

## The Art (Of) Museums: Creating Contemporary Spaces of Identity

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**Abstract:** The book *The Art (of) Museums: Creating Contemporary Spaces of Identity; Ars Aevi Sarajevo*, authored by Associate Professor Senka Ibrišimbegović PhD, represents the culmination of her many years of work in culture, education, and research. It emphasizes the importance of museums, architecture, and art in promoting social development. It discusses the transformation of the cultural landscape—from being a survival element during the siege of Sarajevo to becoming a key component of sustainable development over the past three decades.

The book explores the architecture of contemporary art museums within various social contexts, highlighting their role in fostering cultural diversity and urban development. It concludes by advocating for socially responsible architecture in contemporary art museums, presenting a vision for the future of museum architecture, and emphasizing the need to construct the Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This research offers a deep reflection on the intersection of culture, history, and architecture, providing insights into how cultural institutions can contribute to both the preservation of identity and the advancement of society. *Case study in Bosnia and Herzegovina: Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina*

**Keywords:** Museum, architecture, culture, contemporary art, identity, urban regeneration

### 1. Introduction

The presented research explores the role of contemporary art museums, in shaping cultural and societal identity within the context of globalization and consumerism. Contemporary architecture is critiqued for its tendency toward either impoverished form or excessive abstraction, with globalization contributing to the homogenization of architectural identity. The phenomenon of consumerism, driven by market forces, has influenced the function of architectural spaces, including museums, which often serve as tourist attractions rather than as spaces for cultural reflection. Furthermore writing emphasizes the need for architecture to balance material and spiritual values, advocating for a design approach that fosters individual and collective identity. Contemporary art museums are identified as key cultural institutions that not only promote societal development but also encourage public engagement with art and culture. The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is presented as a specific example, highlighting the challenges faced by cultural institutions in the post-war (1992-1995) period. The closure of several national museums (2011-2012) reflects a broader issue of inadequate cultural support, though the text also discusses the potential for cultural projects, such as the uncompleted Ars Aevi Museum of contemporary art Sarajevo, based on the preliminary design by Renzo Piano, to contribute to the city's cultural and economic regeneration, creating new spaces of identity.

The research aims to assess the architectural approaches to contemporary art museums, analyzing the balance between form and function, and the role of museum architecture in urban development. The role of architecture in the development and creation of cultural and spatial identity of a society is not only material, but also artistic and spiritual. This is actually the quality that gives architecture as an appearance in space the epithet artistic – separating it thus from mere construction, as Tadao Ando says: “Architecture is the art of articulating the world through geometry”. And, for this precise reason, creating architecture, especially contemporary architecture, for art is a special challenge. The study draws on theories of architecture, including Aldo Rossi’s concept of “collective memory” and the idea that cities evolve through a dialogue with their past. It concludes by arguing that contemporary art museums, particularly as designed by renowned architects, have the potential to become icons that influence the identity, new placemaking and regeneration of cities, using the Ars Aevi Museum project as a case study for the cultural development of Sarajevo to show the long lasting processes in the post-war societies in transition.

### 2. Key concepts TIME | CULTURE | ART | ARCHITECTURE

Research focused at the beginning by exploring phenomena of time shaping culture, art, and architecture. **Time** is a central factor in human perception and understanding of reality, and architecture, like other art forms, reflects the spirit of its era, influenced by socio-political and economic structures. It is emphasized that architecture arises from the interaction between individual creativity and collective artistic achievements, serving as "time capsules" that capture specific historical moments. However, styles often revive as society

evolves, keeping architecture on an ever-evolving timeline. In modern times, globalization is a dominant phenomenon affecting cultural systems and leading to cultural homogenization. Despite promises of equality, globalization commodifies culture and architecture, with contemporary architecture often reflecting branding trends and celebrity architects disconnected from local contexts.

**Culture**, both material and spiritual, shapes human heritage and societal behaviors. Technological advancements globally reconfigure culture, changing identities and interactions. Cultural continuity and progress are key to preserving humanity in the modern world, as architecture remains deeply intertwined with human experience, reflecting and shaping societal values. Further on research is exploring the term spatial identity, shaped by geographic, social, and cultural factors, and how architecture can integrate modern materials while respecting local traditions. Visual perception and cultural context play significant roles in how we experience architectural space, where art, as a symbolic form, reflects and challenges cultural, social, and political realities.

The evolution of modern and contemporary **art** from the late 19th century to today underscores art's role in provoking new perceptions. Modern art focused on abstraction and emotional expression, while contemporary art emphasizes engagement with current events, challenging traditional forms and materials.

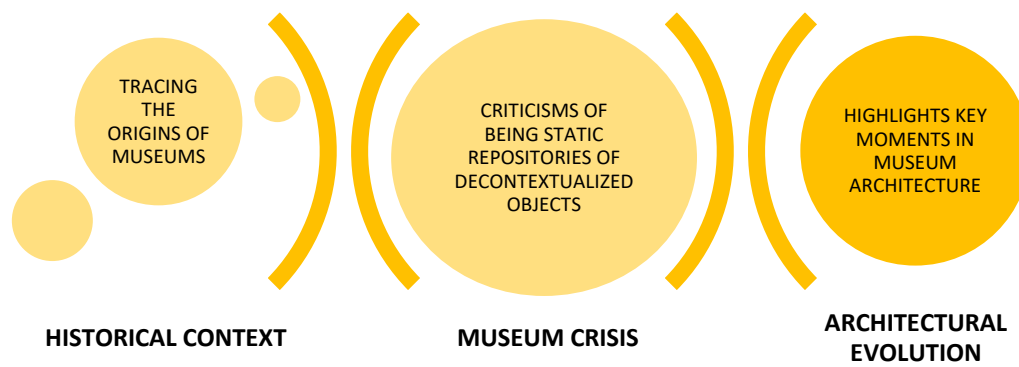


**Figure 1** Architecture as urban regeneration, MoMA PS1, New York

Finally, **architecture** is portrayed as more than a functional or aesthetic discipline. It exists at the intersection of art, science, and philosophy, continuously shaping and being shaped by society. It serves as a witness to the present moment, embodying the cultural, emotional, and social contexts in which it emerges, offering a space for individuals to connect with their purpose and understand their place in the world.

### **3. Historical and Theoretical background ARCHITECTURE OF MUSEUMS THROUGH TIME**

The third chapter of this book provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution of museum architecture, examining how these spaces have been shaped by societal needs, cultural changes, and shifting socio-political contexts. It traces the development of museums from exclusive aristocratic collections to public institutions that serve as important cultural and social hubs.



**Figure 2** Diagram of composition of the historical and theoretical background of research

The **historical context** is presented through a timeline that begins by tracing the origins of museums, starting from ancient Greek "mouseion" spaces for study, through the Renaissance era, where wealthy families like the Medici showcased their private collections. It also highlights the transition to public institutions, exemplified by the Louvre Museum, which opened after the French Revolution, marking a shift from private to public ownership of art and cultural heritage. **Museum Crisis** part addresses the contemporary challenges museums face, including criticisms of being static repositories of decontextualized objects. Museum professionals like Chris Dercon emphasize the need for "living" museums that engage with contemporary audiences and contexts, ensuring relevance in a rapidly changing world. Through **architectural evolution** research provides an analysis of the architectural transformations that have shaped museum design over the centuries. It highlights key moments in museum architecture, such as the development of the Ashmolean Museum, the world's first public museum, and the influence of neoclassical and baroque styles in the 19th century. It underscores how architecture has always played a pivotal role in shaping the visitor experience and reflecting the societal values of the time. Over time, museums transitioned from private collections to public symbols of national pride, democracy, and culture. It is emphasized that architecture is not just functional but also a key element in defining the identity of a museum, facilitating public interaction, and making museums accessible spaces for all.

During time of **Modernism**, architects like Frank Lloyd Wright revolutionized museum design by focusing on fluid circulation and creating immersive visitor experiences. Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York exemplifies this approach, where the architecture itself becomes an integral part of the narrative.



**Figure 3, 4** The Guggenheim Museum, New York, Frank Lloyd Wright, 1959; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, 1977

The architecture of high modernism originated with the introduction of new materials and forms and culminated in extreme high-tech, HI-TECH, construction. These are buildings on which no expense was spared, and they appear futuristic in their original designs. The first of its kind was the Pompidou Center in Paris, designed as a developing spatial diagram by architects Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, who won first prize in an international competition for a wide-ranging cultural center (Oliva in (Ibrišimbegović, 2015)).

In contrast, Postmodernism embraced a more eclectic and referential style. Architects like I. M. Pei, who designed the Louvre Pyramid, blended contemporary design with historical references, making the building an iconic part of the museum experience. This period marked the beginning of museums being recognized as cultural icons, where the architecture was as significant as the collections within. **Continuity and Reinterpretation** explores the balance between preserving cultural heritage and adapting to contemporary needs. Italian architect Gae Aulenti’s approach exemplifies this delicate task, where she transformed historical spaces while maintaining their integrity. Aulenti’s work, particularly her use of homogeneous stone, created a seamless blend between past and present, enhancing both pedestrian circulation and the interaction between museums and their urban surroundings. The chapter also discusses how large thematic exhibitions in modern museums echo Renaissance and Mannerist traditions, transforming museums into theatrical spaces designed to engage and entertain visitors.

**Diversity in Contemporary Architecture** shows museum architecture, ranging from neutral modernist approaches to more expressive and spectacular designs. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, designed by Frank Gehry, and Daniel Liebeskind’s Jewish Museum in Berlin are highlighted as examples of how museums have become architecturally spectacular or evocative landmarks. Other notable projects include Alvaro Siza’s Museum of Contemporary Art in Porto and the Louis Vuitton Foundation’s Museum of Contemporary Art by Frank Gehry, showcasing a wide range of architectural expressions in contemporary museum design.

The chapter concludes by reflecting on the role of museums in today’s society, where they are not only spaces for preserving culture but also places for public engagement, urban regeneration, and intellectual exchange. It emphasizes that the future of museum architecture will continue to evolve as it adapts to new technologies, social changes, and environmental challenges, ensuring that museums remain dynamic and relevant in a globalized world.

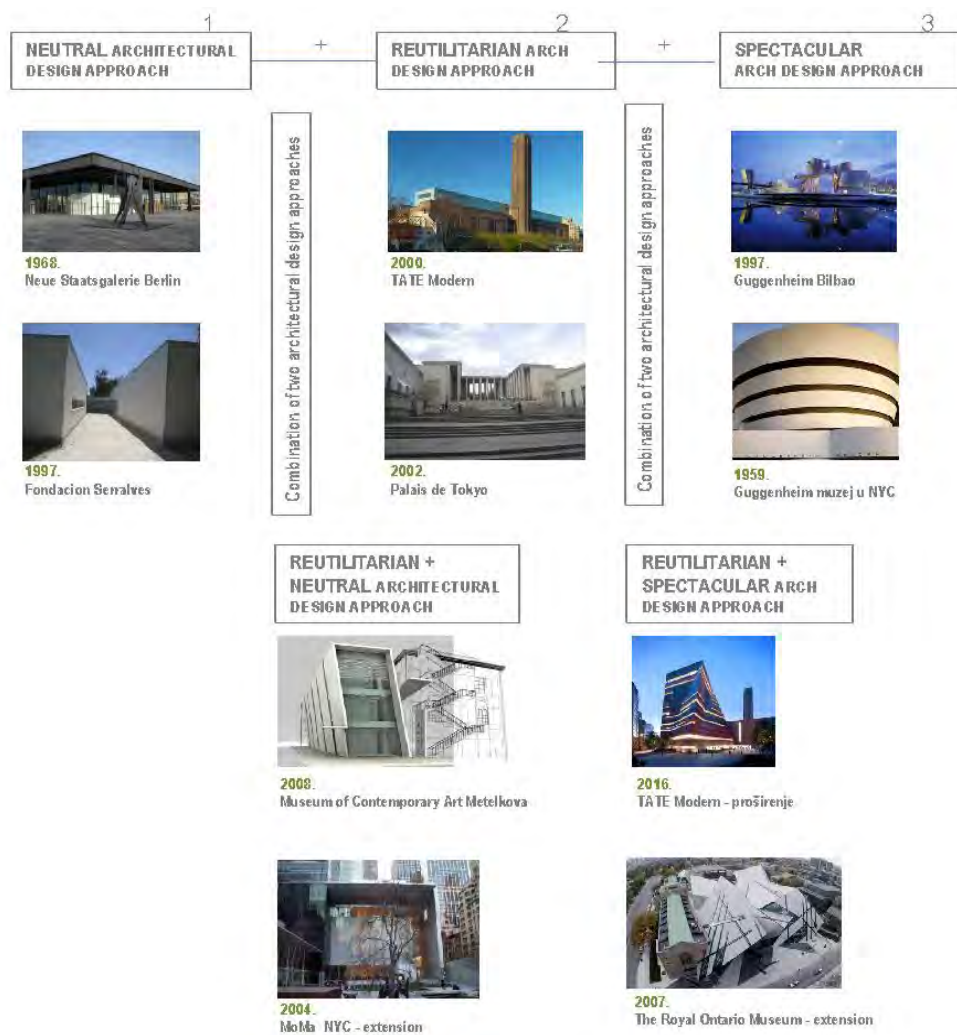


Figure 5 Renzo Piano; View of the Istanbul Modern from Bosphorus

#### **4. Methodology ASPECTS OF SHAPING ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUMS**

The methodology that follows in research in order to analyze the case studies is defining the aspects that could impact the evolution of museum architecture, emphasizing the interplay between societal development and architectural design through various dimensions .

##### **4.1. Socio-Political Aspect**

The origins of museums trace back to the Renaissance, marked by the Medici family's collection in Florence, initially catering to elitist groups and educational institutions. The French Revolution shifted this role, making museums accessible to the public. By the 19th century, museums reflected contemporary social and political climates, evolving into dynamic spaces that engaged with other cultural institutions. The post-World War II era saw a significant transformation as a mass audience embraced new artistic movements and technologies, prompting museums to adapt.

##### **4.2. Economic Aspect**

Museums play a crucial role in national identity and cultural development, acting as catalysts for economic transformation, particularly during downturns. Tschumi argues that architecture can drive social and political change, positioning museums as essential for economic revitalization. The proliferation of museums post-WWII highlights their importance in addressing identity crises and contributing to community economic growth.

##### **4.3. Urban-Development Aspect**

Contemporary art museums have become vital in urban regeneration, especially in post-industrial contexts. They are instrumental in revitalizing abandoned spaces, promoting dialogue, and enhancing pedestrian experiences. The architectural design of museums fosters interaction with their surroundings, facilitating cultural exchange and addressing historical legacies.

##### **4.4. Technological Aspect**

Modern architecture is significantly influenced by advanced technology, which shapes recognizable urban forms. While economic and cultural disparities remain, local architectural movements have emerged in response. Many contemporary museums integrate traditional vernacular architecture and contemporary artistic philosophies, using technology to bridge gaps between museum spaces and the real world, offering dynamic exhibitions and educational experiences.

##### **4.5. Aesthetic-Design Aspect**

The relationship between architecture and art is explored, noting that architecture can be considered art when it transcends functionalism and reflects socio-spatial contexts. However, contemporary architectural practices can sometimes appear ostentatious or impersonal, overshadowing the art within. A balance between architectural presence and its function as an art container is crucial, urging architects to incorporate additional sensibilities in museum design.

##### **4.6. Educational Aspect**

Since the establishment of the Ashmolean Museum in the 16th century, the educational role of museums has expanded. Today, they serve as workshops for creativity and social engagement, fostering understanding of cultural heritage. The chapter emphasizes the significance of museum education in developing responsible individuals, complementing traditional education.

##### **4.7. Spiritual Aspect**

Contemporary art museums create environments that foster contemplation and spiritual growth. Their architecture acts as a catalyst for creativity and interaction, enhancing the visitor experience. The atmosphere of the museum can evoke positive emotions, contributing to a sense of fulfillment.

##### **4.8. Valorization of Architecture of contemporary art museums**

All aspects will help to discuss the evolving role and significance of contemporary art museums in society. It can be emphasized that a museum's success is measured by visitor engagement and its integration into the cultural and economic landscape of a city. Gerald Matt highlights that museums should serve as vibrant cultural hubs that not only preserve heritage but also actively participate in community life and events. Museums today are not just places for passive observation; they are becoming dynamic spaces for education, creativity, and social interaction, often compared to forums or amusement parks. Harold Rosenberg's view is noted, portraying

museums as entities that balance entertainment with education. Furthermore, the influence of globalization and media on museum architecture is explored, suggesting that these factors have led to an aestheticization of architecture that prioritizes visual appeal and capital investment. This trend raises concerns about the potential superficiality of art and architecture in an era driven by consumerism.

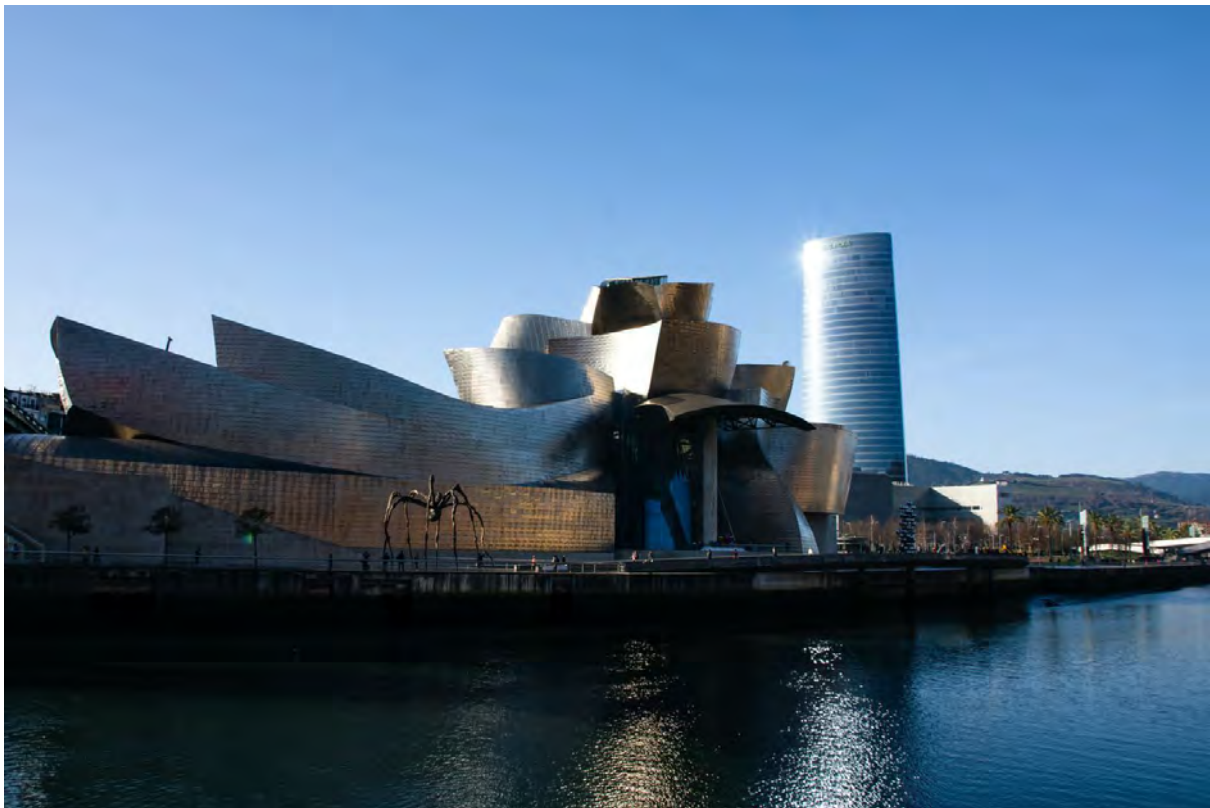
In conclusion, this chapter articulates the multifaceted roles of contemporary art museums as dynamic cultural institutions that navigate modern societal challenges. It highlights the importance of educational programs, public discussions, and collaborations with cultural figures to enhance social integration and foster a sense of community. By emphasizing spiritual fulfillment, economic viability, and social responsibility, museums can maintain relevance and impact in a rapidly changing world.

## **5. Key case studies ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUMS IN DIFFERENT CULTURAL CONTEXT**

Case studies chosen to examine the architecture of contemporary art museums analyze the cultural, spatial, economic, technological, aesthetic, didactic, and social values inherent in museums, illustrating their multifaceted roles in urban life. It will be shown how the aforementioned aspects, in a specific social and cultural context, influence the realization of reference examples, as well as implications they have on the city and society after their construction. To make the results of this analysis as relevant as possible for the local context, examples have been selected from a western social context, focusing on Western Europe, an eastern cultural context, and the regional countries in transition. The chapter emphasizes the dynamic relationship between particular and universal cultural values, particularly in response to neoliberal globalization. It argues that contemporary architecture must address both aesthetic and functional criteria while engaging with disrupted natural and social environments due to capitalist dynamics. Museums are increasingly shaped by private patronage and corporate interests, complicating their role as institutions representing cultural values. Charles Jencks' concept of museums as "spectacular contradictions" underscores the complex role these institutions play in contemporary culture, adapting to modern society's evolving demands.

### **5.1. Western cultural context**

#### **5.1.1. Guggenheim Museum Bilbao**



**Figure 6** Frank O. Gehry: Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, 1998

Established in Bilbao during economic challenges, the museum, designed by Frank O. Gehry, became a centerpiece of a revitalization plan aimed at diversifying the economy and enhancing social cohesion. The building, with its innovative design and deconstructivist style, transformed Bilbao into a cultural destination, drawing nearly a million visitors annually and contributing significantly to urban regeneration.

### 5.1.2. MAXXI Museum, Rome



**Figure 7** Zaha Hadid: Exterior daytime appearance of the MAXXI museum complex

Designed by Zaha Hadid and completed in 2009, the MAXXI Museum features a ribbon-like structure that interacts with its surroundings, promoting a sense of continuity and fluidity. The museum serves as a multifunctional cultural hub, enhancing public engagement with contemporary art and revitalizing the Flaminio district.

### 5.1.3. Tate Modern, London

Opened in 1997, Tate Modern transformed a former power station into a contemporary art museum, emphasizing accessibility and community interaction. The museum's design integrates outdoor spaces and a new extension, enhancing its role as a prominent cultural landmark along the Thames and contributing to the revitalization of the Southwark district.



**Figure 8** Herzog & de Meuron: Side facade of the TATE museum, 1997/2016

#### 5.1.4. Centre Pompidou, Paris

Initiated by President Georges Pompidou in 1969, this multidisciplinary cultural center challenges traditional museum architecture with its transparent facade, symbolizing accessibility to culture. Opened in 1977, the Centre Pompidou integrates various art forms and promotes community engagement, marking a shift in how culture is perceived in everyday life.



**Figure 9** Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers; View of the exterior of the Pompidou Centre, seen from Place Georges Pompidou

#### 5.2. Eastern Cultural Context

This section explores the influence of global political, economic, and social trends on urban and architectural design within the Middle Eastern cultural context, focusing on the rapid development in countries like the UAE. Specifically, it highlights how large-scale projects, such as the **Istanbul Modern Museum** and the **Saadiyat Museum District in Abu Dhabi**, integrate local cultural elements into modern architecture while addressing concerns about the loss of architectural identities due to globalization.

##### 5.2.1. Saadiyat Museum District in Abu Dhabi

The Saadiyat Museum District project, initiated in 2004, is transforming Abu Dhabi into a global cultural hub by integrating museums, promenades, and commercial spaces on Saadiyat Island. It aims to maintain local traditions amidst rapid urbanization, enhancing Abu Dhabi's cultural and commercial significance while preserving its rich history and identity.



**Figure 10** 3D illustration, view of the cultural district plan on Saadiyat Island, Abu Dhabi

### 5.2.2. Louvre Abu Dhabi

The **Louvre Abu Dhabi**, designed by Jean Nouvel, reflects the universal mission of art within a local context. Its architectural design combines Arab influences with global perspectives, symbolized by the iconic dome. The museum promotes cultural dialogue and exchange, balancing globalization with regional identity. Nouvel's design philosophy, emphasizing the integration of new forms with existing environments, creates a unique architectural space that blends local and global cultural narratives.



**Figure 11** Exterior view of the Louvre Museum, Abu Dhabi

### 5.2.3. Guggenheim Abu Dhabi

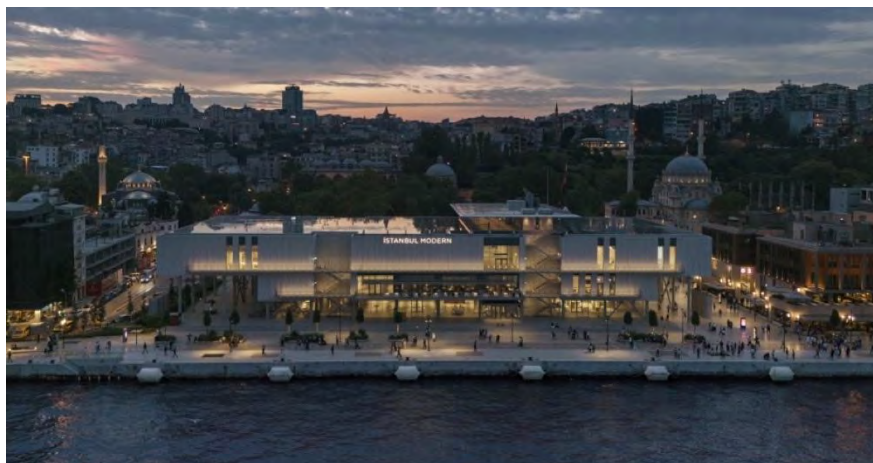
Designed by **Frank Gehry**, the **Guggenheim Abu Dhabi** aims to be the largest museum in the world. Its innovative design incorporates sustainability features, such as traditional Middle Eastern wind towers, while offering specialized galleries and spaces for contemporary art. The museum embodies the concept of a "universal museum" by integrating global themes with regional awareness, fostering cultural exchange and deepening the local population's engagement with the arts.



**Figure 12** Frank O. Gehry; Model of the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi

#### 5.2.4. Istanbul Modern

**Istanbul Modern**, Turkey's first museum of modern and contemporary art, played a key role in shaping the cultural landscape of Istanbul. Since opening in 2004, it has hosted numerous exhibitions, educational programs, and community projects. The museum's new building, designed by the **Renzo Piano Building Workshop** and completed in 2023, enhances its position on the waterfront and incorporates modern architectural features that strengthen the connection between the city's historical and cultural fabric



**Figure 13** Renzo Piano; View of the Istanbul Modern from Bosphorus

### 5.3. Regional cultural context – Western Balkan region

Analyzing the cultural context of the former Yugoslavia and its post-socialist transition, research highlights the continuity of artistic practices and the significance of museums in shaping national identities. Art historians Branislav Dimitrijević and Ješa Denegri emphasize that the Yugoslav cultural space remains relevant despite the state's dissolution, functioning as a decentralized organism interconnected through various cultural expressions. As new states emerged, each sought to develop their unique cultural identities through museums. Slovenia established the Modern Gallery of Ljubljana, Croatia began to develop its cultural sector in the late 1990s, Serbia re-engaged with the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, and North Macedonia has maintained a Museum of Contemporary Art since 1964. Montenegro's modern art scene is evolving slowly, while Bosnia and Herzegovina faces challenges but is receiving EU support for its contemporary art sector.

#### 5.3.1. Museum of Contemporary Art, Zagreb

Opened in 2009 in Novi Zagreb, the museum has been criticized for its lack of connection to the urban environment. While praised for its modern design, it is seen as a missed opportunity for public engagement, with accessibility issues hindering its role as a cultural landmark.



**Figure 14** The western facade of MSU (Museum of Contemporary Art), Zagreb

### 5.3.2. Museum of Contemporary Art, Metelkova, Ljubljana

Established in 2004, the museum originated from a need for contemporary art spaces dating back to the 1930s. Its renovation of a 19th-century barracks into a modern exhibition space emphasizes visitor experience and integration with public space, enriching Ljubljana's cultural landscape.



**Figure 15** Renzo Piano; View of the Istanbul Modern from Bosphorus

### 5.3.3. Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka (MMSU)

Opened in 2017, the MMSU emerged from Rijeka's need for cultural transformation post-Homeland War. The museum's design emphasizes adaptability and community engagement, contributing to the creation of a cultural hotspot in the area.



**Figure 16** Display of the exterior of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Rijeka

#### **5.3.4. Museum of Contemporary Art, Belgrade**

Founded in 1958 and reconstructed from 2008 to 2017, this museum plays a crucial role in the cultural life of Belgrade and Serbia. It has adapted to contemporary standards and was nominated for the EU Mies Award in 2019, underscoring its architectural significance and commitment to promoting Yugoslav and Serbian art.



**Figure 17** The exterior of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, after the reconstruction, 2017

#### **5.4. Importance of Contemporary Art Museums as Catalysts for Development**

This section discusses the critical role of contemporary art museums in urban development, economic growth, and cultural identity. The analysis emphasizes the multifaceted nature of these institutions, highlighting their potential to stimulate urban regeneration and preserve architectural heritage. The design approaches for contemporary art museums can be categorized into three main types:

- A. **"White Box" Architecture:** This approach features neutral designs that do not overshadow the artworks, maximizing functionality within the urban environment.

- B. **Reutilitarian Approach:** This increasingly popular method involves adapting existing structures to serve contemporary functions, thus preserving historical architecture while accommodating modern needs.
- C. **Architecture as Art:** Here, the building itself becomes a significant piece of art, engaging visitors with its striking design and creating a memorable landmark.

Investing in contemporary art museums not only supports cultural heritage but also fosters community dialogue and collaboration with regional and international institutions. Successful examples like the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao demonstrate how cultural investments can revitalize cities, transforming them into tourist destinations and boosting local economies. The section underscores that museums should act as educational and cultural resources, reflecting societal values and identities. By engaging with their communities, they contribute to social cohesion and local identity. Museums also adapt to changing societal needs, evolving in purpose and significance over time. In recent decades, the rise in the number and diversity of museums correlates with increased visitor engagement, making them vital players in educational development and cultural discourse. Museums are recognized as significant economic engines, helping to revitalize urban areas and promote tourism. The section concludes by stating that contemporary art museums must adapt continuously, fostering a dynamic relationship between art, architecture, and community needs. With approximately 55,000 museums globally, their collective impact on education, cultural exchange, and economic development is profound, making them essential for societal progress.

## 6. Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art Sarajevo

### 6.1. Cultural Context in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This chapter provides a detailed exploration of the cultural context in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, particularly focusing on the evolution and challenges faced by cultural institutions, especially museums. The destruction of architecture in the war (1992-1995) articulated such a disruption of the system of social action that even the post-war reconstruction, which includes a relatively significant restoration of architectural heritage, fails to change its chaotic character. On the contrary, B&H society is actually awaiting a strong social order articulated through architecture. "In this sense, the society tries to direct that part of its apparatus towards the affirmation of social aesthetic patterns of order, but mainly relying on the pre-war patterns."<sup>1</sup> (Hadžimuhamedović, 2007)

Here are some key points summarized:

1. **Impact of Political Situation:** The post-war period has seen a chronic political instability that has raised questions about the existence and operation of cultural institutions in B&H, revealing weaknesses in cultural identity.
2. **Architectural Expression:** Contemporary architecture in B&H is described as chaotic, reflecting social disorder rather than a cohesive cultural identity. This chaos is rooted in the destruction caused by the war (1992-1995) and has persisted despite efforts for restoration.
3. **Societal Transformation:** B&H society has undergone significant changes, moving toward a post-capitalist framework, complicating the task of articulating a coherent architectural identity. The text emphasizes the need for architecture to represent social order but notes that current societal values are unstable and poorly aligned with modern demands.

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<sup>1</sup> The cultural identity of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a category that peaked during Tito's Yugoslavia, specifically in the 1970s and 1980s. Reflecting on this period is useful for a better understanding of the recent cultural history of Bosnia and Herzegovina because it reconstructs a particularly dynamic and optimistic time. After World War II, as one of the Republics of the SFRY, the economic development of Bosnia and Herzegovina was accompanied by a rich architectural activity. At this point, it is useful to mention a few realized projects that best testify to the new BiH identity seen through the prism of progress and development: the construction of the sports and cultural center Skenderija in the very center of the city in 1969 authored by Živorad Janković and Halid Muhasilović, and the administration of Elektroprivreda BiH by Ivan Štraus in 1984. Of course, in this direction, the stamp of the Bosnian architectural style was given by academician Zlatko Ugljen, a student of the famous and respected architect Juraj Neidhardt, a student of Le Corbusier. Ugljen's contribution from that time is reflected in the conceptual solutions of the Ruža hotel in Mostar in 1978, the Bregava hotel in Stolac in 1979, and the Vučko hotel on Jahorina in 1984. The period from 1970-1990 is a time of accumulation of strong creative and productive energy in the territory of BiH. Sarajevo finally ceases to be a cultural periphery, and fertile ground is found for new technology, rapid industrialization, cultural development, philosophical thought, and, more importantly for culture, theoretical thought and criticism in numerous periodicals. A mature environment allowed artists a certain power to develop those ideas that were in their inception and emergence. It is about the new social and cultural mentality of the Sarajevo environment, which, like never before, showed the strength of a long-term and continuity. The art of that time became an active participant in the social events of its environment, not paying attention to its national tradition. Its goal was no longer the beauty and romantic decorativeness but universality that transcends the boundaries of the national with tendencies of modernism, thereby becoming international and boundless. (Hošić, 2013: 53.)

4. **Global Influence:** The architectural landscape in B&H is influenced by global trends, leading to a mixture of styles without strong local originality. The “copying” of architectural forms is seen as a means of integrating global values, yet it diminishes the focus on creating unique, culturally resonant architectural objects.

### 6.2. Museum Tradition in Bosnia and Herzegovina

1. **Historical Development:** The foundation of the first museum in BiH dates back to the mid-19th century, with significant progress made during the Austro-Hungarian administration. The National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina was established in 1888.
2. **Post-War Challenges:** The war had a devastating impact on museums, leading to the destruction of buildings and a loss of professional staff. By 2011, several key museums were closed, indicating the dire state of cultural preservation.
3. **Emergence of New Institutions:** Despite challenges, new museums and galleries have been established post-war, such as the Tešanj Museum and the Alija Izetbegović Museum, showcasing resilience and a commitment to cultural preservation.

After the XIV Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo, a group of artists gathered at the Youth House in Sarajevo (Radoslav Tadić, Jusuf Hadžifejzović, Saša Bukvić) in 1987 and organized the first Yugoslav Documenta as a manifestation of new artistic currents in former Yugoslavia. The second Yugoslav Documenta followed in 1989, and somehow from that concept, a very positive idea was born during the war in the 1990s in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A group of enthusiasts, led by Mr. Enver Hadžiomerspahić, who was also in the directorate of the Olympic Games opening ceremony in Sarajevo, launched an art project called “On the Threshold of the Third Millennium” during the war. The idea was to invite artists from around the world to donate an artwork to the besieged Sarajevo, on the path to peace, as an expression of the international collective will. The project born from this idea was later named “Sarajevo 2000”, and, in 2002, it received its permanent name ARS AEVI, Art of the Epoch. The entire artistic endeavor during the years of the Sarajevo siege already had the potential to become a significant cultural and development project for the City of Sarajevo, the Sarajevo Canton, and the entire Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Ars Aevi Collection was formed, and was transferred to Sarajevo in 1999.

### 6.3. Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art

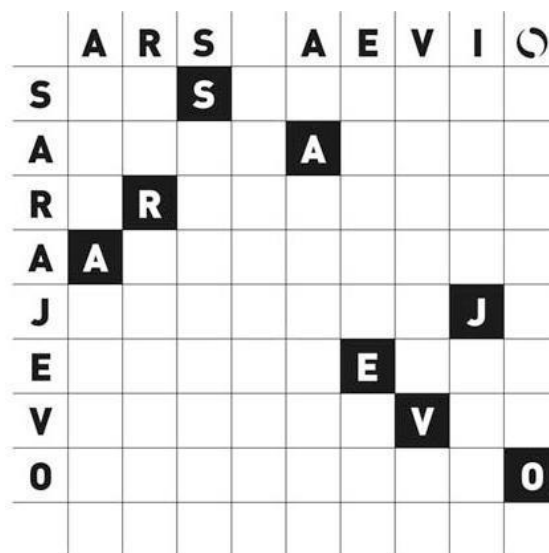


Figure 18 Ars Aevi Anagram of Sarajevo

After the Ars Aevi Collection was formed by 1998, it first came to Sarajevo in 1999 and was exhibited in the Ledena dvorana Hall, Center Skenderija. After the exhibition, it was placed in the Cube of the Historical Museum, waiting for its “permanent home”. The conceptual architectural design for the future Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art, signed by one of the world’s most prestigious architects, Renzo Piano, as the then-UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, was officially promoted in Sarajevo in September 2006. The project plans for the building to be constructed at the Quadrant C - Marijin Dvor location, on the Wilson’s Promenade, on land provided for

this purpose by the Sarajevo Canton, with the support of the City of Sarajevo and the Novo Sarajevo Municipality. As the activities for the realization of the Ars Aevi Museum construction progressed slowly, and the Cube of the Historical Museum began to leak, the Ars Aevi Collection was moved to the left wing of the Youth House, Center Skenderija. Architect Amir Vuk designed the interior in the form of an Art Depot, which was meant to store artworks until they could be moved to the new building, once it is constructed.



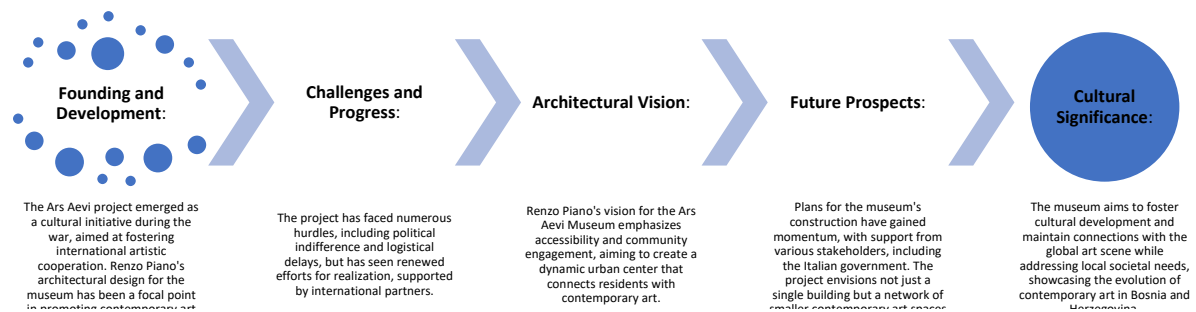
**Figure 19** Ars Aevi depo, Dom mladih, Centar Skenderija, 2018

The year 2018 becomes a turning point in the Ars Aevi project itself. Namely, the City Council of the City of Sarajevo decided to establish the Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art Public Institution, which had operated as an association of citizens and a foundation (founded by the City of Sarajevo and the Sarajevo Canton), assuming the care over the Ars Aevi Collection. Shortly after that, at the end of 2019, the collection was moved from the Skenderija Center to the City Hall, as it was given newer and more conditional rooms for display and storage. The goal is to obtain a permanent place for the exhibition of works of art from the Ars Aevi Collection by building the Ars Aevi Museum.



**Figures 20, 21** Constructed pedestrian bridge ARS AEVI; Situation of the future ARS AEVI museum and pedestrian bridge

The location of the future Ars Aevi Museum covers an area of 5,453 m<sup>2</sup>, and the building itself, according to the project, will cover an area of 2,650 m<sup>2</sup>.



**Figure 22** Development scheme plan of Ars Aevi Museum

The narrative highlights the intricate relationship between culture, architecture, and society in Bosnia and Herzegovina, demonstrating how historical, political, and social factors shape the cultural landscape and influence the development of contemporary art institutions. The Ars Aevi project, in particular, stands as a testament to the resilience and creativity of the Bosnian cultural scene amidst ongoing challenges. The proposed Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art in Sarajevo, designed by Renzo Piano, symbolizes a significant exchange of global values and reflects complex social dynamics affecting the city, culture, and tourism. Its establishment could mirror the positive impact seen with the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, enhancing urban and economic development and enriching the educational landscape for local residents.

Today's architects, like those of the International Style, create a global architectural language that connects with the spirit of contemporary society. This results in spaces that nurture growth and creativity, essential for fostering a vibrant community, including young children. In a post-Darwinist and post-ideological era, art serves as a forum for exploring new horizons. However, there is a concern about the dehumanization of technology and art's transformation into dematerialized aesthetics. This shift has led to the emergence of new public spaces for art, including online and virtual museums, which allow for the preservation and engagement with art in a safe environment.

The Ars Aevi Museum's initiative to establish a virtual presence during the pandemic illustrates the ongoing need for accessible art spaces. Collaborating with the Goethe Institute, it launched a virtual museum, emphasizing its commitment to remain a cultural presence even without a physical building. This reflects a broader trend where the virtual realm increasingly offers solitude and an escape from the nihilistic tendencies of contemporary history, aligning with Picasso's assertion that "art is that which is directed towards the world."

## 7. New Perspectives of the Contemporary Art Museums Architecture

Chapter VII explores new perspectives in the architecture of contemporary art museums, emphasizing their role as reflections of the times and spaces that foster social change. Museums are not just structures; they are places of interaction between humans and architecture, where meaningful experiences occur. While virtual museums can provide information and educational content, they cannot replace the genuine human experience and self-awareness gained through physical engagement with art.

Contemporary theorist Nicolas Bourriaud's concept of "Relational Aesthetics" emphasizes the importance of human relationships in art, advocating for an architecture that facilitates social interaction. The Botanical Garden project by architect Tatiana Bilbao serves as a prime example, creating an open-air museum where visitors encounter contemporary artworks integrated into a natural setting, fostering learning and experience.

Bilbao's work transcends mere aesthetics, responding to social and economic changes and encouraging community interaction. Her architecture aims to rebuild damaged social ties and stimulate economic renewal. Similarly, philosopher Slavoj Žižek highlights the importance of social spaces in architecture, such as foyers that facilitate encounters and interactions.

Discussions among contemporary architects in 2014, including Chris Dercon, pointed to the need for museum architecture to connect more with nature and reflect artistic sensibility. Japanese architects, known for their ability to harmonize with nature, create flexible environments that allow visitors to engage with contemporary art while connecting with the natural world.



**Figure 23,24** Tadao Ando, Japan; Tatiana Bilbao, Botanical Garden, Culiacánu: museum of contemporary art in open space

Collaboration between architects and artists is crucial for creating successful contemporary art spaces. Architects like Tadao Ando and Ryue Nishizawa exemplify this collaboration, resulting in designs that enhance the art experience. Moreover, in cities with limited space for new museums, repurposing existing structures is increasingly seen as a viable approach, allowing for cultural and educational uses of historically significant buildings. This trend is evident in developed countries like Switzerland, England, and Austria, showcasing a forward-thinking approach to contemporary art museum architecture.



**Figure 25,26** Collaboration of architect Ryue Nishizawa and artist Rei Naito, Teshima Art Museum, Japan

## 8. Conclusion

The research presented in the book analyzes the architecture of contemporary art museums within various cultural contexts, focusing on the factors influencing their design and the implications these structures have on cities, regions, and society. The closure of the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2012 and the lack of political support for a new Museum of Contemporary Art prompted critical questions about the need for such institutions in transitional societies like Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Historically, museums evolved as public institutions influenced by political power and social status. They have transformed into educational centers that extend their impact beyond architecture, reflecting societal trends, economic conditions, and cultural transformations. Contemporary art museums, which have moved away from traditional “white box” designs, now serve as social metaphors and economic generators, contributing to urban identity and development.

The book emphasizes the importance of contemporary museums as dynamic entities that respond to the current societal context, focusing on education, cultural identity, and individual expression rather than collective identities. The examples discussed highlight how museums can integrate contemporary art into open spaces, promoting community engagement and accessibility.

In the specific context of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the development of the Ars Aevi Museum of Contemporary Art is crucial for fostering awareness of contemporary art and cultural identity. However, challenges remain, not only of an economic nature but also concerning political will. The proposed museum district around the Ars Aevi Museum presents an opportunity for cultural revitalization, creating multifunctional public spaces that facilitate interaction, education, and artistic exchange.

Ultimately, the architecture of contemporary art museums serves as a reflection of their time, embodying cultural, historical, and social narratives. As they evolve, these museums aspire to function as sacred spaces that enhance urban life, educate society, and promote cultural identity, thereby contributing to the broader dialogue on contemporary art and architecture. The hope for the realization of the Ars Aevi Museum underscores the potential for cultural renewal in Sarajevo, positioning it as a vital platform for artistic and architectural innovation.

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