What society needs most is vision, lofty ambition, this vision is not one day acquired but rather taught through the fine arts such as architecture, sculpture, painting, and drawing” Master Librarian and Secretary of the Newark Museum Association | John Cotton Dana
The art museums of today are funded and underwritten by the society which they serve. A conflict of interest arises when donations to these cultural institutions become tax deductible. The seduction of tax deductible donations cause museums to become more concerned with the interests of their corporate and political donors than those of the society which they serve.
I propose to challenge the institutionalization of art as well as alter the way in which it is viewed.
The way we think about art and architecture today is a product of the Scientific Revolution. Originally, art as well architecture was a part of society, so closely integrated that one was inseparable from the other. What we see as art and architecture today had a completely different context at the onset of civilization. For someone to take the time to raise a building or create a work of art meant that it had significant cultural and spiritual importance. In many cases, art and architecture were embodied within the same entity, they would have been used simultaneously to serve a wide variety of function as well as preform a wide variety of rituals.
Ever since man has held beliefs, there have been those who would seek to convert him. This was often done through the destruction of religious and spiritual works of art and architecture.
i·con·o·clasm | /iˈkänəˌklazəm/ | Noun

The destruction of religious icons and other images or monuments for religious or political motives.
In 600AD, the Roman Catholic church revised its stance on iconoclasm legitimizing art overnight. At the time, the masses across Europe were illiterate and unable to read let alone understand Latin, the language of the catholic church. The church needed a way pass on the messages of the bible. It's interesting to note that this was not a Europe specific problem, we see this begin to happen in the Middle East, Asia, and South America. Civilizations across the world began to use art and architecture as a means to convey religious and spiritual salvation through graphic representations.
The legitimization of the arts did not last forever. In 1515, Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Catholic church starting the protestant reformation. This marks a turning point for not only Europe but the world. As the Catholic church's political power begins to decline across Europe, both art and architecture managed to retain their place in society. Paintings, sculptures, mosaics, and murals depicted religious figures, lords, kings, adorn lavish palaces like Versailles and public venues like Palais Garnier in Paris.
As aristocrats, bankers and merchants begin to amass personal wealth, we see their patronage of the arts slowly increase. Personal art collections begin to be established throughout Europe, the Middle East and Asia. As these personal collections expand, a structure begins to take shape by which value and prestige are assigned to both the artist as well as the work of art. This is when we begin to see art and architecture becoming a means of vanity and expression of one personal importance to the world.
The development of linear perspective, during the Italian Renaissance would forever alter the way in which we perceive and think about art. Before the multiple point perspective, symbols and compositional arrangements had as much to say as that which was being graphically represented.
Art, now more than ever, is something that is viewed in palaces, wealthy manors, museums, or gallery’s. Aristocrats and other elite utilize art to display their wealth and vanity to others. Art is now something that is worthy of acquisition through militaristic conquest.
In 1796, a hundred years after being converted to a museum to house the royal collection, the Louvre has opened to the public.
While Napoleon was campaigning through Italy, the rest of the European world was turning its attention toward a greater understanding of the scientific world. It wasn't long until the scientific community turned its attention to the arts and the study of Aesthetics began. Just as Luther's theses marked a turning point for the Roman Catholic church so did aesthetics mark a turning point for art and architecture.
Rationalism and the Industrial Revolution soon after created a shift in work force. For the next few hundred years, we begin to see manual labor, which was previously inexpensive and abundant, begin to become expensive and sparse while machinery, which was previously expensive and sparse, begins to become inexpensive and abundant. Industrialization causes both art and architecture to become greatly disenfranchised. Both disciplines suffer the fate of being easily produced and easily constructed. Architecture begins to become tilt up panels walls while art is what appears on T-Shirts and coffee cups.
Cubism, surrealism, and nonobjective painting at the turn of the 19th century led to the total elimination of any reference to an external object. Technological advances in the realm of photography means that painting and drawing cannot compete in capturing a scene or a moment in time, we now begin to see artist reverting to methods of creation that are not unlike the biblical images of the 6th century. Art now requires more than just a passive gaze. We must make an active contribution of our own to understand art. We must try to synthesize the outline and various planes as they appear on the canvas and re-combine them to create our own masterpieces for ourselves.
Art and architecture was something that surrounded every aspect of our lives, but now art and architecture is something we now must actively search for. Art and architecture is something that can only be found in large cities or on the walls of mega museums.
This idea that art is now divorced from our everyday life is a keystone in artists like Hans Haacke, Daniel Buren, And Gordon Matta-Clark. These three individuals can be credited with kicking off the entire movement within the world of art. A critique to the institution of art challenges the idea that art only exits behind the walls of mega museums.
These were the guys I studied with at Cornell. These were my teachers. I hate what they stand for.” Matta-Clark furiously rejected the ivory tower approach to both art and architecture and this is reflected within the exhibition.
Daniel Libeskind’s Jewish museum can be perceived as being closely related to the work of Matta-Clark because it too challenges our perception of what art is. Libeskind’s museum challenges our perception of what the museum is. The museum does not merely play host to several kiosks and collections but rather becomes the experience itself.
Matta-Clark, as well as Libeskind, both challenge the institution of art as well as the cultural relevancy of art in today’s society.
Now, more than ever, we are facing a loss of legitimization and the disenfranchisement of both art and architecture. However, it is not without total disadvantage. Previously art and architecture embodied culture, they were one and the same, so closely intertwined that it was impossible to separate. Now, we turn to art and architecture as a means to preserve our culture.
Alberto Perez-Gomez once stated that ever since the turn of the late 18th century, cities have stopped being articulations of ritual places and became circulation, fluids, air, goods, services, and hygienic purposes. For the last few hundred years our soul focus has been efficiency. Our social tendency is now to engage less and less with our physical environment. GPS is now used for our orientation, Facebook for our social interaction, and Google for our knowledge. As a result, these social tendencies are directly affecting the built environment.
Artefact
Site
Chicago Illinois
Western Elevated View
Ground Level South View
Ground Level East View
Composit view from above grade
Permanent Collection
16 Stolen Masterpieces

Semi Permanent Collection
6 month rotating collection from local to international artists

Artist Residency
26 semi annual dwellings
2 semi permanent dwellings for prominent artists
Public Studios
Private Studios

Administrative
Coat Check
Tickets
Offices
Curatorial space
Storage