

Temptation to Self-Indulgence?

*Aesthetics and Function in Recent Art Museum Design*¹

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Over the last decade we have come to expect audacious designs for new art museums, such as the 2004 Kunsthaus in Graz, Austria, which looks like some tentacled science fiction creature dropped into the midst of a Baroque city. Such wild architectural fantasies have given rise to complaints that museum architecture has too often become the real art work overshadowing what is inside. There is little doubt that most of those who fly to Bilbao to visit the Guggenheim Museum are going primarily to see Frank Gehry's shimmering titanium sculpture. Many critics have worried that in such buildings, "flash and bravura win out over contemplation [...] and architecture triumphs over art."² Complaints of this kind actually combine two objections that ought to be distinguished. One is that spectacular architecture will outshine the art, but this objection is hardly worrisome since it seems appropriate that an art museum would itself be a work of art. But there is another, more serious charge, which is that strange curves, odd angles, and enormous heights in the galleries may distract our attention from the art.³ Confronted with such a clash between architecture *as* art and architecture *for* art most people would say: Why not have both? Indeed, our natural inclination seems to be that aesthetics and function should be united in any work of architecture. Yet, we also seem to have an equally natural inclination to appreciate outstanding buildings just for their appearance without regard to function. Can these two intuitions be reconciled? Can they be philosophically justified? In the course of answering these questions we will discover that the controversy over radical art museum design is an exemplary case for reflecting on some central problems in the philosophy of architecture.

In order for us to have some examples in common, I have chosen two cases of iconic museums that some critics have celebrated for their daring architecture, but other critics have complained interfere with viewing their art. One is the 1997 Guggenheim Bilbao itself. Although the glittering Baroque curves of its sculptural exterior are its best known feature,

the Bilbao is equally notable for its unusual interior. The soaring, curvilinear atrium reaches over thirty meters, and many of the galleries that extend off it are oddly shaped and outsized, one of them, over a 150 meters long, dwarfed everything put into it during the museum's early years. Yet, these vast spaces were not simply artistic self-indulgence on Gehry's part, but reflected the conviction of Thomas Krens, the Guggenheim's director, that contemporary art demands exhibition spaces of huge scale and extraordinary character. Moreover, the Bilbao government was betting on a spectacular piece of architecture to revitalize the city.

Although Gehry himself has explicitly rejected what he calls the "the mythology [...] that a museum for art has to be deferential and [...] not compete with the art," he actually provided more conventional galleries for older types of modernist painting, and reserved his high, asymmetrical galleries for late modernist and contemporary works.⁴ A few critics feel that his dramatic galleries do distract the viewer's attention from the art, but others believe the Bilbao museum is not only a magnificent work of architectural art, but "is a place where art and architecture finally meet in harmonious amplification."⁵

Before looking at my other example of a spectacle museum, I want briefly to consider a less dramatic museum for purposes of comparison. Rafael Moneo's Moderna Museet in Stockholm opened just a year after the Bilbao Guggenheim. Instead of making a glittering monumental statement, however, it deliberately blends into the built environment of Skeppsholmen island. But Moneo is proudest of his lighting system, based on the lantern-like skylights that are the most conspicuous formal feature of the museum from the outside. He says that he sought to create "a piece of architecture that is so appropriate to its function that a strict continuity emerges between the source of light and the walls [...] it is almost like being inside a lamp."⁶

My other example of a spectacle museum is Daniel Libeskind's 2006 Hamilton Building at the Denver Art Museum in the United States, a building whose glowing jumble of angles has helped put Denver on the architectural map. Many architecture critics have highly praised Libeskind's daring cubistic sculpture for the way it enlivens downtown Denver. But what it does to the art within is more controversial, with some critics praising its striking angles, and others finding them terribly dysfunctional.⁷ Just as there are hardly any vertical or horizontal lines on the outside of the building, so also on the inside, almost every wall leans outward or inward with many rooms in odd, trapezoidal shapes, sometimes narrowing to a point in the corners.⁸ As a result, exhibition designers and curators have faced

a tremendous challenge. Occasionally, a piece of contemporary sculpture seems to fit this tilted environment, but more conventional works are either overwhelmed or, in the case of paintings, one is distracted by the braces that are used to hold them vertical. When one adds the fact that thick boards or potted plants have had to be placed on the floor in front of the more severely inward slanting walls to keep people from bumping their heads, some critics have concluded that the design is too self-centered to consider the needs of the art public. As one put it, Libeskind's "tortured geometries, generated by purely formal considerations" make it "virtually impossible to enjoy the art."⁹

The obvious lesson of these brief examples is that no matter how radical an art museum design may appear on the outside, the real test of its successful functioning is whether the spaces within are designed to support the art. Thus, when Frank Gehry rejects the idea that a museum design should not compete with the art, I could agree, if he is referring to the exterior or the atrium, but it is hard to believe even he thinks the design of the galleries should directly *compete* with the art. Yet, in the words of the architect, Renzo Piano, whose museum designs have often been praised for integrating architecture and art, "You can't just build neutral white spaces. They kill works of art just as much as hyperactive spaces that make the building a piece of self-indulgence."¹⁰ Piano's criticism of both deadly neutral spaces and self-indulgent "hyperactive spaces" reflects the ordinary intuition, mentioned earlier, that an art museum should ideally be both an interesting work of art itself and serve the art it contains. But the enthusiasm of many critics for Gehry's and Libeskind's spectacular museum exteriors also reflects our other ordinary intuition, namely, that some works of architecture are so outstanding visually that we may overlook their functional faults. Let us turn now to some possible philosophical grounds for adjudicating these two intuitions.

Many philosophers of architecture have noted that whereas other arts *may* be employed for some purpose beyond aesthetic appreciation, most works of architecture are made to serve some practical function (with follies as borderline cases and *paper* or *digital* architecture as exceptions).¹¹ It is significant that one of the first writers to articulate the modern system of the Fine Arts, the Abbé Batteux writing in 1746, placed architecture in a special category he called *mixed arts* that combine the pleasures of the fine arts with the utility of the mechanical arts.¹² Subsequent theorists dropped Batteux's category of mixed arts, and the role of function in architecture as a fine art became problematic. Although most philosophers and theorists, from Kant to Scruton, have made utility a

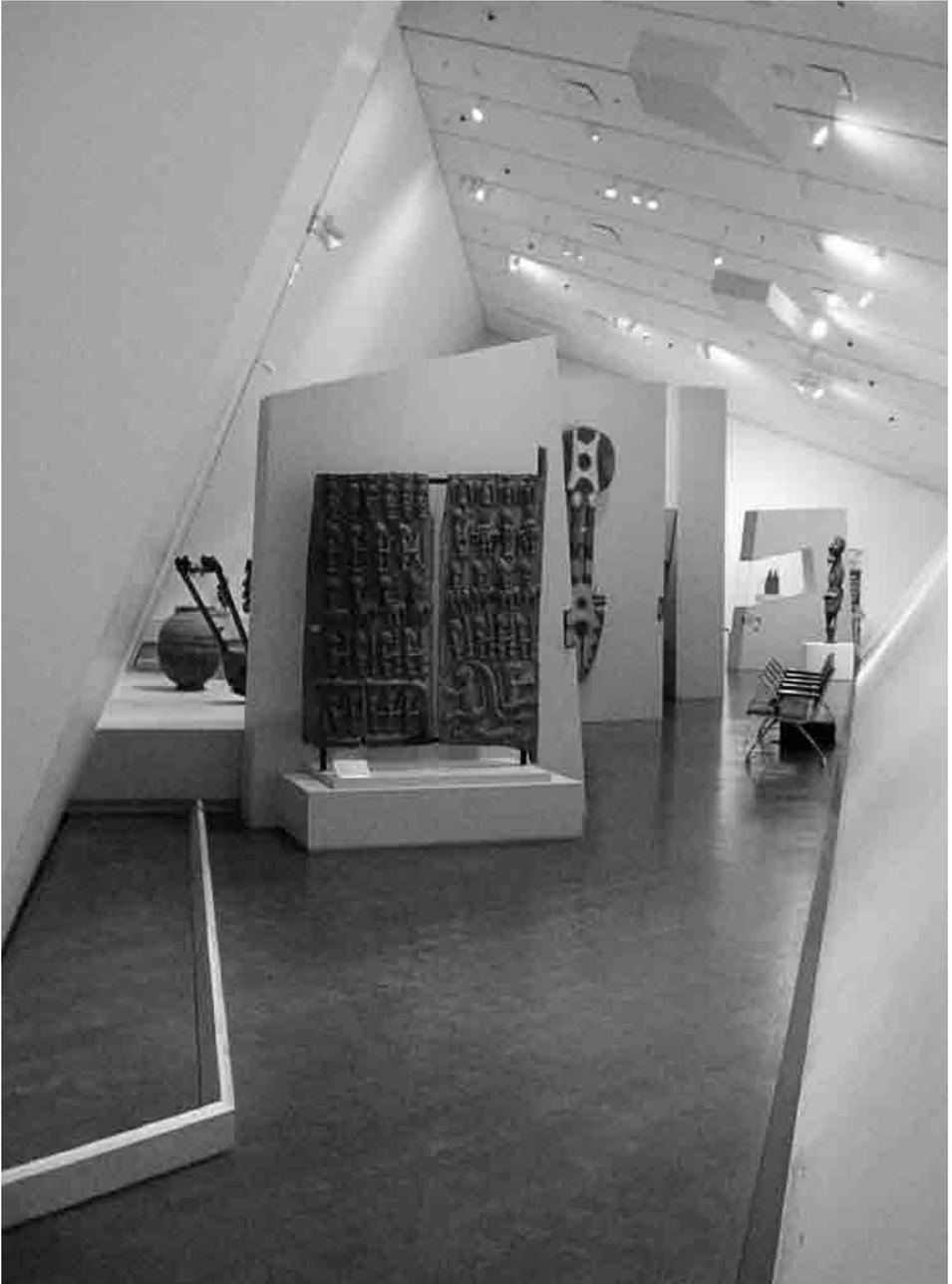


Guggenheim Bilbao.



Moderna Museet in Stockholm.

Denver Art Museum.



Denver Art Museum.

necessary condition of architecture, a few, like Schopenhauer and Ruskin, have treated function as largely irrelevant.

Before we go any farther, however, I need to comment on the ambiguity of the term *function*.¹³ Although *function* has been a central motif in architectural writing since the early twentieth century, writers from Vitruvius to Batteux used the term *utility*.¹⁴ Today, *utility* seems to imply a narrower, means-end relationship, whereas *function* suggests the role something plays within a larger system as implied by its use in biology or anthropology. Even broader uses of *function* have emerged among theorists of architecture many of whom have spoken of architecture's social function, its ethical function, its symbolic function, even its aesthetic function.¹⁵ Thus, one could rephrase the disagreement over the place of function in architecture, as a disagreement over the relative importance of two *kinds* of function: one side emphasizing practical function, the other side aesthetic function, where aesthetic function is taken to mean that a work of architecture is designed with the intention that its formal elements (shape, space, light, texture, color) will evoke a positive aesthetic response. Rather than contrasting aesthetic function with practical function, of course, architectural theory has usually spoken of *form vs. function*, and I will follow that practice. But we also need to note that just as there is an important relationship between aesthetics and practical function, there are also significant relationships between aesthetics and other architectural functions whether social, environmental, ethical, or symbolic. Although some of these functions will briefly come into view in the following discussion, unless otherwise noted, I will use the term *function* to mean practical function or utility.

The philosopher Gordon Graham has usefully suggested four types of position on form and function.¹⁶ At one pole is extreme *functionalism*, which says that form ought to *follow* function in the sense of being determined by it.¹⁷ But, as Graham points out, if one takes the idea of the functional determination of form strictly, it will collapse, since, for any given function, there are innumerable possible forms that would work. The stripped down, simplified look of modernism, for example, was not a necessary requirement of function, but a stylistic choice arising from an animus to ornament and historical styles. A second possible position at the other extreme would have form determine function. But a given form can also have innumerable and often unforeseen functional effects.

Few today embrace either of these extreme positions, but a third possibility has continued to seem attractive: the position that form and function are sufficiently independent to be judged separately. As Schopenhauer put

it long ago, “the great merit of the architect is achieving purely aesthetic ends [...] in spite of other ends foreign to them.”¹⁸ This view leads to a tendency to focus either on a building’s exterior shape and qualities or, if the interior is included, to view it only in terms of formal properties. In some architecture journals and monographs, for example, one can still find critical discussions that hardly mention function and are accompanied by photographs of the building’s empty interior before furnishings or people have intruded upon its architectural purity.

Less extreme versions of this separatist view have been associated with the widely used conceptual polarity: architecture vs. building.¹⁹ Its most cited version has been the declaration of the historian, Nicholas Pevsner: “A bicycle shed is a building; Lincoln Cathedral is architecture [...] the term architecture applies only to buildings designed with a view to aesthetic appeal.”²⁰ But if one defines architecture in such a way that only “aesthetic appeal” is essential, there would obviously be no basis in principle to criticize functionally inadequate designs as *architecturally* deficient.²¹ A functionally inadequate design could still be considered an excellent work of architecture since its function would be seen as belonging to it only qua building. But the architecture vs. building polarity is clearly an evaluative continuum pretending to be a categorical disjunction. Lincoln Cathedral may be considered architecture primarily because of its artistic properties, but as a church it remains a functional building. Conversely, the lowliest bicycle shed possesses some aesthetic properties. If used merely as a way of delimiting the subject matter of architectural history, the architecture vs. building contrast may be a convenient distinction, but in order for it to become a dichotomy justifying a purely aesthetic approach to architecture, one would have to prop it up with a set of formalist assumptions.²²

A fourth possible relation of form and function is the idea that form and function ought to be somehow united in works of architecture – the ordinary intuition with which we began. This unity can be conceived loosely as a kind of complementarity, or it can be formulated more intimately as an ideal of a perfect integration, as in Frank Lloyd Wright’s dictum: “form and function are one.”²³ But whether the unity of form and function is formulated broadly as a kind of concord or ideally as a perfect marriage, the philosophical question is: Can the two also be joined within the process of aesthetic judgment itself?

Several philosophers writing on architecture in recent decades have suggested they can be so joined by using terms like form *fitting*, *articulating*, or *expressing* function. An essay by Alan Carlson, for example, has vigorously affirmed that the way a building’s form *fits* its practical

functions is central to our aesthetic appreciation of it.²⁴ Unfortunately, he does not tell us much about *how* functions might affect our aesthetic appreciation. If we turn to what Gordon Graham, Roger Scruton, and Edward Winter say about form *expressing* specific functions we find even less help. Although all three begin by declaring that utility or function is a necessary condition of something being architecture, each of them rejects the idea that a building's *specific* practical function is crucial to its aesthetic appreciation. For Graham the idea of form expressing specific functions is likely to result in such absurdities as trying to figure out how a gothic pile like St. Pancras Station in London *expresses* train travel.²⁵ Scruton and Winter say not only that there is no way to clarify the notion of form expressing practical functions, but that it would not make any difference if there was, since the functions of buildings change over time.²⁶ For Scruton what remains most important in the appreciation of architecture is "to find meaning in appearance itself," so that "aesthetic considerations [...] must take precedence over all other factors."²⁷

Having found little help on the relation of form to specific function in these works, I want to begin afresh by briefly describing three structural characteristics of a typical art museum experience that also have important implications for understanding the aesthetic judgment of architecture in general. First, our aesthetic experience of architecture is seldom purely contemplative, but involves a complex and highly mobile interaction. This is especially true of our experience of the interior of a building which shifts from the primarily visual modality characteristic of our response to the exterior, to a multi-sensory response to the interior, involving hearing, touch, and smell, and leading to a general feeling for the immersive atmosphere created by the interaction of space, light, and surfaces, as we move through the building.

Second, our aesthetic response to the museum's architecture has distinct temporal phases, as we move from the exterior to the reception and other general use spaces and on to the galleries for art, ending in a literal or figurative *looking back* as we leave. This temporality means that our judgments of the exterior and interior are initially relatively distinct, as are our experiences of the reception spaces vis a vis the art galleries. This explains why people can sometimes say things like: It's exciting architecture [exterior and atrium], but not a very good museum [galleries]. Yet, if unity is an important aesthetic property, a serious critical judgment will finally have to take into consideration how *all* aspects of a building's design come together.²⁸

The third peculiarity of our aesthetic judgment of architecture is that it is almost always *aesthetically impure*, especially with respect to function.

We seem to make tentative judgments about the appropriateness of form to functions all along the way, whether it is the appropriateness of an extravagant exterior for identifying the building as an art museum or the appropriateness of a dramatically soaring atrium to heighten our expectations even as it serves the mundane functions of ticketing and orientation. But it is in the art galleries that our aesthetic experience of form mingles most completely with our perception of practical function, since we are more or less continuously aware of the interplay between the architecture and the art it contains. Of course, we may sometimes be so captivated by an artwork that we momentarily forget the architectural setting. Yet most of the time we will be aware of the architecture as a framework for the art, sometimes interacting supportively with it, as in the case of Moneo's Moderna Museet, sometimes interacting intrusively, as in the case of Libeskind's Denver Museum.

Obviously, a strict formalist could object to my description of these structural characteristics on the grounds that my informal phenomenology is biased in favor of the inclusion of function. It is just as reasonable to assume, the formalist might reply, that a critic primarily interested in architecture as a fine art would come to a museum with the intention of focusing purely on architectural form. This view is especially plausible given a particular philosophical tradition that understands the aesthetic experience of art as primarily a matter of responding to formal, sensuous, or expressive properties without regard to moral or practical purposes. Since my appeal to experience would obviously fail with such a critic, I must either try to find an argument that would make use of the separatist's focus on architectural form, or develop an alternative understanding of the nature of aesthetic judgment. I will take up each strategy in turn.

One argument against the formalist approach is that, by ignoring the way an art museum's architecture serves the art within, the formalist misses an essential aspect of the form of the building as a work of art. The reason is that the formalist fails to consider the way an architect's artistic choices must take function into consideration in the process of design so that functional concerns become *embodied in the very architectural forms* on which formalists focus their attention. This is true even for those architects like Frank Gehry who are most eager to create architectural works of art "designed with a view to aesthetic appeal." Consider Gehry's justly celebrated Disney concert hall in Los Angeles, whose curving titanium exterior is similar to that of his Bilbao Guggenheim Museum. When he designed the interior of the Disney concert hall, Gehry did not just carve out a visually satisfying form, but hired acoustical engineers to guide him

in shaping it to provide the best possible sound environment.²⁹ Similarly, at the Guggenheim Bilbao, Gehry designed more conventional looking galleries for modernist paintings, but restricted his most sculptural, curvilinear galleries for more recent installation and performance works. If one were to judge the Bilbao museum from a purely formal perspective, one might have to fault the traditional looking galleries as out of keeping with the rest of the museum, thereby blaming Gehry for failing to unify his design's sculptural form rather than praising him for effectively combining formal aims with a concern for functions. Thus, although practical functions may begin as *external* to a work, once an architect has taken them into account in designing a building, the architect's choices with regard to function have become *internal* to the building as a work of art, analogous to the way the external subject matter of a representational painting becomes part of the internal content of the completed painting.

Someone might object at this point that I am burdening our aesthetic response with the necessity of trying to find out the psychological intentions of the architect. But artistic choices and intentions can be inferred from the properties of the work itself without the need for biographical knowledge. The knowledge of the building type and of the kind of art it is to contain is usually a sufficient basis for inference. Our aesthetic appreciation of an art museum's galleries, therefore, should not be directed only to the abstract formal properties that make them satisfying spaces in general, but, as Yuriko Saito puts it, at the *way in which* these same sensuous and design qualities converge to facilitate our encounter with the art they contain.³⁰ Our appreciation of Moneo's galleries in the Moderna Museet, for example, is based in part on the way in which he has artistically solved the problem of illumination; we appreciate his lanterns as *simultaneously* enhancing our viewing of the art and affording satisfying spatial experiences. And when we reflect on the museum as a whole we also note the way the lanterns contribute formal interest to the exterior.³¹

But formalist critics could still make three objections to my argument from artistic choice. First, they could point out that many important art museums have been installed in former warehouses, factories, railway stations, and power plants, in which cases it would be absurd to claim we infer architectural choices from the way the galleries are designed. Second, whether gallery spaces are in an older building turned into a museum or in a newly designed building, the apparent fit between any given architectural space and the art it contains, may not be attributable to the architect, but to the museum's curators who choose which art works to install in a given space, what color to paint the walls, where to focus artificial lighting, etc. In

reply to the first objection, I would point out that nearly all the warehouses, power plants, and other buildings adapted for use as art museums, have been significantly modified by architects commissioned precisely to make them suited to showing art. In fact, the case of adaptive reuse actually supports my point about inferred considerations of function, since most of the architects who are commissioned for this work are focusing primarily on making interior spaces that function effectively for showing art, rather than simply creating impressive architectural forms to be appreciated for their own sake. As for the second objection, concerning the important role of curators, it is certainly true that a curator may make poor use of an architectural space excellently designed for art, or may rescue a space poorly designed for art. In most cases, however, it is not difficult to sort out the architectural choices from the curatorial ones.³² One reviewer of Libeskind's Denver addition, for example, entitled his review "It Works Despite Libeskind's Best Efforts," explaining that the curators had done a heroic job of making several of the galleries function well, despite Libeskind's apparent disregard of functional concerns in his design.³³

But formalist critics would have a third, more principled objection to my account of the way functions are embodied in artistic forms, namely, that the noticing of an interaction of form and function in our architectural experience is merely an empirical fact about some observers, not a necessary condition of aesthetic perception. Genuine aesthetic judgments, they would say, simply *are* judgments about formal, sensory, and expressive properties, and the ability to make such judgments is precisely the ability to separate immediate responses to aesthetic properties from responses to artistic properties like choice and intention or to non-artistic properties like morality and function.

It would seem, therefore, that we must either re-define the nature of aesthetic experience and judgment or accept the traditional formalist understanding but make aesthetic experience only one part of a more general appreciation of architectural art. But the strategy of making aesthetic response only one part of a comprehensive artistic appreciation would still leave aesthetics and function judged separately before they were combined in an overall artistic judgment. What we really want to know is whether functional achievements or defects in a work of architectural art can enter into the process of aesthetic judging itself. For that we need a different concept of the aesthetic.

In looking for an alternative account of the aesthetic, we ought to avoid the arbitrariness of a merely stipulating definition by staying close to common usage and its roots in the long tradition stemming from Baumgarten,

Kant, and other eighteenth century thinkers. Of course, by now, many alternatives to formalism are available that could make a place for function in aesthetic judgments. There are the various pragmatist and phenomenological approaches. There is Noel Carroll's deflationary and disjunctive expansion of the idea of aesthetic experience that eliminates the *for itself* clause.³⁴ Even more promising would seem to be Stephen Davies' recently proposed "new model of aesthetic judgment" that he names "judgments of functional beauty."³⁵ Yet, instead of any of these, I will briefly draw upon some ideas from Kant himself – his controversial distinction between free and dependent beauty.³⁶ There are many problems with it, beginning with the fact that Kant speaks of both judgments and objects as free or dependent. His examples of freely beautiful objects include flowers, arabesques, and absolute music whereas dependent beauties include representational paintings, music set to words, and architecture. As for the two kinds of judgments, a judgment of free beauty is a spontaneous attending to the form of the object as it is entertained in a harmonious free play of the imagination and understanding. A judgment of dependent beauty, on the other hand, "presupposes [...] the concept of the purpose that determines what the thing is to be."³⁷ One of Kant's examples of a judgment of dependent beauty is our response to a church. "Much that could be liked directly in intuition could be added to a building," says Kant, "if only the building were not to be a church."³⁸ When Kant concludes that such judgments of dependent beauty are not *pure* aesthetic judgments, some philosophers have asked how they could be aesthetic judgments at all, given the strictures he earlier placed on the role of concepts and purpose.³⁹ But Kant seems in this passage to loosen his notion of subsumption under a concept, which is his criterion for a *determinative* judgment as opposed to an aesthetic one. He says that in a judgment of dependent beauty the concept of a purpose does not *determine*, but merely *constrains* the freedom of the imagination.⁴⁰ Thus, to use Kant's example of a church, the purpose of a church as a place of Christian worship limits what architectural forms can please us aesthetically, but does not determine in advance any particular form that would satisfy or impede the needs of worship.

Some scholars have interpreted Kant's notion of *constraint* here as primarily negative, that is, we first take note of an object's purpose as an example of its kind and then we judge it formally as free beauty.⁴¹ Others have interpreted judgments of dependent beauty as an additive combination of a judgment based on intellectual pleasure in the satisfaction of purpose with a judgment based on a felt pleasure in form.⁴² On either of these accounts, knowing that a building is of a certain type leads us

to expect that it will minimally fulfill the functions of that type, and if it does so, we may go on to enjoy its formal features. But when a building serves its functions too poorly we may find our imagination impeded in its attempt to freely enjoy the building's forms.⁴³ Both the constraint and the combination approaches to judgments of dependent beauty do make function relevant to aesthetic judgment, but, by suggesting a two stage approach to aesthetic judgment, both remain relatively close to the separatist position we are trying to overcome.

What we need is an account of judgments of dependent beauty that can show how function can be a more integral part of the process of aesthetic judging. Of the several reconstruction's of Kant's idea of dependent beauty that argue for a more intimate involvement, I find most convincing that of Rachel Zuckert in *Kant on Beauty and Biology*.⁴⁴ For Zuckert, aesthetic judgment in general "comprises attention to *all* the empirical, sensibly apprehended properties of an object" as these are "reciprocally, internally unified" in the play of imagination and understanding.⁴⁵ In a judgment of free beauty this unification of our experience is based on the object's form, but in a judgment of dependent beauty, concepts such as those of *aesthetic ideas* or of the object's purpose are, as Zuckert puts it, "incorporated' into an (overarching) representation [...] of the object's purposive form."⁴⁶ Thus, on Zuckert's interpretation, "when we appreciate an object *as* a church, the properties that make it a member of its kind are taken to be aesthetically relevant [...] *within* aesthetic judging."⁴⁷ In Zuckert's account of dependent beauty, then, an object's conceptual contents or its practical purposes do not merely constrain free judgment from the outside, or get combined with free judgments in an additive way, but are fully integrated into a distinctive process of aesthetic judging.

Of course, by incorporating ideas of content or purpose into the play of imagination and understanding, such judgments are rendered *impure*, as compared to a play of the imagination based only upon formal properties. Moreover, unlike judgments of free beauty judgments of dependent beauty can lay no claim to universality.⁴⁸ But the point of having a concept such as dependent beauty is precisely to make room for a distinctive kind of aesthetic judgment that permits the inclusion of features like artistic intention or practical function. Such judgments are still genuinely aesthetic since they are neither judgments of mere agreeableness nor are they determinative judgments that subsume instances under a concept. Functionality, therefore, can be incorporated into a genuine aesthetic judgment of architecture, so long as function is experienced "as itself to be in play with the object's [many] other sensible properties."⁴⁹

Whether or not Zuckert's particular reconstruction of the concept of dependent beauty is accepted as the most convincing interpretation of Kant, it offers us a useful way of philosophically articulating our ordinary intuition that form and function should be united in architecture. Paul Guyer has persuasively argued that all three of the major interpretations of dependent beauty – the constraint view, the combination view, and the internal view – can find some textual support in Kant and that, moreover, all three reflect various ways form and function are actually related in our ordinary experience.⁵⁰ In the case of architecture, however, the advantage of the *internal* view of dependent beauty judgments over the other two is that it shows how function can enter most intimately into the process of aesthetic judging itself.

Nick Zangwill, another philosopher interested in reformulating Kant's idea of dependent beauty, has also applied it to the problem of function in architecture, but he has raised the worry that attempts to incorporate the specific functions of a building type into aesthetic judgments may find no logical stopping point.⁵¹ How, he asks, do we determine *which* functions are relevant in each case without getting into an endless process of ever narrower specification, for example, from judging a building *as* a church, to judging it as a catholic or protestant church, to judging it *as* a certain type of protestant church, and so on? One possible solution Zangwill suggests is that we avoid ascribing beauty or aesthetic excellence to a building as a specific type, but "only see it as having the broad function of being some building or other."⁵² But that solution would land us back with Scruton and Winter in the denial that the *specific* functions of a building matter to our aesthetic judgments.

I believe Zangwill's worry is excessive. The danger of an infinite regress is perhaps a problem for some versions of the constraint and combination approaches to dependent beauty in which the judgment that an object is an adequate exemplar of its type remains relatively external to the process of imaginative free play. The advantage of a more integrative account of dependent beauty judgments like Zuckert's is that "we take many more properties into account" than those that render an object simply "a good member of its kind."⁵³ In our case of the art museum as a building type, for example, we certainly have to move to the appropriate level of specificity since the kind of architectural forms that would satisfy the function of a great historical museum like the Prado in Madrid would obviously be different from the forms appropriate to a museum like the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art in Helsinki.⁵⁴ In actual aesthetic judging, relevance finally has to be decided at the level of the individual building and the critic

must adjudicate an exceedingly complex interaction of numerous factors.

On the understanding of aesthetic judgment I am recommending, therefore, the unity that we seek in aesthetic judging is not restricted to purely formal properties as it would be in a judgment of *free beauty*, but includes attention to the ease with which form can be integrated with practical function and other features in the play of imagination. Within this kind of dependent beauty framework, of course, critical judgments would have to be qualified by the principle: *when all relevant aspects are given due weight*. Given the multiple functions of many of today's art museums, enabling the thoughtful display of art works is only one of several practical and other functions architects and critics must address. Yet, if we are to call something an *art* museum, surely whatever proportion of a museum building is given over to the display of art, that part should be designed in a way that supports viewers' attention to the kinds of works the museum contains. Thus, even though there may be blameless differences in the way people weigh relevant aspects in the process of aesthetic judgment, one thing they cannot *justifiably* do: they cannot give the practical functions of a building type zero weight in an overall aesthetic judgment.

Unfortunately, Kant himself, at the very end of his discussion of dependent beauty seems to pull the rug out from under not only such an *internal* view of the effect of practical function on aesthetic judgment, but even from under the *constraint* and *combination* views. Kant says that a person may, either through ignorance of an object's purpose or, by deliberately abstracting from purpose, judge such a work of dependent beauty as if it were a *free beauty*.⁵⁵ Certainly, Kant is right to point out that when we are ignorant of a building's purpose – as we often are when we visit a strange city – we are likely to respond to a striking work of architecture purely as form. But Kant's other claim, that even when we know what the function is, we may deliberately abstract from it, while also empirically true, has disturbing implications. Kant's claim could be seen as endorsing the extreme formalist separation of form and function, allowing a critic to totally disregard the function of a work of architecture without blame, whereas I have argued that the idea of dependent beauty implies, at the least, that a critic cannot blamelessly exclude function altogether.

Although there are ways to construe Kant's statement as not undermining the idea of dependent beauty, his statement does articulate the *other* ordinary intuition we have about works of architecture that I mentioned at the beginning of my paper.⁵⁶ I said there that alongside our intuition that aesthetics and function should be united in architecture, we

seem to have an equally natural intuition that some buildings are so beautiful we may enjoy their appearance without regard to their functions.

For the philosophy of architecture, I can think of no more interesting witness to this kind of intuition than Ludwig Wittgenstein. In Vienna in 1926, Wittgenstein designed a fine house in the modern style for his sister but was disappointed with it because he felt it lacked what he called "*primordial* life, wild life."⁵⁷ For just as "every purposive movement of the human body" is not "a *gesture*," so "every functional building" is not "architecture."⁵⁸ Here, Wittgenstein seems to raise the architecture vs. building topos to a far higher level than Pevsner's "aesthetic appeal," suggesting that true works of architecture may evoke an almost ecstatic response.⁵⁹ Similarly, the critic, Andrew Ballantyne, has translated the building vs. architecture continuum into one between *ordinary* and *visionary* architecture, for which he uses the metaphors of the "nest" and the "pillar of fire." "At one end of the scale we have the nest, a modest and comforting place to [...] feel at home; at the other we have the extravagant pyre which consumes vast resources, and fills us with awe."⁶⁰ Ordinary buildings – *nests* of all kinds, including most art museums – are designed, Ballantyne suggests, by architects who see themselves as problem solving professionals working with their clients to achieve a common goal of integrating functional and aesthetic values. Visionary buildings, on the other hand, are designed by architects who see themselves primarily as free artists and who today are giving us the most spectacular displays of "avant-garde extravagance" in architecture.⁶¹

How do Wittgenstein's and Ballantyne's ideas apply to architectural spectacles such as the Guggenheim Bilbao or the new wing of the Denver Museum? Would it not seem petty to allow such mundane matters as utility spoil excitement at wild architectural form? Would critics not be justified in setting aside questions of purpose in the case of such visionary buildings and treat them as *free beauty*?⁶² Can such a perspective possibly be reconciled with the dependent beauty argument that function has a necessary role to play in aesthetic response?

Despite all the talk of *wild*, *primordial*, *visionary*, or *extravagant* architecture, I would argue that with few exceptions even the most spectacular works of contemporary architectural art are still buildings that have purposes. Of course, certain historical works, like the Pantheon in Rome or some Gothic Cathedrals, form a special case; we treat them as monuments of architectural art that can justifiably be enjoyed as objects of free beauty, although they may still be used for some purpose. And even in the case of contemporary buildings like the Guggenheim Bilbao or the Denver Museum of Art, we may be so overwhelmed by the buildings' formal, sensory,

and expressive properties, that when all things are given due weight, we will be prepared to forgive their functional faults. But that is very different from declaring function to be irrelevant.⁶³

In the case of the Guggenheim Bilbao, for example, its wonderfully sculptural exterior and the soaring curves of its atrium not only serve the symbolic function of proclaiming Bilbao's resurgence and the practical function of drawing thousands of tourists, but most of its galleries are appropriate to the differing kinds of art each is meant to contain.⁶⁴ In short, the Bilbao museum's aesthetic power could be seen as more than compensating for its relatively few practical shortcomings.

In the case of Libeskind's Denver addition, on the other hand, despite a wonderfully *wild* exterior, whose iconic presence is also both symbolically and practically good for its city, many critics have found the lack of integration of form and function on the interior to negatively affect their overall aesthetic judgment. Unlike Libeskind's Jewish Museum in Berlin, which has many formal similarities to his Denver addition and has also created problems for its curators, the Denver design's functional failures are such that its symbolic and spiritual expressiveness is not strong enough to compensate for them.⁶⁵

But what about museums like the Moderna Museet, that fall somewhere between the visionary and the ordinary? Those who go to art museums primarily to encounter art are likely to prefer museums that are conducive to reflection rather than spectacle and astonishment and they may find museums like the Moderna excellent examples of the successful integration of form and function.

As these cases show, although aesthetic judgments of the dependent beauty type must incorporate function along with form (and other factors) into the process of aesthetic judging, there is enormous variability in the relative weight that may be appropriately given each factor. In this way, I believe, we can philosophically reconcile both our intuition of a desirable concord between form and function in architecture, and our corresponding intuition that some works are aesthetically so exceptional that we may forgive their function faults.⁶⁶

Notes

1. I want to thank Lars-Olof Åhlberg for the invitation to present this paper at the 2008 meeting of the Nordic Society of Aesthetics in Uppsala. I profited greatly from conversations with Lars and comments made after the paper and some of those conversations are reflected in this version of the paper. I am also grateful

for the assistance of Anna-Lena Carlsson and Åsa Arketeg during the conference and to Jacob Lund for the invitation to revise the oral version of my presentation for this journal. The paper contains a few passages from the article "Architecture vs. Art: The Aesthetics of Art Museum Design," published in the on-line journal *Contemporary Aesthetics* 5, (2007), www.contemporaryaesthetics.org. All illustrations are by the author except for the image of the Guggenheim Bilbao which is reprinted courtesy of Mary Ann Sullivan.

2. Nicolai Ouroussoff, *New York Times*, October 13, 2005. See also Hal Foster, *Design and Crime: and Other Diatribes* (London: Verso, 2002), 37.

3. I am grateful to David Goldblatt for first pointing out the importance of this distinction. Among the more thoughtful explorations, besides that of Foster, is Hans Belting's essay, "Place of Reflection or Place of Sensation?," in *The Discursive Museum*, ed. Peter Noever (Ostfildern-Ruit, Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag, 2001), 72–82, and Vittorio Magnango Lampugnani, "Insight versus Entertainment: Untimely Meditations on the Architecture of Twentieth-century Art Museums," in *A Companion to Museum Studies*, ed. Sharon Macdonald (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 245–262.

4. Gerhard Mack, *Art Museums into the 21st Century* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1999), 23.

5. Philip Jodidio, *Architecture: Art* (Munich: Prestel, 2005), 33. The critical literature on the Guggenheim Bilbao is enormous, but noteworthy celebrations include Herbert Muschap's review "The Miracle of Bilbao," in *the New York Times Magazine*, September 7, 1997, 54–59, 72, 82, and Victoria Newhouse's comments in her book *Towards a New Museum* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1998), 245–259. In interviews, Gehry loves to cite the artists who have praised the museum. See Mack *op.cit.*, 23. For criticisms of the Guggenheim Bilbao see Foster, *op.cit.*, 36–42, and Lampugnani, *op.cit.*, 255–257.

6. Mack, *op.cit.*, 69. See also *Architectural Review*, November 1998.

7. Among the critics responding favorably to the interior and its appropriateness to the art are Suzanne Stephens, "Studio Daniel Libeskind and the Davis Partnership Shake up Downtown with a New Addition to the Denver Art Museum," *Architectural Record* 195, 1 (2007): 84–91, and Robert Campbell, "Denver Hits a High Point," *Boston Globe*, November 5, 2006.

8. Exceptions are the galleries for temporary exhibitions at the south end of the museum.

9. Nicholas Ouroussoff, "A Razor-Sharp Profile Cuts Into a Mile-High Cityscape," *The New York Times*, October 12, 2006.

10. Cited in Mack, *op.cit.*, 88. The classic discussion of this issue is Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: the Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

11. There are also some who use the centrality of function to question whether architecture is an art form at all. Stephen Davies has taken the most restrictive

position on the issue. See “Is Architecture Art?” in *Philosophy and Architecture*, ed. Michael Mitias (Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 1994), 31–47. At the opposite end of the spectrum is Tom Leddy, who defines architecture as an art of spiritual expression, capable of moving us deeply. See Tom Leddy, “Architecture as Art,” in *Architecture and Civilization*, ed. Michael Mitias (Amsterdam: Rodolphi, 1999), 25–42. Among those taking an intermediate position which accepts architecture as an art form but also recognizes the cogency of Davies’ objections are T. J. Diffey, “Architecture, Art, and Works of Art,” and David E. W. Fenner, “Pure Architecture,” both in *Architecture and Civilization*, 1–23 and 43–57 respectively. Robert Stecker comes closest to resolving the conceptual issue by a useful distinction between architecture as *art form* and architecture as *medium*. “Reflections on Architecture: Buildings as Environments, as Aesthetic Objects and as Artworks” in *Architecture and Civilization*, 81–93. Among those who view architecture as one of the fine arts, the second most frequently cited distinguishing feature after function is architecture’s attachment to a specific site. Although sculpture may seem the most obvious model for thinking about architecture as an art form in the light of the great sculptors of the past who were also architects (Michelangelo, Bernini) or the contemporary architects who are also practicing sculptors, one could follow DS+R and conceive of architecture as a form of conceptual art, or one could go back to Semper and Schelling each of whom in different ways likened architecture to music. Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), 163–180. For Semper see Kenneth Frampton, “Bötticher, Semper and the Tectonic: Core Form and Art Form,” in *What is Architecture?*, ed. Andrew Ballantyne (London: Routledge, 2002), 148. See also Hanno-Walter Kruft, *A History of Architectural Theory: From Vitruvius to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), 301–316.

12. Charles Batteux, *Les beaux arts réduits à un même principe* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de Livres, 1989).

13. Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 174–195.

14. Paul Guyer has traced the important discussion on beauty and utility among the founders of a modern aesthetics in *Values of Beauty: Historical Essays in Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 110–128.

15. The social, symbolic, ethical, and aesthetic functions dominate the three main book length philosophical treatments published over the last few decades: Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), Roger Scruton, *The Aesthetics of Architecture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), and Edward Winters, *Aesthetics and Architecture* (London: Continuum Books, 2007). Naturally, the enormous literature on the aesthetic function of art generally is relevant to the aesthetic function of architecture. Among the more important recent

treatments is Gary Iseminger's *The Aesthetic Function of Art* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004). It contains an interesting chapter on the distinction between what he calls "artifactual function" and "systematic function" which parallels that between the differing uses of "utility" and "function" mentioned above. Among the important earlier discussions are Stephen Davies, *Definitions of Art* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991) and Robert Stecker, "Historical Functionalism or the Four Factor Theory," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 34, 3 (1994): 255–265.

16. Gordon Graham, *Philosophy of the Arts: An Introduction to Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 2000), 141–150.

17. Louis Sullivan, who is usually credited with popularizing the phrase, "form follows function," certainly was not an extreme functionalist. In fact, as Forty points out, *functionalism* deterministically conceived, was not the actual position of Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, or Le Corbusier, but an invention of critics of modernism who could seldom find anyone who actually held such extreme views apart from the former socialist director of the Bauhaus, Hannes Meyer. Forty, *op.cit.*, 187.

18. Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation*, Vol. I (New York: Dover, 1969), 217.

19. Ruskin opens *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* with the assertion that it is "very necessary, in the outset [...] to distinguish carefully between Architecture and Building," arguing that what makes something architecture and one of the fine arts is precisely those parts of it that are unnecessary or useless. John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: Dover, 1989), 8–9. Le Corbusier uses a version of it in *Vers Une Architecture* (Paris: Flammarion, 1995 [1923]), 9.

20. Nicolas Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1963), 15. No doubt, there are other criteria that could be invoked in making the comparison of building and architecture, such as monumentality or symbolism.

21 Pevsner admits utility only grudgingly, insisting that "functional soundness" has not always been considered "indispensable for aesthetic enjoyment." Pevsner, *op.cit.*, 17.

22. For a discussion of the way distinctions are often turned into dichotomies see Hilary Putnam, *The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and Other Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 9–14.

23. In *Frank Lloyd Wright: Writings and Buildings*, ed. Edgar Kaufmann and Ben Raeburn (Cleveland, OH: World Publishing Company, 1960), 33. A good statement of the concord view is Gordon Graham's "Ideally form and function in architecture must complement each other" (Graham, *op.cit.*, 150).

24. Alan Carlson, *Aesthetics and the Environment: The Appreciation of Nature, Art and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2000), 206–213. Carlson and Glenn Parsons

have co-authored a new book, to appear in 2009 under the title *Functional Beauty* which will no doubt give a more complete account of the way function can be incorporated into aesthetic experience and judgment.

25. Graham, *op.cit.*, 150.

26. The most Scruton will say is that “buildings have uses, and should not be understood as though they did not.” Scruton, *op.cit.*, 40. For Winter’s view see *op.cit.*, 148. None of these objections, by the way, keep Graham, Winter, or Scruton from discussing the way architecture expresses various *symbolic* functions such as the metaphorical *character* we imaginatively project onto buildings, qualities like grandeur, elegance, or sobriety. Graham, at least, sees such characteristics as linked to the general purposes of building. Graham, *op.cit.*, 151.

27. Roger Scruton, *The Classical Vernacular: Architectural Principles in an Age of Nihilism* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1994), xvii.

28. An important sub-theme of ideal of unity in architectural theory has been the notion that not only should the outside and inside of a building be consonant but that integrity of structure requires a tectonic consistency of the two. The idea of the *false* or *deceptive* façade was roundly condemned from Violet Le-Duc and Ruskin down to late twentieth century theories of post-modernism in architecture. With respect to form and function in the art museum, however, the idea of inside and outside matching plays out in an interesting way. One of Gehry’s achievements was to show that thanks to CAD and CAIA one could use newer, light weight materials such as titanium to shape a sculptural exterior that sits on an armature separate from the interior walls with the result that Gehry could give his interiors at Bilbao whatever shapes he chose, including more traditional ones in certain galleries to suit the hanging of paintings. In Libeskind’s Denver building, on the other hand, the inside walls follow the slant and pointed shape of those on the outside, thereby creating galleries that are inimical to the hanging of paintings.

29. *Frank Gehry, Architect*, ed. J. Fiona Ragheb (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2001), 192–193.

30. Yuriko Saito, *Everyday Aesthetics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 27.

31. Of course, a *paper* or *digital* architect does have the luxury of considering only formal matters, but even such an architect would still face various formal choices and problems to solve, and our aesthetic judgment of the completed drawings would be based in part on the design’s success in solving them. Similarly, in the case of an architect who has accepted the functional constraints involved in designing a real building, our aesthetic judgment of the completed work should be based, in part, on the design’s success in integrating formal possibilities with functional constraints.

32. For an excellent discussion of the way curatorial choices affect our experi-

ence of art in a museum setting see Victoria Newhouse, *Art and the Power of Placement* (New York: Monacelli Press, 2005) and Suzanne Macleod, *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions* (London: Routledge, 2005).

33. David Littlejohn, "It Works Despite Libeskind's Best Efforts," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 15, 2007. Although Littlejohn praises the heroic efforts of the curators, he laments "the apparently brutal indifference of Daniel Libeskind to the work of any artist but himself."

34. Noel Carroll, "Aesthetic Experience: A Question of Content," in *Contemporary Debates in Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. Matthew Kieran (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 69–97.

35. Stephen Davies, "Aesthetic Judgments, Artworks and Functional Beauty," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 56, no. 223, (April 2006): 224–241. A functionally beautiful object for Davies is one that possesses "aesthetic properties that contribute positively to its performing its intended principal functions" (*ibid.*, 237). Although one might wonder how this definition of functional beauty could apply to art, Davies points out that his definition also works well for the majority of art works both past and present because they have been made to serve practical functions. He is able to apply his functional beauty model to works of the Western high art tradition by shifting from the idea of practical function to the idea of an aesthetic function. "Art is functionally beautiful if it has aesthetic properties that augment the pleasure its contemplation as art brings" (*ibid.*, 239). The difficulty of applying "judgments of functional beauty" to works of architecture, is that on Davies' main account that makes form serve function, it is not clear whether the aesthetic properties of an art museum should contribute to its aesthetic function as a work of architectural art or to its practical function as a museum for art. According to Davies' view of the function of high art, insofar as a museum is a work of architectural *art*, its aesthetic properties should be judged by whether they enhance the museum's art function as an object of contemplation; but insofar as it is also a *museum*, its aesthetic properties should enhance its function of serving the art. We have been trying all along to show philosophically how, and these two functions – architecture *as* and architecture *for* art – might be integrated, but, as currently formulated, Davies' main version of "functional beauty" would simply leave them side by side. His article actually includes a second version of functional beauty that speaks of the mutual dependence of form and function (*ibid.*, 238), although he does not seem to notice that this is in tension with his main account that has form serving function. I am sympathetic to Davies' overall aims and find this second version promising, but it would be too complicated to develop a modified version of it here. Davies proposes "judgments of functional beauty" in effect as an alternative to any Kantian *judgments of dependent beauty* approach, believing that Kant's view cannot be interpreted as providing an appropriate account of

the place of function within aesthetic judgments (ibid., 234–36). I will try to show that it can be so interpreted in the following paragraphs.

36. There is a large literature on this topic. In addition to the works cited in the course of my discussion below, I have also profited from older works such as Donald Crawford's *Kant's Aesthetic Theory* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974) and Eva Schaper, *Studies in Kant's Aesthetics* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1979), as well as more recent studies such as Kirk Pillow, *Sublime Understanding: Aesthetic Reflection in Kant and Hegel* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2000), James Kirwan, *The Aesthetic in Kant: A Critique* (London: Continuum, 2004), Robert Stecker, "Free Beauty, Dependent Beauty, and Art," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 21, 1 (Spring 1987): 89–99, Philip Mallaband, "Understanding Kant's Distinction Between Free and Dependent Beauty," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 52, 226 (2002): 66–81, and Denis Dutton, "Kant and the Conditions of Artistic Beauty," *The British Journal of Aesthetics* 34 (1994): 226–141.

37. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1987), 77. Since I am less interested in the details of Kant's exegesis than in deriving a workable notion of aesthetic judgment that is open to more than formal properties, I have not included Kant's phrase "and hence a concept of its perfection" which would involve lengthy explanations of the role of the concept of *perfection* in Kant's critique of Leibnizian inspired aesthetics. Although the Guyer/Matthews translation is preferable to Pluhar at many points and its use of *adherent* rather than *dependent* has sound reasons behind it, I have stayed with the more traditional terminology of free vs. dependent beauty. See *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, ed. Paul Guyer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 114.

38. Kant, op.cit., 77.

39. Among the many observations on this conflict see especially Ruth Lorand, "Free and Dependent Beauty," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 29, 1 (1989): 32–40.

40. Kant speaks of the imagination's freedom as *restricted* (eingeschränkt) not as *determined* by purpose, thus allowing room for a genuinely aesthetic response to a building's dependent beauty. See Paul Guyer, *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, second edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 219.

41. Paul Guyer has offered cogent interpretations of the *constraint* emphasis, first in *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 219 and later in *Values of Beauty*, 120–128, 131–132.

42. Representative examples are Henry Allison, *Kant's Theory of Taste: A Reading of the Critique of Aesthetic Judgment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 140–142 and Christopher Janaway, "Kant's Aesthetics and the Empty Cognitive Stock," *The Philosophical Quarterly* 47 (1997): 459–76.

43. Guyer, op.cit., 126.

44. Rachel Zuckert, *Kant on Beauty and Biology: An Interpretation of the Critique of*

Judgment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Another valuable treatment, from which I have profited, is Robert Wicks, "Dependent Beauty as the Appreciation of Teleological Style," *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 55 (1997): 387–400. There is an interesting exchange on Wicks' article between Wicks and Paul Guyer in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57, 3 (1999), 357–363.

45. Zuckert, *op.cit.*, 205. Italics mine.

46. *Ibid.* 203.

47. *Ibid.* 207.

48. As Zuckert puts it, "judgments of dependent beauty may make only a hypothetical claim on others: if one shares my concept of this object's kind, then one ought to find this object (dependently) beautiful" (*ibid.*, 208).

49. *Ibid.* 206.

50. Guyer, *Values of Beauty*, 129–140. As Guyer points out, a similar phenomenon related to our expectations regarding the functions of different building types. Thus, we normally expect a work of architecture to meet at least minimally the functions of its building type and if it does so we are not likely to have our aesthetic estimate of its other properties affected, but when it is exceptionally dysfunctional, our overall aesthetic response is negatively affected. Guyer's observation shows how either the *constraint* or the *combination* interpretation of dependent beauty could also be used to justify the incorporation of function into judgments of architecture (*ibid.*, 126).

51. Nick Zangwill, *The Metaphysics of Beauty* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 61.

52. *Ibid.*, 68.

53. Zuckert, *op.cit.*, 207.

54. We might also apply Kendall Walton's distinction between standard and variable artistic properties as a way of sorting out relevance with respect to aesthetic judgment. In our museum case, a building's kind *as* museum could be *standard*, and the forms appropriate to individual museums might be *variable*. Kendall Walton, "Categories of Art," *Philosophical Review* 79 (1970): 334–67.

55. Kant, *op.cit.*, 78. Of course, some other person, Kant goes on, "looking only to the object's purpose" and regarding its beauty "as only an accessory" would "censure the first person for having wrong taste." Yet each of them, Kant continues, "is judging correctly in his own way, one by what he has before his senses, the other by what he has in his thought."

56. For ways of reconciling Kant's comment at the end of his discussion of dependent beauty with what precedes it, see Zuckert, *op.cit.*, 207–208. See also Guyer's discussion of the problem of the extent of the power of abstraction in Kant. *Kant and the Claims of Taste*, 220–225.

57. Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value*, 38e. The mention of the house for his sister occurs in the context of comments on Mendelssohn. "Within all great art there is a

WILD animal: *tamed*. Not with Mendelssohn, for example. All great art has man's primitive drives as its groundbass. [...] In *this* sense Mendelssohn can be called a 'reproductive' artist. – In the same sense: the house I built for Gretl is the product of a decidedly sensitive ear and *good* manners, an expression of great *understanding* (of a culture, etc.). But *primordial* life, wild life striving to erupt into the open – that is lacking" (ibid. 37e–38e). For a comprehensive and insightful discussion of Wittgenstein's house and his views on architecture in relation to his philosophy as a whole see Roger Paden, *Mysticism and Architecture: Wittgenstein and the Meanings of the Palais Stonborough* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007). It is interesting to place Wittgenstein's somewhat romantic view of *wild* architecture beside Heidegger's very different but equally romantic notion of *dwelling*. See Andrew Ballantyne's comparison of Wittgenstein's hut above the Norwegian fjords with Heidegger's hut in the Black Forest in *What is Architecture?*, ed. Andrew Ballantyne (London: Routledge, 2002), 5–49; ref. on p. 15. pp. 15–21. Karsten Harries draws on Heidegger for the idea that architecture "calls us out of the everyday to another place, one a bit closer to the ideal." *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997), 282.

58. Wittgenstein, op.cit., 42e.

59. See Paden, op.cit., chapters 6 and 7. On the ecstatic view of architecture generally, see Leddy, op.cit., 27–28.

60. Ballantyne, "Commentary: The Nest and the Pillar of Fire," in *What is Architecture?*, 5–49; ref. on p. 15.

61. Ibid., 41.

62. The celebrated architect, Philip Johnson, went so far as to claim that "when the architecture is as good as in Bilbao, fuck the art!" Cited in Martin Filler, *Makers of Modern Architecture* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2007), 178.

63. Whereas Johnson's epithet suggests function is irrelevant, Wittgenstein's idea of *primordial* architecture does not, even if Wittgenstein believes that what is most important is the way the best architecture combines transcendent vision and moral renewal. On Wittgenstein's understanding of the house he designed as "an ethical deed," intended to have transformative powers see Paden, op.cit., 153–164.

64. For a discussion of the extravagant museum as an expression of the *society of spectacle* see Foster, op.cit., 14–40. For those who know something of Krens's machinations in dealing with the Bilbao government, or are aware that Basque artists were initially shunned and that the museum is programmed from New York, the Guggenheim Bilbao may symbolize something more like cultural imperialism. But those meanings do not arise from Gehry's architecture per se. (But see Andrew Friedman's less charitable comment on the way Gehry's architecture expresses the violent process of Bilbao's transformation from a working industrial city into a tourist destination. Cited in Mimi Zeiger, *New Museums: Contemporary Museum*

Architecture Around the World (New York: Rizzoli International, 2005), 9. The many ramifications of Krens's *franchising* program for the Guggenheim as it has played out in Bilbao are traced in several of the essays in *Learning from the Guggenheim Bilbao*, ed. Anna Maria Guasch and Josebe Zulaika (Reno, NV: University of Reno, 2005) and in Joseba Zulaika's earlier study *Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa: Museums, Architecture, and City Renewal* (Reno, NV: University of Nevada at Reno, 2003).

65. If we look at the critical and public response to the Jewish Museum, where the jagged plan and angled windows are expressive of relationships and ideas connected to the Holocaust, the difficulties curators have had in installing exhibitions have not led to an overall negative reaction. In Berlin, Libeskind had a set of profound historical and spiritual concerns to embody and his Jewish Museum may be the very kind of thing Wittgenstein had in mind in speaking of architecture as "primordial life, wild life."

66. Obviously, not only does a great deal more need to be said about the relation of practical function to aesthetic judgment, but also about its connection to other facets of architecture that I have not been able to consider: the relation of buildings to their sites, their environmental and social impact, matters of structure and comfort, the way buildings embody meanings. Even more closely intertwined with the problem of aesthetics and function, although also related to all the just mentioned issues, is the question of architecture and morality that Paden has so insightfully discussed in relation to Wittgenstein. Buildings play such an important role in our everyday lives – physically, socially, aesthetically, and spiritually – that an architect's concern with functions often goes far beyond narrow utility to involve a profound responsibility to those who live, work, and play in their buildings and to the community at large that has to look on them. Moreover, the approach to the problem of aesthetics and morality that I find most congenial is Noel Carroll's *moderate moralism* which parallels the position I have taken on the incorporation of function into aesthetic judgments of architecture. From Carroll's moderate moralism perspective a moral defect can sometimes be an aesthetic defect and a moral virtue can sometimes be an aesthetic virtue, but moral defects and virtues must be weighed against many other properties, including formal ones. See his "Art and Ethical Criticism: An Overview of Recent Directions of Research," *Ethics* 110, 2 (January 2000): 350–387.