

# Trends of Shaping Urban Environment by Integration and Development of Performing Arts (in Transcarpathian Region)

## Abstract

The article describes the possibility of applying performing arts in the formation of modern public spaces. The article highlights correlations between urban environment and the human perception of art. The study focuses on the Transcarpathian region in Ukraine.

**Keywords:** theatre space, public space, local, improvisation, acting, environment

Today theatre does not lose its value, organically grows into the socio-cultural environment and is able to generate a new cultural strategy.

We can observe a bright flash of experimental theatre in Ukraine, which combines a revision of philosophical principles and expressive means with the destruction of traditional forms and meanings of acting and performance, attempt to return the theatre to its origin, to implement an appropriate technology to acting. That is, theatre is trying to cleanse itself of any excess – a burdensome structural shell, which inhibits its own expression [1, 2]. Similarly, theatre tries to move beyond its own building, overcoming dictates of monolithic architectural constants, in order to return to a more archaic form of space action. Today, at the beginning of a new century, we have to take into account the fact that theatrical acting has gone beyond its customary structures. Theatre is developing as a synthesis of art, combining in new artistic strategies such as performance, happening, actionism, flash mob, interactive media. Modern theatre often requires active communication between actors and the audience and consequently the distinction between the audience and actors becomes conditional. Such theatres play not only a role of entertainment, but are able to reflect current socio-political events or philosophical themes, uniting together wide social varieties that rarely interact.

One of the key elements of modern acting is the space as theatres primarily begin to exist outside of a special building. Thus, theatres that have migrated to specialized buildings a few centuries ago, due to some socio-cultural processes, now are returning to city spaces or the landscape environment. Relations between the city and the theatre can serve as a basis for the study of a wide variety of phenomena of urban life [3].

One of the potential spaces for modern theatre performance in urban environment is the main city square. Since the Middle

le Ages, the main city square has been a place where social life concentrates, where people of different social status have their points of intersection. Historically, important functions of the main city square are spectacle and performance. Today city squares literally become scenes. Potential audience is involved in participation and activity, unlike the audience of a classical theatre [4]. In the theatre building actors and spectators are constantly separated. It lies in the architecture and typology of theatrical space: a long way since getting into the theatre building to the immediate deployment of performance, a motionless sitting position, the stage machinery, technical lighting, sound notification of the beginning of the performance, clearly differentiate the theatrical action and reality. In return, theatrical performance that takes place in the urban space gets polar characteristics: participation, interaction, spontaneity. The audience becomes part of the action, and the urban environment is transformed into a theatrical space. An example of integration of theatres in the urban environment is a theatrical performance in the centre of Uzhgorod in the International Festival of Puppet Theatre "Interlyalka 2013". It should be noted that a city square is no longer the only place of acting in urban environment. Theatrical actions reach urban spaces that usually do not have any features of a theatre – abandoned buildings, industrial zones, landscapes etc. [5, 6].

The integration of theatres in environments unsuitable for them has a synergistic effect, especially in the regional context. [7] As an example, one can cite the annual festival “Kredents” in Vinogradiv, Transcarpathia. Each year the festival changes its location, but the key (core) idea remains: holding actions in degraded areas on the outskirts of the city (a furniture factory, a cement factory, an abandoned tourist campsite). The repertoire of the festival consists of theatrical performances, recitations, concerts, art exhibitions. For example, the place of theatrical performances in 2013 was an abandoned one-story building that was the backstage and the make-up room at the same time. The facade of the building had been transformed into a decorative panel that served as a staging element, created by a renowned street artist from Lutsk. A peculiar feature is the placement of viewers - dispersed and simultaneous, there are no strict seats and everyone is personally able to choose their point of perception. A natural blend of genres results in a complete and original artistic product. Interaction of the environment and art has a broad resonance.













The lack of cultural development is one of the reasons for the decline of the province, but cultural activity can become the impetus for the development of the whole region; it can revive tourism, attract investments, involve the local population in the cultural activity [7].

Another positive example of local self-organization is the festival of Theatre Art “Ptah” in Lower Village of the Transcarpathian region. The festival is organized by an initiative group of local enthusiasts. The aim of the festival is to present children’s and youth theatre groups. The performances were conducted both indoors and outdoors in the local House of Culture and in the landscape environment. Near the House of Culture, a wooden frame theatre pavilion was erected.

Theatrical acting, free from conventions, often refers to the interpretation of folk traditions. As a result, the connection between spectator and participant with the environment is reborn. Such events and activities have a number of distinctive features:

- Democracy
- Non-standard space
- Self-organization
- Recycling
- Improvisation
- Interactivity
- Adaptability

Table 1. Classification of performing spaces in the urban environment (il. aut)

	Type of Space	Principles of location (Indoors/Outdoors)	Type of action	Location	Example		
					Name of event	Name of the theatre	Year
	Abandoned buildings, ruins		Performance, experimental theatre	Old tourist campsite	Festival “Kredents”, Vynogradiv	Artists, theatrical collectives	2013
	Industrial zones		Performance, experimental theatre	Furniture factory	Festival “Kredents”, Vynogradiv	Artists, theatrical collectives	2012
	Urban spaces		Spectacle	Theatre square	“Interlyalka”, Uzhgorod	Puppet theatrical collectives	2013
	Landscape environment		Play, chants, dances	<b>The village</b>	Ethnographic festival “Lemkivskavatra”, Transcarpatian region	Folk collectives	2009-2013
	Historical environment		Historical reconstruction	Castle of St. Miklosh	Festival “Sribnyy tatosh”, Transcarpatian region	Knight clubs	2012-2013
	Public, commercial buildings		Spectacle	House of Culture	Festival of theatre “Ptah”, Transcarpatian region	Young theatrical collectives	2013



il 1. a. Festival "Kredents" 2012, b. Festival "Kredents" 2013, c. Festival "Interlyalka" 2013, d. Ethnographic festival "Lemkivska vatra", e. Festival "Sribnyy tatosh", f. Festival of theatre "Ptah"

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### Summary

Modern theatre is gaining new forms and content, merging with other art forms and integrating into the environment. Theatres often do not require special buildings that limit their development, and tend to adhere to open, independent spaces. Considering the example of local events with a theatrical component, one can affirm that they do not require significant material costs, but are powerful artistic and cultural products, which promote the region and create its identity. However, this does not mean that designing theatrical spaces is no longer needed. Simply, we are witnessing a situation where architectural activity in this field is moving away from the traditional way of design and construction of theatre buildings to the specific design of modern public

spaces that pose new requirements for the organization of the environment. As a result, it can become an impetus for regional development, it can attract the resources that are necessary for positive changes in the development of provincial centres and abandoned areas.

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