

*Viktor Proskuriakov*

## PLACE OF F. KIESLER'S IDEAS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD ARCHITECTURE NOWADAYS AND IN THE FUTURE

*Lviv Polytechnic National University, 12, S. Bandera Str., Lviv, 79013, Ukraine,  
proskuryakov\_das@ukr.net*

*“There are three types of architects:  
the first suggest the ideas long  
before implementing them,  
the second and the third ones simply react”  
F. Kiesler\**

*Received: September 15, 2017 / Revised: November 18, 2017 / Accepted: November 29, 2017*

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**Abstract.** The article researches the place and influence of ideas, projects and buildings by F. Kiesler on the world and Ukrainian architecture, in particular, nowadays and in the future.

**Key words:** ideas, projects, structures of architect F. Kiesler

### 1. Introduction

If not taking into considerations the publications by professor V. Proskuriakov and supervised by him post-graduates and masters D. Yarema, K. Yanchuk, Z. Klymko, S. Starak, publications of such foreign researchers as D. Bogner, P. Bogner, B. Lesak, M. Lind, M. R. Luke, S. Papapetnos, C. Thum Hohestein and others as well as systematic research and educational design conducted by the department of Architectural Environment design at Lviv Polytechnic National University, the creativity of F. Kiesler is, unfortunately, poorly known to anyone in professional circles of architects in Ukraine. The development of national architecture education and practice demands experience gained not only by architecture activity in general but also the achievements of separate experts and F. Kiesler in particular, who was born in Ukraine and presented world civilization with architecture ideas.

### 2. Basic Theory Part

The aim of the publication lies in defining the place and influence of artistic ideas of F. Kiesler on the world architecture futuristic and applied activity in the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### 3. Result and Discussion

It is complicated to find a term, which would characterize the importance for Ukraine of the fact that an architect Kiesler was born in Chernivtsi. It can be called a miracle. Nevertheless, Kiesler himself is considered to be a Messiah of the most modern world architecture, his postulates are also realized nowadays, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The very list of Kiesler's ideas, their chronology and general description could become a topic for numerous important scientific researches. Even if everything declared, designed and built by him should be simplified and generalized, his architecture would still have unique features:

– he was one of the first ones, if not the first, to suggest the ideas of suspended, dimensional cities and buildings;

- since the 20s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when everybody was enthusiastic about constructivism – functionalism, he popularized the ideas of curvilinear, spiral and spherical shapes;
- popularized and experimented in the directions of mobile, kinetic and transformation architecture;
- designed interiors, furniture, equipment in the rooms which could change its functions within short time;
- was one of the first to develop the ideas of architecture bionics, total architecture ecology;
- was the first among the architects that used the latest achievements of the scientists-physicists in his architecture and artistic search, for instance, he put the structure of a nucleus into the basis of the theory of buildings and structures, urban search, art and sculpture works;
- defended and developed the ideas of “flexible” architecture;
- developed the concept and created architecture-sculpture (he was regarded in this direction as a follower of A. Gaudi);
- in decorating the facades he applied and implemented modern effective materials such as aluminium, plastic and polymeric compositions for architecture constructions;
- spoke for elimination of existing differences between a city and a village;
- since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century he has cultivated the ideas of endlessness and continuity in architecture [1].

All the statements expressed above, can be belonged to the global directions of his activity. Moreover, he also deepened, developed and was a pioneer of separate architecture creativity directions. A special theme present in his creative lifetime was the development of theatrical architecture ideas. The most popular among them are the following:

- dimensional scenes-constructions;
- double-theatres, theatres with double halls and scenes both in united space and in separate volumes;
- continual theatres;
- multipurpose theatres;
- syncretic theatres;

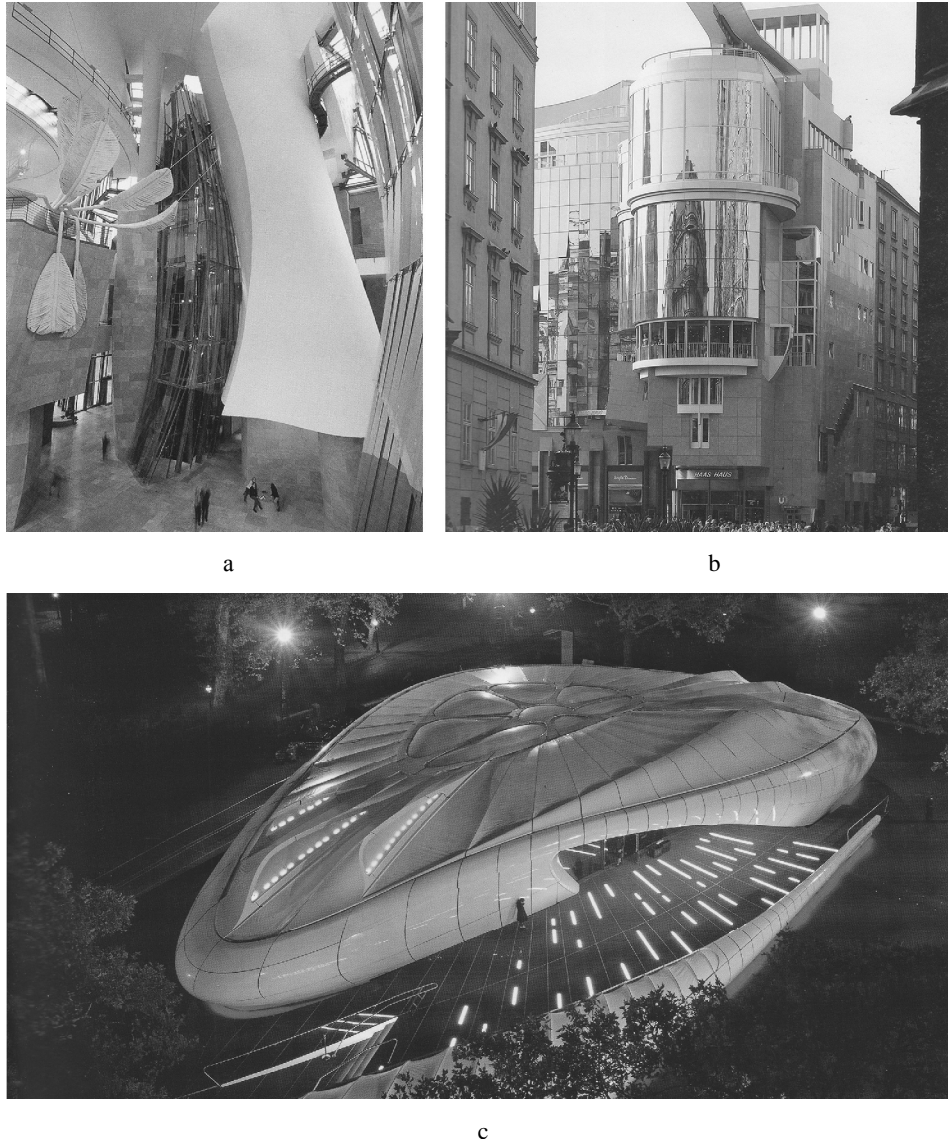
A separate theme of Kiesler's creativity was the other experimental performance of buildings – multiscreen and of different format cinemas, total screen cinemas etc [2], [3].

His architecture and scenography activity in a broad genre palette can be classified as a separate branch: starting from developing the ideas of scenographic solutions of classical exhibitions environment to irrational scenographic installations [4].

At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the following are fairly recognized to be the coordinates of the future architecture: curvilinear shapes of the station at the International airport in New York by Saarinen; spiral main volume and building the exposition-ramp in Guggenheim Museum built by Wright; city put up on pillars by La Corbusier or Khidekel; multilayered city by Friedman; dimensional city by Schulze-Fielitz, dimensional constructions for the cities by Le Ricolet; “Suspended cities” by Meimon; cybernetic city by Scheffer; mobile architecture of dwellings, theatres and cities by such architects as Reno, Friedman, Gi Rottier, Schein, Manyan, Coulomb; “Live” structures by Helmke, Otto, Soleri, Grigio; sphere- and egg-like shapes of experimental buildings by Hausermann, Quarmby, Gitte, Meimon; architecture-sculpture by Geretz, Quel etc. However, researchers and chroniclers forget that all the mentioned directions were at certain point of time initiated and inspired by sketches, pictures, drawings, designs, experimental buildings and scientifically-theoretical research of Frederick Kiesler. Hans Hollein, Zaha Hadid, Frank Gehry and other famous architects of the 20<sup>th</sup>–21<sup>st</sup> centuries (Fig. 1) considered him to be their teacher and, for all it, not groundlessly.

What has found the reflection in created by him functionally-sculptural buildings and using metal, plastic, glass capsules-facades are the various formal solutions.

It is now worth dwelling upon the significance of provided facts for Ukraine and Chernivtsi directly, architecture community and residents. The very fact that a person who influenced the development of architecture ideas in the world was born in Chernivtsi, deserves to be honored. Moreover, it was the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary since birth of F. Kiesler in 2015 and it would worth to name that year after him. The organization of such events also demands a special research. However, only year and date of Kiesler's birth were definitely known – 20.09.1890 (although Kiesler himself wrote in some sources that he had been born in 1892, in the others – that in 1896), but it is unknown how long he lived indeed and when exactly he moved out of the city, what were his hobbies as a child, activities and what was his family and public aura. It is important for us Ukrainians, since some researchers still do not know that F. Kiesler was not “born in Vienna” and not “an American architect of Viennese origin” [5], [6], [7], [8].



**Fig. 1.** Architectural work of F. Kiesler's pupils of the late 20<sup>th</sup>–early 19<sup>th</sup> century:  
a) Frank Gehry [8]; b) Hans Hollein [8]; c) Zaha Hadid [7]

But it is not only that. As in the past, when up to 1965 F. Kiesler had gained a recognition in connection with building the temple in Jerusalem, where Hebrew manuscripts are kept and his name was not mentioned except for newspapers, not in any research paper dedicated to modern architecture and sculpture, it is the same now, professional knowledge of his creativity is extremely limited. This fact should intensify scientific research of his heritage by Ukrainian researchers too and by his compatriots Chernivtsi residents in particular. It might sound paradoxically now, but there is an assumption (it is expressed as the hypothesis to exemplify that creative work and especially shaping architectural method, preferences, tastes to formal solutions) that the beginning of Kiesler's creativity mentally and ideologically traces its roots in his childhood, in Ukraine and in Chernivtsi, respectively. For example, if analyzing all designed by Kiesler projects, models, sketches, drawings and sculptures of his "endless houses" shapes of which are defined in foreign researches as curvilinear, sphere- or ball-like, it is impossible not to notice that an egg shape is considered to be their formal basis. It refers to the search and models of 1926, 1930, 1949, 1950 and later periods. Moreover, some models of "endless house" (1950–1959) have paintings and reliefs on their egg-like surface what makes their shape much closer not so much to the searches of worldwide famous architects P. Meimou, A. Quarmby and O. Niemeyer as to the cult of an egg and egg painting in Bukovina and Chernivtsi in particular [9] (Fig. 2).

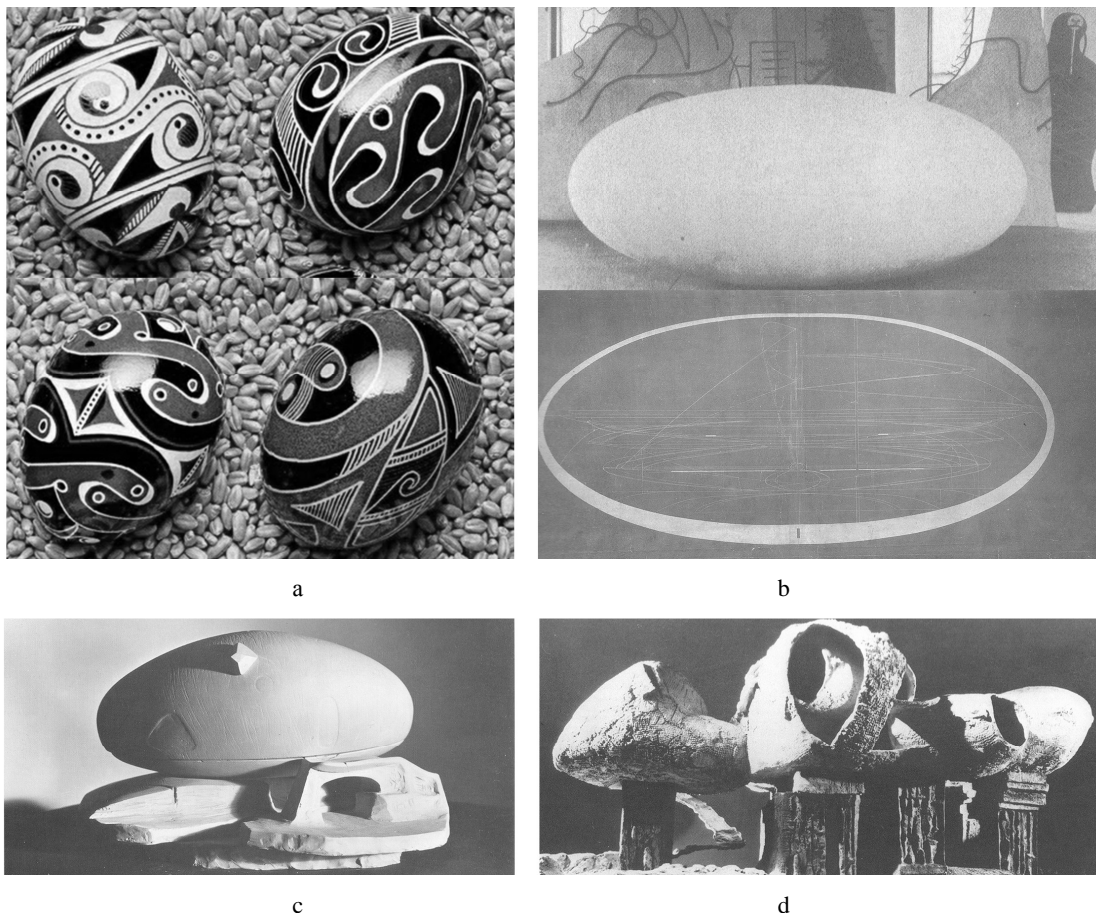
No doubt that I "attract" such idea without enough reasoning, however, I do it with an aim of showing that such an idea has right to exist and to be researched as it has not been proven by anyone that such influence did not exist. One of the directions of researches considered the background of Kiesler's ideas concerning spiral spaces and

shapes, combination of dolmen – supports and egg-like shapes of “endless houses” and continuous theatres, the origins of which may be not only in structures of medieval views, pyramids from an American continent but also in temples – labyrinths, pagodas, sites of ancient Slavs which were situated in both Bukovina and Galicia. All in all, concerning the statements that the temple architecture of Hebrew manuscripts in Jerusalem, its formal side was also influenced by Kiesler's will to make architecture have the warmth of shapes and contours of a woman's body, meaning the shape of the main space and its covering. As far as this version is concerned, this shape is much closer to the shape of a dome in the Ukrainian church than to the “shapes of a woman's body”. What is more, it is easy to find the “analogue” in Chernivtsi – close in shape to both “dome” in Jerusalem and those shapes of domes of Christian churches in Bukovina, which were once reflected in F. Kiesler's sub-consciousness, however without tops (Fig. 3) and crosses but at the same time not similar to building of Bukovina synagogues.

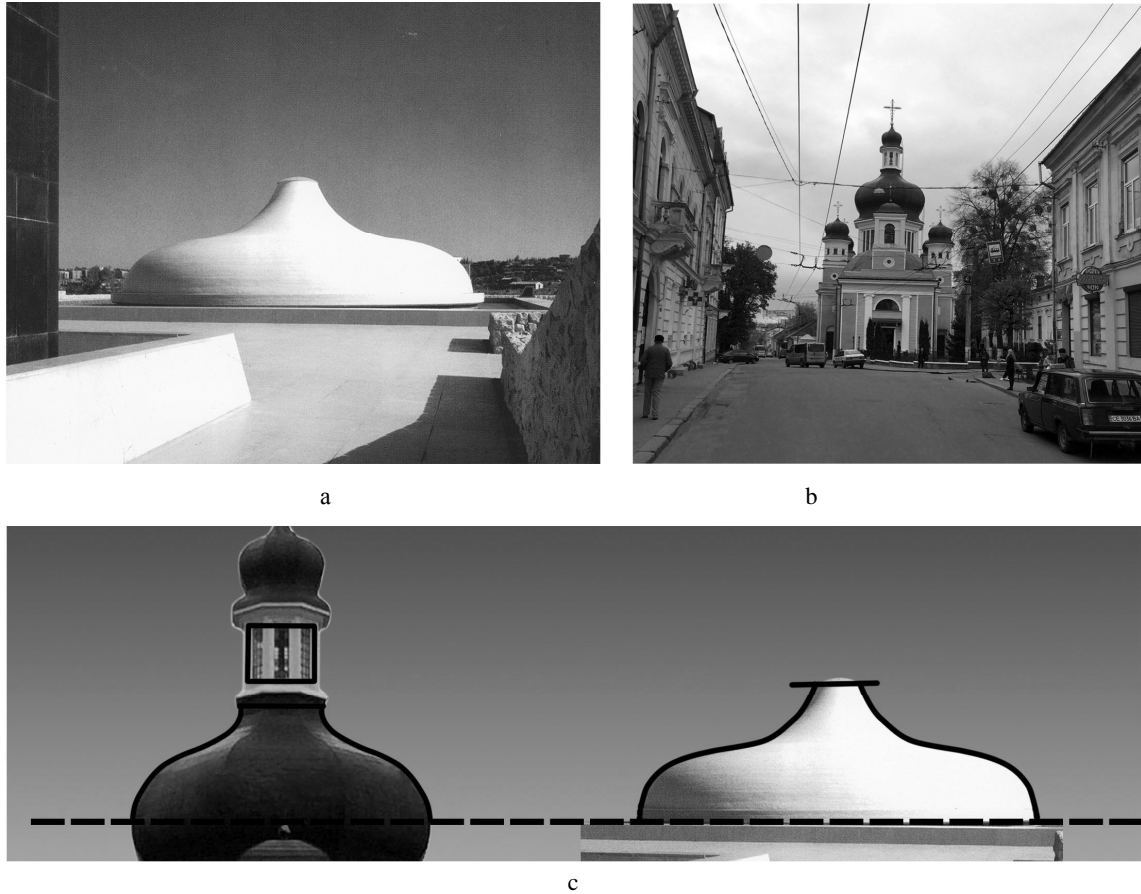
Everything demands research. As well as the fact that possibly there was some influence of F. Fellner and H. Helmer on F. Kiesler's interest on theatre architecture, in particular. The influence started as far back as in 1904–1905 during building a city theatre in Chernivtsi when F. Kiesler still lived there [10]. It continued in construction, in Vienna concert hall, in particular, which F. Fellner and H. Helmer built in accordance with the norms which are now set to the modern buildings – multiple halls, rather flexible interior space and style which was not close to the modern of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but to those established later. It was the one, which Kiesler used to build the active model of spatial scene in one of the halls at the world theatre exhibition held in 1924 [11].

What may become a step forward on the way of real measures of modern presenting of F. Kiesler's phenomenon?

We, the staff of the Institute of Architecture of Lviv Polytechnic National University have agreed upon the suggestion of annual presenting the semester bachelor, diploma and master works, project part of which would be directed to creating F. Kiesler Centre or cultural, exhibition and educational buildings named after F. Kiesler in Chernivtsi at one of the city squares or memorial signs dedicated to the events from his life and creative work (Fig. 4).



**Fig. 2.** The hypothesis of F. Kiesler's interest in egg shape a) Ukrainian painted eggs. Source: The V. Proskuriakov archive of; b) Kiesler's endless theatre, plan of 1926 [6]; c) A model of Kiesler's endless house of 1950 [5]; d) A model of Kiesler's endless house of 1956 [6]



**Fig. 3.** The hypothesis of creating the shape of a temple dome for keeping ancient manuscripts in Jerusalem  
 a) View of a temple dome; b) General view of the dome shape of one of the churches in Chernivtsi  
 c) Hypothesis of creation algorithm of a temple dome in Jerusalem. Source: The V. Proskuriakov archive



**Fig. 4.** Projects of public buildings designed by Lviv architecture school students under the influence of F. Kiesler architecture ideas supervised by professor V. Proskuriakov and lecturers B. Goi, K. Yanchuk, Yu. Bogdanova, Z. Klymko. Source: The V. Proskuriakov archive

According to study curricula, a real preparation of such projects has already started since the end of 2005. It was the influence of F. Kiesler ideas that triggered the creation at the Department of Architectural Environment design of Lviv Polytechnic National University a special study direction – the conceptual design. Theme events (readings, conferences, seminars) are also held before his birthday anniversaries. The biggest one was the international conference dedicated to the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary since F. Kiesler's birth; its founders and organizers were the Department of Architectural Environment Design of Institute of Architecture of Lviv Polytechnic National University and the Department of Architecture, construction and decorative and applied arts of Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University. It was a grand forum, where 20 papers were prepared by researchers from Ukraine, Germany and Canada. During last years, a lot of thesis researches are conducted, the results of which may also be given to Chernivtsi as a present. Anyone who is interested in the phenomenon of F. Kiesler in Chernivtsi or other cities in Ukraine could start by following the example. Such activity is certain, from my point of view, to be beneficial for both Ukrainian and world architecture community!

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*Віктор Проскуряков*

### **МІСЦЕ І ВПЛИВ ІДЕЙ Ф. КІЗЛЕРА НА СВІТОВУ АРХІТЕКТУРУ ТЕПЕР І В МАЙБУТНЬОМУ**

*Анотація.* У статті висвітлене місце і вплив ідей, проектів, будов Ф.Кізлера на світову і зокрема українську архітектуру тепер і в майбутньому.

*Ключові слова:* ідеї, проекти, споруди архітектора Ф. Кізлера.