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## Logo as basis for architectural shaping

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**Abstract:** Logo represents graphic symbol for one subject. Developing science and technology there are new possibilities for 3D shaping in architecture and logo is one of them. This paper is about using logo as basis for architecture shaping and a way to express objects function with its form.

Lately there are many objects whose form is a symbol for their purpose (library –books, music center – piano, national center -rose) and just looking at their facades you know their function.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Logo design is one of applied arts discipline and it is frequently used nowadays. Every company, trademark, organization has its own logo which is a way of their presentation with graphic symbol. So, we could say that logo represents key sign in identification of one company. Logo has big influence in marketing process of one company and it creates first impression of one organization, company. There are many logo types but the main are logos as graphic symbols and a logotypes – text written logos.

During past few centuries logo was used only in marketing purposes for companies, organizations and trademarks. Developing technology, many possibilities for 3D logo modeling appeared and also logo utilization in other purposes began. First there was use of logo in producing furniture. Good example is Gerrit Rietveld chair in Bauhaus school which was in logo colours so when you see the chair you know that it is from Bauhaus. [1] Using logos shape in modeling object is used in industrial design where logos of companies are used for producing marketing material as fob, lighter... There is also use of logo in producing packages for some trademarks.

This paper is about logo use in architecture. With development of 3D softwares started use of complex shapes in architectural modeling. Last few decades logo shapes are used in modeling objects. Many architects got inspired with logo forms and using them as a graphic symbol made shapes for their projects. In this paper, using descriptive method and case study of examples of architectural objects, utilization of logo forms in architectural shaping will be presented.

### 2. LOGO DESIGN

#### 2.1. HISTORY OF LOGO DESIGN

Logo design has its origin in ancient Egypt and Greece. That time, picture symbols or letters represented graphic symbols for some subjects. There are coins from 6<sup>th</sup> century BC with lion head and sun rays symbolising king and his power Fig.1. Word logo comes from ancient Greece and it means word or speech. In other cultures Babylonian, Egyptian, Assyrian logo is used as pictograph, and it represented a graphic symbol as way of communicating.



Fug. 1. Coins from 6<sup>th</sup> century BC

In XVIII and XIX century, industrial revolution brings innovations in logo designing. Logo designing stops being a way of artistic expression and becomes part of marketing industry. Litography and typography became main tools in trademark marketing. They were used for commercial purposes and they were designed for mass production. At the end of XVIII century, in US there was 700 firms that were designing and printing lithographic commercials for companies and organizations. [2]

In late XIX century started Arts and Craft movement with idea of craftsmanship in mass production for new era. In the middle of XX century Modernism movement appeared with ideas of simplicity and distinctness. These ideas were used also in logo designing. After the Mies Van der Rohe words: “Less is more”, designers started making logo as a simple and very clear symbol which on first look gives necessary information for company purpose. These logos were used for everyday mass visual communication on television, printed posters, digital innovations, billboards ... Logo in XX century became infallible part of everyday marketing and required part of company identity. [2]

Nowadays, logo design found inspiration in street art. Colours, shapes and design of street artist is often

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used in making logo design. Emotion evoking and refreshing ideas are always good for design, so new trends in designing are going in direction of street art. Also, street art – graffiti, have 3D illusion and that is very important for some logos.

## 2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOGO DESIGN

Logo is part of graphic design and it is used as a symbol for visual identity of one company, trademark or organization. Logo can be designed as graphic symbol, text, emblem, monogram. Purpose of logo is to make easy and simple recognition of company which represents.

Famous modernist graphic designer Paul Rand<sup>1</sup> said: “The trademark should embody in the simplest form the essential characteristics of the product or institution being advertised”<sup>2</sup> Logo must satisfy few requests : first, logo must visible represent activities of one company, it must be original and it should not be similar to some existing logo. Logo must be usable and universal so it can be applied on many promotional materials. Also, logo must last for years like some of the world famous logos and it must be easy to remember.

Logo symbol can be made of same shapes that are directly involved in business or service that is company or organization activity. It is not always case, and many successful and timeless logos, like logo for Mercedes benz, are having nothing to do with their activity. In designing logo most important factor is certainly audience for which is logo designed.

Logo design has long history, and during it's development there were many examples of more or less successful logos. One thing is shure, simplicity and clarity of design has the best results. Not only that logo gives clear message to the auditorium, but logo becomes more usefull and it can be applied on everything related to business of company. [3]

Logo design is not only job for graphic designers. Many people that are having no experience in this area, every day take part in many online competitions and they are giving brand new ideas for future logos. Lately, many architects are trying to make experiments with logos. It is known, that architects always had to put logos on their projects, but now days with software development, appeared many possibilities for using logo in other purposes. Using softwares to make logo in 3D forms make possible use of logo in other disciplines and only in graphic design.

## 3. LOGO DESIGN IN ARCHITECTURAL SHAPING

<sup>1</sup> Rand Paul – American graphic designer (1914-1996)  
[www.paul-rand.com](http://www.paul-rand.com)

<sup>2</sup> Rand, P. :Logos, Flags & Escutcheons, article on web site:  
[http://www.paul-rand.com/foundation/thoughts\\_logosflags/#.UT3vdDfKibU](http://www.paul-rand.com/foundation/thoughts_logosflags/#.UT3vdDfKibU)  
accessed on 09.03.2013. at 15:59 PM

Since the first houses are built, man always searched for perfect shape of his home, and later for the city institutions. Shapes were first projected with scaled models so architects could see how everything stands in space. In XX century, with development of technology, started software development and new possibilities for modeling in architecture appeared. Nowadays, there are numerous of computer programs which can be used to calculate all characteristics for one shape which is used in modeling.

Inspiration for object shapes can be found everywhere. Many architects found their inspiration in nature using organic forms, others use geometry shapes. However, form follows function, so form is a way to visually present function. Because of that, various architects decided to make shapes for their models using logo. Some logos present graphic symbols for some objects, so in architecture logo is used to represent function. With object shape that is also logo form, on the first sight man can figure out which function object has.

Logo in architectural shaping is also used as a visual symbol for object function. Thanks to 3D modeling programs, every logo shape can be made three dimensional and it can be human scaled so calculation of construction can be done. In architecture, so far, logo shapes that are used are logo symbols for some activities. Hereinafter text there will be presented successful examples of logo utilization in architectural shaping.

### 3.1. BUILDINGS WHERE LOGO SHAPE SYMBOLIZES FUNCTION

Searching for idea for shaping some object with public purpose is sometimes hard work because architect must make shape that is original and there are a thousands of objects with same purpose. Good example is library in Kansas city which was founded in 1873(Fig.2). When they were working on regeneration of this library, they decided to make tall walls around parking garage and to put graphics of rare books on them so it can look like public shelf with books.

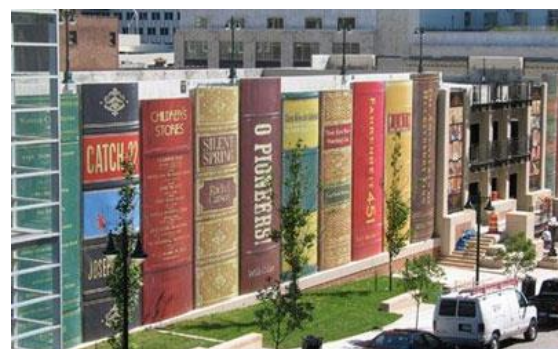


Fig. 2. Kansas city library parking garage

With making garage walls to look like book shelf – book symbol for library, this building became

recognizable in world of architecture. Everybody can on the first sight conclude what is function of the building. [4]

Another example of using logo shaping in architecture is “Piano house” in Huanian city in China(Fig.3). Piano house is showroom with shape of piano and violin and it is used for music performance and it is also practicing place for music students. This showroom is done in 50:1 scale and it’s function is obvious because shapes are music instruments. [5]



Fig. 3. Piano house in Huanian city, China

When Henning Larsen architects got to project children’s discovery center with library,exhibition, education and administration space, they had to think about the form that will connect all this activities in one building. Because this building is in the hearth of the city of Damascus, which is capital city of Syria, this project was of the national importance. Because of that they decided to shape this building as rose which is symbol for their national flower(Fig.4). [6]

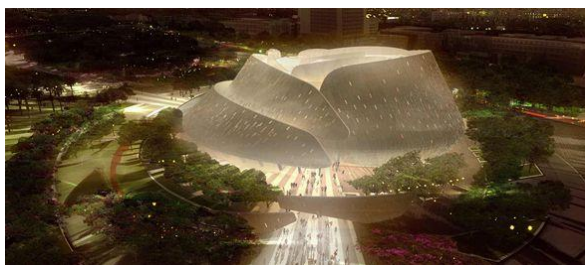


Fig. 4. Children’s discovery center in Damascus, Syria

### 3.2. BUILDINGS WHERE LOGO SHAPE SYMBOLIZES MANUFACTURING PRODUCTS

Many big corporations every day are looking for good way to advertise their business. They are building many corporative centers and showrooms which should show people what are companies activities. Some of the companies got an idea to shape their headquarters like their products. This idea spread out not only for headquarters, but also for kiosks, and production plants. Reagardless of object type, their shape is very clear and symbolize their manufacturing products. This buildings are very famous and they attract attention to clients. Using logo of company products for shaping, is maybe one of the best and

timeless advertisement.



Fig. 5. Lomgaberger headquarters in Newark, Ohio

Company Lomgaberger from America is worlds famous manufacturer of handcrafted maple wood baskets. They have headquarters all over the world, and when they decided to build headquaterts in Newark in Ohio, they got idea to make basket shape for building(Fig.5). This basket model is scaled 160 times from its basic dimensions. With this way of advertasing their products, this company became famous and recognizable in world with its headquarters shape. [7]

Between 1930 – 1990, in America was trend of making kiosks in shape of the products they sale. So did the company Twistee Treat from Florida, which opened 90 kiosk for ice–cream selling, and they were shaped as cone with ice-cream(Fig.6). Same story was with Hood milk in Boston which was shaped as milk bottle and now is showpiece in Children’s museum in Boston(Fig.7). Both of this kiosks were for selling ice cream on the street and they needed strong advertisement so they can attract as many as possible buyers. Of course, their target group were kids because with unusual shape they can be interested and they can make parents to buy ice cream on this kiosks. [7]



Fig. 6. (left)Lomgaberger headquarters in Newark, Ohio

Figure 7.(right) Hood milk kiosk in Boston

### 3.3. RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS WHERE LOGO IS BASE FOR THEIR SHAPING

Using logo in architectural shaping is ordinary for public purpose buildings, but there are few examples where logo is used also for residential houses shaping.



In this case, model scale is far less than in case with public buildings.. Even so, this houses are famous and well designed, and ideas for using logos often come from clients who would like to have symbolical shaped house.

One of the worlds famous modern house, is Naomi Campbell house in ski resort in Russia(Fig.8). This house is shaped like ski jump, and it has wonderfull view on entirely ski resort. Because house is in mountains and in a middle of ski resort, its shape is related to winter sports. Using logo in shaping of this house, accent on surrounding ski resort is put. [8]



Fig. 8.Naomi Campbell house in ski resort, Russia

Sometimes, symbol for the house in nature is someting from nature. One of the worlds famous eco–friendly house is “Casa Mariposa”(butterfly house) in Cali in Columbia(Fig.9). This house is complete eco house and because of that shape for it is planned to be from nature. On the otherside, Columbia is famous for rarely butterfly spices, so shape for new house is butterfly, for which rarely spices is Columbia famous. [9]



Figure 9.Cali in Columbia

#### 4. CONCLUDING REMARKS.

Logo design represents tool in visual advertisement. During history, logo was linked only for commercials and it was a part of graphic design. With modernism, and technology progress, logo found his place in architecture also. Famous architects, not only put logo on their building like a advertisement, they also use logo as a base for their

modeling building. Depending on logo type, there are many possibilities to shape building and to give visual message to people. Logo symbol in architecture is made in 3D and it represents scaled model compared to basic logo dimensions.

Analyzing examples that are given in text, it is obvious that logo shapes are used in different purpose in cases of dufferent objects. Logo can be used to symbolize function of some object so on the first sight we can imagine purpose. This is very important, because it represents very stron visual advertisement and with its form it can attract many visitors. On the other side, there are objects in which shaping is manufacturing product form involved. This is very significantly for customers-buyers who can easily find products they need and they can do it only with looking at buildings form. This visual presentation is most important for kiosks, because on this way they have output from masses of kiosks on boardwalks. Logo shapes are present in residential housing also. In this cases, logo doesn’t have commercial purpose. Here logo represents symbol that is important for the future users or for the environment. This shapes also make houses special and recognizable in the world of architecture. Every of this house has it owns story and reasons to be symbol of something.

Considering everything said in text, it can be concluded that logo design has strong influence in architectural shaping. Thanks to good softwares, every logo shape can be scaled in right proportions and her construction can be analysed. Combining logo and architectural shaping, buildings can become advertisement for them own. This buildings reperesent power of modern technology, graphic design and architecture together.

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