum architecture, art museum, anti-museum.*

1. CONVERSION. HISTORICAL EXAMPLES.

"Conversion means change. One converts something that exists because a transformation is necessary. In this sense a conversion is a game with building blocks played in a quarry of history in which the original substance is sometimes so transferred that new and old combine in a symbiotic alliance. In such a case one cannot be removed from the other. Conversions

have been carried out in any historical era. Interface between history and the present is expressed in a conversion. In this way dead substance is injected with life." (1)

The first museums, like Vatican Museum (Fig. 1), Louvre and Uffizzi (Fig. 2), are even now greatly admired and respected, as the perfect museum model. Our idea of "immaculate" museum form (at least for exhibition of old masters' paintings) is formed by these model museums, although these first museums were originally built for different content and service. Conversion was a rule, not an exception in museum building type evolution. First museums were housed in luxurious residential objects which frequently had long and narrow "galleries" and small "cabinets of treasure" and they had been used as exhibition spaces for ages in Europe, mainly for private collections of artistic objects and scientific specimen. In the beginning, the purpose of the galleries WAS NOT exhibition. Their *raison d'être* was to connect distant parts of huge palace complexes. Later, utilization of these spaces for exhibition became a logical consequence.

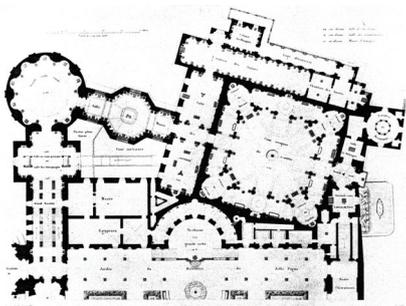


Fig. 1. The Vatican, courtyard of statues in the Belvedere and the Museo Pio-Clementino

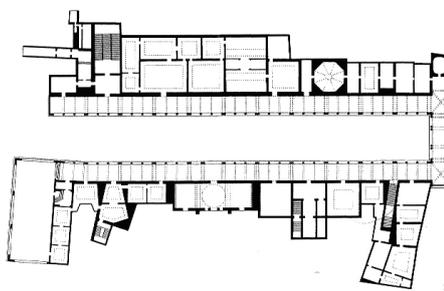


Fig. 2. Giorgio Vasari, Uffizzi, Florence, begun 1560

Vatican is one of the fundamental examples. The Pope's collection was increasing very fast through the multi-storey gallery complex designed by Donato Bramante. It was conceived as a connection between Belvedere Palace on the north and the central part of the Pope's residence, but as soon as in 1508, the first sculpture exhibition was installed in the palace courtyard, in the immediate proximity to Vatican.

There is a similar story about Fontainebleau. Works of art "imported" from Italy to France were exhibited in the Gallery François Ier, which was originally created as a link for two palace wings. Soon after that, Vincenzo Scamozzi had built the Gallery Vespasiano Gonzaga in Sabionetta, near Mantua, whose interior was later decorated with sculptures.

More time has passed until the Uffizzi in Florence begun to function as an administrative center, and a home for ducal collection, which was placed in the deep enfilades. It was a cornerstone of Vasari's brilliant intervention in the heart of Florence, at the end of XVIII century. The Medici's family collection, one of few renaissance collections preserved till the present days without change, was established in the 1670s, in Galleria degli Uffizi, in several ducal offices, designed previously by Giorgio Vasari for Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Later changes in Uffizzi Loggia, needed for accommodation of the large Medici collection, construction of the Tribune building, and special

adjustments in the interior, have contributed to the establishment of new standards for buildings used as exhibition space. (2)

The history of the Louvre is similar. It was built as a palace wing in the XVIII century, created as a connection to the central part of Palace in Tuileries, and used exclusively as the exhibition space as early as the 18 century.

Carlo Marchionni's Villa Albani, built for Alessandro Albani, and Fridericianum in Kasel, designed by Simon Louis Du Ry, for Frederick II, also witness about hybrid origin of museum. Although with different concept, both buildings were used for exhibition: Vila Albani for the antiquities, as the specialized museum, while the Fridericianum, with its library and mixed collection of scientific curiosities and works of art, was an encyclopedic museum. Both palaces were built in late baroque style and represent, in opinion of many, two most important precedents of modern museum buildings. (3)

This early phase in development of "museum building type" had a significant influence on further progress in museum buildings organization. Typological structure of first museums, which were adopted baroque and renaissance palaces, had effects on the art exhibition. All major rooms were interconnected, which influenced the sequence of viewing, treated as a linear continuity, with a presumption that the viewer will follow the prerequisite order, a feature which is perpetuated through time in museum buildings until present days. Leo Von Klenze's Alte Pinakothek in Munich, therefore, with exception of brilliantly constructed staircase, is essentially a modification of palace design (4).

Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret-Gris) admired this museum feature in his studies, and researched the possibility of growth and expansion of this already established sequence. Design of Guggenheim Museum (Frank Lloyd Wright) is entirely and rigidly determined by this feature, and this predetermined sequence can be marked as a starting point of design process. Even in these works, no matter how different they might look to the eye of a neutral observer, influence of primary museum scheme is present, and stunningly big number of new, contemporary museums, still find their retreat in "re-reading" of few, renowned museum archetypes - Durand's layout (Fig. 3), Schinkel's Altes Museum scheme (Fig. 4), Leo von Klenze's Alte Pinakothek stairs. And, it has to be emphasized, these archetypes had their model in primary museums, which were also products of conversion.

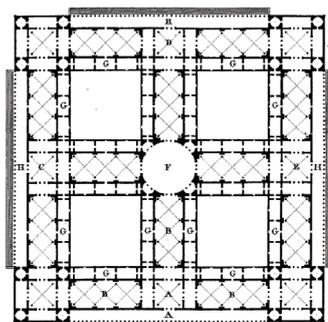


Fig. 3. Jean-Nicolas-Louis Durand:
Design for a museum:
ground floor plan, Paris, 1803

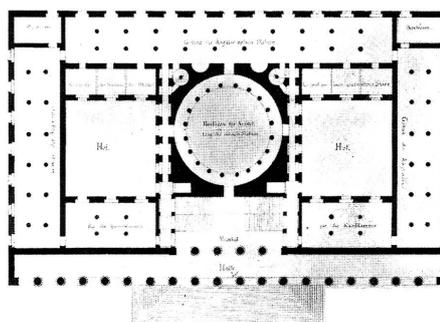


Fig. 4. Karl Friedrich Schinkel, Altes
Museum: ground floor plan,
Berlin, 1822-28

2. MUSEUM AS A CONVERTED MONUMENT

After the WWII, in the 1950ties, the seductiveness of museum accommodation in old buildings with big historical, cultural and architectural values is rediscovered. Museums, as the "places of recollection" find perfect frame for their works of art in architecture which is, as a piece of cultural heritage, also a "recollection" worthy of preservation. Persuasive contribution of Italian authors to the restoration of old, valuable buildings and museum design in general is especially striking. Franco Albini, Ignazio Gardella, Carlo Scarpa, Studio BBPR, have undoubtedly shown that they understand the old architecture and respect tradition, and their successful interventions were admired all over Europe. Their reconstructions have offered some solutions which had great influence on further development of "museum architecture". Alleviated of the museum "monumental crust", a museum design process is transformed, and therefore the works of art themselves initiate certain architectonic project; the works of art determine space, dimensions and proportions of exhibition walls. Every single statue and painting is analyzed and, in search for appropriate space for them, exhibits are shown "visibly"; they express the idea that museum exhibition is not only about storing, but above all, about communication which should be individual and specific.

Despite assertions to the contrary, this was not achieved without some elements of cultural violence. When Albini presents Giovanni Pisano's marble fragment of Margherita di Brabante in the Palazzo Bianco (Fig. 5), he turns it into an almost metaphysical sculpture. This exploits Pisano for the purpose of a version of modernism that is and must be alien to him (although it is given a more ecumenical interpretation than the modernism of the 1920s and 1930s). In the other words, even when the boundary between old and new is sharply emphasized and heavily underlined, a contemporary interpretation is taking place. In this way, by means of, at that point in time, provocative deconstruction of traditional relations between painting, frame and interior, Albini shifts the "old masters" paintings from their usual surroundings to the semantically "neutral" space of esthetic ideology. (5)



Fig. 5. The fragment of the tomb of Margherita di Brabante by Giovanni Pisano



Fig. 6. New octagonal staircase with continuous timber handrail covered in leather

Palazzo Rosso (1953-61) (Fig. 6) is another example of Albini's attitude toward museum as a "working combination of spaces and exhibits in a delicate relation of old and new" (7). The original concept is almost entirely preserved and studiously designed in details represented with glass screens which emphasize and use transparency and fluency of interior, staircases and loggias in the courtyard, as important elements of Genoese baroque.

Architects from BBPR Studio (Belgiojoso, Peressutti and Rogers) worked on design of Castello Sforzesco conversion to City Museum in Milan (1954-64). In the first phase, designed in 1952, and built between 1954 and 1956, two floors have been re-constructed, the lower floor for sculptures, arms, tapestries and Leonardo's fresco, and upper floor, for the paintings, furniture and tapestries. The second phase, finished seven years later, is placed around the entrance tower and serves for exhibition of ceramics, bronze, jewelry and vast collection of musical instruments. With respect for the importance of well-defined "districts", which is easily recognized by visitors, designers "move" the connection with the first floor out to the exterior space, transforming it to the bridge overlooking the courtyard greenery and fountain, and the staircase leading to the open loggia with a view to the tower and open space between the two museum wings. Although this communication is shaded, the break is clear and the wholes are clearly defined. Another interesting solution is the choice of designers to place unfinished Michelangelo's sculpture *Pieta Rondanini* at the bottom of the staircase, partially closed with a stone screen, which brings a visitor unexpectedly to the exhibit, increases his excitement by this encounter, and enables a "private" communication between the work of art and a viewer.

Carlo Scarpa, in his design of the conversion of Palazzo Abbatellis in Palermo (1954), into the exhibition space (National Gallery of Sicily), researches the mutual relation between the exhibits and their immediate surrounding. Courtyard, windows screened with gothic ornaments, bare stone walls, and vaulted ceilings from the 15th century palace, as well as the big fresco "Triumph of death", became the part of museum exhibition and contribute to the creation of the specific atmosphere. Scarpa made a whole range of small interventions in cooperation with local craftsmen, and he had used their skills to create recognizable contemporary form which, although modern, expresses his respect to the past (6).

Scarpa's reconstruction of Castelvecchio in Verona (1958-1961) represents not only an exquisite example of conversion of an old castle into the museum space, but also a daring restoration of medieval building. Scarpa found out that the courtyard façade does not date from the 14th century, and that it is a "pastiche" from the 1920s, and decided to incorporate some surprisingly invasive details into it, gaining the revived wall structure. Nowadays, willingly or not, conversion of old palaces and castles frequently means the reduction of their architectonic features, and this example of "transplantation of historic skin", would be hardly acceptable from the aspect of modern conservators. (5)

Combination of "gentleness" and understanding of old building restoration (7) along with use of modern materials and clean modern intervention in works of Carlo Scarpa, Franco Albini, as well as theoretical aspects of "museumification process" as an important segment of active protection of built heritage, analyzed by Franco Minissi, significantly influenced many designers all over the Europe and worldwide. Hans Hollein, Rafael Moneo, Lacaton and Vassal, Sverre Fehn, Ortner and Ortner, are some of many who have recently, in their adaptations of valuable historical buildings to museum spaces, approached their Italian rolemodels.

3. MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE OF 1960S AND 1970S AND ARTISTS – BIRTH OF ANTIMUSEUM

Museum architecture of 1960s and -70s is characterized by two trends: widespread "white cube" museum architecture, neutral from aesthetic and political point of view, and parallel expansion of, truly revolutionary, although seemingly superficial architectonic innovations (starting with Centre Pompidou). Museums are not confined any more to exhibition and storing of art works, they gain new functions, as guided tours, banquets, lectures, conferences, retail stores – functions that are nowadays considered inevitable in museums. All these activities are synchronized with new museum program. Present day museum is a place where the culture is exploited for new purposes. In these new, vast, noisy spaces, crowded with people, all contemplative analysis of artwork is annihilated, and visitors are forced to consummate the art in motion. Architecture has become an instrument of that process and it fits perfectly into this new function: escalators, turnstiles, and other architectonic elements, previously reserved only for department stores and shopping malls, railway stations and airports, are more and more often found in big museums. In this way, museums lose their unique identity, and turn to faceless facets of modern globalized society, adjusted for carelessness, craving for gratification.

Artists' response to this arrogance and indifference was equally harsh. PopArt has already shown its aversion towards museum as institution; with evolution of LandArt, MinimalArt and EnvironmentalArt, and even more with development of performance art and "happenings", war against the "white cubes" speeded up. Art gets more and more public approval outside museum space, and first alternative exhibition spaces arise. Most of them were private galleries or some kind of artistic "communities", which functioned as workshop and exhibition space at the same time.⁽⁸⁾ In the beginning, in New York, in SoHo and later in Chelsea, but also in Europe, these "revolutionary" exhibition spaces were created in some incredible places – old industrial facilities, railway stations, deserted warehouse and administration buildings, powerplants, hospitals, jails, schools...creating an alternative space for art and parallel cultural system as a reaction to "overdesigned" museums packed with luxury and mass products. Alternative museums, which refuse to be museums, constantly move beyond limits, make breakthrough, and revitalize artistic avant-garde critics of museums, especially by recognition of complex nature of each space devoted to the contemporary art.⁽⁹⁾

One of the most famous alternative exhibition spaces was PS 1 Contemporary Art Center on Long Island, in Queens, New York (Fig. 7), opened in 1976. It was situated in an abandoned school building, by the Institute for Art and Urban Resources inc., an organization devoted to organizing exhibitions in underutilized and abandoned spaces across New York City. Their consultant was famous Brian O'Doherty. In a deliberate rejection of the "white cube" esthetics, this building has preserved its former character in structure and exterior. The PS-1 primary interest is set on critical, fresh, anti-cultural and politically engaged groups, while exhibitions often work as an unexpected revelation.

Another similar example is the mounting of artistic objects in two exhibition spaces on Manhattan, The New York Earth Room (1977) and The Broken Kilometer (1979) Dia Foundation of Art. One part of the building in SoHo, made of cast iron, was transformed into apparently accidental art space. One of the exhibition spaces is located between grocery store and tourist agency, totally "indecently", demonstrating that art is capable to manage in the city even without museum, and even more, in this way, art expresses its poetry more intensive. ⁽¹⁰⁾



Fig. 7. PS 1 Contemporary Art Center on Long Island, Queens, New York, 1976

Frek Gehry's 1983 renovation of two single-story sheds in Los Angeles for the Museum of Contemporary Art was significant. Typical of adapted spaces, the Temporary Contemporary (now the Geffen Contemporary) (Fig. 8) had a generosity of scale unavailable in most museum galleries, with structural elements providing a context for the art. Gehry's sensitive remodeling set a precedent for subsequent alternative spaces, like Dia Art foundation in New York (1987). (11)



Fig. 8. Temporary Contemporary (now the Geffen Contemporary), L.A., F.O. Gehry 1983



Fig. 9. The Saatchi collection gallery, 98A Boundary Road, London, Max Gordon, 1984

Considering how many alternative spaces for art there were by 1984, Charles and Doris Saatchi's conversion of a garage and motor-repair shop in London into a private museum has received an inordinate amount of attention. The renown of 98A Boundary Road (Fig. 9) as a gallery for painting and sculpture for since the 1960s was due partly to Charles Saatchi himself, a partner with his brother Maurice in one of the world's largest advertising and public-relations agencies. In their emphasis on neutrality, Saatchi and the late Max Gordon, the friend and architect he chose to design the space, created galleries more like those of a public than of a private museum. In contrast with most projects of its kind for which the collector personalizes the architecture, 98A is remarkably anonymous. Gordon designed a container within the container of the original trapezoidal structure, and used light to unify galleries. (11)

Opening of permanent installation of Donald Judd's works in 1986, was definitely a protest; (10) in cooperation with Chinati Foundation, its main goal was to denunciate inadequacy of contemporary museums for exhibition of modern works of art. Donald Judd

believed in permanent installations, as many of his works were fragile and not easy to handle and prepare for exhibition. Permanent installation offers an encounter with a particular work of art within a given space where change is brought about not by new juxtapositions but by the changing natural light at different times of the day and by the changing perspective of the viewer. That's why Donald Judd used his home on Spring Street in SoHo for exhibition, and later Chinati Foundation in Marfa, isolated in the desert of Chihuahua in Western Texas. Visitors of Chinati declare that they feel like they went on a pilgrimage. (12) Abandoned army barracks, used as exhibition space, possess a rare quality and perfect harmony of space, light and art.

Eventually, all these "artistic" projects have caused the reaction of museum experts. The director of the Tate Gallery, Nicholas Serota, in his lecture at the National Gallery in London, in 1996, made some remarks on the effect of changes on the conventions of the museum:

"What do we expect from museum of modern art at the end of the twentieth century? We may agree that the encyclopedic and dictionary functions of the museum are neither achievable nor desirable. But there is less general agreement on how to balance the interests of the artists, the curator and the visitor. Some of the larger institutions have begun to explore new approaches. However, the most stimulating developments have occurred in smaller museums, where the sense of institutional responsibility towards conventional expectations is less pressing." (13)

4. AWAKENING OF THE INSTITUTION

These unconventional exhibition spaces have gained a great success from broad audience. Fundamental changes in museum typology have compelled museum experts, architects, curators to search for new solutions, which will please the visitors, but also enable artists to express themselves and feel more at home in their buildings. Older buildings, especially abandoned industrial facilities, were recognized by experts as a convenient solution. An old building is not "an empty canvas"; it frequently offers vast, already existing space, appropriate for exhibition of contemporary, often great art works.



Fig. 10. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Gaetana Aulenti, 1987

An outstanding example of conversion as a new museum architecture trend is undoubtedly Musée d'Orsay in Paris (1979–1987) (Fig. 10). The building, originally designed for the railway company and served as a railway station (Victor Alexandre

Frédéric Laloux, 1850-1937), started to work in 1900, in honor of World Exhibition in Paris. At the time, it was considered as a technology wonder. However, only forty years later it was closed as out-of-date, and left to decay for decades. At the beginning of seventies, after public discussion, it was proclaimed to be a cultural monument, and in 1978, it was decided to become an art museum.

The design was commissioned from A.C.T. Architecture studio (Colboc, Bard, Philippon), and Gaetana Aulenti was assigned to work on interior design of future museum. Exterior elements of Laloux's building were partially preserved and the new construction elements were visibly added to the original object. In the interior, Gae Aulenti, specialized in redesign and adaptation of historical buildings, introduced powerful post-modern architectural elements, although with aspiration not to disturb the fluency and transparency of existing interior elements. Plentitude of details and the original design of each exhibition room still have a common motive, uniform design of floors and ceilings, covered with light "Buxy" limestone from Burgundy. The special attention was given to the introduction of zenith light and interior elements which should preserve works of art from direct sunlight and eliminate the glare at the topmost floor, dedicated to impressionist paintings.

Public reactions to this conversion were contradictory. Most experts consider it successful, although some other, like Claude Lévi-Strauss, remark that in this case, in his opinion, primary aim was to indulge investors, and attract the public attention, at the expense of art works exhibited in this museum. (14) Either way, Musée d'Orsay is visited, in average, 9000 people a day, and it successfully functions as a proof of "new life of old buildings".

The conversion of the Bankside Power Station (Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, 1947-63) in Southwark (Fig. 11), to house part of the Tate Gallery's collection of modern art, represents the exquisite example of an industrial monument revival. The new institution, Tate Modern, contains an expanding accumulation of international twentieth-century and contemporary art, together with fluid, flexible spaces for multidisciplinary exhibitions and performances, while the existing Millbank building remains the national museum of British art from 1750 to the present day.

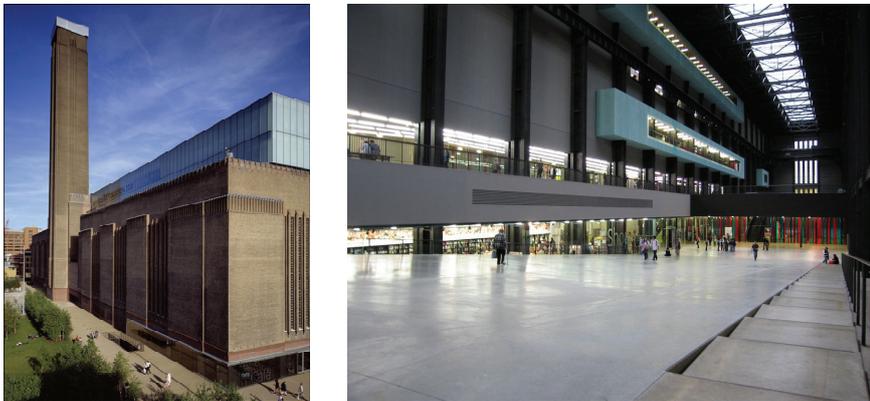


Fig. 11. Tate Modern Gallery, London, Herzog & de Meuron, 2000

The international competition for the Tate Modern was won by Herzog & de Meuron. The most visible designers' intervention in this conversion is a two-storey 'light beam' that runs longitudinally along the building, its emphatic horizontality counterbalancing the strong vertical mass of the central chimney. This new structure brings light into galleries and is illuminated at night; its huge mass pulsating with light above the Southwark skyline evocatively signals the building's reincarnation. (15)

The Bankside powerplant was originally designed in two phases, between 1948 and 1963, and reflected Scott's interest in the early Dutch Modernism, manifest in a taut brick skin incised with long vertical openings. Herzog & de Meuron leave this largely intact, but gently diffuse the building's necessarily hermetic character with a big ramp on the west side that funnels visitors into the soaring, cathedral-like volume of the former turbine hall. Now carved open to its full height, this forms an imposing public street for performances and displays of art, particularly large sculptures and installations. Public facilities, such as education rooms, shops and information spaces are arranged around the turbine hall, which acts as a constant reference point for visitors as they circulate through the new museum.

Despite variations in size, configuration and lighting conditions, the gallery spaces form a recognizable overall family. This partly stems from an early decision to maintain a minimum room height of around 5m, rather than creating a hierarchy of floors, which lends itself to stratification by medium or school. On the north side of the turbine hall, three floors of galleries are organized around a central concourse. Multiple entrances to groups of rooms enable visitors to construct their own routes through the building. Gallery walls are generally plain white, with floors of either timber or concrete. Some spaces are lit from the side through Scott's existing slot-like windows, others from above through clerestoreys. Some rooms are totally enclosed, others have bracing views out over the Thames or back into the turbine hall. In spite of all the restraint of Herzog and De Meuron's architecture, the Tate Modern is clearly a spectacular place to visit, one that leaves visitor with the most memorable of experiences of spatial gymnastics.



Fig. 12. The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCa), North Adams, Brunner/Cott & Associates Inc., 1999

The Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art (MASS MoCa) (Fig. 12), designed by Brunner/Cott & Associates Inc., occupies a 19-th century mill complex, vacant for 10

years before development of the museum began. Its architecture of brick and glass remained symbolic of every New England town of the Industrial Revolution. The underlying challenge in the design of MASS MoCa was tripartite: create a social and economic self-sustaining catalyst for the town, preserve a historic mill complex, and design a new kind of art museum.⁽¹⁶⁾ MASS MoCa discards the notion of the museum as a reliquary for displaying precious objects. Instead, it integrates the making of art with the viewing, showing art in a setting akin to the studio context, demystifying and bringing the viewer into closer proximity to the visual and performing art. The patina of history is preserved and honored, but also used as an element of a fundamentally new work of architecture.



Fig. 13. The Palais de Tokyo, Paris, Lacaton & Vassal, 2002

In Paris, The Palais de Tokyo, originally designed by Dondel, Aubert, Viard and Dastugue, after conversion into museum (Lacaton & Vassal) (Fig. 13) succeeds in addressing more challenging issues such as tactics and politics of display. Beyond ensuring structural integrity and the reintroduction of power and services, the main physical adjustments made by Lacaton & Vassal concerned the floors and the roof. Usable areas of original stone flooring were kept and extended with concrete. For the roof, the aim was to reclaim the abundance of natural light provided by the original design, reopening all the skylights and replacing some of the glass with polycarbonated panels. The main entrance in the north-west corner opens into cupola-covered volume, a feature of the original design. But the space has been intriguingly and provocatively cannibalized⁽¹⁷⁾, ragged chunk is missing from one of the cupola's five supporting columns and marble entrance desks have been customized with a few spray-paint, pixel-dot graffiti stencils, reminiscent of space-invader characters (by graphic designers M/M). The interior of the Palais has been defined as a receptacle for a constant evolution of finishes, as new artists occupy its spaces and adapt them to their own requirements. The architects strived to ensure that the interior was not whitewashed, like an orthodox gallery.

In Beacon, New York, the old industrial printing facility became an exceptional residence of Dia: Beacon museum (designed by Open Office and architect Robert Irwine). It is an outpost of New York Dia Foundation, which has collected majority of artworks by minimalist artists, like Richard Serra, Dan Flavin, Carl Andree and Donald Judd. Most works have huge dimensions, which give the special atmosphere to the exhibition in the old industrial facility. In this case, the old building plays its role perfectly, better than any new build-

ing ever could do. Also in New York, in Queens, another successful conversion was made: an old staples factory was turned into museum, MoMa QNS (designed by Michael Maltzan) (Fig. 14), as a temporary gallery and permanent storage depot, as a consequence of the reconstruction and extension of MoMA in central New York (this extension is designed by Taniguchi). The trend of successful conversions is living, and it is continued all over the world, with many interesting examples, to mention only brilliant Caixa Forum in Madrid, Spain, designed by famous architectonic duo, Herzog and De Meuron (Fig. 15).



Fig. 14. MoMa QNS, New York,
Michael Maltzan, 2002-2004



Fig. 15. Caixa Forum, Madrid,
Herzog and De Meuron, 2008

5. CLOSING REMARKS

Successful conversion of historical buildings into museum spaces is an important and influential issue in evolution of museum architecture. Yet, there are many museum experts arguing against this type of conversion. The conversion opponents have various explanations for their attitude. Some of them believe that conversion "simply cannot be copied" and therefore it cannot be a model in architecture. (5) Others think that any intervention on transforming some space into museum leads to the elimination of its spatial qualities and personal features, no matter how degraded this space was previously. (18) There are opinions that limited space and spatial organization of the original historical building have an unfavorable effect on latter museum functioning.

Therefore, some dilemmas should be resolved at the very beginning of design process, especially when art museum is planned. Why is new building necessary? Where is it going to be located? What form is desirable? Is going to be an extension to the existing building, or a totally new building, or can a conversion satisfy the need for exhibition space? A whole range of decisions has to be made; many of them are disturbing for the unstable balance of power and historical conflict between architects and curators.

An object as a "landmark" could be one of likely answers. Typical examples are Guggenheim Museum in New York, designed by F. L. Wright and Guggenheim Bilbao by F. O. Gehry. Such structures have proven themselves by shaping the identity of entire city, and expressing the power to attract their own audience. On the other hand, these projects have caused inconvenience to artists and fear that the container will sidetrack visitors from art contained within. These buildings unquestionably set standards, but, are they the

best place to show art? Many curators and artists disagree with that, ever since egoistic Wright's museum was constructed. Forty years later, that museum is one of New York city landmarks, but the fact that the majority of its collection is exhibited at the new, orthogonal museum wing, on rectangle, straight walls, should not be underrated. In the world of art, architecture is often considered to be an intruder, disturbing the art, but the art itself can be equally egoistic in its demands from the architecture. Is it art or architecture that attracts us, desire for knowledge or urb-architectonic spectacle? It is clear that, in case of museum, or any other "cultural" building, both aspects are important. But to achieve the balance is not easy, and the mere conflict between architecture and art is a phenomenon which can be traced back to the time of the construction of many important buildings at the beginning of the twentieth century. In that two-way process, curators and artists themselves certainly wish to catch the attention of the audience, which is then used by museums as a merit of their value, but they are not willing to be beaten by architects.(19) However, unexciting buildings do not attract masses. This could be an explanation for the fact that so many new museum buildings, galleries and other cultural institutions are housed in valuable historical objects, and recently in recycled industrial objects. These spaces almost always have spectacular dimensions, and although they are often emblematic, there is no fear of their domination over art, because their place in "memory and picture of the city" is already granted, and, even more important, they are not visibly "signed" by a contemporary architect.

On the other hand, to choose an existing building for accommodation of a museum collection is a difficult task. Dimensions of the building can be a restraining factor in conversion process, as well as the existing building organization. The required preservation of primary building structure, especially when circulation of visitors and transport of art works is considered, can be a challenge. The limited spatial potential in historical buildings often puts together museologists and architects in order to achieve a maximal effect in exhibition areas, while the other museum contents are partially neglected.

All mentioned issues clearly testify about the problems which accompany every conversion of existing objects into museums and exhibition spaces. It is essential to protect the cultural monument, but also to establish a new museum, and to satisfy all specific requirements linked to exhibition of art works and other exhibits and all other aspects of contemporary museum. Beside exhibition area, contemporary museum must possess the prerequisites for other activities, e.g. area for documentation, library, auditorium, entrance hall, museum shops, cafeteria and restaurant, etc. The precise program for a new museum is an essential condition for a successful conversion. Only a joint effort of architects, conservators and curators will result in appropriate solution for two central aspects of this, sometimes dramatically architectonic problem: how to preserve the existing architectonic expression from another epoch, and at the same time, ensure that all conditions for functioning of a contemporary museum are present, without disturbance of building's typological structure.

In this way, conversions serve as guardians of the valuable architectonic heritage; they search for, and establish relations between the cultural legacy, culture and contemporary society. Recycled architectonic elements make their contribution to the fulfillment of modern model of integrated conservation, inevitable in context of sustainable urban development.

6. CONCLUSION

The institutionalization of contemporary art, enabled by the opening of Tate Modern in 2000, and the fusion between MoMA and PS1 in 1999, created new perspectives in evolution of museum typology. After more than twenty years spent in a conceptual opposition, a substantially modernist museum and a substantially alternative space – the type and the anti-type, became constituents of the same organization: the postmodernist museum, characterized by desire to acquire an impressive building and franchising. The most prolific examples are museums of Guggenheim Foundation (with famous buildings in New York, Venice, Bilbao, and presence in Berlin, Las Vegas (now closed), and the future building in Abu Dhabi) and Tate (with the outposts in Liverpool and St Ives). This high-level merge has marked the end of an era. In several ways, it has also rewarded the new approach of postmodernist museum to the exhibition space interior.

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MUZEJSKA ARHITEKTURA I KONVERZIJA: OD PARADIGME DO INSTITUCIONALIZACIJE ANTIMUZEJA

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Najveći deo svetskih muzeja našao je svoje mesto u objektima koji su građeni za sasvim drugačije sadržaje i u druge svrhe. Čak bi se moglo reći da je konverzija pre bila pravilo nego izuzetak u razvoju (i ne tako dugoj istoriji) muzeja, a izvesno je da je tipološka struktura renesansnih i baroknih palata postala model koji će bitno uticati na organizaciju muzejske zgrade u kasnijim periodima. Naredni značajan iskorak u pogledu smeštanja muzeja u postojeće istorijske strukture dešava se nakon II svetskog rata, reevalvacijom i reprezentacijom stare umetnosti korišćenjem modernih arhitektonskih sredstava. Kasnih '70-ih reakcija umetnika na tada dominantne trendove u muzejskoj arhitekturi rezultuje stvaranjem mnogobrojnih nekonvencionalnih muzeja, koji se pojavljuju na marginama zvanične kulture, a smešteni su u napuštene industrijske pogone, železničke stanice, skladišta, elektrane, stvarajući kontrast u odnosu na muzeje kao predizajnirana mesta luksuza i zabave. Nedugo potom, mreža muzejskih institucija, prihvata vitalne elemente koncepta ovog "paralelnog kulturnog sistema" čime se reafirmiše konverzija, kao ravnopravan izbor u procesu donošenja odluke u vezi sa smeštanjem postojećih kolekcija, kao i u slučaju traganja za odgovarajućim prostorom za prikazivanje novih kolekcija, odnosno povremenih izložbi. U radu se prikazuje evolucija korišćenja konverzije kao sredstva u razvoju muzejske tipologije, diskutuju prednosti i nedostaci, kao i doprinos konverzije održivom urbanom razvoju.

Ključne reči: *konverzija, arhitektura muzeja, muzeji umetnosti, antimuzej.*