



Architecture as a Performing Art (Ashgate Studies in Architecture)

Marcia Feuerstein, Gray Read

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How do buildings act with people and among people in the performances of life? This collection of essays reveals a deep alliance between architecture and the performing arts, uncovering its roots in ancient stories, and tracing a continuous tradition of thought that emerges in contemporary practice. With fresh insight, the authors ask how buildings perform with people as partners, rather than how they look as formal compositions. They focus on actions: the door that offers the possibility of making a dramatic entrance, the window that frames a scene, and the city street that is transformed in carnival. The essays also consider the design process as a performance improvised among many players and offer examples of recent practice that integrates theater and dance.

This collection advances architectural theory, history, and criticism by proposing the lens of performance as a way to engage the multiple roles that buildings can play, without reducing them to functional categories. By casting architecture as spatial action rather than as static form, these essays open a promising avenue for future investigation.

For architects, the essays propose integrating performance into design through playful explorations that can reveal intense relationships between people and place, and among people in place. Such practices develop an architectural imagination that intuitively asks, 'How might people play out their stories in this place?' and 'How might this place spark new stories?' Questions such as these reside in the heart of all of the essays presented here. Together, they open a position in the intersection between everyday life and staged performance to rethink the role of architectural design.

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