LIST OF TERMS.

Below will be introduced a terminology list in order to guide us through the research. All of the terms could be applied in both topics of the urban environment and performance art. Before starting exploring the similarities and differences between, we should explore the terminology in order to be able to use it after.

Art:

Anything could be art. Art may be creative. It may be aesthetic. Art in terms of action. Art may represents reality. It also may be characterized in terms of expression. Art in its general concept is related with creativity and interpretation.

Action:

The term “action” distinguishes the performance from the traditional forms of art. It highlights one of the main aspects of performance art – the activities. Any kind of activity may be part of a performance. 

Body:

The figure of body attends the world of architecture, urban environment and performance art. Its role is put in the center. It is the body behavior which is uncontrollable and spontaneously used in the everyday life. The body is seen not only as a physical part from the human world but also as an action and material existence. The body creates movement. The movement is a language of intent. The concept of body and movement attends in Laban Movement Analysis (LMA), which is a language for visualizing and interpreting all varieties of human movement.

Context:

The set of circumstances or facts that surround a particular event or a situation.

Design:

The boundaries between art and design are blurred, largely due to a range of applications both for the term ‘art’ and the term ‘design’.

Digital:

Digital signals are discrete time signals generated by digital modulation. In contrast comes the “analogue”, where the signal is a continuous signal which represents physical measurements.

Expression:

The expression is often identified with the architectural movement of expressionism, whose main starting point and aim is to present and express what has been „seen” or experienced in the inner eye of the mind, heart and soul, i.e. to express the subjective moods and feelings without referring to conventional and „objective” values, judgments and truths.

Happening:

A happening is a performance, event or situation meant to be considered art, usually as performance art. Happenings occur anywhere and are often multi-disciplinary, with a nonlinear narrative and the active participation of the audience. Key elements of happenings are planned but artists sometimes retain room for improvisation. This new media art aspect to happenings eliminates the boundary between the artwork and its viewer.

Interaction:

Interaction is a kind of action that occurs as two or more objects have an effect upon one another. It has an interest in form but its main focus is on behavior.

Image:

An image depicts or records visual perception, that has a similar appearance to some subject - usually a physical object or a person, thus depicting it.

Live Art

Live art is a research engine, driven by artists who are working across forms, contexts and


spaces to open up new artistic models, new languages for the representation of ideas and identities, and new strategies for intervening in the public sphere.

Performance:

“The performance itself is architectural. It depends more on repetition, reenactment, and renewal than on permanent materialization”.

Performance Art:

Performance is a genre in which art is presented "live," usually by the artist but sometimes with the presence of an audience or performers.

Rhythm:

A pattern imposed by the mind. Rhythm in terms of urban environment is the product of the grouping of elements; of emphasis, interval, accent and direction. It is the sense of movement achieved by the articulation of the members making up the composition.

Space & Time:

The term can be perceived as an area or volume bounded actually or theoretically; a continuous extension in three dimensions; a bounded area within a building. The idea of time and space in terms of performance art, deals with a heightened "now," and "here," with the ambiguous space between "real time" and "ritual time," as opposed to theatrical or fictional time.

PERFORMANCE ART. ORIGINS.

The origins of the performance art could be return before the First World War. In 1909 in Paris a publication of the first futurist manifesto, by the Italian poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, was read out. Later, in 1916, the Dada manifesto was read out in Zurich, in Cabaret Voltaire. Dada movement believed that any society capable of starting and then prolonging something as the World War should not exist. Dada was a new tendency and it wanted a new society, a new form of art. This new art involved performing poems, music and actions. It praised nonsense, rationality and intuition of reason and logic. Other art movements also used performance. Some of them are the Russian Constructivists and the Surrealists. People, such as the following were crucial for the development of performance art. For example, Yves Klein was famous with his leaping into the void, because he was interested into the space around us. He believed that in space the artist could listen to his own voice.

Merce Cunningham believed in the limitless possibilities for the human movement. John Cage believed in the limitless possibilities for music and sounds. In 1959, Allan Kaprow presented to the world the word "happening" in order to describe a live performance by an artist. He mixed a happening with everyday life. Many artists thought "happening" is a very good idea. George Maciunas wanted to create a world that was free of art and replace it with something called "fluxus". Fluxus was so uncomplicated that it could be realized anyway, anyhow and by anyone. Yoko Ono with “Cut Peace”. Sonic Youth with “Piano Peace 13”. Joseph Beuys also liked "fluxus", because he believed everyone was an artist. What is more, he believed that every sphere of human activity could be a work of art, as long as it is a conscious act.
In the early 1970s artists began to push their bodies to the limit of pain in order to better understand the human body and nature. Performance art has the power to give suggestions and contributions of all kinds. It is about how we perceive the world around us and our place in it. Performance Art is a part from the Performing Arts. Performing art contains plenty of art forms, where artists may use their voices and bodies, in order to express their artistic statements. The performers could be actors, comedians, magicians, musicians, etc. All these various disciplines aim to be performed in front of a live audience. Here comes the idea of performance art. The performance could be scripted or unscripted, accidental or planned, with or without the participation of an audience, live or via media. The condition for the performance is that it should involve four basic elements: “time”, “space”, “the performer’s body”, and the relation between a performer and the audience. Even though someone could say it is close to the theatre, actually such kind of art does not seek to entertain the audience or follow a formal linear narrative. It can though include actions as a communication between the artist and the audience. The seek effect could aim to satirize the reality – something sometimes used to think in new and unconventional ways. Thus performance art seeks to challenge the society and the audience. The seek effect could aim to change the existing conditions there. For example, it may attempt to change economic or political situations, or may attempt to make people aware of a condition that they previously had no knowledge of. Other performances could involve interventions addressed and engaged with the public. No matter of the kind of performance, performance art is a term with a general concept, which has a meaning in a more dramatic – related sense.  

**ARCHITECTURE AS PERFORMANCE.**

In terms of architecture as performance, architecture may start its journey from the notion of static use and evolve to that of a performance. This means it will start from the identity transformations and continue with resolving issues of the society needs in their everyday life. Taking into consideration the performance art notions as a focal point, the architecture as performance is based upon three main principles: the focus on the body, the idea of space and its context, and the principle of action. Thus architecture in terms of performative action becomes a strong instrument in the world of architects and users that goes far than just an aesthetic piece of art. An example of an act of performance art political statement is the idea of Kryzstof Wodiczko and his project in which he presents the global problem of the homeless [Figure 3]. Thus, the notion of performance becomes an efficient tool by which architecture could produce statements in terms of social and political terms in the rapid change of the urban environment. Another project that makes people think in a more provocative way is “Body Transit” by Didier Fiuza Faustino. Its focus is about the political and social mobility of illegal immigrants in Europe.  

![Figure 4 - Documentation of Homeless Vehicle, New York, NY, 1988-89](image)

In the project “Demo Polis”, Moov created an intervention that focuses on urban spaces, that nobody is using and thus proposing tents for whoever needs them in the city. 

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NOTIONS OF STREET AND STAGE TRANSLATED INTO THE IDEA OF PERFORMANCE.

When people move, architecture stops. When people desire, then the space around them has the power to define. Thus the architect represents the one who collects movements and desires of people. He is the one who has to transform them into a concept of a building or an urban space. In order to understand how buildings and space act [Figure 5] together in the urban context among people in terms of performance art, we should clarify the notions of street and stage.

Street and stage – two words so different in their meanings, and so equal in their concepts. The scenery in both represented by the terms of architecture and performance art, together with the citizens whose role is to be participants who perform. The street is the most important characteristic of a city. The streets are the one who determine the shape of the city. Through illusion and allusion, the streets are the one who can play among people. What is more, streets represent the stage in the urban context. The buildings on the streets represent the notion of time, so that time is the narrative which puts the buildings into place as an act of performance. Playing an urban scene as both praise and irony turns the architecture of the city into a landscape of adventure. Urban festivals act as a performance art that could transform the public life and thus start asking questions which will make people think. Everyone is both actor and spectator. The borders between architecture and performance become to blur. Below will be revealed how to reinforce the narrative of an action – in case of performance, or in case of urban environment – how to manifest the ideas behind a vision.

THE IDEA OF ACTION.

Performance art combines sculpture and body. Thus it works with behavior and everyday actions. Urban environment, on the other hand, already contains the idea of body and everyday actions. Painters use paint, sculptors use sculptures, and performance art use “action”.

This idea of action could easily occur within an urban space. If we think about a space as a set of instructions for how to act we can easily break them into pieces, which will guide us how to understand it in a more provocative way. There are two ways of perceiving an urban space: the first one is to see it as a system of spaces planned together in one idea and realized by a construction; the second one is to see it as a system of spaces, on which activities and experiences work together. Both ways make the space to work as an object, the first as a result of technical reason, and the second as a result of a composition experienced to work between people in a social and an interactive way. For example, in the book “Architecture as a Performing Art” Marcia Feuerstein examines how buildings act with people and among people in the performances of public life. The accent is focused on the word “action”: the door that offers the possibility of making a spectacular entrance, the window that frames a certain scene, and the city street that is transformed into an event. These explorations are like closing the gap among people in place and thus revealing their relationships.

Questions with a variety of answers rise up. Is there “action” in architecture’s static permanence? Is the term “behavior” to architecture anything more than an abstract expression, or do buildings and spaces perform in a certain way?

Compared to dance and music, urban space seems to stay steady and inactive. Compared to theatre, it seems motionless, like a stop scene in time. The concert hall, the theater and museum are placed in time and space, waiting for the
visitor’s experience. Thus, both places and people start playing a major role in the improvisations of everyday urban life. A role where urban space acts as both set and player in the performance of public life. What is true for performance art is also true for urban environment – the character is shown through the actions they do. Both represent an action on an urban scene, where a player is a must. The scene is represented by the urban space where the player – the human – performs. With other words, the urban space could be perceived as an experimentation area on which people act with the space itself. To qualify buildings as actors in the urban life suggests that their main value is not in the way they stand but in the way they perform among people. The shift from identity toward action, from statically objects to spiritual objects, has the power to transform and perform. This kind of relationship of performance (between public space and public life) could enrich the design process. What is more, the attention will be focused on how people, places and buildings could interact in time and space and in relation to each other, rather than on their individual identities. What does exactly “performance” means in terms of architecture and urban design nowadays? A definition used by Aristotle – that architecture imitates human action and life – continues to be true even nowadays. Nowadays refers to the context of contemporary societies leading mass performative acts. To declare your own desires and ideas into reality is performance. Today this may be assumed as one of the most powerful tools with which people can achieve their goals. To manifest desires a person needs a stage, a plot which will be transformed into a speaker’s corner [Speaker’s corner placed in Hyde Park in London. The concept has been explored by artists such as Michel Francois in 2005]. Thus, the urban environment and architecture becomes the most important and vital part for the performance acts. The urban space takes on such a vital importance because of the physical support that it provides. Only the art is missing, which becomes the second vital part. To put together, performance and art are combined together to become a whole part. Accordingly appears the question if urban space and art succeed to work together in practice? If so, what exactly is meant by performance? Does it intend to work like a machine (for example, the car on the street)? Or it is closer to what is happening in theaters? Instead of an answer, a quote by Sol Lewitt will be used in order to answer the last questions: "When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes the machine that makes the art".

A publication in Domus states that Performance and Architecture are in a strong relationship in which both disciplines can work together by “blurring the distinctions between geometry and analysis, between appearance and performance”. Performance and Architecture are working at the limits of their disciplines in order to blur the borders between them and reflect on the architectonic aspirations of art, and the artistic aspirations of architecture. They work on very different project scales but all use performance as the interface to their research. Focusing on subjects such as the city, space, the body, the memory they tackle their disciplines “speaking about art from architecture and about architecture from art”.

CREATING A SITUATION.

When an architect is developing his/her idea, he/she becomes responsible for directing people behind the scenes. It seems like he/she is recounting a story, so that after it can interact in the best way with people and place. Performance art does not aim to narrate a story, but both, art performance and urban spaces create conversations among people (actors), audience in a place and time. The actors in performance art speak with their bodies face to face with the audience in the same way as buildings and urban space correspond together and among people. Bodies are not only the

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human body, but also bodies of buildings and objects, the form of the city. Thus the process between bodies could be perceived as a relationship between the human social body and the urban space, its design and architecture. 28

Both create an atmosphere, a situation which reflects actions in real life. People are involved in a process whereby watching or participating, they are prompt to think about their personal situation. In this way, people become part from a story telling. The narrative of daily social life transforms people from passersby to spectators. Thus, the relation between actor and spectator, building and urban space is been deleted. In this way of thinking, the framework of performance art and architecture is blurred. The aim of the thesis research is the urban space or more specifically the street to be transformed into an event, a “story of reality” which will provoke people to act as both performers and architects. Thus the urban space will be studied trough a study which aims to learn the urbanism through experiments and to transform the urban stage through performance of art. The result will be the enrichment of the urban environment.

Both performance art and architecture involve ideas of event and situation, where both architects and performers explore the conditions of a situation, and then focus on the details in order to open up events. Spectators and performers come away having shared something real together. Buildings are open to the events of life, so that people can make the choices that define their lives. An event happens in a place for duration of time, so the emphasis is put on action, rather than object. On the other hand, a situation includes “circumstances in which one finds oneself”. A situation consists of series of events. People do not come to events, but events happen to them. The events occur unexpectedly. What objects possess in abundance – definitions – events lack almost entirely. Put differently, the performance of a setting can only be known on its own terms. Events cannot be defined or predicted, but they could be guided. The guidance may create a rhythm, because of the people activities. Consider a festival street, where every year different events are coming up. Which part can be considered as architecture? Which part display, perform or dictate event? When urban space becomes an action, this creates two poles of performativity. At one point is the virtual performativity, the conceptual one. The second one is the performativity of the real. The skills to organize a performance are the skills to organize a public space in a good possible way. Buildings are the ones who play an important role in the actions of those who live in and spend time around them. Buildings represent the background in a performance, so important in live performances. Not only the buildings, but the whole composition of the city urban fabric has always been the stage or urban life. A stage on which people act socially; a stage on which some of the people perform and the others participate by watching. Again we see the strong bond of the relationship between performance and people, art and public space. To sum up, people choose how and in what way will use a space. The urban space may perform among people through the creation of events.

To sum up, the urban environment works as a living art. To explain better, a scheme bellow [Figure 6] shows the main components in terms of performers and situations. The focus is on how people manage to work behind the scenes in the process of design to create space which perform on the stage of daily life. A stage, where the people create situations and thus define actions under certain conditions. The whole process involves many actors, who continuing the performance after the finished work. To make performance in all of its forms means creation and giving attention. The act of creation provokes situation and one situation could be explained only by a story. Thus, the urban environment is less an object, than an action which brings people together. The process of designing performance comes as interaction and improvisation between many actors. An interaction which will continue to play now.

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Figure 6 – In terms of a situation.
The space is based on reality, but actually it is a creation of a situation designed to express a statement. The act of perform could involve any situation that involves basic elements such as time, space, and a relationship between performer and audience. Performance could happen anywhere, in any street or space, for a long or short period of time. The actions that people recreate contain the message that a space encompasses.

Time is a constant that cannot be changed by an individual. But even unchangeable, space has the power to mix time – able to portray past, present and future narratives together represented in a different layering of historical periods during time. Time may be referred as a collective experience just like performance art involves collective actions and thus experience.

The topic “a sense of place” explores themes related with how people perceive their history nowadays in respect to the past. The last chapter in the cited book – “The museum as a facilitator”, represents the author’s point of view about how museums act as facilitators in order to perceive a sense of place. How is this connected to the notions of time and space in terms of urban environment and performance art? Kevin Walsh believes that locality relates to places, which connects to a space, within people spend the majority of their working and social lives; a place which, in most of the cases, could be referred as a node in a network of relationships which cross ones such as time and space. Places can be perceived as localities which are at the same time both acting on, and being acted upon by, other places. Performances from the other side, cope with the places and help people realize that their localities are significant, one of a kind, and can influence institutions.

How to conserve the past in respect to the future? How to develop and enhance the sense of a place? For Kevin Walsh the process of exploitation of a space has a temporal dimension. He calls it a “phenomenon” which cannot be understood through “the analyses of a single static snapshot”. Walsh defines places as spaces. And spaces continually experience processes and thus performances which occur through time.

These processes are not and never have been static. The idea for time and space is deepen even more when the author mentions Yi-Fu Tuan and his consideration about place as a pause in movement. This pause can be referred as a “time-mark”. Time marks are important for creating the image of a sense of a place. The key to develop a sense of place is to allow people to develop their own understandings of a particular place, rather than producing artificial places. My question here is how and in what way the visitor may create their own, personal understanding and appreciation of context of this space (or place)? The sense of place can be completely meshed with the sense of time.

Time and Place – “a continuum of the mind, as fundamental as the space-time that may be the ultimate reality of the material world”. Kevin Lynch deals with the human sense of time, a biological rhythm that may follow a different beat from that dictated by external, “official”, “objective” timepieces.

The chapter "The Time Inside" deals with the meaning of time from a psychological aspect and with its social aspects. An interlude follows, illustrating the symbols of time in a particular place (Boston) and quoting the residents on how they respond to their time-place. The analysis resumes, taking up the aesthetics of environmental time, the meaning of change, and the relation (or lack of one) between environmental and social change. A final chapter looks at all these themes from a general perspective. According to Kevin Lynch, rhythms, objects, and events exist; but time and space are human inventions. Time is not continuous and linked with particular events. “Time is concrete, tied to remarkable natural and human events: generations, seasons, moons, days. It is not regularly and continuously subdivided but
According to Kevin Lynch, the image of space and time depends on a vivid sense of the present, well connected to future and past, perceptive of change, able to manage and enjoy it. That concept of time must be compatible both with the structure of reality and with the structure of people’s minds and bodies. The distribution of objects and activities in space and time – can encourage the growth of a strong image of time – to support and enrich it.

There are distinct nodes that Lynch outlined, that can help to achieve and understand better the idea of image of time-space. By temporal collage, which can be used to preserve and contrast sections of different age, connecting them with paths of movement or activity links, inserting new activities into older settings of contrasting meaning. All of these ideas open rich possibilities for experiment, for training, and for public participation, thus for the act of performance. “While adding directly to our enjoyment of the world, they could also serve to vivify and make coherent our image of time in respect to our past and future.”

To sum up, people’s environment is a very special setting of life. It should be conserved; it cannot be preserved. It will change despite people. People’s real task is not to prevent it from changing but to cause it to change in a life-enhancing direction. The environmental image of time-places can play a role in speeding that necessary change, and its analysis can tell people what some of the features of a life-enhancing city could be. People can change their minds in a way to enjoy the dynamics of their own city.

**FRAME & MOTION.**

People move through space and thus they become part from the process called experience of life. The central figure of the experience refers to the body. People meet others, travel, and explore new paths. Urban environment is used as a tool where the expression of movement becomes possible. The term *motion*, a synonym of movement is very flexible. It can refer to different ideas. To understand how motion works in terms of public space and performance art the theory of Laban Movement Method comes to help. It is a theory where the central figure is put on the human body and its observation, performance and interpretation in terms of movement. The four main elements of the theory are the body, the effort, the shape, and the space. The second element – the effort is explained by four another concepts (space, weight, time and flow). These terms are important notions in this thesis that have been taken into consideration through the whole research. The urban environment is represented by the body and space, and performance art is being represented by the former notions (body, effort, shape, and space). The notions aim to prompt mentally and physically. Through the notion of motion we can design spaces that make people think, act, and provoke. Such kind of motion emphasizes change and allows freedom of personal interpretation on the act of moving rather than on the result of reaching a point. Here the process is important, not the result. In contrary to the frame, the motion is a force which shapes our world. For example, if there is a desire to transport ourselves to different town, we build a path leading to there. The path becomes a change in the terrain. If our motion can change our environment, can our environment change the way we move? Urban environment is a definition of space and motion is the experience of space. Consequently, urban
space defines motion. For example, a building defines many choices of spaces, which creates limits of exploration and thus movement inside the space.

When demonstrating effort, we simultaneously explore Shape. Shape is how the body defines its space. Through the understanding of Shape, we connect with the definition of space. Space corresponds to Shape in many ways. Both are terms that mix motion with the urban environment. However, space consists of three dimensions. People who are in motion form space; a space which is a three dimensional. Laban Movement Analysis is the four-dimensional result of the human form moving in its setting. In architecture, space is the three dimensional result of a person’s need. In Laban Movement Theory’s space introduces the fourth dimension of time. As people move, they act. The act is a sequence of motions. In Laban Movement Method, the space is defined by the body’s movement, which is in motion, like in a performance art. While, in architecture, the space is defined by a person’s need and desire. Thus motion is a constant, because people are always moving and acting on the stage – the environment that they live in. The shapes and forms that people create throughout their constant motions, form the rhythm of their built environment. People make movements which together with the shapes establish the spaces they live in and thus act among them. This kind of relationship establishes architecture with main focus on people and society. Architecture that becomes more than just a space people live in; it becomes an interactive response in people’s lives, just like performance art puts questions such as how people perceive the world around them and their place in it.

The urban environment has the power to guide people’s motion, and so when they examine the spaces they inhabit, it could be observed that people’s lives are defined by their movement. The architect Jacob Esocoff explores the idea of motion in his book “Monograph: In Motion”. The book is a collection of five elaborated concepts of buildings that sculpt social activity by rethinking how motion is introduced within their spaces. Jacob Esocoff shows a new way of living, where architecture together with the concept of dance and street performance, creates movement50. (Figures 7).

In terms of the notion of frame, the work of Gordon Cullen comes to help, in which through his drawings, he captured the emerging and ever changing views that structure and reveal urban experiences and relationships between different components of the city51. Thus, identifies movement and sequential images as important tools to read cities (Figure 8).

Figure 7 - Gordon Cullen’s Concise Landscape: a city of serial visions.

Figure 7 – Monograph – In Motion

In terms of the notion of frame, the work of Gordon Cullen comes to help, in which through his drawings, he captured the emerging and ever changing views that structure and reveal urban experiences and relationships between different components of the city51. Thus,}

*NARRATIVE.*

A focus on the action rather than on the object will catch up people and situations together in narratives of desire. Performance art includes actions presented to a public and the one who watch and listen bring the actions of the place, the set, and the story, thus representing the narrative of the action. The whole situation creates an event which shares imagination and experience. The act of performance with people in place is always both physical and narrative. The narrative that I would like to portray in this thesis deals with actions. I want to figure out in what way to set up these collective actions and where exactly they are taking place in people’s everyday life. Part of telling the narrative is how the action frames it up visually. A certain view has the power to give a highlight and thus to portray the importance of conversation that happens between actors and stage; people and space.