**ON PERFORMATIVE POTENTIALS OF THE EXHIBITION SPACES: OCTOBER SALON**

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ABSTRACT

Starting with J. L. Austin's claim that there are two kinds of speech: constatives (utterances that determinate the facts and inform, in saying thay describe or report on something) and performatives (those that, in saying, actually perform what is being said; they do not describe, but rather act, perform the action that appointed) and the Marxist concept of ideological interpellation, the paper will focus on the performative potentials of the spaces in which the contemporary art is exhibited. It is possible to single out three kinds of exhibition spaces: the first one that were built with the intention to function as a gallery/exhibition space; the second, built for any other purpose (except for the exhibiting the art works) which at some point, after smaller or bigger adaptation, become the exhibition space; and, the third kind of space, built also for any other purpose but at some point, occasionally and/or temporally for the purpose of the artistic project or the exhibition project become contemporary art exhibition space. Contemporary post-duchampian art based on the concepts of nonmaterial, exchange and experience, redefines the addressee – he or she is not necessarily the traditional (passive) visitor any more, he or she becomes reconfigured into participant, interlocutor, guest, colleague, comrade (friend). Consequently, the exhibition space has no clear limits or profile, certainly not traditional museum or ‘white cube’ one – it can be performed as laboratory, café, library, office, classroom, or other kind of social space. The issue of its interpellation by the contemporary art practice into the world in which the main investment is not in the object but into the most valuable (precious) possession, our own subject is the topic that will be discussed in this paper with the respect to the local art scene examples.

Key words: exhibition space, contemporary art practice, performativity, participation, antagonism, October Salon

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“Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function in a polyvalent unity of conflictual programs or contractual proximities". Michel de Certeau (1984, p. 117)

“Social space is produced and structured by conflicts – with this recognition, a democratic spatial politics begins.” Rosalyn Deutsche (1996, p. xxiv )

**INTRO**

The exhibition space is a kind of social place and its history is still unwritten. The paradigmatic exhibition models, traditional museum model or ’white cube’ model, are actually the bourgeois society institutions that have the power to produce and to privilege the knowledge as well as to create the specific normative narrative, and in this sense they are deeply involved in the processes of disciplining and shaping (bourgeois) audience. Traditional exhibiting represents, as Tony Bennett (1996; 2007, p. 63) describes ‘a set of cultural technologies concerned to organise a voluntarily self-regulating citizenry’. The exhibitionary complex, a technology to exhibit knowledge and artifacts to a broader public that began in Europe in the late eighteenth century, was in Bennett’s opinion already a response to the problem of order, but one that was seeking to transform that problem into a problem of culture. The historical emergence of the art exhibition was closely related to that of a wider range of institutions: history museums, natural science museums, dioramas and panoramas, national and, later, international exhibitions, arcades and department stores. All these served as linked sites for the development and circulation of new disciplines (history, biology, art history, anthropology) and their discursive formations (the ‘past’, ‘evolution’, ‘aesthetics’, ‘Man’) as well as for the development of new technologies of vision. Consequently, the traditional exhibiting can be described as ‘a set of cultural technologies’ concerned to produce the politically neutral, impartially regulated spaces, the object/’product’ oriented visual culture and the disciplined/fostered viewer. First the museum, and than the ‘white cube’ model stood from its beginning in the context of other bourgeois institutions, taking their part in politics of knowledge and performing the effects of that politics.

As discursivity and sociability become central concerns of the contemporary art (whether under the influence of the art from the 60’s of the last century, or under its own circumstances, whether under the influence of the avant-garde and neo-avant-garde or the influence of popular culture, or finally whether under the mixed up influences), the focus moves from the art work to the art practice, from the aesthetic to the ethics, from the beauty to the politics, from the passivity to activity, from the authorship to the collaboration, from the (art)objects to the (social) relations, from the finished to the process, from the ‘eternity’ to ephemerality, from the artist-viewer sharp division to their conviviality, and, finally, from the undisputed knowledge and evaluating authority of the exhibition space (vertical approach) to the “messy juxtapositions of projects - photos and texts, images and objects, videos and screens” (Foster, 2004/2006, p. 192) in any space, closed or opened, which by performing the ‘art work’, transforms itself or it starts to perform an art exhibition space. New participatory and political practices in the art world have radically reshaped the very concept of the place in which they are going to be ‘staged’. On the other hand, it is also possible to think that the potential of the exhibitionary space and its architecture to establish a specific public includes also the potential of its alternative use:to address and involve in the project, different audiences who are usually separated by their disciplines or their social and class order. These two facts – conceptualization of the ‘viewers as producers’ (Bishop, 2006, pp. 10-17), and the other, subversive (‘dark’) potential of the ‘white cube’ model – transform the traditional exhibition space and its architecture from its constative towards its performative status. In that sense, the ‘exhibition’ uses the ‘white cube’ or the gallery (museum) space as a communicative platform, a place for public encounter, a stage exhibiting not just knowledge but ideas about collaborative practices (Bourriauld’s ‘relational aesthetic’ theoretical model; Hans Ulrich Obrist, Hou Hanru and Maria Lind’s paradigm of laboratory; workshop, or ‘chat rooms’ as Hal Foster named this kind of practice (2006, p. 190)), as well as platform for the antagonistic tensions or rational consensus alternative (Bishop’s ‘relational antagonism’ (2004, pp. 51-79), Mouffe’s proposition of the ‘artistic activism and agonistic spaces’ (2007, pp. 1-5). Above all, it is quite possible to activate/interpellate any other public or private space and any other architecture, eventually, into the art world in the same way by establishing them in one sequence of time as new, different and/or unexpected, accidental discursive space.

**CASE STUDY: OCTOBER SALON[[1]](#footnote-2)**

**From 1960 to 2004**

The October Salon was initiated almost six decades ago, with the intention of making it a public arena where domestic artists would establish and/or reproduce their reputation year after year. In the course of the passing years, this event defined itself within the local framework as a relevant one, and in that sense as a kind of indicator of validity of the main trends, but also as a place where innovations on the local scene received their verification. But as this event gradually built its position of a reference point of Serbian culture, it simultaneously fell into the grip of increasing inertia on account of its essentially conservative selection concept, valorisation and presentation of artistic production. The October Salon was conceived as an exhibition that presented works of art within the framework of particular media categories: painting, sculpture and graphic art, and this division was reflected on the awards given for these categories. Since 1967, the Salon has also featured works in the sphere of applied arts, and this segment has encompassed examples of ceramics and textile, as well as industrial and graphic design, costumes, scenography and photography. In the course of the 1990’s, when artistic practice had largely overcome the stylistic, media and other divisions, the October Salon quite evidently stopped being an adequate framework for its presentation. The last time when the October Salon made sense in terms of media divisions was in 1994, when it managed to be in touch with the contemporary scene following this concept. Four years later, in 1998, we had the first Salon that was not based on the concept of a contest or selection, but on the idea of a thematic authorial exhibition, held within the segmented framework of the so-called fine arts and applied arts. It was in the course of this, the 39th Salon, that media-related differences were abolished in the sphere of awards, so that five *ex aequo* awards were given that year. In the year 2001, artists selected artists, which was an interesting “experiment”, but it was even more a convenient way for the October Salon Council to get out of the awkward situation in which it was placed on account of the controversial effects of the contest for the Art Director. In 2002, there was willingness, but not enough financial support, to turn the Salon into an international event by inviting prominent contemporary artists to participate in the exhibition and by staging a historical survey of late European modernism. The October Salon finally turned international two years later, in 2004, when Anda Rottenberg was appointed the Art Director of the event.

**From 2004 to the present day**

If, until 2004, sharp criticisms and denials were exchanged in the area of local divisions and paradigms, after 2004 the focus was shifted onto polemics that could roughly be divided into those based on the issue of the participation of domestic artists in this event, and those based on a critical pondering of the very thesis of the exhibition and its explication, as presented in the introductory text and through the selection of artists and works made by the appointed Art Director. In principle, the former group of polemics begins and ends within the gap between the outside/inside view, inside the vicious circle of the dynamics of the relationship between the centre and the margin. Perhaps it would be productive to ponder the (in)compatibility of the two views not only in terms of the question whether the international scene is capable of recognising the local one, but also in terms of the question of whether the local scene possesses the potential to recognise itself in the global context, that is, whether it has the capacity to integrate in that context. In this sense, the question of whether the mandate of the Art Director should be given to a foreign or a domestic curator ought to be less a matter of political correctness and more one of professional competence.

Was it all right for the October Salon to go international? This question should undoubtedly be answered in the affirmative, for a number of reasons. Apart from the notorious argument that Belgrade should have an international event in the sphere of visual arts, just like film, the theatre or musical arts have their own FEST, BITEF and BEMUS festivals, among other and more important arguments, one could point out the processes of *glocalisation*, in evidence for some time already, which have been changing the geography of art over the past few decades, then the fact that the world’s major biennial or triennial exhibitions have arisen out of deep cultural and political needs, and that the Salon is by no means the only prestigious local event that has become international (for example, this has also happened to the Sydney Biennial, a very prestigious event today), and perhaps most importantly of all, the fact that art itself has the need for a dialogue “without frontiers”, in the course of which each individual artistic practice will form its current identity and its difference, but will also recognise mutual similarities.

International events are important places for “exchange of information”, establishing paradigms, promotion and affirmation of artists and their work, and also for promoting a particular city or region in historical, political, cultural and social-economic terms. These events reflect both the need of the public sphere for producing and presenting contemporary art and the need to structure and code the very same artistic production in this way. Also, it is not thinkable that they could be distanced from the so-called purely commercial system, for it is precisely that system that produces them, that is, makes them possible and actively participates in initiating them, organising them and making it possible for them to survive. On the other hand, the so-called “non-Western” biennials represent a new tendency of a relative distancing from the commercial system, and are initiated with a view to turn the marginal position central; conversely, they may also reflect the processes of the Westernisation of marginal points, the assimilation of those differences that lack the potential to radically destabilise the (Western) institutions of contemporary art. The only valid polemics to be conducted with good reason in connection with the October Salon appear those based on a critical reflection of what the Salon in question conceptualises, the manner in which it does so, whether it establishes a paradigm, and if so, what kind of paradigm, and the like. The task of a curator, when he/she works on an exhibition, is precisely to conceptualise the present time from his/her cooperation with artists and interpretation of their works, and with the help of the organisers, or to put it more precisely, to conceptualise some of its topical aspects (Čubrilo, 2009, pp. 26-31).

**October Salon: places and spaces or on the exhibitionary heterotopy**

 October Salon for all the decades of its existence was and still is ‘homeless’ manifestation, hosted form the edition to edition by various institutions, galleries, museums, alternative spaces, public spaces, but never *chez soi*. Up to the last ten years, i.e. to the first international edition, the conventional exhibitory concept ‘art-work in white box’ was the dominant, indisputable, undeniable, unquestionable, in a word never problematized. The 45th October Salon - at the same time the 1st International October Salon ‘The Continental Breakfast’ (Anda Rottenberg, art director) - stepped out of the routine and along with conventional exhibition space such as The Museum of Yugoslav History, and Nikola Tesla Museum, as well as galleries of Belgrade Cultural Centre, Association of Fine Artists of Serbia, and of Faculty of Fine Arts. Some of the art works, mostly the video-art works and video-installations, were placed in such unconventional spaces either forgotten and not in function such as Belgrade public Bath[[2]](#footnote-3) or in function but in the completely different field from the art world such as Astronomical Society Rudjer Bošković – Planetarium. This activation of the ‘unusual’ spaces generally was not dictated by the artistic demands as much it reflected the organizer’s and art director’s desire to provide eccentric settings which could give (spurious) legitimacy to contemporary art work and, more than that, which could make the event unique and attractive.[[3]](#footnote-4) Only few works considered historical and cultural meaning of place and its architecture and, in the same time were capable for creating, provoking and exploring the possibilities of exchange with audience as was at the first place the performance and video-installation *Otvorena pita – Açik pita* (Open pie) by Jelica Radovanović and Dejan Andjelković (Čubrilo, 2011, pp. 168-170) situated in the Belgrade public Bath.

 In the following years October Salon‘s editions in the same manner and with the same intentions alter between these two modes - conventional and unconventional - of performing/interpellating exhibitionary space, sometimes and not quite often employing the unconventional in the conventional, museum or gallery setting, creating the open, live, unpredictable, debate, even ‘agonistic’ situations, thus succeeding in ‘practicing place’ in de Certeau manner of speaking (the 52nd October Salon, for instance) and indirectly, with the long lasting debate in various newspapers, electronic media and even organized conferences as was the case with the video installation *Gypsies and Dogs* by Zoran Todorović, the 50th October Salon, ‘Circumstance’), sometimes and more usually employing the conventional in the unconventional exhibition spaces keeping up with the de Certeau (1984, pp. 117-118) concept of ‘place’ as ordered and ordering system. The list of unconventional spaces besides the above mentioned includes: The NOLIT Warehouse in Kraljevića Marka Street and The Inner Museum in Palmotićeva Street (the private space of the artist participant Dragan Papić) in the occasion of the 47th October Salon directed by René Block and Barbara Heinrich under the name ‘Art, Life and Confusion’, the means of public transportation (tram no 10 and trolleybus no 41), Public garage in Masarikova Street, *Kunsthistorische Mausoleum* in Braće Radovanovića Street[[4]](#footnote-5), (project in anonymous artist’ private space), and TV Networks: RTS and Fox TV in the occasion of the 50th October Salon, ‘Circumstance’, curated by Branislava Andjelković, The building of the former Military Academy in Resavska Street in the occasion of the 51st October Salon ‘**The Night Pleases Us...’,** curated by Johan Pousette and Celia Prado, Local community hall Student City of Novi Beograd in the occasion of the 52nd October Salon ‘It’s Time We Got To Know Each Other’, curated by Galit Eilat and Alenka Gregorič, and finally the former building of the Geodetic Institute in Karađorđeva 48 in which the entire the 53rd October Salon ‘Good Life’ curated by Branislav Dimitrijević and Mika Hannula was exhibited and **Zepter Expo, the former** *Kluz* department store (and before that former army supply facility) in which the entire the 54th October Salon ‘No One Belongs Here More Than You’, curated by the curatorial team Red Min(e)d is on-going exhibition at the moment in which this paper emerges (is written).

 The principal idea of using spaces such as neglected and shabby Belgrade public Bath and The NOLIT Warehouse in Kraljevića Marka Street was to find a space which has been by its position, architecture, history and/or some other criteria attractive, existing, but not in the function any more, and to promote as new contemporary art site through the most prestigious local but also manifestation prestigious to be in regional framework. The intention to change the perspective on ‘the gallery’ as a stable and neutral setting was of the secondary importance, in a way unsystematically left to individual case, depending on the selection of the artists that curator made in compliance with his concept. Project of reviving the Belgrade public Bath as the ‘eccentric’ exhibitionary/gallery space did not come to life. On the contrary, the ‘conquest’ of the NOLIT Warehouse in Kraljevića Marka Street by October Salon in 2006 was accompanied by the agreement between the City of Belgrade, the founder and patron of the manifestation and Belgrade Cultural Centre, the organizer to promote this disregarded warehouse as the new city center of the independent cultural scene. During the next year and based on the call for applications several non-governmental associations and organizations which work in the field of culture and art, had been chosen. Organizations that work in Magacin (Warehouse) at the moment are: ProArtOrg, SEEcult – Portal for South-East European Culture, Station – Service for contemporary dance, iCA - Independent Cultural Association, TkH - Centre for Performing Arts Theory and Practice, and Rende Publishing House.[[5]](#footnote-6)

 The building of the former Military Academy in Resavska Street represents one more example of similar intention: in 2006, the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Serbia gave the building of the New Military Academy to the City of Belgrade who than decided to repurpose the building and to house the Museum of the City of Belgrade. The building was expected to be completely repaired and renovated to meet the requirements of its new function. Within this frame, the Belgrade Cultural Centre invested into enabling the approximately one third of the available space for exhibition purposes in the occasion of the 2010 edition ‘**The Night Pleases Us...**’ with the clear idea that the museum needed far more serious reconstruction (Šulović, 2010; David, 2010; Anon., 2010).

 October Salon up to that moment, in 2010, with its exhibition politics and strategy problematizes the lack of exhibition and cultural spaces in general and especially the deficiency of the provocative one that would be able to deal with unstable, complex and critically engaged art practice and its demands, with some examples, every now and there, of so-called ‘interactive art’ based on strategy of activation the audience and assumed its emancipation or, more radically, on the politics of participation in terms of Jacques Rancière’s idea of performing the idea that we are all equally capable of inventing our own translations (Rancière, 2008, pp.19-26). The exhibitions themselves were the examples of what Paul O’Neil describes as modern ritual settings, contemporary forms of rhetoric, complex expression of persuasion, subjective political tools which uphold identities (artistic, national, sub-cultural, ‘international’, gender-or-race specific, avant-garde, regional, global etc.), even as institutional ‘utterances’ within a larger culture industry (O’Neil, 2007, p. 15) but not exclusively as artistic ‘utterances’ which perform the new and unpredictable situations within the art or culture scene questioning them in general or in some aspects, functioning as symptom or as incident.

 Nevertheless, it could be said so far that the October Salon’s beyond the ‘white cube’ exhibition politics has been put into a motion, more or less, articulated as the finding the alternative solutions to represent the diversity, many perspectives and values, dominant pluralist paradigm, adequately mirroring the striated public space and its hegemonic structure. The 53rd October Salon (2012) was very close to this concept of exhibiting in the ‘eccentric’ spaces – the manifestation was located at the building of the Geodetic Institute.[[6]](#footnote-7) Most of the artworks were executed in situ, with no intention of “spectacularisation or commodification of the venue, but rather at providing a situated and motivated visual and conceptual commentary on its physical, perceptual and narrative properties vis-à-vis the context of the current social, political and economic crisis” (Dimitrijević&Hannula, 2012). The exhibition based on the conception of “ad hoc transformation where the works will be “implanted” in its present condition and in its existing historical narrative and architectural design” (Dimitrijević&Hannula, 2012) certainly has launched the issues on meaning and critical potential of the site-determined, site-oriented, site-referenced, site-conscious, site-responsive, site-related works[[7]](#footnote-8) in the context of another, inevitable and very sensitive issue on gentrification that by default inactivates criticality. The loaded historical background and its provocative effects as well as neglected but erstwhile noble and elite aesthetic of the building were to powerful and seductive that at the end the exhibition with its accompanying program and catalogue was rather very sophisticated and eloquent homage to the building more as a kind of ‘preparing the ground’ or mobilization the eventually projects of revitalization that should be realized, than the questioning and challenging potential neo-liberal *embourgeoisement* strategy and politics (Smith, 1996) which in a way with the cultural and artistic revitalization of Savamala, the oldest part of Belgrade, set in motion in recent years, is possible to envision.

 The concepts of the 52nd and the 54th October Salon share two things: the conviction that artists and art works can play an important role in the hegemonic struggle by subverting the dominant hegemony and by contributing to the construction of new subjectivities and the desire to restore the social bond through a collective (artists+audience) elaboration of meaning. While the 52nd October Salon strongly put forward the idea of conventional exhibition space (museum) as public social arena interpellated as such by the name of the exhibition ‘It’s Time We Got To Know Each Other’, in the case of (ongoing) the 54th October Salon the unconventional exhibition space, *Zepter Expo*,[[8]](#footnote-9) becomes an elaborated social and political space informed by explicit feminist agenda. The exposition is based on several formats: there is an exposition, *stricto sensu*, consequently the format closest to traditional salon exhibition, and there are heterogeneous non-representational contents from workshops, conversations, projections, etc. The way of realizing the concept through the exhibition medium represents the weakest point of the 2013 October Salon and as a consequence, the ways of interpellation of the former department store and actually vacant space with good real estate potential for its owner (Zepter Real Estate[[9]](#footnote-10)) by the artistic practice as the particular site of activation, individual/collective agency, community and, above all, of the hegemonic struggle politics are not always apparent as they supposed/announced to be and this view has been argued also in Hanaček and Kulteša (2010).

**The exhibition as the site of the construction of new subjectivities alters the architecture in which it is placed**

Contemporary art practice is mainly oriented toward participation in the reconfiguration of everyday experience which is essentially unstable and in constant displacements and process of renegotiations between various social agents. Public space is intersected by many perspectives which do not accordingly to neo-liberal ‘belief’ constitute a harmonious ensemble; on the contrary, they give to public space an antagonistic dimension. Our lives, concepts of public and private, employment and unemployment, finally modes of representations, are specified by spatial politics and its attempts to create a different form of articulation among public spaces. Contemporary art practice just follows this line as one among other possible modes of interventions in the domain of politics. As Chantal Mouffe declares that contemporary artists cannot pretend any more to constitute an avant-garde offering a radical critique, but this is not a reason to proclaim that their political role has ended. They still can play an important role in the hegemonic struggle by subverting the dominant hegemony and by contributing to the construction of new subjectivities (Mouffe, 2007, p. 5). Such approach redefines the exhibitionary practice into new form of temporary and precarious events marked by ‘happy’ (Bourriauld, 1998) or ‘unhappy’ (Bichop, 2004, pp. 51-79) interactivity, live presence, encounters, conviviality, collaboration, including or not ambivalence, contradiction and conflicts, and staged or better performed in any open or closed architecture in which they are placed.

October Salon is the manifestation that, although it is annual event, belongs to ‘biennial culture’ (Jones, 2010, pp. 66-87) and as it was the case with all ‘biennial format’ manifestations, fundamentally ‘unstable institution’ (Basualdo, 2003/2010, pp. 124-135), ‘hybrid field of cultural endeavor’ (Hlavajova, 2010, p. 294), it is generally situated between cultural and creative industry, institution and art works, spectacularisation and subverting the spectacularisation. If this struggle articulates the exhibition, than the exhibition acts, in other words has that active, performative dimension and finally they could have kind of strong democratic atmosphere because “conflict, division, and instability do not ruin the democratic public sphere; they are the conditions of its existence.” (Deutsche, 1996, p. 289)

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1. See: <http://oktobarskisalon.org/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. For more than a decade Belgrade Public Bath in Dušanova Street has been under consideration as potential space for the cultural events and has a long history on whose territory for more than a decade thought of as a potential space for cultural events and occasionally was used for the setting of the October Salon. Belgrade Public Bath has a long history. Most likely it was built on the foundation of a Small Hamam, which is mentioned in the Turkish inventory from 1728 as well as in a note after the 1739. Small Hamam probably has been demolished around 1880 when the Dušanova Street regulation was carried out. This Hamam, in the period from 1865 up to 1867, before the Turks left Belgrade, held Risto Simic as a renter. In the following year George Naumović, the innkeeper, has become a renter. (Đurić-Zamolo, 1977, p. 116) At the end of 19th century, the Public Bath has been built and a renowned rich brothers Krsmanović invested significant amount of money in improving the building which caused the rather high price for its users. (Jovanović, 2006, p. 374). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. This kind of attractiveness is also activated in the bigger and older manifestations and for the most part they are dealing with cultural tourism and nostalgia-kitsch, for instance some countries in Venice Biennial are hosted in Renaissance and Baroque palaces and even churches, outside the Giardinni ‘diplomatic’ ambiance. The another example is Istanbul Biennial, the manifestation that from the first edition up to the 9th International Istanbul Biennial has also activated and ‘colonised’ more or less successfully its rich historical legacy as a stage for the contemporary art. (Čubrilo, 2009, pp. 301-303; 313-314) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. The New Military Academy, at No 40b, Resavska St, was designed by Dimitrije T. Leko in 1899, as a part of the Military Academy complex begun in the year 1850 along Kneza Miloša Street. Having studied abroad, Leko attempted to introduce the knowledge he attained there, using his romantic predilection for a free interpretation of classical models. He also contributed to the “eternal” idea of forming a “national school”, which for the most part boiled down to academism, adoption of eclectic solutions and a predominant use of neo-Renaissance motifs, which is also a characteristic of the building of the New Military Academy. The building was eventually completed after the First World War. The elegant façade decoration, the choice of materials, the clear and firm composition, all of these corresponded to the requirements of its function and public presentation. On the other hand, the inside was in keeping with its purpose (practice halls, classrooms, dormitories, offices…) – clear spaces, for the most part without partitions, in an almost ascetic manner. (Ivanović, 2009, pp. 119-142; ) The striking buildings of the Military Academy complex, along with the surrounding representative buildings: the Seventh Regiment barracks in Nemanjina Street, the Officers’ Hall, the Officers’ Cooperative and Manjež Park, defined a new, modernised face of this part of Belgrade towards the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. Until the Second World War, the building of the New Military Academy was used in keeping with its original purpose, as a military institution of higher education. During the course of the Second World War, after the Ministry of Civil Engineering managed to secure the funds required to repair the roof extensively damaged in the April bombing in 1941, which was done during the course of the years 1942 and 1943, the building was adapted and reused, according to the order of the German High Command, to serve the needs of Belgrade’s courts. In the basement, there was space envisaged for prison cells and there were sections intended for detainees. After the World War II the building was given an administrative function within the framework of the State Secretariat of National Defence complex: in 1964 the building was reconstructed to serve the needs of an Army printing establishment. Finally, during the course of the NATO bombing campaign of 1999, the building sustained significant damage but remained functional. Repair work on the building was commenced soon after the bombing and its reconstruction was initiated, but soon abandoned, so that it remained for the most part in poor condition. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. I am very grateful to Aleksandra Estela Bjelica Mladenović, the curator from the Belgrade Cultural center and at the time of 47th October salon assistant to the curators and her willingness to remind me and explain me every forgotten and to me unknown details concerning manifestation.

About the current projects and programs in the NOLIT Warehouse see: <http://www.domomladine.org/magacin/>; and <http://www.proartorg.com/magacin.php?lng=srp> (accessed on November, the 6th, 2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The Building of Geodetic Institute was constructed on Karadjordjeva Street in 1905-1907 according to plans of two architects, Andra Stevanović and Nikola Nestorović as the Belgrade Shareholders’ Society. This was and, in spite of its neglecting, still is one of the most beautiful monumental edifices in Belgrade; it represent the example of eclecticism in architecture with dominant neo-baroque and (than contemporary) secession elements. It was built in reinforced concrete which was the most modern method of construction at the time; the façade was paneled by the artificial stone. Its interior was richly decorated with the intention of showing the power of financial cooperatives, and today is almost completely preserved but in very poor condition (Đurić-Zamolo, 2009)

After the World War I, it became Geodetic Institute based on the decision made by King Aleksandar Karadjordjević. From the end of the sixties of previous century the building, its interior and exterior, was used as scenography in many TV series and movies (*Majstor i Margarita* (The Master and Margarita) directed by Aleksandar Petrović, 1972, *Slučaj Harms* (The Harms Case) directed by Slobodan D. Pešić, 1987). From the last decade of the 20th century, while the closed (and bizarre) parties were held under its roof, the Geodetic Institute has been moved out. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. Miwon Kwon argues that the current efforts to redefine the art-site relationship are also inspired by a recognition that if site-specific art seems no longer viable —because its critical edges have dulled, its pressures been absorbed—this is partly due to the conceptual limitations of existing models of site specificity itself. In response, many artists, critics, historians, and curators, whose practices are engaged in problematizing received notions of site specificity, have offered alternative formulations, such as context-specific, debate-specific, audience-specific, community-specific, project based. These terms, which tend to slide into one another at different times, collectively signal a desire to distinguishcurrent practices from those of the past, an attempt to forge more complex and fluid possibilities for the art-site relationship while simultaneously registering the extent to which the very concept of the site has become destabilized in the past three decades or more. (Kwon, 2002, pp. 1-2) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The building was constructed in 1908 as the building of the Army Officer’s Cooperative, after the design by architects Svetozar Jovanović, Danilo Vladisavljević and Vladimir Popović as the significant example of the international Art Nouveau style with visible remnants of the morphology of the academism. At the time of its construction it was one of the most modern buildings and second ever department store in Belgrade, and as such is included among the most significant accomplishments of Belgrade architecture from the first decade of the 20th century. (Kadijević, 2004, pp. 62-63).

The building, today declared as cultural monument of exceptional importance, was conceived as an army supply facility and thereby got its name. After the World War II the building retained its original function now in the civil sector – department store of the garment factory Kluz, named according to national hero from the Second World War, aviator Franja Kluz. Today it belongs to Zepter Real Estate, waiting to be use within more certain business or cultural agenda, in the meantime occasionally hosting ‘Science Festival’ (since 2009) and the ‘Easter Fair’ held in 2012. See: <http://zepterrealestate.rs/sr/estate/3/rk-kluz?class=lang> (accessed on 10.11.2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. See: <http://zepterrealestate.rs/sr/commercial> (accessed on 10.11.2013) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)