

# The Performative Nature of Function

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## Abstract

Carlo Lodoli (1690-1761) exists as a footnote in most history books of modern architecture. He is typically noted for either his influence on the Venetian Neo-classical tradition or as an early prophet to modernist functionalism. Lodoli, as this essay will show, proposed an understanding of function that is more closely related to performance. Far from being the precursor to the modern dictum ›form follows function‹, Lodoli's position may still be seen as a productive and non-dialectical critique of the reductive relationship between form and use. A careful look back to Lodoli's critique offers a new perspective on the relationship between architecture and function today and, even, the role of performance in architecture.