

УДК 712.25(474.5+476-25)

O. M. Berezko<sup>1</sup>, V. Vaitkutė Eidimtienė<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Belarusian State Technological University<sup>2</sup>Kaunas Forestry and Environmental Engineering University

**LANDSCAPE ORGANIZATION AT THEATER SQUARE  
ON THE EXAMPLE OF KAUNAS CITY GARDEN (KAUNAS)  
AND ALEXANDROVSKY SQUARE (MINSK)**

The theater building is a representative – is still going to the theater is an event, a holiday. Ideally, it should reflect and theatrical environment. During the formation of the environment of the theater as possible use the same principles that are used in the formation of any other public use of the urban landscape.

The article estimates the features of formation and a comparative analysis of environmental theater building on the example of Kaunas city garden adjacent to the building of the Kaunas Musical Theatre and the Alexandrovsky square with the building of the National Academic Theater Y. Kupala in Minsk.

Environmental assessment theaters in the article is based on the methodology proposed by the Lithuanian architect P. Kavaliauskas. In assessing the level of formation there are two elements of the landscape: the child, which includes a proportion, scale, rhythm, balance, color consent; and the parent whose elements are the idea of the composition, compositional principle, centers and axes of the composition and the composition scenario.

The comparison showed the similarity of the situation and the history of urban facilities, a great similarity in many landscape and composition elements. At the same time revealed that similar ideas of composition – a man out of urban space and enter it in the world of theater, scripts composition in the examples are different.

**Key words:** city garden, Kaunas, Alexandrovsky square, Minsk, composition scenario, landscape.

**Introduction.** While forming a theatre environment they use whenever possible the same principles which are used at formation of any other city landscape. P. Kavaliauskas [1] insists that there are two levels of landscape elements formation:

1) subordinate, which relies on regularities of direct sensual influence of landscape models, which express anthropogenic landscape elements of emotional reactions. This level includes:

- *proportions*;
- *scale*;
- *rhythm*;
- *equilibrium*;
- *colour match*;

2) higher, which is based on the intellectual understanding, which helps to arrange intentionally. Its elements are:

– *composition idea* – it expresses the composition purpose, defines the composition function and terrain character;

– *composite principle* – it is a method of connection of landscape elements, usually coordination (coordination with the existing structure) or comparison (contrast) (separation and isolation) [2];

– *composition centers and axes*. The composition center is – as a rule, its basic element, and an axis is – the composition orientation direction;

– *composition scenario* is the elements observation procedure in motion.

Though it is necessary to have in mind that while estimating a historical object, simultaneously

it is necessary to estimate its correspondence to environmental conditions, to functionality and technological possibilities of that time [2].

Further in the work the assessment of theatres environment will be carried out on the basis of assessments of the listed elements.

**Main part.** Formation peculiarities of theatrical buildings environment are assessed in the article on the example of the Kaunas city garden adjoining the building of the Kaunas Musical Theatre, and Aleksandrovsky public garden with the building of the Y. Kupala National Academic Theatre in Minsk.

Both objects under study are similar historically – they are historically well-established parts of city gardening (in XIX century), both theatres were built in the second half of XIX century (1887 – the Kaunas Musical Theatre, 1890 – the theatre in Minsk) and so far are in historical buildings on the same place.

Town-planning situation of objects is also similar – both are near the main city streets (the Laisves avenue in Kaunas and the Independence avenue in Minsk), and are surrounded by not-modern social-cultural buildings.

Surroundings of the Kaunas Musical Theatre are rather happy. Thanks to the fact that the theatre is in the same place where it was planned, surrounded by numerous buildings of the same epoch, its ambient is rather harmonious, and the composition scenario is carried out quite qualitatively.

Nevertheless, some modern elements, in particular, a children's playground, do not agree with the general environment and reduce the surroundings aesthetics degree.

The abundance of monuments singles out the public garden in front of the Kaunas Musical Theatre among other green zones of the city – here there are seven various sculptures and monuments mainly dedicated to composers and musicians, but there is also a memorial monument. All monuments are of small dimensions, therefore organically fit into the surroundings, become only insignificant accents, without distracting attention from the theatre building. Also there is a fountain in the public garden.

The territory of the Aleksandrovsky public garden is somewhat opposed to a little eclectic surroundings, its territory is considered as self-sufficient, and to a large degree is isolated from the general scenario of the city part. At the same time some busy pedestrian transits pass through its terrain, and the object successfully copes with this

function. Inside the public garden there is a harmonious medium, creating a special mood with some theatrical effect, allowing for a short while to have a rest from a noisy city center.

The composition center of the Aleksandrovsky public garden is the circular area with a fountain at the center of which the sculpture “Boy playing with a swan” is installed. Moreover, there is a small memorial in the public garden on the execution yard of Minsk underground workers during the Great Patriotic War.

The species composition of wood plantings in both public gardens is similar and consists of kinds, widespread in landscape gardening and resistant in a city. Flower decoration is presented basically by annual plants though the assortment in the Aleksandrovsky public garden is more varied – there is also a mixborder from perennial flowers.

The comparative assessment of surroundings of the considered objects is given in the Table; the assessment was carried out according to the criteria specified above.

**Assessment of the surroundings of the Kaunas city garden and of the Aleksandrovsky public garden**

Criteria	The Kaunas city garden	Aleksandrovsky public garden
Proportions	Proportions of the city garden and height are sufficiently balanced – there are no large objects nearby directing attention	Proportion of Aleksandrovsky public garden and height are sufficiently balanced
Scale	It is in the city center where the area is built-up to the limit, but really the theatre medium is relatively high, with arranged green space in a prestigious place, and it makes the impression of greatness	It is in the city center, there are no high-rise buildings nearby. The public garden itself is a relatively high green area in a prestigious place, it is elevated above the avenue level, and that makes the impression of greatness
Rhythm	From the Laisves avenue three paths conducting towards the theatre, are located rhythmically. When approaching the theatre the rhythm of paths disappears, however the intermittent rhythm is created by busts of musicians and trees, the medium looks easy but not boring	Rhythm is seen directly in the public garden planning – diagonal paths which cross in the central circular area. Also when moving along the paths the rhythm is set by position of street lamps and garden benches
Equilibrium	There is a well-balanced equilibrium between active and passive influence forms: sharp lines of the theatre, strict forms of the fountain and quiet, low, curved lines of garden benches and road kerbs, facade of an active yellow colour and a considerable quantity of green foliage and neutral elements of small architecture	Equilibrium between active and passive forms of influence is kept: a rather active colour gamma of the public garden and very strict geometrical pattern of paths and quiet, low lines of breastwalls and garden benches, a considerable quantity of greenery, the facade of neutral colour
Colour match	According to Osvald template, yellow (the theatre facade) and green (grass, leaves) colours are bordering, therefore they do not contrast, but coordinate with each other. There are no sharper colour accents in the theatre surroundings, neutral grey colour – the colour of coarse concrete, of tree trunks dominate	Red (paving colour, breastwalls, and also flower beds) and green (grass, leaves) make a harmonious contrast pair. Contrast is softened by dark red tint of small architectural forms, and also by presence of grey-silvery colour in flower beds. There are no sharper colour accents in the public garden
Composition idea	It is difficult to guess the thoughts of the designers, but it seems that the musical theatre surroundings – the City Garden – should have separated the theatre from the busy Laisves avenue, and do it gently, thus preserving unity and certain harmony (decor, ceramic tile)	The public garden area should be considered as a quiet place for rest and walks, being neatly singled out in a noisy city center, with a reminder about the history of this place. Thus the theatre building is strictly separated from the avenue, receiving its own space

End of the Table

Criteria	The Kaunas city garden	Aleksandrovsy public garden
Composition principle	The applied conformation principle - the area and the majority of its surroundings belong to the same historical period, the surroundings are not active (except new glass buildings and children's playground)	The public garden contrasts with the surrounding area, it is clearly separated from it by railing and visually – the public garden colour gamma is more active than the area colouristics. The theatre architecture belongs to the earlier period as compared to the surrounding buildings
Centers and axes of composition	The center is the theatre building. Axes are from the Laisves avenue to the theatre front access door, and also diagonally from the restaurant "City Garden" to the front access door	The center is the circular area with the fountain. Axes are the diagonal paths crossing the central area, functioning as active pedestrian transits
Composition scenario	The composition scenario is to take a person from the hastening commercial medium, business, commercial streets and to put him into the art world. At first it is necessary to pass by old trees, then silent and the unobtrusive fountain, then there are busts of musicians, and at last – flower beds and the theatre building. The scenario is interrupted a little bit by the children's playground as the impression of greatness, historicity is lost	The composition scenario is to take a person from noisy urbane medium and to offer "another world", probably, another time. From every quarter the public garden is surrounded by railing, when entering it from any part, except the theatre, you find yourself at once under crowns of old trees, and in the middle of your way you come to the fountain with a subject absolutely uncharacteristic for our culture and time – and it is the center of the small artificial world. If you approach the public garden from the part of the theatre, so it all appears as if behind the front access door, becoming a theatrical scene

**Conclusion.** The studied objects are similar according to their purpose and town-planning position. They also have a very similar history.

The composition of small architectural forms has similar features – there is a fountain in both public gardens, benches, road kerbs, sculptures. Elements of small architectural forms reflect different historical periods, though the majority of them were installed in Soviet period. At the same time the Aleksandrovsy public garden has railings and breastwalls which are absent in the Kaunas city garden. At the same time there is no children's playground in the Aleksandrovsy public garden.

Wood plantings in both public gardens are very similar, they are basically large trees of the kinds which were applied in large quantities in the city gardening in Belarus and Lithuania.

In the Aleksandrovsy public garden there are bushes which are absent in the Kaunas city garden. In both public gardens there are no complex landscape compositions, as the basic function of wood plantings is partial separation of the theatre from streets. The most significant areas of the public gardens are emphasized by flowerbeds, mainly of annual flowers.

At both public gardens there are memorial monuments and sculptures which do not bear an obvious sense load. Sights together with plantings help to take out a person from an intense and ur-

bane area of the city center and to put him into the world of art and culture.

The composition of the Kaunas city garden has a subordinate character – the public garden itself and its surroundings belong to the same historical period, environment is not active. And the Aleksandrovsy public garden contrasts the surroundings, and that is even underlined by colour.

Both studied public spaces are viable, multi-functional and attractive, are often used, not only before theatrical performances, but also as places a shot rest, for various local events, being preferred and regularly visited by the citizens and guests.

In the analyzed examples the ideological content and installation materials of the used small-scale architectural elements are different. The largest differences are observed comparing composition of the routes of theatre visitors. In the case of Kaunas, a gradual smooth transition from urban environment to the theatre building was planned.

The square and its surroundings belong to the same historical period, the surrounding environment is not active. In Minsk visitors within a few minutes fall from one era of architectural styles into the other, contrast the volumes of neighboring objects, their colours.

Having similar composition ideas – to take out a person from the city area and to put him into the theatre world, the composition scenarios are different

in the considered examples. In the Kaunas city garden it is an onward smooth transition from the city area to the theatre building, and in the Alek-

sandrovsky public garden a person as though enters other world at once – probably, another time, or onto a theatrical scene.

#### References

1. Kavaliauskas P. Kraštovaizdžio samprata ir planavimas. Vilnius, Vilniaus Universitetas, 2011.
2. Motloch J. L. Introduction to Landscape Design. N.Y., John Wiley & Sons, 1990.

#### Information about the authors

**Berezko Olga Mihiaylovna** – Ph. D. Agriculture, assistant professor, Department of Landscape Design and Landscape Construction. Belarusian State Technological University (13a, Sverdlova str., 220006, Minsk, Republic of Belarus). E-mail: Berezko@belstu.by

**Vaitkutė Eidimtienė Vaida** – lecturer, Department of Landscape Design. Kaunas Forestry and Environmental Engineering University (1, Liepu str., 53101, Girionys, Kaunas distr., Lithuania). E-mail: v.eidimtiene@kmaik.lm.lt

*Received 13.04.2015*