

Books

Antonella Ranaldi, ed.

La cappella di Sant'Aquilino in San Lorenzo Maggiore a Milano: Storia e restauro

Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2022, 320 pp., 57 color and 258 b/w illus. €34 (cloth), ISBN 9788836646531

Relatively few buildings dating to the fourth century CE remain standing, and very few retain even a portion of their original decoration. The chapel of Sant'Aquilino in Milan, the subject of this new book, is one of those surviving few, and therefore holds an important place in the history of the architecture and architectural decoration of the late antique period (ca. 300–600 CE). The book's publication followed the 2017–19 restoration of the building and its decoration directed by Antonella Ranaldi, head of the Soprintendenza di Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio di Milano, the government agency responsible for the archeological and artistic patrimony of Northern Italy's largest city. Ranaldi is also editor of the volume and author of several of its chapters; other contributors are twelve specialists who collaborated in the restoration.

The first sections of the book address the original building, including its function, patron, and construction, and its mosaics, marble revetment, and painting. The essays pay careful attention to later

architectural modifications, such as the addition of a small chancel on the chapel's south side and the raising of the upper exterior walls, as well as other interior decorations incorporated over the centuries. Further chapters document the later use of the building and successive restorations, especially those of 1911, 1937, and 1980.

Restorations are important for preserving the cultural heritage of the past. The most recent interventions at the chapel included work to address water infiltration as well as the cleaning of frescoes and the strengthening of mosaic adhesives as needed. In addition, sealed vestibule windows were reopened, restoring the natural lighting of this space.

As important as restoration work and its documentation are per se, restorations may also lead to new discoveries. These in turn may reinforce earlier interpretations or lead to new insights and understanding. The latter is the case for this study, as the recent restorations generated several significant new insights regarding the building and its decoration.

Sant'Aquilino is a simple octagonal building, entered through a square vestibule with lateral niches, attached to the south flank of the church of San Lorenzo. Octagonal structures served various functions in Roman architecture, including as baths and residences as well as freestanding buildings such as mausoleums. In the Christian context, they functioned as both baptisteries and mausoleums. Typically, each of the interior walls included a niche, with one serving as an entrance. Often the niches featured alternating rectangular and semicircular forms, as is the case here.

According to earlier scholarship, the chapel was originally a baptistery or mausoleum. Its identification as a mausoleum is the most common interpretation and is

also accepted here. An earlier octagonal mausoleum built in Milan by the tetrarchic emperor Maximian provided a convenient model for the builder of San Lorenzo.

Despite some debate regarding the date of the building—estimates range from the mid-fourth to the early fifth century—Ranaldi argues that it dates prior to the end of the fourth century, and certainly before 402 CE, when the imperial court transferred to Ravenna. The indications of imperial patronage pointed to by previous scholars include the proximity of the imperial palace as well as San Lorenzo's unusual scale and grandeur, the reuse of stone blocks from the nearby amphitheater for its foundations, and reports of porphyry ornament on its interior. To this Ranaldi adds the observation that the quality of the building's construction and of its mosaics equally suggests imperial patronage, especially when compared to the rougher building techniques found in contemporary churches built by Bishop Ambrose. As to patron, Ranaldi follows my own hypothesis that the chapel was built to house the sarcophagi of Emperors Gratian and Valentinian II, as well as Galla Flavia, wife of Theodosius, who died in 394.¹

The restoration demonstrated that the walls of the octagon are original up to the springing of the vault that covers the interior. Technically it is a segmented brick vault, composed of eight curving triangular segments with joints between the sections. One important finding is that there seems to have been an attempt to smooth out these joints using terracotta fictile tubes, making the interior of the vault appear domical rather than segmented. Additional plaster would have helped to create the illusion.

Arcaded galleries placed on the upper walls of the exterior rise to support a

Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians 82, no. 2 (June 2023), 204–227. ISSN 0037-9808, electronic ISSN 2150-5926. © 2023 by the Society of Architectural Historians. All rights reserved. Please direct all requests for permission to photocopy or reproduce article content through the University of California Press's Reprints and Permissions web page, <https://www.ucpress.edu/journals/reprints-permissions>, or via email: jpermissions@ucpress.edu. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1525/jsah.2023.82.2.204>.

pyramidal roof covering the vault. Gino Chierici, who conducted the restorations begun in 1937, believed these galleries to be original, a view accepted by most. But Ranaldi argues persuasively that they are a later addition, dating no earlier than the sixth century, but possibly as late as the twelfth. The domical vault would have therefore been exposed externally, which would have been quite normal for this period.

Ranaldi's inclusion of measurements in Roman feet helpfully illuminates the simple planning of the design of the octagon and its vestibule. I would add that in designing octagons, Roman builders showed a marked preference for numbers divisible by ten for major measurements. In this case the diagonal diameter from corner to corner, which is the key dimension used to lay out an octagon, measures 70 Roman feet. In addition, the measurement from the foundation platform to the top of the domical vault also seems to have been 70 Roman feet, creating a simple 1:1 ratio in the building's proportions.

Another important observation addresses the vestibule, generally assumed to be an afterthought inserted following the construction of the foundation platform. Elisabetta Neri and Paola Greppi, who detail the construction techniques in this study, discount that idea, arguing that the platform is much larger than the building in any case and that the techniques and materials used in Sant'Aquilino are identical to those used in San Lorenzo.

Ranaldi gathers all evidence for the original interior decoration, both written and material. *Opus sectile* covered the lower walls with various marble and porphyry revetment. The restoration brought to light some of the metal clamps used to hold these pieces in place. The sumptuous character of this ornamentation, combined with the mosaics decorating the niche vaults and the interior domical vault, must have resembled what still survives at the slightly later Orthodox Baptistery in Ravenna. Ranaldi's excellent reconstruction drawings convey a sense of what must have been a visually stunning interior space.

Claudia Tedeschi directed the restoration of the surviving mosaics—including the southeast and southwest niches of the octagon as well as fragments depicting patriarchs and saints on the upper walls

of the vestibule—and she examines the evidence for the lost mosaic of Christ and the Apostles crowning the domical vault. The restoration included removing a number of pins inserted during the 1980 restoration, as well as cleaning and consolidating the tesserae. Tedeschi notes the high quality of the workmanship of these mosaics and signals their importance as immediate predecessors of the earliest mosaics at Ravenna.

One of the notable differences between imperial mausoleums for Christian rulers and those for their pagan predecessors is that Christian mausoleums incorporate more windows of a larger size to allow more light into their main interior spaces. This is true for Sant'Aquilino, which features windows over each of the niches, accessible by an upper gallery. Ranaldi further advances this idea with an important observation: on the day of the winter solstice, the rays of the morning sun enter the southeast window to illuminate the niche vault on the opposite wall. The same phenomenon occurs in the afternoon, as the sun's rays illuminate the vault of the northeastern niche. Sadly, the mosaics that decorated those vaults are lost, but one imagines scenes of Christ appropriate to the Feast of the Nativity celebrated at that time of the year. Although scholars have often credited baroque artists like Gian Lorenzo Bernini for the play of light in their designs, clearly the builders and artists of late antiquity also developed careful strategies to shape experience through the use of light.²

Ranaldi's book is large format and beautifully produced, featuring numerous photographs of exceptional quality by Maurizio Montagna, as well as excellent architectural drawings and reconstructions and an exhaustive bibliography.³ It is the kind of book one wishes existed for each of the key monuments of late antiquity, and it will be the starting place for any future studies. Ranaldi and her group are now restoring the church of San Lorenzo, and thus one looks forward to another exceptional publication on a significant building of the period. Finally, at the price of €34, not much more than the cost of a trade paperback, the book is a bargain.

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Notes

1. Mark J. Johnson, *The Roman Imperial Mausoleum in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 166–67.
2. See Vladimir Ivanovici, *Manipulating Theophany: Light and Ritual in North Adriatic Architecture (ca. 400–ca. 800)* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016).
3. One correction: the author of *Principles of Roman Architecture* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000) is not the present writer, but Mark Wilson Jones.

Joseph C. Williams

Architecture of Disjuncture: Mediterranean Trade and Cathedral Building in a New Diocese (11th–13th Centuries)

Turnhout: Brepols, 2020, 173 pp., 15 maps, 15 tables, 1 color and 80 b/w illus. \$93/€85 (paper), ISBN 9782503581088

The first pages of Joseph C. Williams's recent publication on Old Molfetta Cathedral (Duomo Vecchio, or Church of San Corrado) in Apulia challenge a seemingly fundamental truth of architecture, that “no part can be added or taken away without damaging the whole” (4). The title, *Architecture of Disjuncture*, encapsulates this leading premise. Fragmentation, instead of unified planning, characterizes the working method and design principle of the site. Founded before 1071, the diocese of Molfetta was a suffragan see of the archdiocese of Bari. Because of its favorable location on Adriatic trade routes, this burgeoning port town experienced a building boom at around the same time as other cities on the middle coast of Apulia, where some of the most splendid examples of Romanesque architecture remain. But unlike San Nicola of Bari, which benefited from large seigneurial holdings, Molfetta Cathedral did not have funding proportional to its newfound status. Its support came from lay donations, an unsteady source of income that led to the creation of what Williams terms “a fragmented architecture dominated by specific interests” (11). However, the resulting building, constructed in several distinct episodes, was not the haphazard product of a series of hiccups. Instead, as Williams explains, the choices made in each phase were deliberate, demonstrating remarkable adaptability, versatility, and creativity on the part of its builders, and thus countering the negative connotations of rupture. Even

though the word “disjuncture” (from the Latin *disjunctūra*) signifies a “separation, breach [or] condition of affairs involving disunion; a perplexed or disjointed state of things” (11), the author attempts to uncover how “discontinuities,” as he characterizes them, were worked through at sites like Molfetta. These were the “joints” on which this building project hinged, explored in chapters focusing on funds (chapter 1), construction phases and design changes (chapter 2), labor and expertise (chapter 3), and geographic networks (chapter 4). Williams demonstrates how, despite significant financing obstacles, the builders of Molfetta Cathedral embraced a strategy that emerged from change and multiplicity.

Chapter 1 explores two concepts presented in the book’s introduction to chart how the mixed typology of a transept basilica with axial nave domes and quadrant vaults over the side aisles came into being. The first of these concepts, hybridization, concerns how these separate plans became integrated into one building. The second, fragmentation, corresponds to the multiple phases of the project. Starts and stops beset the early stages because of the reliance on varying amounts of funding from lay donations; this source of monetary support did not become consistent until the second half of the thirteenth century, with the introduction of tithes. Five discrete building phases are outlined in chapter 2: the two earliest (first half of the twelfth century–1184) saw the construction of a vaulted hall crypt, built most likely in anticipation of receiving the relics of Saint Conrad of Bavaria (comparable to San Nicola in Bari and the cathedrals of Bari and Trani), where the first liturgical functions took place. In this period, the transept walls were built as well. Although their extent suggested Molfetta would be a cathedral of grand proportions, the topography of the site—namely, the sea abutting its west side—did not allow for such a building. Major revisions took place in the third phase (ca. 1184–mid-thirteenth century) with the introduction of three axial domes and the transformation of the nave crypt into a transept crypt. The two final stages (ca. second half of thirteenth–early fourteenth century) worked to consolidate and standardize earlier construction, with completion being the primary goal. When read alongside the book’s immensely

useful appendix, which includes detailed descriptions of additions and changes made during construction, with photos visualizing the stages of work, the contents of this chapter become clear even to the least architecturally adept reader.

Chapter 3 explores the responses, solutions, and working methods of the builders of Molfetta Cathedral. Through a close analysis of the building fabric, Williams distinguishes the work of technical specialists in pier design, proportional planning, and dome construction, who were likely overseen by a master mason (*protomagister*). This division fit the labor demands of the greater region, with builders working in different sites in the territory of Bari that relied at the same time on standardization. Most significantly, he contends that these forms and techniques could be shuffled around depending on the needs of the project at hand, pointing to the interconnectedness of these Apulian Romanesque examples. Chapter 4 expands this territorial discussion, since earlier scholarship has variously described many structural and decorative elements as Byzantine, French, and Islamic. The author demonstrates that local building forms found in Molfetta and elsewhere in Apulia could be found much farther away as well. The *cuffia* squinches introduced into the cathedral’s middle and western domes are a key example, appearing in geographical locations from Sicily to southern Calabria and Tunisia. The analogy that he draws between the exchange of forms and building methods across short and medium expanses, which became part of longer-distance knowledge networks, and the cabotage of merchant ships is thought-provoking and is a concept that harks back to Fernand Braudel, as cited in the conclusion.¹ Williams here also compares the architectural production of sites like Molfetta to Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell’s characterization of the Mediterranean economy as fragmented yet, at the same time, interconnected through larger interregional networks.² Nonetheless, the question remains how such movement and exchange were made possible across Christian- and Muslim-controlled territories. In his conclusion, Williams briefly mentions *muqarnas* vaults of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as indicative of knowledge transfer across long distances,

but without connecting this very relevant point to the discussion in chapter 4.

Williams is largely successful in presenting his ideas on medieval building projects and working processes, including how new structural and ornamental elements could be integrated into the fabric of a building when construction was already under way. His book is well written and coherently organized, and it presents a fresh approach to the multiphase Molfetta Cathedral with wide-ranging implications for the study of medieval architecture. Most fascinating is his suggestion in the conclusion that instead of focusing solely on the corpus of monuments at the highest peaks of monetary support and patronage, we should also look to sites that were far less well financed. He cites Amiens Cathedral and the Great Mosque of Córdoba in the first category. Yet their multiple building phases and adjustments in plan are also ripe for the telling of their own stories of fragmentation, and the author misses an opportunity to point out how this might be done in future works. Incidentally, a small oversight in this section is the misspelling of the name of the preeminent Cairo Geniza scholar Shelomo Dov Goitein, which appears as Shelomo Gov Goitein (a mistake that persists in the endnote citation and the bibliography).

A subsection in the conclusion explores the didactic uses of disjuncture as a framework for design education, an unexpected but certainly welcome addition to a study on an ecclesiastical building in the Italian Mezzogiorno. The author builds on concepts expounded in the introduction borrowed from the political scientist Charles Lindblom’s classic article on U.S. executive policy making, “The Science of ‘Muddling Through.’”³ Transposed to medieval Molfetta, Lindblom’s “branch” method signifies the ability to respond to challenges during building by making choices that favor project realization and privilege versatility. Commonplace prior to the Renaissance, this approach contrasts with the “root” method based on a plan as represented in architectural treatises, namely, that of Leon Battista Alberti and others like him after the rediscovery of Vitruvius. Williams convincingly advocates for a synthesis of the two to allow for maneuverability and even open-ended results, thus demonstrating how the working methods of medieval builders

can be applied to current design practices and pedagogy.

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Notes

1. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 1:103–8.
2. Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea: A Study of Mediterranean History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).
3. Charles E. Lindblom, “The Science of ‘Muddling Through,’” *Public Administration Review* 19, no. 2 (1959), 79–88.

Anna Bortolozzi

Italian Architectural Drawings from the Cronstedt Collection in the Nationalmuseum Stockholm

Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2020, 320 pp., 350 color illus. €58 (cloth), ISBN 9783775748025

Nearly two-thirds of the drawings in the first two sections of this catalogue from the Cronstedt Collection have complex artistic provenances, as works on paper created by unknown artists active in Rome—primarily architects from France and, exceptionally, from Italy—executed either on-site or later in the studio. Moreover, the featured drawings are copies rather than originals, consisting primarily of artists’ duplicates made after the antique and after Renaissance or early mannerist masters (cat. 1–118). Admittedly, the complicated circumstances surrounding genesis and authorship do not always facilitate an understanding of the works (neither does their uncharted provenance). Nevertheless, they do corroborate the reception and impact that these ancient and modern models had on mannerist and baroque architecture, first in Rome and thereafter in France and Sweden. By contrast, the third section of the catalogue is more pragmatic and comprehensible, depicting largely original projects for churches, palaces, gardens, and fountains in early baroque Rome by noted architects, or their workshops, ca. 1580–1630 (cat. 119–81).

Anna Bortolozzi discusses 181 architectural drawings on about 165 physical sheets.¹ All were likely collected in Paris by the Swedish architect Carl Johan Cronstedt (1709–77) and acquired by

the Nationalmuseum Stockholm in 1941 from his family, together with about six thousand other works on paper. In December 1731 Cronstedt traveled to Paris under the guidance of his teacher Carl Hårleman (1700–1753). Thanks to his elaborate network of contacts, in September 1734 the young Cronstedt acquired the entire estate of his deceased master, the Parisian interior designer Claude Audran III. Nothing is known about Cronstedt’s three further acquisitions, also made in the capital, except that in summer 1735 he purchased an additional set of drawings, shortly before leaving for Italy.

The first section of the catalogue includes all the drawings after preserved ancient monuments or fragments in Rome, including many delicate sketches, elevations, and perspective views published here for the first time (cat. 1–59). All but a small number were created by an unidentified Frenchman (or his colleagues) active in Rome in the second half of the sixteenth century. Bortolozzi attributes most of them on stylistic grounds to an anonymous late sixteenth-century French draftsman, Hand B of the Cronstedt Collection, noting the use of similar French paper sheets and watermarks (36–37). She compares these to similar drawings in the Scholz and Goldschmidt Scrapbooks at the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Codex Destailleur D at the Kunstbibliothek in Berlin, and Codex 209e at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. Bortolozzi dubs this network of copyists the “Vignola-Dupérac-Dosio Complex,” thus including Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola, Giovanni Antonio Dosio, and Étienne Dupérac as possible contributors. The identities of the members of this complex group of collaborators/creators remain hypothetical, indicating the difficulty of identifying the artists responsible for these drawings and providing definitive attributions. Admittedly, the stylistic similarities noted between the drawings in Stockholm and elsewhere often rest on visual evidence, thus the works’ attribution to specific artists is all the more difficult. The author refers to the work of Carolyn Yerkes, who has emphasized the close collaboration between Italian and French draftsmen in documenting monumental antique buildings in Rome, and draws on her

conclusion that half of the drawings in the Stockholm Pantheon series (a total of ten works, cat. 1–10) closely resemble the drawings of the rotunda in the Codex 209e in Munich.² In comparison with the larger number of Pantheon drawings in the Goldschmidt Scrapbook (conveying the architectural range and quality of the edifice more systematically), the Stockholm drawings suggest a more focused, if less holistic, approach. Overall, Bortolozzi attributes the Stockholm Pantheon drawings to Hand B, except for two sheets (cat. 1 and 3) that she assigns to his predecessor Hand A1.

Drawings after modern architecture of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (cat. 60–118) include examples of churches, palaces, and architectural fragments. Bortolozzi attributes forty-three of these fifty-six works to Hand B. Largely Roman monuments, these include St. Peter’s Basilica (cat. 61–73), Villa Giulia (cat. 85–97), and Palazzo Farnese (cat. 101–4). The St. Peter’s sketches are of particular interest because they mirror the impact of the basilica’s design on Italian and French architects after around 1550, and also because they depict a number of its iconic architectural details. One workshop drawing of the cupola, possibly by Antonio Labacco, ca. 1546, presents a cross section of Sangallo’s project for the dome (cat. 62). Bortolozzi argues that the artist uncovered planning details beyond those found in the Scholz Scrapbook, and thus based his drawing on Michelangelo’s wooden model.³ Additional drawings by Hand B of the basement, drum, and dome (cat. 64, 65, 68–71, dated ca. 1570) all relate to the Scholz Scrapbook. The formal and stylistic consistency of the nine drawings of St. Peter’s with the Stockholm Pantheon series suggests these might have belonged to an extensive group of works on paper including both ancient and modern architecture executed about a decade after their models in New York. What is exceptional is the fact that a large part of this group survived thanks only to Cronstedt’s committed collecting.

In 1978 Rudolf Wittkower recognized the importance of the St. Peter’s drawings for reconstructing Michelangelo’s project. He first proposed a link between the drawings for the cupola in Stockholm and the comparable drawings in New York, thereby stimulating interest in the series that was furthered by the 1994–95

exhibition *Renaissance from Bramante to Michelangelo*, which included many of these drawings.⁴ One of the catalogue's further coherent groups of drawings concerns the early design process of the Villa Giulia in Rome, encompassing numerous elements of the façade, courtyard, and garden conceived by Vignola, with additions by Bartolomeo Ammannati and Giorgio Vasari (cat. 85–96). Surprisingly, work on these exceptional drawings is relatively recent, stimulated by a 2002 Vignola exhibition.⁵

The last chapter of the catalogue is the most engaging, with its discussion of original projects as well as workshop designs (rather than copies) of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, often by well-known masters (cat. 119–181). Many of these examples reflect crucial stages of the design procedure and invariably reveal the architect's personal thought and handwriting, making these more immediate than the anonymous drawings presented in preceding chapters. These examples also reveal various techniques, subtle execution, and different color effects. Of particular interest is the 1587–90 design for San Giacomo in Augusta in Rome (also known as San Giacomo degli Incurabili) by Francesco Capriani, better known as Francesco da Volterra (cat. 119–21). To integrate a longitudinal church into a large hospital complex, Volterra proposed a large oval plan. Two other Volterra projects include highly finished drawings of 1591 for the Caetani Chapel in Santa Pudenziana in Rome (cat. 123 and 124), presumably intended for the patron. Other projects include a longitudinal section of Sant'Andrea della Valle of 1608–11 by Carlo Maderno and his workshop (cat. 130–32). Bortolozzi also publishes two drawings by Cronstedt of the same church, made in 1736 during his stay in Rome. It would have been useful if she had discussed the Swedish architect's activity in Italy in greater detail, and especially his interest in baroque architecture and his sketches of Roman churches. A number of drawings of Sant'Andrea della Valle, including a half elevation of the dome, a façade cross section, and a view of the first bay of the nave (215, figs. 2–3), are in fact attributed here for the first time to Cronstedt.⁶ Other projects showcase Maderno's collaboration with Francesco Borromini (cat. 159 and 160). By contrast, three profile studies of

ancient bases, cornices, and architraves seem out of place in this section (cat. 147–50).⁷ Given that the cross section of a base (cat. 148) matches a profile drawn by Giuliano da Sangallo, identified with the Arch of Septimius Severus in the Codex Barberini, this certainly belongs in the first chapter.⁸

This well-researched catalogue includes entries for all catalogued drawings, along with detailed bibliographical references, as well as information about comparable examples (many also reproduced). Moreover, the list of substantiated watermarks deserves praise (284–95). In contrast, the decision to refer only to Italy in the publication's title obscures the significance of contributions by French artists. The reader would also like to know more about the relevance of the phrase “from the Cronstedt Collection” in the book's title. That is, what were the criteria used to make the selections presented in the catalogue? The author notes in the introduction that she included a group of seven drawings from the Tessin-Hårleman Collection because they formed part of Cronstedt's collection (14). These are drawings from the collections of Nicodemus Tessin the Younger and Carl Hårleman, Cronstedt's master.⁹ The excellent online catalogue includes entries for additional drawings by Italian and French artists active in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that are part of the Cronstedt Collection but are not included in Bortolozzi's catalogue.¹⁰ It would have been helpful for the reader if the author had offered further explanations for such decisions. Nonetheless, the publication of a selection of Italian and French architectural drawings from the Cronstedt Collection represents an essential addition to the earlier catalogues of the important holdings of the Nationalmuseum Stockholm in these areas, all with their origins in the collections of major Swedish architects, especially Nicodemus Tessin the Younger.¹¹

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Notes

1. In the case of drawings with images on both sides of a physical sheet, Bortolozzi provides two catalogue numbers, in a rather unusual procedure; the museum's online catalogue instead uses the same inventory numbers differentiated only by the addition of “recto” and “verso” in

these cases. For the Nationalmuseum's online searchable catalogue, see <https://collection.nationalmuseum.se/eMP/eMuseumPlus> (accessed 13 Jan. 2023).

2. Carolyn Yerkes, *Drawing after Architecture: Renaissance Architectural Drawings and Their Reception* (Venice: Marsilio, 2017), 60–65.

3. Bortolozzi also discusses a group of sketches by Giovanni Antonio Dosio at the Uffizi that she connects to both the Cronstedt and Scholz Scrapbook drawings. The at times extensive catalogue entries reveal the complexity of the architectural copying process of St. Peter's (31, 121–38). See also Yerkes, *Drawing after Architecture*, 188–211.

4. Rudolf Wittkower, “Michelangelo's Dome of St Peter's,” in *Idea and Image: Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 73–89; Henry A. Millon and Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, eds., *The Renaissance from Brunelleschi to Michelangelo: The Representation of Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994), 658–69.

5. Richard J. Tuttle, Bruno Adorni, Christoph Luitpold Frommel, and Christof Thoenes, eds., *Jacopo Barozzi da Vignola* (Milan: Electa, 2002).

6. The online catalogue attributes them to an unknown French artist, active during the second half of the seventeenth century: NMH CC 1184 recto and verso.

7. The group of four works listed here as cat. 147–50 includes one drawing reproduced as both cat. 148 and cat. 150, the latter bearing a different catalogue number from the first. The online catalogue shows instead another drawing for the accession number of cat. 150, NMH CC 1313v, although this work is not reproduced in the publication.

8. For Giuliano's drawing, see Cammy Brothers, *Giuliano da Sangallo and the Ruins of Rome* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2022), 80–81, fig. 64, 170–71, fig. 175.

9. Bortolozzi states that “all seven drawings bear the stamp of Carl Johan Cronstedt's master Carl Hårleman” without providing further substantiation, and does not clarify which are the seven drawings to which she refers (14–15, n. 15).

10. Examples include drawings by anonymous artists of the Pantheon (NMH CC 3161, Cronstedt Collection) and after a Bernini project for the Spanish Steps (NMH CC 790, Cronstedt Collection).

11. Martin Olin and Linda Henriksson, eds., *Nicodemus Tessin the Younger: Sources Works Collections*, vol. 4, *Architectural Drawings I: Ecclesiastical and Garden Architecture* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 2004).

Jesús Escobar

Habsburg Madrid: Architecture and the Spanish Monarchy

University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022, 288 pp., 117 color and 26 b/w illus. \$124.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780271091419

“Matritun, urbs Regia” (Madrid, Royal City) reads the banderole above Pedro Teixeira’s 1656 map of the capital of the Habsburg Empire, perhaps the most famous view of the city ever produced. Teixeira’s image merged two different—and not always harmonious—aspects of the Madrid of the Habsburgs, as both a municipality and also the residence of the royal court. By strategically casting the Royal Alcázar’s main façade and square as the protagonist of the print, but with the Plaza Mayor as its compositional center, Teixeira depicted a synthesis of Villa y Corte, as Madrid was known in the seventeenth century. Madrid was only a small city at the center of the Iberian Peninsula when King Philip II decided to establish it as the seat of his previously itinerant court in 1561. Over the next century—roughly the period covered in the book under review—new buildings and urban forms seeking to represent this complex and multifaceted dual identity completely transformed the new capital.

Jesús Escobar’s *Habsburg Madrid: Architecture and the Spanish Monarchy* not only recounts this process but also has the more ambitious goal of telling the story of how this tension, collaboration, and symbiosis played out, and how architects and their buildings articulated Madrid’s complex and shifting nature in both practical and symbolic terms. The book is a rich, thoughtful, well-written, and even entertaining read that weaves social, political, and cultural history together with architectural history. Surprisingly enough, a book like this one has never been written before about Madrid. Of course, many histories exist for the capital of Spain. Specific studies examine almost all the monuments discussed in this book (including Madrid’s Plaza Mayor, the subject of an earlier work by Escobar).¹ We can even consult a fine study on the history of the city’s maps.² Yet no one, at least to my knowledge, has attempted to write such a nuanced, multilayered history of the way that architecture determined Madrid’s role as the Habsburg capital. While Escobar’s book naturally focuses on architecture, it also develops a more culturally nuanced historical narrative; here architecture and buildings do not simply reflect politics but instead represent an integral part of a complex political program.

Escobar begins by exploring the essential complexity of the Spanish sovereigns,

the “Catholic monarchy” that Sebastián de Covarrubias defined as both “truthful and universal” (*universal y verdadera*) in his 1611 dictionary. The Spanish rulers promoted Catholicism as a “composite monarchy,” where (following John Elliott’s well-known definition) several crowns and viceroalties converged into the single political body of one dynastic monarch.

This elucidates Escobar’s first important contribution in this book, namely, his argument that Madrid’s seventeenth-century architecture should be analyzed not only within the context of Spanish early modern architecture but also within a “transnational and transatlantic framework” (16). In most chapters, after uncovering the history, patronage, and use of several key buildings, he supports such analysis by incorporating discussion of analogous buildings in the viceroalties, including palatial (Naples), penitential (Mexico, New Spain), and municipal (Lima) structures. Escobar’s transversal approach to the architecture of the Spanish Habsburgs (traditionally dismissed by art historians for failing to contribute to the history of “baroque” architecture) enriches our understanding of its intricacy. Recent studies such as Laura Fernández González’s book on the architecture of Philip II—what she describes as “pan-Iberian visual culture”—also respond to a similar challenge, if crafted using very different structures and objects of study.³ (Fernández González’s first chapter, on the impact of the legislation of Madrid’s sixteenth-century domestic buildings, reads in a seamless dialogue with Escobar’s book.) This coincidence speaks, I believe, to the new and promising direction of Spain’s architectural history, moving it outside the circles of local erudition that have often contained it.

In another coincidence, both Escobar and Fernández González begin their books with a brief analysis of “style.” Escobar proposes the term *estilo austriaco* for the austere classicizing mode that defined most of these buildings, combining both material and formal elements from different territories to “mirror the composite nature of the Spanish Habsburg monarchy.”⁴ Of course one book cannot do everything, but I believe *Habsburg Madrid* shows that much more remains to be done on the architectural language of the *estilo austriaco*, using

diachronic and geographical frameworks to show how it responded to local vernacular traditions on which it was superimposed, and how it also responded to the universalizing claims of architectural theory. Such a fully transregional architectural history would probably need to be geographically multicentered if not comparative. Escobar promises a future study of this kind (with Michael Schaeffler) that we anticipate eagerly.

Habsburg Madrid considers these problems and questions in the analysis of some fundamental buildings, all secular, and all in Madrid. It excludes religious buildings, from monasteries to the fraught project of providing a cathedral for Madrid, resisted by the Archdiocese of Toledo and only accomplished in the late nineteenth century. While these limits could certainly be questioned, they provide a clear structure and narrative to the book. Each of its five chapters examines one key building, tracing its history, institutional structure, and actors before closely analyzing the structures themselves as the primary and ultimate source of information. For this, the book relies on a very rich primary literature, archival documentation, including important unpublished drawings as well as prints and paintings.

Following an introductory chapter on the city image of Madrid, chapter 2 concentrates on the Alcázar, the Royal Palace. The extensive literature on this building includes the history of its construction, the arrangement of its paintings, and its collections more generally.⁵ Escobar, however, takes a very different approach. The chapter, titled “Monarchy and Governance,” examines the building as “inhabited” by the different institutions of the Habsburg administration, including the councils representing the different territories as well as other government offices. Considering jurists, ambassadors, historians, and cosmographers as privileged actors of courtly life, the discussion brings to life the meaning and importance of palace collections, including maps and city views. Escobar shows not only how the design and decoration of the building responded to its use but also how the building’s “style” provided a model for the viceroalties, in dialogue with various palaces in Naples, Modena, Mexico, and Lima.⁶

Chapter 3 examines the Court Prison, a subject on which very little prior literature exists. A magnificent, solemn

building that greatly impressed foreign visitors, the Court Prison provided a public symbol of good governance. It combined municipal functions with a tribunal (a *sala del crimen*, or courthouse), as attested in its plans as well as its exterior ornament, which Escobar carefully analyzes and documents.

The author deploys a similar strategy in chapter 4, on the Madrid City Hall. Built to accommodate the Municipal Council, the project was undertaken not by the city government but by the Council of Castile. Again, the building's dual municipal and royal functions can be read in its plans as well as in its decorative frescoes, with the arms of the Habsburgs surrounded by the city arms of Madrid. Finally, chapter 5 examines the Plaza Mayor, the most important urban space of the city and the subject of Escobar's previous monograph. Building on that work, the chapter offers a detailed analysis of the royal pavilion facing onto the plaza, the Casa de la Panadería, rebuilt following a destructive fire in the early 1670s under Mariana de Austria's regency. This allows Escobar to consider also Mariana's other interventions in the city, including the Queen's Tower in the Alcázar, bringing the book to its chronological end and returning the narrative to the Royal Palace, where it began.

Beautifully edited and illustrated (including useful modern reconstructions and drawings), *Habsburg Madrid* is a rich study of a city so complex that chronicler Jerónimo Quintana called it the "Babylon of the Court" in 1629. The book makes two important contributions to the history of early modern Iberian architecture that I hope will continue to drive future work: first, it interrogates architecture through politics in a way that incorporates but also expands upon the formalist approach that has dominated this field for many years; and second, it develops a new geographical frame that places local—in this particular case "Madrilenian"—architecture into dialogue with a "Catholic" and thus "universal" empire.

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Notes

1. Jesús Escobar, *The Plaza Mayor and the Shaping of Baroque Madrid* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
2. Molina Campuzano, *Planos de Madrid de los siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid: Caja Madrid, 2002).

3. Laura Fernández González, *Philip II of Spain and the Architecture of Empire* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2021), 6.

4. Jesús Escobar, "Architecture in the Age of the Spanish Habsburgs," *JSAH* 75, no. 3 (Sept. 2016), 260.

5. Jose Maria Barbeito, *El Alcázar de Madrid* (Madrid: Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid, 1992); Stephen N. Orso, *Philip IV and the Decoration of the Royal Alcázar of Madrid* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986); Fernando Checa Cremades, ed., *El Real Alcázar de Madrid: Dos siglos de coleccionismo en la corte de los reyes de España* (Madrid: Comunidad de Madrid, 1994).

6. Sabina de Cavie anticipated some of these conclusions in her book *Architecture and Royal Presence: Domenico and Giulio Cesare Fontana in Spanish Naples (1592–1627)* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2009).

Ann Marie Borys

American Unitarian Churches: Architecture of a Democratic Religion

Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2021, 263 pp., 20 color and 59 b/w illus.
\$34.95 (paper), ISBN 9781625346032

In 1906, Unitarian reverend Rodney F. Johonnot wrote of Frank Lloyd Wright's Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois: "Without tower or spire it expresses the spirit of the ideal. By its form it expresses the thought, inherent in the liberal faith, that God should not be sought in the sky, but on earth among the children of men."¹ The building's rejection of the spire (a symbol of God in heaven) and its embrace of the grounded square form (a symbol of God "on earth among the children of men") communicated the core Unitarian belief in the fundamental dignity of the human person mirrored in the founding documents of the United States. As Ann Marie Borys argues in *American Unitarian Churches*, American Unitarianism possesses a unique relationship to American democracy precisely because, "of Christians, Unitarians alone prioritized this value [of the dignity of human beings] over scripture" (31). Borys calls us to see American Unitarianism as a "democratic religion" and its churches as expressions of "faith in freedom and democracy" (8).

Borys's project in this book is twofold: to recover the pivotal role that American Unitarianism, founded in the 1820s, and its Congregational antecedents played in the early history of the United States,

and "to expose a culture of architectural excellence in what is generally perceived as a marginal movement in American religion" (7). Borys gathers a surprising number of significant American architects who designed Unitarian churches, many with Unitarian connections: Peter Harrison, Maximilian Godefroy, Charles Bulfinch, Robert Mills, Henry Hobson Richardson, Henry Van Brunt, Frank Furness, Joseph Silsbee, Frank Lloyd Wright, Marion Mahony, Bernard Maybeck, Charles Goodman, Louis Kahn, Edward Durell Stone, Paul Rudolph, Pietro Belluschi, Hugh Stubbins, and Victor Lundy. She thus crafts an alternative narrative of American architectural history, offering new answers to the perennial question "What is American about American architecture?" by arguing that Unitarian architecture tells the story of American democracy in built form. This book will become a standard for scholars seeking to understand both American Unitarian churches and American democratic architecture rooted not in government but in religion.

A virtue of Borys's work is that she engages Unitarian theology directly in relationship to its architecture. She notes that the Reverend William Ellery Channing's 1819 "Baltimore Sermon" captured the belief in "the unity of God and his benevolence toward man, the superior humanity of Jesus, and the moral nature of human conscience" central to many Unitarians through the late nineteenth century (3). Yet, as she explains, Unitarianism ultimately accepted a broad humanism and all beliefs, including atheism. This development is vividly captured in the subheading "From Christian Church to Humanist Hut" (116). Borys emphasizes that for this denomination without "creed or liturgy" (208), which prized "variety and innovation," "no single element or typology emerges as a key to Unitarian architectural expression" (6). Nevertheless, she chronologically maps the architectural consequences of the changing and diverse set of Unitarian beliefs.

In the first chapter, "The Myth of the Meetinghouse," Borys argues that the stereotype of the meetinghouse—whether on the pattern of Old Ship Meetinghouse in Hingham, Massachusetts (1681), originally a Puritan church, or the white Federal-style meetinghouse with a steeple on the town green—did not represent

“the historically authentic architectural form of American Unitarian churches,” as some still erroneously believe (27). Instead, she posits other early Unitarian forms, including Mills’s octagonal First Unitarian Church in Philadelphia (1812) and Godefroy’s Pantheon-inspired First Unitarian Church in Baltimore (1817), deeming the latter “probably the best and most complete architectural analogue of the philosophical reasoning of the Enlightenment that drove the Unitarian movement” (30). In the second chapter, “Originality, Not Origins,” Borys notes “an appetite for innovation” (66) in Unitarian architecture, evident in designs for Unitarian churches by Furness, whose father, William Henry Furness, was a Harvard-trained Unitarian minister, and Richardson, who was Unitarian before becoming an Episcopalian. Jacob Wrey Mould’s All Souls Church in New York (1855), more memorably known as the “Church of the Holy Zebra” for its striated coloring, further proved the fruits of architectural experimentation among willing Unitarians.

The third chapter, “...And the Service of Man,” follows Unitarians’ expansion westward, taking up Wright’s famed Unity Temple (1908) and Unitarian architect Maybeck’s Unitarian Church in Palo Alto, California (1907). This chapter also spotlights churches realized by the “Iowa Sisterhood” of female Unitarian ministers as well as those designed by architects Minerva Parker Nichols and Mahony in the Progressive Era. Given that Unitarians were among the first Protestants to allow women to serve as ministers in the 1860s and 1870s, and that “women’s equality was a central belief of Unitarians,” Borys writes, “it is not surprising that perhaps the earliest American churches designed by professional women were Unitarian” (82).

The fourth and fifth chapters, “From Commons to Campus” and “Church without Cross or Creed,” turn to Unitarians’ experimental modernism in the postwar period. Here Borys’s architectural training and practice shine in her analysis of Unitarian design principles. In the postwar rush from city to suburb, Unitarians—for whom “the Transcendentalist view of nature as the key to knowledge of the divine and the cosmic order remained a central truth” (134)—sited their churches to maximize access to the outdoors.

Borys illustrates Unitarian church interior features with midcentury examples, including Kahn’s First Unitarian Church in Rochester, New York (1959), and Belluschi’s May Memorial Unitarian Church in Syracuse, New York (1964). The Unitarian value of equality created nonhierarchical, communal-focused worship spaces that Unitarians did not view to be sacred in themselves. Neither did Unitarians, valuing “rationality, pragmatism, and straightforward truth” (168), see light as “symbolic of the divine” (162). Consequently, light “was generally not manipulated to produce mysterious effects or a devout mood” (162). For their worship spaces, Unitarians favored the ideal geometries of the square and triangle, invoking a grounded nature, over the circle, with its divine associations. Their focus on fellowship put the sanctuary in near parity with the social hall, and their belief in education led to the occasional inclusion of libraries. Borys points out that Unitarian churches often provided members with a spatial choice—a moment of pause, whether a courtyard, bridge, lobby, or narthex—where one could “affirm one’s participation” in worship “not as a matter of habit or lack of attention but with full awareness of making that choice” (190). Although Unitarians expressed their congregational independence in a variety of architectural forms, Borys highlights some Unitarian design characteristics that were common in the mid-twentieth century, including humane scale, exposed structure, daylight, connections to nature, and lack of religious symbols.

The influence of the Unitarians in American culture more broadly is another focus of this book, as signaled by its division into two parts: “Unitarianism at the Center,” dealing with the nation’s first 125 years, and “Unitarianism on the Edge,” which addresses the twentieth century. Borys traces extensive Unitarian networks, drawing into her narrative nonecclesiastical projects like Richardson’s Ames Free Library (1883) and Ames Gate Lodge (1881) for his Unitarian client Frederick Lothrop Ames. We learn that Charles Eliot, a Unitarian, educational reformer, and president of Harvard University (long associated with Unitarianism), selected the inscriptions for the dome of the Thomas Jefferson Building of the Library of Congress in the 1890s, further evidence of the “intersection of Unitarian

humanistic values and American democracy” (224). Even Martin Luther King Jr.’s well-known remark “The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice” had its roots in an 1853 sermon of abolitionist Unitarian minister Theodore Parker. Borys describes Unitarianism as a progressive, liberal denomination whose beliefs in social service and social justice have been borne out in support of civil rights, women’s suffrage, education, immigrants’ rights, and, more recently, the Black Lives Matter movement and the LGBTQ community. And yet there were contradictions between these progressive Unitarian beliefs and cultural realities. Unitarianism’s “allegiance to ideas and words over rituals and emotions” resulted in a seemingly elitist “appeal mostly to the college-educated.” Despite a strong belief in the equality of all, the denomination has had “a critical failure to attract more African American members” (205).

Even if Unitarianism may be regarded as a “marginal movement in American religion,” Borys makes a convincing claim that it “is in fact woven into American history” (8) and that Unitarian churches have much to tell us about American democracy. Architectural historians will find this book eye-opening for just how much American architectural history can be categorized as American Unitarian architectural history, given that Unitarians have sponsored an impressive number of forward-looking buildings as clients who “understood that the creative expression had to be left to the architect” (208). While a clear methodology for the selection of specific Unitarian churches is absent from an otherwise tightly conceived introduction, this book reads as a geographically diverse survey of American Unitarian churches and a helpful primer on American Unitarianism. Its concluding chapter, “Architecture of, by, and for the People,” is a particularly useful tool for teaching students of architectural history and American religion what a democratic religious architecture looks like and what it means.

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Note

1. Quoted in Joseph M. Siry, *Unity Temple: Frank Lloyd Wright and Architecture for Liberal Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 77.

Kerry Dean Carso

Follies in America: A History of Garden and Park Architecture

Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2021, 216 pp., 52 b/w illus. \$29.95 (paper), ISBN 9781501755934

The folly, as a structure lacking a use, offers an opportunity to reflect on the role of design in social life. It casts off the burden of utility that separates architecture from the fine arts. Follies are not houses, or churches, or even bicycle sheds—they are ornaments at the scale of buildings. Despite their interpretive potential, the subject falls between scholarly cracks: too precious for scholars of the vernacular, and perhaps too frivolous for architectural historians. Kerry Dean Carso's *Follies in America* is a literate, appreciative account of this little-considered aspect of nineteenth-century American architecture. Written by an art historian, it integrates visual and textual sources to outline the interpretive possibilities raised by ornamental garden buildings in public and private settings.

Follies in America focuses on the northeastern United States, principally New York and Pennsylvania, in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. This concentration is driven by Carso's aim to deepen the reader's understanding of the book's single most important artifact, Henry Hardenburgh's 1876 Kingfisher Tower in Cooperstown, New York. A vignette about Thomas Jefferson opens every chapter of the book, but Andrew Jackson Downing and the Hudson River school of painters are the threads that bind it together. Its four central chapters are bracketed by an introduction, highlighting early American elites' interest in English gardens, and a conclusion. The chapters treat follies according to four formal types: temples, garden houses, towers, and ruins. This typological approach, while covering a broad period, has a tendency to elide significant distinctions across historical eras. This may frustrate historians who seek causes for events, works of architecture included, within their immediate cultural contexts.

Carso grounds the American enthusiasm for garden buildings in aristocratic European tastes. The introduction opens with Thomas Jefferson and John Adams's tour of famed English gardens. Several examples of European-derived landscapes

in early America follow, including Joseph Bonaparte's Point Breeze in New Jersey and Samuel Colt's Armsmear in Connecticut, both featuring follies distributed artfully around the grounds. In these and other examples, Carso sees an aspirational class of Americans employing European material culture to assert their taste and status.

The book's second chapter considers the temple as a common form of folly in private gardens of the early nineteenth century. Carso argues that neoclassical iconography served multiple rhetorical ends, citing examples such as an outbuilding at the Edwards-Womrath House in Philadelphia, a garden temple in the novel *Wieland*, a commemorative pavilion created after Washington's death at Mount Vernon, and a Federalist parade float by Charles Willson Peale. While these ends ranged from the political to the sentimental, temples were commonly associational. Nonetheless, Carso subsumes all of these purposes to the pervasive nationalism coursing through the arts in the decades after the American Revolution.

A more critical historian might observe that above all, such buildings manifest excess, as indulgences of the leisure class. But Carso is sympathetic, finding in them a commonplace interest in withdrawing from the business of the city as well as the social obligations of the house. She develops this observation more fully in the third chapter, devoted to summerhouses. These often ephemeral, rustically styled structures usually stood on the grounds of large estates, but authors including Harriet Martineau, Washington Irving, and Mark Twain also employed them as one-room writing retreats. Public institutions, including asylums and middle-class resorts, used more durable materials to create similar open-air structures for therapeutic purposes. Citing these benefits, Carso notes that mid-nineteenth-century architectural authors, among them Downing, encouraged a wide range of builders, from farmers to estate owners, to erect summerhouses on their properties. As she relates it, such elevated rustic retreats were within the means of many householders.

The subtitle for the chapter concerning follies designed as towers, "The Belvedere and the Panoptic Sublime," announces a debt to Alan Wallach's work on landscape painting. Carso shifts her

attention here from the private, domestic world to public settings, following an opening account of Jefferson's unbuilt tower at Monticello. The centerpiece of the chapter is an account of the Terrapin Tower at Niagara Falls, which Carso reads as nationalistic because of its association with one of the continent's natural wonders. Those who climbed to its precarious summit could experience the illusion of possessing the falls. Anthony Trollope's account of the experience, however, highlights the degree to which the vista, whether patriotic or possessive, required strength of imagination. In 1863, touristic detritus like the Camera Obscura already marred the views from the tower, attesting to the conversion of the falls from natural wonder into a site for private gain. As Trollope's disappointed reaction suggests, the opportunities for reverie and retreat at follies open to a wide public were hindered by the very presence of that public. Linking Terrapin Tower to Belvedere Castle, the observation tower at Central Park, Carso argues that the tower made the elevated view democratic, while telling "an associational story of national striving" (88).

Carso's fifth chapter addresses the ruin, "the ultimate folly" (89). Though an interest in ruins was widespread in the early nineteenth century—extending, for example, to impressive Indigenous sites like the earthworks of the Mississippi River Valley—few Americans followed the English fashion of constructing ruins. Those who did were exceptional, and quixotic, like Matthew Vassar, who erected a replica of Stonehenge in Poughkeepsie. In the absence of more widespread built examples, Carso considers the ruin through the literary and visual culture of the period. She cites, for example, the prevalence of an implied pointed arch motif (rendered in cave entrances and leaning trees) in the landscape paintings of the Hudson River school as a sign of a fascination with ruins. Ruins, in this sense, "were not necessarily purpose-built structures; sometimes, they were natural forms that resembled architecture" (100).

Follies in America concludes with a chapter interpreting the first object of the author's fascination, Kingfisher Tower, followed by an account of architects' engagements with follies in the modern era, including Bernard Tschumi's installations at the Parc de la Villette in

Paris. In extending her discussion to the present, Carso identifies a pervasive and ongoing fascination with the folly reaching well beyond her primary focus on the nineteenth-century Mid-Atlantic states.

The reference to America in the book's title implies a consideration of follies as a nationwide phenomenon, but Carso's evidence is drawn from a relatively narrow period and region. The chapter on ruins, for example, focuses almost entirely on the Hudson River valley; although James Fenimore Cooper, Thomas Cole, and Andrew Jackson Downing all had a national audience, their homes and their subjects were emphatically regional. Other than Mount Vernon and Monticello, southern follies, like John Lawrence Manning's outbuildings at Millford, in South Carolina, are not considered. In a similar way, Carso's expansive treatment of literary and visual sources sometimes crowds out relevant existing structures even within the Mid-Atlantic, such as George Rapp's grotto in Old Economy, Pennsylvania.

That said, this is a fine account of the literary and pictorial context of the mid-nineteenth-century folly, illustrating how literate Americans used such buildings for rhetorical, sentimental, and political purposes. The first step toward understanding a subject is to identify it in order to expose it to scrutiny, and in this, Carso succeeds admirably.

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Tim Samuelson, with Chris Ware, ed.

Louis Sullivan's Idea

Chicago: Alphawood Exhibitions, 2021 (distributed by University of Minnesota Press), 384 pp., 300 color illus. \$45 (cloth), ISBN 9781517912796

John Vinci, ed., with Tim Samuelson, Eric Nordstrom, and Chris Ware

Reconstructing the Garrick: Adler & Sullivan's Lost Masterpiece

Chicago: Alphawood Exhibitions, 2021 (distributed by University of Minnesota Press), 352 pp., 250 color illus. \$45 (cloth), ISBN 9781517912802

Architect Louis Sullivan's life and work are celebrated in two new books published by the Alphawood Foundation of Chicago.

Each substantial volume catalogues items displayed during two exhibitions honoring Sullivan's architectural achievements, both held during the 2021 Chicago Architecture Biennial. These scholarly works reproduce vast collections of historic photographs, drawings, sketches, watercolor paintings, letters, and other related materials amassed by the authors. *Louis Sullivan's Idea* tells of Sullivan's most iconic building designs from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the Auditorium Building in Chicago, the Guaranty Building in Buffalo, and the Wainwright Building in St. Louis. The book also covers important buildings no longer extant, like Sullivan's Chicago Stock Exchange Building, the Transportation Building from the World's Columbian Exposition, and Chicago's Garrick Theater. *Reconstructing the Garrick* concentrates on one of Sullivan's earliest metal-framed skyscrapers, designed in collaboration with his business partner, Dankmar Adler. Many of the Sullivan-related items appearing in the two books derive from the sizable personal collections of their principal authors, Tim Samuelson and John Vinci, as well as from the collection of Richard Nickel, a Chicago photographer, preservationist, and Sullivan enthusiast who died while salvaging architectural fragments from the Chicago Stock Exchange Building in 1972.

In *Louis Sullivan's Idea*, Samuelson, former cultural historian of Chicago, now retired, explores Sullivan's philosophy of architecture—his idea—and identifies the attributes of Sullivan's buildings that express his individualized approach to architectural design. This is a significant achievement because, as we learn, Sullivan never articulated his unique way of conceptualizing buildings in precise or objective terms. Samuelson abstracts Sullivan's design process from the numerous texts and images that he has gathered over the course of his career, and their presentation in this volume represents a major contribution. In Samuelson's words, "Sullivan's idea" is "the power to extend the forces of nature and give vibrant life to buildings and their component parts."¹ Sullivan, we are told, had a romantic vision of buildings as living plants or trees, and consequently he sought to imitate the feelings of awe and delight evoked by nature through the construction methods,

planning, ornamentation, and materials of each building he designed. According to Samuelson, Sullivan believed that nature endowed architects with the power to think through solutions to contemporary design problems creatively, without "a hollow attentiveness to the past."

Samuelson addresses some misconceptions about Sullivan (he did not invent the skyscraper, for example) and provides a brief biography that begins with the architect's deep appreciation for the beauty of nature, even in childhood. The book, however, mainly remembers Sullivan as a romantic thinker capable of designing a wide range of nature-inspired buildings, from dwellings to theaters, banks, sacred spaces, and modern skyscrapers. His cohesive designs included hardware, light fixtures, stenciling, and windows ornamented with vegetal motifs in carefully selected colors and finishes. Samuelson's vivid descriptions and analysis of the images filling the book's pages match Sullivan's romantic visions. Samuelson captures the essence of Sullivan's artistic temperament when he describes architectural elements that rise, shift, morph, bubble, curl, burst, unfold, twist, taper, blossom, soar, and float upward like living leaves, flowers, trees, vines, and snowflakes. He also introduces the artistic collaborators who carried out Sullivan's animated designs in wood, terracotta, plaster, cast iron, mosaic tile, and stained glass.

In *Reconstructing the Garrick*, Samuelson further elaborates on Sullivan's attentiveness to the colors and textures of materials and his romantic design approach. This book is a collection of personal remembrances, essays, interviews, and images by various contributors celebrating the Garrick Theater, Adler & Sullivan's 1,300-seat theater and office complex. The building, then named the Schiller Theater, opened in October 1892, and despite preservation attempts, it was demolished in 1961. Vinci (a Chicago architect and preservationist who worked with Richard Nickel and David Norris to document the Garrick's architecture and salvage its fragments) and his fellow contributors successfully reconstruct the seventeen-story skyscraper's original grandeur. They tell the building's sixty-nine-year history and explain its role in the early historic preservation movement in Chicago.

We learn that the Garrick was noteworthy for many reasons: height, modern

structural technology, site planning, acoustics, rich ornamentation, and cohesive design. It also served as a center for German culture and business in Chicago. An extensive collection of drawings and photographs illuminates the Garrick's original plan, engineering, color scheme, and ornamentation. In re-creating the building's plans, sections, and elevations, Vinci confirmed that Adler & Sullivan designed the building using a combination of solid masonry and a steel frame resting on more than seven hundred 50-foot-long oak log piles. An inventive system of Pratt and Warren trusses supported the floors above the six-story theater. Samuelson explains that the building façade featured Sullivan's signature plantlike composition, with vertical piers between the upper-floor windows that grew like stems to blossom at the level of the building's elaborate cornice and domed cupola. Color photographs reveal the vibrancy of the building's original interior design, including the mosaic floor tiles, marble floor slabs, doorknobs, stenciling, and multicolor plaster ornamentation.

Kirk Nickel and Caitlin Haskell examine the building's commemoration of high German culture in its figural images of German poets, playwrights, musicians, and philosophers. Moreover, artists of German ancestry and origin executed many of the mural paintings, sculptural panels, and portrait busts. While these works are represented in black-and-white images, color images of similar works are provided in some cases so that readers can better understand the color palettes and techniques that were used. Overall, the many images in the book give a sense of the beauty that was lost when the Garrick was replaced by the Garrick Garage, a low-rise parking facility designed with six concrete screens repeating a single pattern taken from the theater's upper floor.

Samuelson presents a timeline tracing the social history of the Garrick's nearly seven decades of existence. Event programs, tickets, advertisements, and posters prove that entertainers and luminaries such as Florence Mills, Al Jolson, Lillian Russell, and Clarence Darrow appeared at the Garrick before the building became a broadcast studio in the 1950s. When the building first opened, it hosted German plays, operas, and musical events, and many German and German American professionals, including doctors and

architects, had offices on its upper floors. In a critical essay assessing efforts to preserve the Garrick in the early 1960s, Daniel Bluestone remarks that the building "stood as a monumental assertion of the persistence of proud German identity and ethnic difference" (120). This fact, he points out, was absent from preservationists' arguments for preserving the building, although he does not speculate as to whether that information would have made a difference. Furthermore, the design of the building included office space to generate revenues for planned German cultural events at the theater, but "nobody recalled the fact that the building, as real estate, was never intended to maximize profits for its owner" (116–17). Bluestone points out that preservationists instead emphasized only the aesthetic and cultural significance of the Garrick's architecture in their campaign. The destruction of this structure eventually led to the enactment of the Chicago Landmark Ordinance in January 1968, part of an effort to better protect buildings with similar historical and architectural value.

Louis Sullivan's Idea and *Reconstructing the Garrick* are important contributions not only for their explanations of Sullivan's architecture but also because they make so many related documents and images accessible to scholars. Both books will appeal to wide audiences with their beautiful images, especially those showing details of Sullivan's intricate terracotta, wood, and plaster ornament. Architects and preservationists interested in the construction of early skyscrapers and the history of the preservation movement in Chicago will also find the books appealing. Preservationists particularly will find *Reconstructing the Garrick* a valuable tool in their work of interpreting the meaning of our cultural heritage and preventing its destruction. Testaments to Sullivan's artistic genius, these books are also a testament to the authors' enthusiasm for Sullivan's architecture and their enduring frustration regarding the tragic loss of the Garrick Theater.

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Independent scholar

Note

1. No page numbers are cited here for quotations from *Louis Sullivan's Idea* because the book is unpaginated.

Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis

Antiquity in Gotham: The Ancient Architecture of New York City

New York: Empire State Editions, 2021, 288 pp., 73 color and 43 b/w illus. \$80 (cloth), ISBN 9780823293841; \$22.95 (paper), ISBN 9781531502423

In *Antiquity in Gotham*, Elizabeth Macaulay-Lewis examines the abiding influence of ancient architecture on New Yorkers and their city. The twist is that Macaulay-Lewis is a classical archaeologist, and she considers styles and periods rarely brought together in a single study—Greek revival, Renaissance classicism, and Egyptian and Near Eastern forms from across the long nineteenth century—under a category she calls the "Neo-Antique." In doing so, she aims to uncover common impulses and strategies that motivated their appropriation. An additional aim that she expresses frequently in the chapters, but that she leaves unstated in the introduction, is to explore the enduring relevance of ancient architecture both today and in the past.

The book's eight chapters move from the public to the private sphere. The first chapter focuses on large infrastructure projects and begins with the largest of them all—the city's famous Commissioner's Plan of 1811, based on the functional grid plan of Roman settlements. Indeed, functionality was a defining feature of early nineteenth-century public works, later replaced by a growing emphasis on beauty. In designing Pennsylvania Station in the early twentieth century, McKim, Mead & White looked to ancient Roman baths for aesthetic as much as for practical inspiration. In Macaulay-Lewis's view, Penn Station's demolition in the 1960s reflected a cultural devaluation of beauty that has more recently begun to show signs of reversing.

Chapter 2 examines how New York's rising population and economic growth encouraged grand civic architecture. A sense of inadequacy alongside European cities inspired imposing government buildings like the U.S. Customs House in Manhattan in the 1830s and 1840s, often executed in the Greek revival style preferred by Town & Davis. In 1898, the creation of Greater New York ignited a new civic impulse, leading to an ambitious plan for a classically inspired civic center in Foley Square, realized only in

part. Meanwhile, penitentiaries such as the infamous Tombs assumed an Egyptian style associated with law and order.

While democratic practices often frustrated ruling-class plans for grand civic architecture, private business buildings offered this class a creative outlet. This was especially true for banks. Chapter 3 tracks the evolution of bank architecture from the Federal style to the Greek temple front to Roman models celebrating America's imperial ambitions. As for warehouses and lofts, Macaulay-Lewis writes, "decorating . . . was never widely embraced" (63). Here Soho's cast-iron architecture, often rendered in (an admittedly ersatz) classical style, is curiously overlooked. The chapter ends by noting the surprising persistence of classical principles well into the twentieth century, citing such prototypical modernist structures as the Seagram Building on Park Avenue by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Philip Johnson.

Chapter 4 discusses nonprofit institutions like museums, zoos, libraries, and universities as another major focus of elite architectural patronage in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as wealthy New Yorkers carved out a separate culture for themselves predicated in large part on classicism. This is attested by the development of the Metropolitan Museum of Art after 1870 and what is now the Brooklyn Museum beginning in the 1890s, both by McKim, Mead & White, as well as the city's most significant academic institutions at the time, the original Bronx campus of New York University and Columbia University in Morningside Heights.

Chapter 5 moves to Greek and Roman influences in domestic spaces (regrettably neglecting the craze for Egyptian-style furnishings). The young republic's identification with Athenian democracy in the 1830s and 1840s helped spur interest in the Greek revival. One of the most exuberant examples was La Grange Terrace, a series of nine terraced town houses on Lafayette Street. Begun in 1832 by Alexander Jackson Davis, the houses' unified Corinthian colonnade possibly drew inspiration from the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. As the century progressed, classical culture became an elite hallmark, and upper-class New Yorkers developed a penchant for Pompeian-style decoration. Here Macaulay-Lewis focuses a great

deal of attention on the music room in the Upper East Side mansion of Henry G. Marquand, a wealthy railroad magnate. Marquand worked with the Anglo-Dutch artist Lawrence Alma-Tadema (who possessed a deep knowledge of Pompeian art) to complete this space. As Macaulay-Lewis explains, the successful cohesion of the room resulted from the fact that its designers were not chasing after authenticity. Instead, they created a Neo-Antique room, combining Greek and Roman influences.

Despite the preponderance of Pompeian rooms in the homes of New York's "respectable" classes, classical interiors remained indelibly (and titillatingly) linked to excess and revelry. As such, antique spaces were an important feature of lobster palaces, the subject of chapter 6; these restaurants were defined as much by over-the-top interiors as by their lobster dishes. Murray's Roman Gardens, a lobster palace in Midtown Manhattan, proclaimed that their interiors were archaeologically authentic but in actuality they combined elements of Greek and Egyptian architecture with elements of Karl Friedrich Schinkel's nineteenth-century Berlin. Even more eclectic was Café de l'Opera, a vast establishment, also in Midtown, occupying an entire block, mixing French, Persian, Babylonian, and Assyrian motifs across eight floors of public and private dining rooms. In focusing on the imaginative potential and pure fun of Neo-Antique lobster palace design, this chapter is particularly successful in making a sympathetic case for the adaptability of ancient idioms, though more could be said about the fascinating architect Henry Erkins, who designed both restaurants.

New Yorkers brought the Neo-Antique to their graves. In chapter 7, Macaulay-Lewis explores mausoleums in Green-Wood and Woodlawn Cemeteries. These rural cemeteries were established in the second quarter of the nineteenth century in Brooklyn and the Bronx, respectively, in part because the city banned new burials in Lower Manhattan, but also because nineteenth-century thinking about death grew more romantic, which allowed cemeteries to be conceived on the model of the Elysian Fields in ancient Greek mythology. Incorporated in 1838, Green-Wood Cemetery was the first of its kind in New York, doubling as a public

park. In 1863, a group of businessmen developed Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, a then-rural site accessible by rail. Among the most impressive mausoleums at Woodlawn was the massive Ionic hexastyle temple of financier Jay Gould. Egyptian-style funerary architecture was also used in these cemeteries but was more likely to reflect the specific archaeological interests of the patrons, according to Macaulay-Lewis's examples. While mausoleums in ancient styles attracted contemporary criticism for their pagan associations, Macaulay-Lewis points out that the designers had little trouble integrating Christian symbolism.

Although Woodlawn and Green-Wood were not the first of their kind in the United States, New York City is home to the country's first ever memorial: a rococo cenotaph for General Richard Montgomery, designed in 1777 by Jean-Jacques Caffieri, the French royal sculptor, and installed outside St. Paul's Chapel, near the southern tip of Manhattan. In chapter 8, Macaulay-Lewis turns to public memorials and sculpture, focusing mostly on the boom period from 1880 to 1920, which occurred thanks to the country's centennial celebrations and efforts to honor aging Civil War veterans. Perhaps the most iconic surviving example is the Washington Square Arch, designed by Stanford White after an ancient Roman triumphal arch, but without columns, giving it a rather modern appearance. At some point, White ordered Doric columns for the arch, but he used them instead in Brooklyn's Grand Army Plaza. The central focus of that plaza, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch, received another Washington Arch castaway, a quadriga titled *The Triumphal Progress of Columbia*.

Macaulay-Lewis stresses that although the civic elite sponsored the Washington Square Arch, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial Arch was erected through public subscription. The same was true for the Column to Columbus placed at the northwest corner of Central Park, a gift to the city from the Italian American community. In this way, Macaulay-Lewis argues, the Neo-Antique is more relevant than we might suppose; it was not the exclusive purview of the richest citizens, nor are its monuments dusty relics from a bygone age. And they continue to interest us, she notes, pointing to recent interventions by

blue-chip artists such as Ai Weiwei's 2012 installation at the Washington Arch, *Fences Make Good Neighbors*.

In the final chapter, Macaulay-Lewis pulls together an enjoyable assortment of miscellaneous buildings, ranging from the Greek revival-style Snug Harbor sailors' retirement community in Queens to Masonic lodges and public bathing facilities that in their sumptuousness and scale mirrored the lobster palaces of the Gilded Age. It is with stylistically eclectic buildings like lobster palaces that the category of Neo-Antique proves most useful and Macaulay-Lewis's expertise as a classical archaeologist most rewarding. But what she learns about the appropriation of ancient form by using the Neo-Antique as a category—that New York's architects moved from Greek to Roman sources over this period, that claims to authenticity were often dubious, that interest in ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern forms never matched the level of interest in Greek and Roman ones—does not break new ground. As for Macaulay-Lewis's claims about the relevance of ancient architecture today, her reliance on elite buildings and the lack of serious discussion regarding the use of classical architecture to promote authoritarianism and white supremacy make these claims difficult to digest. Still, for a wider nonacademic readership, a study of the Neo-Antique may be just the thing to encourage interest in nineteenth-century New York architecture, translating an apparently disparate and impenetrable jumble of styles into a cohesive visual world.

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Amandine Diener

Enseigner l'architecture aux Beaux-Arts (1863–1968): Entre réformes et traditions

Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2022, 420 pp., 125 b/w illus. €32, ISBN 9782753582799

That an upsurge of interest in the history of architectural education at the *École des Beaux-Arts* should have marked the fiftieth anniversary of the 1968 student protests that catalyzed the dismantling of the French state's centuries-old centralized system of architectural education might take some by surprise. After all,

renewed interest in the school during the 1970s was primarily an Anglo-American affair, centered on the instantly notorious 1975 exhibition *The Architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts* at New York's Museum of Modern Art. In France, memories of 1968 were too fresh. Plans to bring MoMA's show to Paris to finish its tour at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs (after a stopover at the National Gallery of Canada), along with a proposed French translation of curator Arthur Drexler's monumental catalogue (published only in 1977), all came to naught. The seminal essays in Drexler's volume by the American trio of Richard Chaffee, David Van Zanten, and Neil Levine demolished the myth of the school as an intransigent nineteenth-century bulwark of the classical ideal, managing even to rebuff Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc's lessons on the rationality of Gothic architecture and his claims that historic French building traditions offered relevant guidelines for the future. But one might say that the twentieth-century notion of the *École* as a fossilized relic impervious to the advances of avant-gardists such as Le Corbusier (dear to many of the protagonists of the modern movement) still persisted even after MoMA appeared to embrace its former nemesis. Now the pendulum has swung in the other direction, following the investigations generated by a whole consortium of French researchers working for nearly a decade on the history of French architectural education not only in Paris but also in the provincial schools of architecture founded in 1903.

The 1863 reform of the *École* under Napoleon III, in which Viollet-le-Duc played a key role, provides the starting point for Amandine Diener's comprehensive study of the school during its final century of monopoly on architectural education. In the aftermath of yet another reform attempt launched in 1962, the first stage in the dismantling of the architectural section in the wake of the events of May 1968, studied in detail here for the first time, the newly created and independent Unités Pédagogiques assumed responsibility for architectural education in the capital. Diener's copiously documented study—with its in-depth review of all proposed and adopted changes to the school's curriculum and its examination of the school's famed competition

system as well as its relationship to the French Academy in Rome—derives from her doctoral dissertation. Diener pursued this work in parallel with a major study of France's largely neglected regional schools of architecture developed by a group of historian-teachers over the past decade that has generated a series of publications, including regular research reports and now a newly published "encyclopedia."¹ Although Diener's readers will often be bogged down by the details in her dense account of all the administrative machinations, she weaves important thematic concerns throughout that offer a revised understanding of the role of the *École* and that of the younger regional schools. The baseline of her narrative rests on an extensive examination of the new regulations of 1883, which remained pretty much intact until the 1960s, except for a thorough but short-lived reform during World War II that was largely reversed after 1945. The chapters on the *École* under Vichy are, in fact, the most enlightening in the volume, adding greatly to our understanding of influential figures such as the historian Louis Hautecoeur, whose role in education has also been studied by Antonio Brucculeri.²

As Diener explains, she aims to explore to what extent the school managed to respond to the challenges of the modern movement as well as to changes in modern society, although in fact she rarely references events outside the school, even in the fascinating section on Vichy. Did the *École* deserve its reputation as a bastion of conservatism, out of step with the times, even as it attracted ever greater numbers of foreign students (particularly Americans) in the 1930s? If American research often focused on the principles of composition taught at the *École*—in the effort to assess their influence on American architectural education and practice—Diener largely frames her study within the internal debates of the school and of the Académie des Beaux-Arts as the judge of the Grand Prix. In addition to helping us understand the implications of the changing regulations governing the courses and the competitions, Diener underscores the near monopoly of the school on professional qualification, and thus on the regulation of the very title of architect. With the goal—shared by so many French state schools—of creating an elite cadre, the *École* offered no formal

conclusion to its education until 1874, when it first introduced the diploma. The competition system upheld a public career as its ideal, even if the vast majority of students left without a prize and many entered private practice, their identities largely escaping the notice of historians despite the fact that many chiseled their names into the façades of Parisian apartment houses they designed. With the diploma—and later the creation of the Société des Architectes Diplômés par le Gouvernement—the École became de facto a licensing authority. This issue is of particular importance in the relationship between the École and the provincial schools. The regional schools of architecture, where the issue of regionalism itself often crept into the centralized world of French culture, remained nonetheless—until 1968—essentially preparatory programs for Paris, since only the École could grant the diploma. And the École exercised authority over the curriculum outside the capital.

Diener identifies the late nineteenth through the early twentieth century as a period of change every bit as consequential as the famous 1960s. While this period also saw great social and political change, Diener skims over these larger forces with little detail or analysis, remaining rather hermetically focused on the changes and pressures within the school. Between 1890 and 1907 architecture enrollment in Paris more than quintupled, from 184 to 1,041. Women gained admittance for the first time, and the number of foreigners ballooned, up to nearly 30 percent in some ateliers. The latter will sound familiar to anyone teaching in American schools today, with the significant presence of foreign students in the student body. In Paris, it was American, Swiss, and Romanian students who predominated. By 1930 the number of architecture students in Paris had reached 1,430, many accommodated in a new building by Roger Expert (La Grande Masse) that exercised enormous influence on student life and culture.

External ateliers represented an important element in the life of the École, setting it apart from European polytechnics or even from the American university-based programs often influenced by Paris (although after 1863 the École included several internal ateliers). It was here, first in the atelier run by Auguste

Perret and then that of Marcel Lods after World War II, that sustained emphasis on new materials, methods of construction, and even building types opened up relevant (not simply procedural) questions in the school's debates on pedagogy and curriculum. Despite an overall ethos of resistance to change, the gradual incorporation of regular visits to construction sites, the study of new building materials (notably steel and reinforced concrete), and coteaching with engineers made the school a lively and engaged place for its students. Yet no doubt the École deserved some of its negative reputation. Perret, for instance, moved his teaching in 1929 to the École Spéciale d'Architecture, a private school offering an alternative to the Beaux-Arts since its foundation in 1865, then under the direction of Henri Prost. This is one of many themes for future research that Diener's fundamental study opens, including further study of influential masters today largely forgotten, such as George Gromort, and of the role of the school of architecture in colonial Algiers, evoked only in passing. Equally suggestive is the legacy of the Bauhaus, evoked in France only long after the Nazis dismantled the school in Germany, or the role of Americans—notably Louis Kahn—in architectural education, marking a reverse of influence in the final decades of the École's existence. And given that the school's history ended some fifty years ago, a study of the vibrant culture that emerged in the new schools of architecture after 1968 also awaits.

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Notes

1. Anne-Marie Châtelet, Marie-Jeanne Dumont, Amandine Diener, and Daniel Le Couédic, *L'architecture en ses écoles: Une encyclopédie de l'enseignement de l'architecture au XX^e siècle* (Châteaulin: Éditions Locus Solus, 2022).

2. Antonio Bruculeri, *Du dessin historique à l'action publique: Louis Hautecoeur et l'architecture classique en France* (Paris: Picard, 2007).

Tom Avermaete and Maxime Zaugg, eds.

Agadir: Building the Modern Afropolis

Zurich: Park Books, 2022 (distributed by University of Chicago Press), 360 pp., 350 color and 50 b/w illus. \$45 (paper), ISBN 9783038602767

On 28 February 1960, Agadir was home to 45,000 residents. The next day, 29 February, this city on the Atlantic coast of Morocco was shaken to its core. A 5.7 magnitude earthquake, followed by a second shock and a widespread fire, decimated Agadir. In just minutes, 15,000 residents perished, 25,000 were injured, and most of the survivors lost their homes. The city was almost entirely razed, including the sixteenth-century casbah and the French colonial *ville nouvelle*. Soon after the tragedy, King Mohammed V announced a comprehensive reconstruction campaign involving both Moroccan and international architects and planners. Agadir earned unprecedented attention as its reconstruction crystallized the ambition of the new Moroccan nation, which had recently gained its independence from the French colonial empire.

Tom Avermaete and Maxime Zaugg's edited volume *Agadir: Building the Modern Afropolis* narrates this reconstruction process. Architectural modernism consistently engaged with the idea of the tabula rasa, as exemplified by Le Corbusier's unrealized plan to bulldoze the historic core of Paris and by ex nihilo modernist cities such as Oscar Niemeyer's Brasília. Avermaete and Zaugg forcefully claim Agadir's rightful place within this extended history of the modernist proclivity for a clean slate. As the book's synopsis notes, this recovering city was propitious terrain for urban and architectural experimentation: "The result of this joint [reconstruction] effort was astounding. In a very short time, the new Agadir rose from the ashes. The best Moroccan and international architects experimented with novel housing typologies, which mediated between ultramodern and vernacular ways of dwelling, complemented by innovative public structures, such as schools, dispensaries, and cinemas. All of these combined into an original urban reality: a modern Afropolis."¹

In their introduction, the editors describe the book as an "*inventaire raisonné*" of Agadir's postearthquake reconstruction campaign (10). Through their gathering of previously unpublished documents and essays, Avermaete and Zaugg intend to bolster scholarship on Agadir's urban and architectural recovery. The substantial and richly illustrated volume consists of three sections: "Foundations," "Translations," and "Transformations."

“Foundations” examines the original principles guiding the rebuilding effort immediately after the earthquake. “Translations” investigates the implementation of these primary intentions into subsequent built forms. Finally, “Transformations” focuses on the aftermath of the reconstruction extending into the contemporary era. Taken together, these sections offer a *longue durée* history of the city’s gradual remaking.

While each of the fifteen essays and three interviews included in the book offers valuable insights, for the purpose of this brief review, I will comment only on select contributions. In the first section, Avermaete’s “Urbanisme Solidaire: Codes and Conventions as Project for a New City” provides a remarkably thorough exposition of the regulations at play in Agadir’s rebuilding process. The essay culminates with an examination of the Normes Agadir, a set of “anti-seismic building standards” intended to protect the city from another catastrophe (60). Avermaete’s administrative focus contrasts with the stylistic approach at play in Laure Augereau, Imad Dahmani, and Lahbib El Moumni’s subsequent inquiry titled “Brutalism: The Gem of Morocco’s Contribution to World Culture.” This trio of architects and scholars retraces the formal evolution of Brutalism in Morocco, from the birth of a shared idiom in the 1950s to a “mature” regional expression in the 1980s (93). Their laudatory appraisal concurs with the heritage activism of the preservation nonprofit MAMMA (Mémoire des Architectes Modernes Marocains), cofounded by Dahmani and El Moumni in 2016.

Of the second set of essays, Irina Davidovici’s “Housing Figures: Social and Spatial A-Synchronicities” is the most compelling. Davidovici examines contextual and formal features that add nuance to the narrative of modernist Agadir as entirely *ex nihilo*: “While the earthquake destruction provided a rare, literal interpretation of the apocryphal *tabula rasa*, a diverse set of continuities—local cultural and administrative patterns; the professional network of the designers; even, to a lesser extent, the desires and wishes of the local population—continued to exercise a palpable claim” (298). This essay aligns with recent scholarly efforts to reframe the modernist *tabula rasa* as a performative gesture cementing a modernist myth

rather than an actual annihilation of all precedents.²

The final section of the book begins with an interview of Lahsen Roussafi, a historian of Agadir, resident of the city, and survivor of the earthquake. Roussafi points to the long-term deficiencies of Agadir’s reconstruction plan, such as the lack of mobility infrastructure and the recent critical decrease in population as more residents opt for suburban living. At this point in the book, readers are familiar with Roussafi, whose three interviews punctuate each section’s set of chapters. Such emphasis on the work of those whom Avermaete and Zaugg describe as “local historians” is a welcome feature of the volume (11). The concluding chapter, a series of photographs with commentary by David Grandorge, may be interpreted as a visual representation of Roussafi’s third interview.

By virtue of its documentary wealth and its narration of a previously overlooked episode of global modernist architectural history, Avermaete and Zaugg’s volume is a clear success. Aside from those obvious qualities, the book’s main shortcoming lies in its overlooking of key ideological stakes in the selection of international architects and planners in charge of the reconstruction. Designers of modernist Agadir were Moroccan (such as Elie Azagury and Mourad Ben Embarak), French (including Jean-François Zevaco and Henri Tastemain), and, more rarely, citizens of other European countries (Albert Froelich from Switzerland and Hans-Joachim Lenz from Germany). Prince Moulay Hassan, King Mohammed V’s son, originally solicited support from American designers, as he imagined a collaborative effort with a strong American imprint would be a potent gesture of postcolonial disassociation from France. Expanding upon this independentist aspiration, Morocco awarded the official commission in 1960 to Harland Bartholomew, who had recently completed a series of regional plans across the United States.

However, within a year of Bartholomew’s appointment, Moroccan authorities discontinued this collaboration, judging his proposal too costly and disconnected from local specificities. French expertise replaced the bulk of the projected American contribution. Most of these French designers were familiar with the Moroccan context because they had

built extensively during the colonial era, often for explicitly colonialist purposes. For instance, prior to designing for Agadir, Tastemain worked in the protectorate’s Department of Urban Planning, then directed by French planner and architect Michel Écochard. Tastemain likely participated in Écochard’s creation of Rabat as a “caste city,” an emblematic example of colonial “urban apartheid.”³ Similarly, Zevaco, born into a family of French settlers in Casablanca, was an active member of GAMMA (Groupe des Architectes Modernes Marocains), a collaborative of designers known for developing deeply problematic “culture-specific” housing models for Moroccan populations.⁴ Despite this prior explicit involvement with colonialism by design, both Tastemain and Zevaco authored a series of monumental buildings for the reconstructed, postcolonial Agadir.

What does the enduring presence of French designers in Agadir, despite Moroccan authorities’ original intentions to sever ties with France, tell us about the persistence of colonial ideology in the postcolonial era? Is the history of modernist Agadir also that of a partially failed attempt to overthrow colonial frameworks? On a related note, considering Bartholomew’s documented role in segregating American cities, how are we to understand his involvement in Agadir, just as Morocco was beginning to recover from decades of colonial oppression, largely on the basis of race?⁵ While Avermaete’s and Davidovici’s essays provide important historical records on these matters, the book does not offer explicit answers to such questions, and thus runs the risk of presenting a partially depoliticized history of modernism in postcolonial Agadir. Fortunately, Avermaete and Zaugg’s “*inventaire raisonné*” will likely catalyze new waves of scholarship remedying this interpretive gap (10).

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Notes

1. “Agadir: Building the Modern Afropolis,” University of Chicago Press, <https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/A/bo161735890.html> (accessed 13 Jan. 2023).
2. On architectural precedents for modernism in Agadir’s extended region, see Jean-François Lejeune and Michelangelo Sabatino, eds., *Modern Architecture and the Mediterranean*:

Vernacular Dialogues and Contested Identities (London: Routledge, 2010).

3. Janet Abu-Lughod, *Rabat: Urban Apartheid in Morocco* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 131–49, 216–36.

4. Azagury has pointed out the corrupt ethics of “culture-specific” housing in colonial Morocco. See Elie Azagury, “Interview with Elie Azagury,” by Aziza Chaouni, *Journal of Architectural Education* 68, no. 2 (2014), 214.

5. Mark Benton, “Just the Way Things Are around Here: Racial Segregation, Critical Junctures, and Path Dependence in Saint Louis,” *Journal of Urban History* 44, no. 6 (2018), 1120.

Victor Pérez Escolano and Carlos Plaza, eds.

Manfredo Tafuri: Desde España

Granada: Patronato de la Alhambra y el Generalife, 2020, 2 vols., 681 pp., 119 color and 117 b/w illus. Open access, <https://en.caleameo.com/books/004924697ac235a2bd23e>

A conference held in November 2016 in the Alhambra palace of Charles V (1500–1558) in Granada brought together eighteen academics hailing from Italy, Spain, and Argentina, as well as a Swiss Italian journalist, to discuss the impact of Manfredo Tafuri’s work on Spanish intellectuals. The substantial number of conference attendees testifies to the vivid interest that Tafuri’s contribution to architectural history still elicits. The first volume of *Manfredo Tafuri: Desde España*, loosely translated as “Manfredo Tafuri viewed from Spain,” is a curated set of the conference papers. The second volume, *Appendices*, contains a list of Tafuri’s publications and their translations, interviews he released, studies discussing his work, and reprints of seminal essays by Spanish scholars.

A constant trickle of publications about Tafuri’s work continues today, almost three decades after his death. Most do not add much to previous studies, while some are almost proudly obscure, as if an inability to explain and clarify constitutes a badge of merit. This is not the case with these two new volumes, which represent an insightful investigation into the roots and development of the early and privileged link that existed between Tafuri and Spanish architects and architectural historians starting in the 1960s. The location chosen for the conference symbolizes the intellectual clarity that characterized the organizers’ endeavor.

The Christian kings reconquered the last Arab holdout in southern Spain in 1492 and proceeded to expel Jews and Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula. In 1527 Charles V, their successor, commissioned the palace that was built at the center of the Alhambra. Designed with the architectural language recently developed in Renaissance Italy, the palace stood in deliberate contrast to the surrounding Nasrid complex. Left incomplete for centuries and never inhabited by a royal household, it served mainly as an emblem of Christianized and modernized Spain.

To Tafuri, the palace represented a prime example of the ideological uses of architecture. He first discussed the peculiar building in 1976 but returned to it in his last book, *Ricerca del Rinascimento*, which represents the culmination of his efforts to outline a more fractured image of the Renaissance than conceived by previous authors, one that would also be more fertile for an understanding of contemporary architectural developments.¹ As Victor Pérez Escolano, one of the organizers of the conference and coeditor of the volumes, points out, Tafuri insisted on understanding the architectural history of early modernity as part of the same long arc that included the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (24).

That view of the architecture of early modernity linked to contemporary concerns was central to Tafuri’s search for a new approach to architectural history—and pivotal to Spanish scholars’ vivid interest in his ideas. In *Ricerca del Rinascimento* Tafuri examined seven salient episodes of the Renaissance (one devoted to the Granada palace); but it was not his interest in sixteenth-century Iberian architecture that attracted young Spanish architectural historians, who for political reasons did not find the study of the Renaissance appealing. None of the historians who most actively disseminated Tafuri’s ideas in Spain—Victor Pérez Escolano, Carlos Sambricio, and Josep Quetglas—focused on Renaissance architecture.

Rather, it was Tafuri’s search for a new approach to architectural history, one that centered on the study of early modernity, that attracted them. Tafuri’s writings, whether on Renaissance or contemporary architecture, introduced young Spanish architectural historians to a new methodological and “intellectual toolset” (170). In the 1970s, Tafuri’s writings, according

to Quetglas, had an impact comparable to the effect of the invention of “gunpowder on the design of Renaissance city walls” (183).

The opening essays of *Manfredo Tafuri* reconstruct the sociopolitical reasons for that explosive effect. The dictator Francisco Franco ruled Spain from 1939 until his death in 1975, and the regime imposed decades of economic isolationism and cultural censure that stifled productivity in both realms. The loosening of restrictions on trade that started, timidly, in the 1950s, led to the so-called Spanish miracle, a period of rapid economic development and a concurrent opening to intellectual stimuli from abroad. Culturally contiguous Italy, with more visible Marxist approaches in all fields of cultural production than anywhere else in the West, received the closest attention.

Tafuri’s writings found immediate resonance within this new political climate. The years that witnessed his most intensive exchanges with Spanish intellectuals, spanning from the late 1960s to the early 1980s, coincided with the final phases of the Franco regime and the subsequent transition to democracy. Architectural history in Spain was then in a depressed state, the province of either practicing architects writing “almost amateurish” accounts for internal consumption or “proper” historians who produced, with rare and partial exceptions, dusty displays of erudition indebted to positivist approaches (161). Young Spanish architectural historians thirsted for new models of history writing. Tafuri’s examination of the socioeconomic context of buildings fell like rain on parched land. In turn, the enthusiastic Spanish response spurred Tafuri’s reflections on his work.

Although Tafuri’s publications were not always translated into other languages, all of his works received Spanish translations. His studies on modern Japanese architecture, the Cathedral of Amiens, and the architecture of humanism appeared in Spanish in 1968, 1966, and 1978, respectively.² Pérez Escolano translated the last of these three volumes and in 1974 invited Tafuri to teach a course in the school of architecture in Seville; four years later, he edited *Retórica y experimentalismo*, a volume including some of Tafuri’s earlier essays on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century architecture as well as the lectures delivered in Seville.³

However, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* was the book that launched Tafuri's international reputation and brought his work to widespread attention among Spanish architects. Published in 1968, it appeared in Spanish in 1972 and in English in 1976.⁴ Rafael Moneo, Oriol Bohigas, and Ignasi de Solà-Morales invited Tafuri to Spain's most important architectural centers and cities to deliver a flurry of papers on the state of architecture. In 1972 a Barcelona publisher issued a collection of essays that included texts by Francesco dal Co and Massimo Cacciari, Tafuri's closest collaborators in the School of Architecture in Venice. Spanish scholars and publishers paid close attention not only to Tafuri but also to the intellectual powerhouse that he animated (167–68).⁵

In *Manfredo Tafuri*, the reconstruction of the phases of Tafuri's ideas and their protagonists fulfills the editors' declared intention to provide a text of historiographic significance rather than a series of personal reminiscences by scholars who knew Tafuri well (34). While the first essays reconstruct the scholarly and cultural context of the exchange between Tafuri and Spanish intellectuals, subsequent chapters delve into the specific subject matter of Tafuri's studies.

All appear in Castilian except for two essays in Italian by Massimo Bulgarelli and Cristiano Tessari. The latter writes lucid pages on the exchanges that affected Tafuri's notion of history as much as they influenced Spanish intellectuals. Bulgarelli analyzes the introductory chapter that Tafuri wrote for a 1989 volume on Giulio Romano, unabashedly declaring it "one of the most important essays in architectural history of the last century" (244).⁶ Carlos García Vázquez contributes a rare study of Tafuri's urbanistic writings, examining these in relationship to political and intellectual developments of the 1960s and 1970s.

An array of images—including posters, book covers, and illustrations from journal articles—enriches both volumes of *Manfredo Tafuri*, helping to reconstruct the cultural context of Tafuri's work. Other images reproduce Tafuri's correspondence with the authors and editors of the volumes, providing a rare glimpse of Tafuri's human side. As he battled the disease that would end his life, he wrote about "working with joy and greater commitment" to both teaching and research

(104). An interview with journalist Giusi Boni in 1992, also in Italian, provides an apt ending for the first volume. Produced for the general audience of a television program following the publication of *Ricerca del Rinascimento*, it offers a glimpse into Tafuri's understanding of Renaissance architecture and the moral responsibility of its practitioners.

Manfredo Tafuri: Desde España offers both a rich examination of the Spanish intellectual experience and a new understanding of the significance of Tafuri's search for a method of architectural history. Published with the contribution of the cultural institution that oversees the Alhambra and made freely available as an open-access resource, these volumes represent an example of the scholarly achievements rendered possible by public sources of funding. It would be a pity if the languages in which the essays are written were to deter Anglophone scholars because the editors offer, in these volumes, a labor of scholarly love and rigor that is an insightful contribution to a much-tilled field, and the reconstruction of an intellectually vibrant period of our recent past.

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Notes

1. Manfredo Tafuri, *Ricerca del Rinascimento* (Turin: Einaudi, 1992), trans. Daniel Sherer as *Interpreting the Renaissance: Princes, Cities, Architects* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2006).
2. Manfredo Tafuri, *L'architettura moderna in Giappone* (Bologna: Cappelli, 1964); Manfredo Tafuri, *La cattedrale di Amiens* (Florence: Sadea Sansoni, 1965); Manfredo Tafuri, *Architettura dell'umanesimo* (Bari: Laterza, 1969).
3. Manfredo Tafuri, *Retórica y experimentalismo: Ensayo sobre la arquitectura de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Seville: Editorial Universidad de Sevilla, 1978).
4. Manfredo Tafuri, *Teorie e storia dell'architettura* (Bari: Laterza, 1968), trans. Martí Capdevila and Sebastia Janeras as *Teorías e historia de la arquitectura: Hacia una nueva concepción del espacio arquitectónico* (Barcelona: Laia, 1972), and trans. Giorgio Verrecchia as *Theories and History of Architecture* (London: Harper & Row, 1976).
5. Massimo Cacciari, Manfredo Tafuri, and Francesco dal Co, *De la vanguardia a la metrópoli: Crítica radical a la arquitectura* (Barcelona: Gili, 1972).
6. Ernst Gombrich, Manfredo Tafuri, Christoph L. Frommel, et al., eds., *Giulio Romano* (Milan: Electa, 1989), trans. Fabio Barry as *Giulio Romano* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

E. James West

A House for the Struggle: The Black Press and the Built Environment in Chicago

Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2022, 282 pp., 19 b/w illus. \$24.95 (paper), ISBN 9780252086397

Invoking the era of American journalism when big headlines and whistling paperboys jostled for readers' attention, *A House for the Struggle* by E. James West narrows our focus to the heady streets of Chicago's Black Belt to trace the evolution of two major Black press entities through the physical buildings they once occupied. At one point in the mid-twentieth century, the *Chicago Defender* boasted a global print circulation of a quarter million readers, and Johnson Publishing Company's suite of colorful magazines could be found on coffee tables throughout the Black diaspora. As reinforced by the reach of the readership of the Black press, West's particular claim is "that [the history] of the buildings of Chicago's Black press matter" (4). Importantly, contrary to studies promoting a view of twentieth-century Chicago as a space of unrestrained creativity, West argues that the buildings that housed the Black press reflected a more complex negotiation between art, uplift, capitalism, and racial barriers (16).

Spatiality is a recognized form of power and civic engagement, and architectural design and its representational access (and exclusions) serve as signs of our collective consciousness and the competing desires within the nation-state. Therefore, the relationship of the built environment to mass-media culture is almost aphoristic. West's book, however, reinforces the significance of space and place to the development of Black civic culture through news media as demonstrative of a geographic response to racial oppression and the maturation of Black political identity within the Black community itself. In doing so, it joins a number of other works of excellent scholarship on Black Chicago's institutions that amplify the precarity of historical landmarks with the advent of urban renewal and digital streaming.¹

The chapters of *A House for the Struggle* follow the ambitions of Robert Sengstacke Abbott and John H. Johnson as they migrate to Chicago and become the city's Black media moguls. Their

biographies provide a rich backdrop to the geographic and architectural stories of the Black press buildings that are the book's main concern. Orienting us south of more recognizable landmarks on the Magnificent Mile, West situates Abbott's and Johnson's property ventures within the larger context of de facto segregation and the historic tactics of violence, restrictive covenants, and racist media discourse. It is unexpected, although fitting, that the first chapter begins with Ida B. Wells's protest against Chicago's 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. Wells, who also moved to the city to pursue journalism, masterminded a pamphlet titled *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition* and handed out free copies near the entrance of the fair's Haitian building for the duration of the exposition's run.² A young Robert Abbott later attended her speech about violence against Black newspapers. West's introduction of these details immediately demonstrates the nexus he will build upon to show how the Black press used space, alongside writing, to assert a political relationship to the changing material landscape.

The book features six chapters along with an introduction and conclusion, spanning the period from 1893 to 2009. It includes high-quality photographs of building exteriors and interiors throughout. The first two chapters trace Abbott's emergence as a respectable newspaperman, his establishment of the *Chicago Defender* as a community staple, and the zenith of Chicago's Black "newspaper row" on State Street.³ West depicts Abbott and the early staff of the *Defender* as scrappy and close-knit, working first out of the kitchen and later the entire home of Black civic leader Henrietta "Mother" Lee.⁴ West dramatizes Abbott's leaving Lee's redbrick building, with its white stone trim, to pound the pavements of this once-famous corridor on the South Side. He also pinpoints several other historic Black newspaper offices, as well as prominent churches, hospitals, and banks. The convergence of Abbott's domestic and commercial quarters positioned him at the epicenter of a burgeoning constellation of Black newspapers, businesses, and social life, a center for the gathering of celebrities, where the Black press vied for access to the city's quadrupling Black population. One of West's key

achievements in these chapters is his deft handling of specific descriptions as he also narrates the pressure faced by Black media seeking to maintain weekly distribution numbers while Black residents and businesses were being terrorized by increasing violence from race mobs. We learn that Abbott's eventual expansion of the *Defender's* operations to an empty synagogue was motivated in part by the danger of outsourcing the paper's printing to a White news journal. Abbott benefited from using the synagogue as a warehouse, as the building's original purpose served to "amplify the *Defender's* own religiously infused justifications of its social and political importance" (54). West relates how other members of the Black press similarly used the physical addresses of their businesses to mediate their editorial roles as arbiters of the national push for equality, as well as their localized goal to put Chicago on the map.

The third and fourth chapters recount John H. Johnson's ascendance and John Sengstacke's succession of Robert Abbott. The young John H. Johnson landed in the Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company, where he observed "a model for advancing the race and a performative space for Black professional excellence" (91). Much like Abbott, Johnson started his first publication—the magazine that became the renowned *Ebony*—by hustling between offices and apartments and competing with other lifestyle journals, such as the *Defender*-affiliated *Abbott's Monthly*. West distinguishes this phase of development in the era of Black media buildings as one of deepening media segmentation. Both Johnson and Abbott sought to establish their outlets as reflecting Black middle-class interests while arguing that their positionality in shiny new buildings—first on the South Side and then, ultimately, north to Michigan Avenue—allowed them to represent "all the people." These chapters display West's acute range of research. The book aggregates documentation from biographies, archival photos, self- and secondary-reported accounts from major periodicals, and building plans to restage Johnson's and Abbott's public tours of each acquired space. Literally and metaphorically, these publishers used their journal pages and open-door policies to convert their buildings into international tourist destinations at the same time they

represented them as houses of refuge for the downtrodden.

In chapters 5 and 6, West points to a paradox in the fact that these publications gained success alongside the rise of the civil rights and Black Power movements. The publishers' choice to relocate to Chicago's downtown business district exacerbated tensions as they strove to balance business concerns with their commitment to the Black community. Pressed from within and without by employee strikes, editorial disputes, and a growing radical Black consciousness, according to West, these men's reliance on the performative possibilities of space revealed them to be both savvy and flawed. Johnson's commission and design of the *Ebony* and *Jet* building on 820 Michigan Avenue, for example, raised the question of whether using opulent display as a model for Black success spoke adequately to the worldwide struggles against colonialism and anti-Blackness during the 1960s. These chapters also stand out for their attention to the radical newspapers produced by the Nation of Islam and the Black Panther Party. Given the often-contested legacies of these organizations, West's inclusion of their printed presence, and by extension their buildings on Chicago's West and South Sides, helps to portray the dynamism of Black polity.

The strengths of this monograph only stoke greater curiosity about the uses and histories of Chicago's built environment. West's ventures into cultural lore, like the story behind the beginnings of the Bud Billiken Parade, never feel like digressions, and his thorough research exemplifies his belief in "the necessity of creative and occasionally speculative approaches to writing history" (20). To this point, the lost issues of the *Chicago Bee*, which West laments (72), provide an invitation to research, given the newspaper building's landmark status. That West mentions Chicago public housing but neglects it as an equally rich center for the Black press is a minor oversight and presents another research challenge.⁵

Black media outlets continue to be a mainstay of African American culture, although—like all such outlets in the twenty-first century—they have converted to predominantly digital forms of distribution. Today, the *Defender* is a subsidiary of a small conglomerate headquartered in Detroit, while the presses of the Johnson Publishing Company have

come to a halt. In his conclusion, West shares that in 2009 the *Defender's* offices reopened on the South Side in a modest but stately former funeral home. The iconic *Ebony* building has been gutted for high-end apartments. The surviving physical structures of these media giants force us to imagine the full significance of their legacies. In that, *A House for the Struggle* attests to the work required to track the architectural histories of media houses now found only on the Internet. The book's unique contribution is its reminder that as all architectural centers face decentralization, we must keep even the buildings on the margins in mind.

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Notes

1. See, for example, Adam Green, *Selling the Race: Culture, Community, and Black Chicago, 1940–1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007); Jacqueline Najuma Stewart, *Migrating to the Movies: Cinema and Black Urban Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).
2. Claudine Raynaud, “African American Women’s Voices at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair,” in *Women in International and Universal Exhibitions, 1876–1937*, ed. Myriam Boussahba-Bravard and Rebecca Rogers (New York: Routledge, 2018), 151–74.
3. West credits Carl Sandburg with this term, defining it as a “geographically concentrated network of Black media outlets that became a ‘mighty propaganda machine’ for millions of readers” (33).
4. West pays close attention to gender politics in every chapter, not only acknowledging women’s contributions to Black news production but also considering how the presence of women influenced the spatiality of the media.
5. Founded by former *Chicago Daily Defender* journalist Ethan Michaeli, the *Residents’ Journal* was written by and for the city’s public housing residents from 1996 to roughly 2013.

Jan Cigliano Hartman, ed.
**The Women Who Changed
Architecture**

New York: Princeton Architectural Press,
2022, 336 pp., illus. \$50 (cloth), ISBN
9781616898717

How do we situate women in history? While successive waves of feminism have granted women access to voting, education, and control over their own finances and their bodies (to varying degrees, as of late) from the late nineteenth century onward, women’s contributions have

historically been less likely than men’s to be documented, more likely to be misattributed to male peers, or simply buried unremarked. *The Women Who Changed Architecture* asks: How do we situate women in architectural history?

The book offers its answer in a collective biography that seeks to identify women who changed architecture from 1881 through 2021. Editor Jan Cigliano Hartman describes the volume, copublished by Princeton Architectural Press and the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation, as a “comprehensive and encyclopedic record of pioneering women in architecture” (9). Brief biographies of 122 women architects are clustered chronologically by generation, with each section introduced by an overview identifying the forces with which the women of that generation had to contend. Among the notable authors who provide these introductions are Mary McLeod, Victoria Rosner, and Julia Gamolina.

The volume begins with “Ground-breakers,” a section devoted to the first women to break into academia or professional life as architects, including Louise Blanchard Bethune (1856–1913), who with her husband launched R. A. and L. Bethune, Architects, in 1881, before university architecture programs admitted women, and Ethel Bailey Furman (1893–1976), the first woman architect in Virginia and the first Black woman architect in the United States. The women profiled in the following generational section, titled “Paving New Paths,” had greater access to academic training; they include Norma Merrick Sklarek (1925–2012), the first Black woman to graduate from the architecture program at Columbia University. These were the first women for whom an academic career in architecture was even possible, although their male collaborators often received credit for the women’s professional work. Notably, the contributions of several women from this generation are just now beginning to be recognized, following the architects’ relatively recent deaths; examples include Charlotte Perriand (1903–99), Natalie Griffin de Blois (1921–2013), Lina Bo Bardi (1914–92), and Minnette de Silva (1918–98).

Many of the women discussed in the next section, “Advancing the Agenda,” launched their practices around the time of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In her

introduction, Doris Cole identifies this as a “generation of firsts,” citing Phyllis Lambert as the first woman to found a museum and research center in 1979, the Canadian Centre for Architecture; Astra Zarina (1929–2008), the first woman to receive the Rome Prize in Architecture from the American Academy in Rome in 1960; and Sharon E. Sutton, the first Black woman promoted to full professor at an accredited architectural degree program, at the University of Michigan, merely twenty-eight years ago, in 1995 (103). Such “firsts” are quite recent, a fact that serves as a sharp reminder that women’s full participation in this discipline has a very short history.

The generation identified in the section titled “Rocking the World” includes five of the six women who have so far been awarded the Pritzker Prize: Zaha Hadid (1950–2016), Kazuyo Sejima (b. 1956), Yvonne Farrell (b. 1951) and Shelley McNamara (b. 1952), and Anne Lacaton (b. 1955). This generation came of age in the 1960s and early 1970s, a time that saw the founding of the National Organization for Women in 1972 and improved access to birth control and reproductive rights. The women identified in the next section, “Raising the Roof,” began their practices in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a period marked by the emergence of the Internet and the digital turn, as well as the blurring of disciplinary boundaries. Here Gamolina identifies Carme Pigem (b. 1962), the sixth woman to win the Pritzker Prize, along with Maya Lin (b. 1959), Jeanne Gang (b. 1964), Brigitte Shim (b. 1958), Mónica Ponce de León (b. 1965), and Mabel O. Wilson (b. 1963) as a generation of architects who have worked intersectionally to advocate for social justice and racial equity across many fronts.

Finally, “Innovating for a Better World” brings us up to the present, profiling women born from the late 1960s through the early 1980s, who are partners in firms, deans and full professors at universities, and industry innovators who, as Lori Brown writes, are “invested in expanding architecture’s significance and relevance for the future of a better world” (279). Such figures include J. Meejin Yoon (b. 1972), Tatiana Bilbao (b. 1972), Amale Andraos (b. 1973), Neri Oxman (b. 1976), Eva Franch i Gilabert (b. 1978), and Catie Newell (b. 1979).

At first glance, the book resembles a Who's Who of women in architecture over the past century and a half. In an interview published on the website of the nonprofit organization Common Edge, Hartman notes that this was the intended effect. As she states, the primary audiences for this book include architects, "general interested NPR listeners," and young women looking for a sense of their own history in the discipline.¹ This is a broad but admirable cross section. Hartman notes in the book's preface that the process of selecting the women to be included required adhering to strict criteria; the goal was to identify those women whose careers demonstrated "design excellence and distinction, cultural and social progressiveness, and leadership in architectural practice," defined here as including "superior work, research, teaching, publications, and organizational engagement" (9).

Of course, it is in the nature of lists that there will be some stinging omissions. But when the reader reaches the last chapter, "Innovating for a Better World," the book still feels unresolved. There are many important women in academia whose work has absolutely changed the profession of architecture, even if they are not strictly architects. For example, Lesley Lokko established the Graduate School of Architecture at University of Johannesburg, served as dean of the Bernard and Anne Spitzer School of Architecture at City College of New York, and established the African Futures Institute in Accra, Ghana, in 2021, before becoming the first Black architect to curate the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2023. Lokko is vocal about how we must rethink the education landscape to dismantle white supremacist ideologies. Jennifer Bloomer's interrogations of architectural theory weave the pregnant body, motherhood, and gendered violence into her writing and building. Other brilliant designers and educators working intersectionally include Jennifer Newsom and Joyce Hwang. Alice Friedman has changed the way we think and write about women patrons and clients, and has written and championed queer histories of architecture. By narrowing the scope of her book to practicing architects, Hartman misses an opportunity to show how cultural production itself also changes the profession. Further, many of the women who are

introduced in this book as licensed architects have also made key contributions beyond practice—Peggy Deamer and Sharon E. Sutton, for instance. Because of the book's limiting format, the true impacts of these women on our discipline feel diminished, if not overlooked.

This is of course a perennial problem. Susana Torre worked with the Architectural League of New York to organize the Archive of Women in Architecture, founded in 1973, as an exhibition in 1977. The exhibition included brief biographies of American women in architecture and related disciplines, along with their projects. Although the sponsors reportedly wanted to showcase only "exceptional" women architects, Torre exhibited all the women in the archive.² In her introduction to the exhibition's accompanying book, *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, Torre asked not only about what these individual women accomplished but also about the circumstances that supported or hindered their achievements and about the institutional structures made available to women. She interrogated women's access to education across time, asked when and how women ultimately received design commissions for public buildings, and demanded to know, "What are the interrelationships of woman as *consumer*, *producer*, *critic*, and *creator* of space?"³ One wishes that this kind of cultural inquiry were also present in Hartman's volume.

The Women Who Changed Architecture is clearly driven by a sense of urgency. Hartman's introduction acknowledges the collective interest in women's architectural contributions as a recent phenomenon. The editor obviously intends the book to do more than function as just another gesture of inclusivity. Yet reading about the women who have bravely transformed the profession also makes one think about architecture's #MeToo movement and the widespread clamor for change, and it is telling that the book overlooks it. Isn't that a kind of activism that has changed the field for women? The women working for Richard Meier who publicly accused him of abuse were featured in the *New York Times*; we need recognition of these groundbreakers, too. Their impact has changed the profession for all of us. We need those who are not worried about being problematic

or about voicing their dissent, another reason Lokko may have been overlooked in this compendium, while it includes other recently departed administrators (Franch, Harriet Harriss). Constructing an optimistic narrative using only exceptional cases forces us to use language like "persists" and "nevertheless": a woman is allowed to be acknowledged if she is "excellent," but by what standards?

The Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation, copublisher of this book, asserts that it is "leading a cultural revolution in the building industry that will acknowledge, cultivate, and value women's contributions and achievements—past, present, and future."⁴ Undoubtedly, this book is one of many efforts. But we must not use yesterday's tools to solve today's problems. If women were left out of anthologies of the past, forget anthologies, forget compendiums. What other modes of writing can better speak to a woman's whole human life as an architect? And if Wikipedia deletes posts about women architects because of a lack of citations, then we need to build our own online reference. The International Archive of Women in Architecture is certainly a start. The existing models were designed to exclude women, and if we embrace them now, centuries later, they will certainly fail us. Playing by these rules only ensures that we try to make up for too much lost time, too quickly. If the erasure of women from this history is multifaceted, ongoing, and systemic, then our way of addressing such erasure needs to be equally so: a wicked constellation too unwieldy to be stopped.

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Notes

1. Jan Cigliano Hartman, "Correcting the Record: The Women Who Changed Architecture," interview by Martin C. Pedersen, Common Edge, 30 Mar. 2022, <https://commone.dge.org/correcting-the-record-the-women-who-changed-architecture> (accessed 14 Jan. 2023).
2. Eva Álvarez and Carlos Gómez, "The Invisible Women: How Female Architects Were Erased from History," *Architectural Review*, 8 Mar. 2017, <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/the-invisible-women-how-female-architects-were-erased-from-history> (accessed 14 Jan. 2023).
3. Susana Torre, "A Parallel History," in *Women in American Architecture: A Historic and Contemporary Perspective*, ed. Susana Torre (New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1977), 10–11.

4. “Our Mission,” Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation, <https://bwaf.org/mission> (accessed 14 Jan. 2023).

Anthony Fontenot

Non-Design: Architecture, Liberalism, and the Market

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021, 376 pp., 65 b/w illus. \$50 (cloth), ISBN 9780226686066

Matthew Soules

Icebergs, Zombies, and the Ultra Thin: Architecture and Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century

New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2021, 240 pp., 198 b/w illus. \$26.95 (cloth), ISBN 9781616899462

In the years since the global financial crash of 2008, the built environment’s complicity in the neoliberal political economy has come under increased scrutiny.¹ Real estate, the financialization of architectural production and aesthetics, and the often-complex realities of neoliberalism “on the ground” in cities and buildings are just some of the topics that have been addressed by architectural historians seeking to reframe long-standing narratives about the role of architecture in society and its relation to capitalism. Two recent books expand and deepen this inquiry with divergent yet complementary perspectives. In *Icebergs, Zombies, and the Ultra Thin: Architecture and Capitalism in the Twenty-First Century*, Matthew Soules explores both the theoretical and the actual ways in which architecture has adapted to service, and enable, the machinations of finance capitalism in recent decades. Anthony Fontenot takes a longer historical perspective in *Non-Design: Architecture, Liberalism, and the Market*, offering an impressive and highly original reevaluation of the canon of postwar design theory, especially as deeply enmeshed within the philosophy of economic liberalism. Both authors aim to enhance readers’ understanding of the theoretical and historical underpinnings of late capitalism and architecture’s relationship to it, but where Soules provides a guide to interpreting the present architectural paradigm, Fontenot offers a historical analysis that reveals its unlikely origins in the postwar architectural avant-garde of England and America.

Fontenot’s book situates architectural discourse after World War II within the wider contemporaneous philosophical debates on liberalism, the decentralization of the state, and the role of the market as a tool of governance. Specifically, the narrative focuses on the writing and activities of the theorists of the Austrian school of economic thought, including Friedrich August Hayek, Karl Popper, and Ludwig von Mises, and their influence on a vast number of architects and architectural writers, ranging from Nikolaus Pevsner, Gordon Cullen, Reynier Banham, and the Independent Group in Britain to Jane Jacobs, Melvin Webber, Robert Venturi, and Denise Scott Brown in the United States, just to name a few. Emerging in the intellectual milieu of interwar Vienna, in the wake of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the failure of liberalism, and the rise of socialism, the Austrian school’s theorists were united by a commitment to free and spontaneous societal systems and opposition to centralized ones, including state socialism and communism. After the atrocities of the war, their critique held more potent political meaning. In his 1944 book *The Road to Serfdom*, Hayek argued that all forms of centralized state collectivism would lead to totalitarianism, whether on the left or the right.² More generally, the theorists rallied against centralized planning, which they characterized as a method of population control; they posited that societies should instead be governed by the market, as a value-free, neutral framework that would promote democratic communities through the decentralization of knowledge and wealth. Such a competitive market-based system would be spontaneous and reactive, enabling the freedom of the individual and limiting the state’s capacity to coerce and oppress. As these theorists dispersed to sympathetic institutions in England and the United States, their ideas gained traction and, according to Fontenot, infused arts and culture just as much as they influenced economists and politicians.

Fontenot makes two main claims that inform his book’s narrative. First, he argues that at the same time these well-known debates around the merits of central planning as a form of societal control were taking place in political and economic disciplines, they were also occurring in the fields of architecture and urban

planning. Designers embraced terms like *organicism*, *complexity*, *indeterminacy*, and *self-organization* not simply for their aesthetic and structural meanings but also for their evocations of escape from the power of top-down control characteristic of prewar modernism. Second, Fontenot argues that a strong, central idea unified this seemingly disparate, yet overlapping, collection of architects and architectural scholars: non-design. He explains that non-design was just one of a list of theories defined by a negative prefix during this period, such as “*non-plan*, *un-planned*, *anti-art*, *anti-architecture*, *anti-design*, . . . *non-Left* and *non-Marxist*,” and although the emphasis on the negative seems to tell us little about what these movements hoped to affirm, we still lack “a sufficient body of theory to fully appreciate the significance of the negative for the history of modern architecture” (23). *Non-Design* interrogates this negative, framing it as a byword for the rejection of centralized top-down planning and the adoption of a liberal market-led framework that valued society “as found” and facilitated complex, spontaneous communities and environments. Through this, the author suggests a third critical assertion: for all their rejection of ideology, these postwar architectural protagonists were in fact ideological.

The book focuses on two geographical contexts, Britain and the United States, following both the physical movements of the Austrian school theorists and the parallel architectural movements within and between the two countries. The first two chapters examine the infusion of liberal critique into design theories in the heyday of the British welfare state. Fontenot notes how economists and town planners alike made indiscriminate use of the term *planning* in the postwar period, thus developing a core concept that a small group of architects began to turn against. He analyzes the townscape movement—an urban planning approach conceived by Hubert de Cronin Hastings, editor of the *Architectural Review*, with Gordon Cullen and Nikolaus Pevsner, among others—as a kind of proto-non-design strategy. Fontenot claims that in embracing the English picturesque as a guiding principle, townscape explicitly drew upon a political tradition of English liberalism. In such a context, tolerance of human behavior, visual variety, spontaneity, and the

combination of planned and unplanned elements stood counter to the tyranny of French rationalist thought (and garden design).

The book then considers the rise of New Brutalism, a non-Marxist design movement that emerged in the 1950s as an aesthetic and ethical challenge to the (socialist) modernist dogma characterizing earlier movements in Britain, including the Scandinavian-inspired “soft” modernist approach, or “new humanism,” adopted by the architects of the London County Council. Through close scrutiny of the writings of the architectural historian Reyner Banham (one of the book’s key protagonists) and the work of the Independent Group, centered on London’s Institute of Contemporary Arts, Fontenot evaluates the emergence of New Brutalism as a movement that embraced liberal notions of complexity, appreciation of the city “as found,” and the use of everyday social experiences and interactions as a basis for design. In particular, he shows how the Independent Group embraced the Austrian school’s writings against historicism, promoting instead a determinist, materialist approach to history. In response to publications such as Karl Popper’s *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945), Fontenot argues, Banham and architects like Alison and Peter Smithson developed a “non-teleological” aesthetic. Rejecting modernist interest in classical geometries, they instead embraced a responsive approach based on trial and error as well as adaptation inspired by biological phenomena, such as those described in D’Arcy Wentworth Thompson’s study of morphology in nature, *On Growth and Form* (1917).³

In the next three chapters Fontenot explores the manifestation of these ideas in the American context. Beginning with the so-called Borax debates, he examines how the commercially driven aesthetics of the streamline style from the 1930s inspired postwar architects and theorists, particularly Banham, and how the brand name Borax came to be used pejoratively to signal commercial pervasiveness and meaninglessness. He then explores the impact of market-based ideology on the work of the urbanist Jane Jacobs. He also considers the legacy of decentralized urbanism in U.S. cities such as Los Angeles and examines its relationship to architectural design theory in Britain,

most famously addressed in Banham’s *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (1971).⁴ Fontenot offers a new reading of Jacobs through the lens of liberalism, arguing that her theories emerged alongside and were affected by a wider range of influences than are usually recognized, including the Austrian school theories of spontaneous order and the townscape and New Brutalism movements in Britain, and particularly the work of the Smithsons.

Perhaps one of the most original and vital aspects of *Non-Design* is the way Fontenot positions the economic theorists as interlocutors with architectural actors: Hayek, Popper, and Ernst Gombrich, an art historian affiliated with the Austrian school, all taught at University College London at the time Banham was pursuing his doctoral degree there under Pevsner. Fontenot shows how the 1950s immigration of Hayek and his contemporaries to New York and Chicago—where they exerted the most powerful influence of their careers—instituted a fundamental shift in the nature of architectural and urban critique, as shown by the work of writers such as Jacobs, William H. Whyte, Scott Brown, and Venturi, some of whom were in direct communication with one another. Fontenot also chronicles the intellectual milieu surrounding the Architectural Association in London in the 1960s, highlighting an intriguing correspondence between Royston Landau, an architect teaching at the AA, and Karl Popper. This in turn instigated a series of important events and communications publicizing Popper’s advocacy of an open society and ideas of indeterminacy among the architectural avant-garde in Britain and the United States.

Non-Design is an important contribution to the history of postwar architecture that in many ways fundamentally disrupts existing architectural historical narratives. Such ambition inevitably also has its pitfalls. The author’s attempt to link this breadth of political economic theory to an even wider range of architects occasionally results in repetition. At times, the book feels as if it were intended to be read as a collection of articles, with each chapter reintroducing different aspects of liberal theory; this results in content overlap and even the occasional repetition of quotations. Likewise, in the discussion of the reciprocal influence of design theories across the Atlantic, movements such

as townscape are introduced several times, and figures like Pevsner appear as both socialists and non-design practitioners in different chapters, leading to complicated characterizations that are difficult to follow. That said, the book is bold in scope and, for the most part, detailed and careful in its execution, drawing on a huge range of archival as well as contemporary theoretical material. Fontenot’s book is a historical critique of the current (non-) planning paradigm, which he argues originated largely from the postwar interactions between the architectural profession and liberal economic theory. It is ominous to read this critique in light of the current environmental crisis and the ravages of uncontrolled market-led urbanism across the globe.

Matthew Soules’s *Icebergs, Zombies, and the Ultra Thin* takes our present situation, or at least a more recent historical moment, as its starting point. In the prologue, the author explains that the book came out of the 2008 financial crisis. He argues that although architecture played a leading role in the crash, in terms of both housing and the subprime mortgage scandal, the architectural profession remained quiet on the issue. This book stands as a corrective to that unwillingness to engage. Taking the writings of Fredric Jameson and Reinhold Martin as his cue, Soules aims to show how architecture is not simply a product of finance capitalism but a fundamental element in that system. Yet where Jameson emphasizes the aesthetics of architecture and abstract qualities of late capitalism, Soules sees finance capitalist investment as a process with tangible results and real urban consequences. Where Martin describes architecture’s symbolic role in producing cultural meaning (by representing finance), Soules argues that architecture and urbanism have in fact mutated into a form of finance capitalist investment, changing how buildings are designed to be occupied and managed. In this engaging critique of the relationship of architecture and finance capitalism, Soules focuses on housing, using mostly European and American examples, and examines formal, aesthetic, programmatic, maintenance, and use practices, arguing that this is the “primary medium” through which finance “actualizes itself” (15).

Icebergs, Zombies, and the Ultra Thin is important not only because it reevaluates

our current paradigm but also because it offers helpful and lucid explanations of complex financial processes. A large part of the book is dedicated to explaining and dissecting the very notion of financialization, a word now used rather generally to describe late capitalism. Soules understands the term as both a historical phase and an ongoing transhistorical practice: historical because the credit and finance modes of operation have always played an important and necessary role in capitalism, and ongoing because finance arguably serves as the defining concept of the present era, where we seek to profit through financial transactions. Borrowing from sociologist Greta R. Krippner, Soules explains that financialization describes “a pattern of accumulation in which profits accrue primarily through financial channels rather than through trade and commodity production. ‘Financial’ here refers to activities relating to the provision (or transfer) of liquid capital in expectation of future interest, dividends, or capital gain” (21–22). Echoing cultural theorist Max Haiven, Soules argues that as financialization forms the basis of our economic and political system, it necessarily affects all aspects of daily life, from large-scale industrial production to the way we work, what we watch on television, and what gets built.⁵ Following an overview of theories—including those of Karl Marx, Rudolf Hilferding, Vladimir Lenin, and Costas Lapavistas—Soules concludes that finance capitalism has had a powerful effect on architecture not just because it is the dominant economic mode but also because “real estate is one of the primary mediums through which finance capitalism operates.” Consequently, “architecture is not the result of finance capitalism but rather *is* finance capitalism” (31).

The remainder of the book explains exactly how architecture, and specifically housing, has adapted to become part of this system. Soules examines first the ways that housing is financialized: through the securitization of mortgage loans, subprime lending, and household mortgage debt; the entry of private equity firms, hedge funds, and real estate firms into rental markets; and the reliance of housing providers on bonds and financial derivatives. In this economic transformation architecture has had to transform physically to make itself investable and productive, but also to make those

using the housing productive through the inclusion of commercial and leisure spaces within residential complexes. In an attempt to taxonomize architecture’s response to this imperative, Soules defines five main characteristics of financialized architecture: (1) it is inherently unstable and creates spaces of crisis; (2) it functions as speculative wealth storage; (3) it becomes a means of uneven development and inequality; (4) it has a simultaneous propensity for iconic and standardized spaces; and (5) it increases liquidity. These characteristics lay the groundwork for the chapters that follow, which address a series of phenomena Soules attributes to financialization. “Zombie urbanism,” for example, is the now well-known phenomenon of the existence of numerous owned but empty housing units. Investors and wealthy individuals buy up property in dense urban centers but do not live there, thus lowering levels of urban vitality. As Soules quips, these urban areas become zombies because “they are not dead, but they are also not quite alive” (51). In contrast, “ghost urbanism” has higher vacancy rates and the perception of failure, taking the form of high numbers of unsold or incomplete housing units, usually built during a boom period, that may now be in a state of decay. Taking Ireland 1995–2007 as a case study, Soules shows how overbuilding (amounting to 40 percent of housing stock) in combination with soaring house prices led to a crisis, with 294,000 vacant units in 2011.

Soules argues that finance capitalism produces “accelerations and mutations” of architectural forms, shifting from wealth accumulation through production to wealth accumulation through financial speculation. Using jargon that buys into the complex nomenclature of finance itself, Soules describes these mutations as “icebergs” (ludicrously large basement extensions built to store wealth in heritage areas in London), “exurban investment mats” (housing estates, gridded, spreading far and wide), “superpodiums” (tower bases that provide leisure and consumption facilities), “ultra-thin pencil towers” (high-rises with one apartment per floor and penthouses on top), and “financial icons” (drawing on the so-called Bilbao Effect). In what is perhaps the most interesting argument in the book, Soules claims that these forms are

the result of the simultaneous simplification and complication of space required for real estate to behave as a liquid asset. Due to its immovable and complex (situated) nature, real estate is typically highly illiquid, and thus must be simplified (i.e., standardized, universalized) to maximize assets and facilitate remote ownership. But to make such spaces desirable, a compensatory complexity must be added through the creation of abstract, localized distinctions that provide a semblance of specificity. “Jane Jacobs–influenced podiums mask standardized condo towers rising above, and nostalgic, materially diverse skins conceal spatial homogeneity,” writes Soules (141), as if to confirm Fontenot’s thesis about how a competition-based society can accommodate Jacobs’s criticism.

Icebergs, Zombies, and the Ultra Thin represents a much-needed addition to the literature on capitalism and architecture, both for its analysis and for its explanations. Its relentless taxonomizing and listing of qualities and criteria are perhaps necessary for a guide of this kind. However, in the same way that financial jargon often obscures more than it reveals, this approach can be exhausting for the reader. One could argue that this is one of the perils of dealing with finance as a topic. Another might be the tendency to focus too closely on the structural causes and effects of financialization while not paying enough attention to the human systems required to make them. Whereas the brilliance of Fontenot’s *Non-Design* rests on an intimate understanding of the network of people, ideas, and events that triggered a new paradigm, Soules’s book remains at the level of systemic analysis. It intentionally ignores, for example, the role of developers, who I would argue have played not merely a facilitating role in finance capital but also a critical role in implementing new investment mechanisms. Likewise, we are left wondering about the role of the architect in all of this. How is the profession complicit? Soules remarks that its silence after 2008 triggered the writing of his book, but architectural voices remain mostly mute in the context of his own probing analysis. That said, Soules was not writing a granular historical account, but rather a contemporary observation of what exists and how it came into being. Both Fontenot’s and Soules’s books have their place in the

current conversation surrounding architecture and the neoliberal context, and both are highly valuable and informative additions to the field.

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Notes

1. Reinhold Martin, "Financial Imaginaries: Toward a Philosophy of the City," *Grey Room*, no. 42 (Winter 2011), 60–79; Peggy Deamer,

ed., *Architecture and Capitalism: 1845 to the Present* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Sara Stevens, *Developing Expertise: Architecture and Real Estate in Metropolitan America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016); Kenny Cupers, Catharina Gabriëlsso, and Helena Mattsson, eds., *Neoliberalism on the Ground: Architecture and Transformation from the 1960s to the Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020); Douglas Spencer, *The Architecture of Neoliberalism: How Contemporary Architecture Became an Instrument of Control and Compliance* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016); Claire

Zimmerman, ed., "The Costs of Architecture," special issue, *Grey Room*, no. 71 (Spring 2018).

2. F. A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944).

3. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (London: Routledge, 1945); D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson, *On Growth and Form* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917).

4. Reyner Banham, *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971).

5. Max Haiven, *Cultures of Financialization: Fictitious Capital in Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).