

## **Abstract**

Playing with architecture

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## **PLAYING WITH ARCHITECTURE**

Over recent years, the interest in informal educational activities for children in Bulgaria has increased enormously. This tendency has led to series of workshops at different places in which children reveal their creative potential. In 2011 Children Architectural Workshop was founded. It is a non-profit organization meant to inspire and emotionally engage children in architecture-derived activities. It is the first architectural school in Bulgaria dedicated to architecture and urbanism adapted specially for children and their parents. Gradually the idea of real involvement of the little citizens in the process of changing public spaces has grown and taken shape. Children perceive architecture above all emotionally and with their imagination as for them a building is never just bricks and concrete. And thus they bring it to life and they can tell us endless stories, filled with magic. This is why our team believes that by the process of play the children should be given room for exploration and experiments. The purpose of this session is to take a look through the children's eyes and try to understand how the surrounding world looks like to them. Their (almost fictional) point of view could serve as a base for exploration of the variety of possibilities and for a development of number of ways for real engagement of the children into the processes of change of the surrounding urban environment. Within the discussion a number of examples of how the children perceive, refract and depict their city and some of the world iconic buildings will be reviewed and talked over. By this we will not only compare the perception of the children and the adults on similar issues, but also consider the different possibilities for giving children the opportunity to practice their sensibility, imagination, aesthetics and critical assessment.