

Architecture in the expanded field. Concept, site and material, a contemporary strategy in art and architecture.

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Abstract

In the beginning of the 60's something changes in the art world suspending modernism and abstract expressionism. Donald Judd invented the concept of 'specific objects' (Judd, 1965), where artistic objects should be adapted to galleries, the 'white cube' space; Robert Morris, wrote about it in his 'notes on sculpture' (Morris, 1966). Critics call this type of art minimalism, but none of the involved artists recognize the term.

In the second half of the 60's, some artists, extending their activities to the exterior and abstract spaces, transformed the American deserts on witnesses of experiments that would minimized minimalistic spatial expansion. 'Sculpture in an expanded field' (Krauss, 1979) replaced 'white cube' abstract space for real wide space.

At the end of the 60's, artists get conscious about some approaches they have made about human behaviour in society, and following the ideas of Henry Flint (Flint, 1961), started measuring and collecting evidence about that behaviour. They started to worry about ideas (concepts), defending that they should be the art's essence, which lead them to decrease and refuse objects. These ideas coming from art field and concerning strategies evolving site, materiality and concept, spread to architecture's field, as post-modernist and contextualist ideas, and recently, by the emphasis in tectonics and materials.

The seminal text by Rosalind Krauss 'Sculpture in the expanded field', originally published in 1979, was the first attempt to unveil sixties art complexity regarding relations between, the now so called, Minimal art, Land art, and Conceptual art.

In April 2007, a conference held by Princeton University, brought together architects, artists, critics and academics to celebrate and look once again to that text.

Keywords: Concept, Site, Material, Minimal art, Land art, Conceptual art.