

Performative Consumption: From Maison Dom-Ino to Ikea Hackers

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In 1915, Swiss architect Le Corbusier proposed an avant-garde idea as a solution for the homeless immigrants of post-WWI. Emphasizing the playful character of an open-plan in architecture, Le Corbusier called it the Dom-Ino house. He sought to engage its future inhabitants in the exterior construction, and affect the aesthetics and characteristic of their own dwellings. The original project remained a conceptual drawing. Le Corbusier's post WW2 housing projects that were actually realised in several locations across Europe, offered quite a different role to its inhabitants, very far from the architects' initial ideal of a playful and active self-made dweller. Nevertheless, the Dom-Ino house is a good reference point not only as an influencing avant-garde concept in architecture, but also as an innovative, performative and open-sourced approach towards design, use and consumption.

In this paper I will draw a line between the avant-garde approach of early modernist Le Corbusier to the consumption and use practices of **IKEA Hackers** - IKEA's customers who adjust the company's products to their own needs by modifying their form, structure and function. These consumers use IKEA's products as if they were an "open-plan" and present their creations in the IKEA Hackers website (www.ikeahackers.net) - an online platform featuring the modifications (hacks) performed by the hackers and the process of their endeavor.

I will evaluate IKEA's role in shaping this new consumerist model, examine the way it defies modernist values of design and consumption and compare existing and emerging consumerist practices to the IKEA Hackers. I will explain how this unique consumerist practice can be seen not only as a rejection of conventional consumerist approach but also as a late echo to the performative shift in the arts and the passage from object to process.

The paper will be accompanied by images of the IKEA Hackers' modifications, and an analysis of the hacks in light of case studies from the history of design and architecture.

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