



**icam** print 03

international confederation of architectural museums

"We exist because we have a great disorder in organisation, [but] order in spirit." Sigfried Giedion

an organisation of architectural museums, centres and collections

**special issue**

contents

history

interviews

issues and debates

about **icam**

## contents

- 2 editorial
- 3 letter from the president

### history

- 4 juhani pallasmaa icam 30 years, the founding of a confederation
- 8 angela giral international confederation of architectural museums, a history
- 16 elisabeth seip, dietmar steiner icam conferences, a retrospective view
- 28 jöran lindvall 13 years with the icam board
- 32 icam from 1979 to 2010

### interviews

- 34 gerald beasley interview with phyllis lambert
- 40 jolanta gromadzka interview with olgierd czerner
- 48 monika platzer interview with mariet willinge

### issues and debates

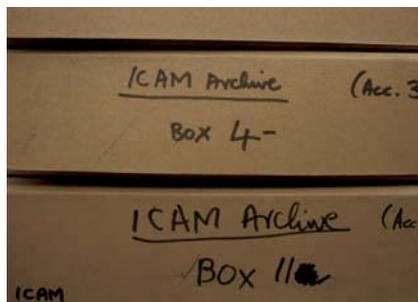
- 56 dietmar steiner icam, 30 years lecture: architecture museums today
- 64 jean-louis cohen exhibitionism and its limits
- 70 andreas tönnesmann, bruno maurer collecting architecture today and tomorrow
- 76 manuel blanco vanishing paper, vanishing records
- 80 claes caldenby, johan linton the presence of the past: tendencies in architectural history
- 88 ulrike jehle-schulte strathaus art and architecture, artist and architects

### about icam

- 98 michael snodin icam 30 years: helsinki revisited
- 102 jane thomas icam14
- 104 jane thomas secretary general's report
- 106 corinne bélier icam15

## editorial

2



*icam archives, RIBA London*

*photo Monika Platzer*

Architecture museums have become a fixture in the museum landscape. Even if there is no universal model for them, the 30th anniversary of *icam* provides a suitable opportunity to reflect on the role and tasks of architecture museums, and the challenges they face. The majority of the contributions published here are based on the *icam* 30 years – helsinki revisited: The Future of Architecture Museums symposium held in Helsinki this year. So all those members of *icam* who were unable to come to Helsinki have a belated opportunity to participate in the discussion. In this context, our gratitude goes to the Museum of Finnish Architecture in Helsinki, and in particular to Severi Blomstedt, Kristiina Nivari, Hanna Galtat and Timo Keinänen.

This special issue of *icamprint* has two focal points: In the first part, **History**, Angela Giral attempts to document the Confederation's development for the first time, and her untiring active support in researching original material and images should not go unmentioned. Elisabeth Seip and Dietmar Steiner provide a look back over fourteen *icam* conferences. In addition, the reminiscences of and interviews with founding members and members of the board Juhani Pallasmaa, Phyllis Lambert, Olgierd Czerner, Jöran Lindvall and Mariet Willinge provide insights into developments at *icam*, the challenges *icam* faces and their perspectives on its future. Here, I should like to thank Irena Murray for providing the perfect working conditions for viewing the *icam* archives. The current holdings, a veritable treasure trove in 21 boxes, give an idea of the challenge that communication posed (using telegrammes!) prior to the multimedia age. One of the highpoints of this collection are the 22 annotated sketches completed by Oscar Niemeyer at *icam*10 in Rio. Respect is due to those colleagues from the early years. This look back at the history of *icam* includes with a list of the names of all of the Confederation's activists. In the second section, **Issues and Debates**, Dietmar Steiner reflects on the demands facing an architecture museum today. The contributions by Jean-Louis Cohen, Andreas Tönnemann / Bruno Maurer and Manuel Blanco engage with the core activities of architecture museums, holding exhibitions and collection/storage. Developments in the architecture theory over the years are traced by Claes Caldenby / Johan Linton, and Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus takes Novartis Campus as an example in pursuing the extent to which artists broaden and sharpen the perception of the built environment. This issue closes with reports on the *icam* activities of Michael Snodin and Jane Thomas, as well as a preview of, Corinne Belier, and an invitation from the Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine to participate in the long awaited *icam*15 conference in Paris, 2010.

As always, my gratitude to all of the contributing authors and the editorial board, without whom this, the most extensive issue to date, would not have been possible – so, here's to the next 30 years of *icam*!

monika platzer, editor

## letter from the president



*icam 30 years – helsinki revisited*

*photo Monika Platzer*

This summer **icam** members met up with some of the founding pioneers at Suomenlinna Fortress, a meaningful venue, to commemorate the creation of the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (**icam**) on Monday 20 august 1979.

There was a coincidence between the formation of **icam** and the global situation in this key year of 1979: With the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviet Army the fall of the Communist system began. Jimmy Carter and Leonid Brezhnev signed the SALT II treaty in Vienna. Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran, and Margaret Thatcher launched her neo-liberal project. In Geneva the first conference on climate change was held... These are among the political events that led to the dramatic changes in our global society which all began in the year 1979. But how has this effected or influenced the world of architecture and **icam** over the last thirty years?

**1** Let's first take a look at the former Eastern Bloc: Contemporary architecture in the post-Communist countries has, in the meantime, reached the standard of western European architecture. There is no difference in quality anymore. But unfortunately our contact with many of the architecture museums in the region has loosened, perhaps because of the lack of culture budgets in the now capitalist countries.

**2** Undoubtedly neo-liberalism, globalization and the need for iconic buildings have opened up new possibilities for contemporary architecture: "Architecture has become an item of conspicuous consumption" (Mario Carpo). From 1979 on, the star system of architects arose (the first Pritzker Prize went to Philip Johnson). Remember also the 1980 postmodern Biennial in Venice, with Paolo Portoghesi's *Strada Novissima*. Is there a relationship between the historicity of architecture in the late 1970s and early 1980s and the founding of new architecture museums? To answer this question we need to consider the role of "Architecture between spectacle and use" (Anthony Vidler).

**3** Along with a rising interest in architecture, the media has been calling for images in better and higher quality than in the 1970s. So architectural photography, and now computer renderings, have come to play a key role.

**4** The next new phenomenon over the past 30 years has been a growing interest in architecture among the general public, which has created a demand for architectural guidance in a context of city tourism.

**5** In the 15 years that I have been attending **icam** conferences the issue of how to deal with digital media archives in the World Wide Web has always been on the agenda. The Museum of Finnish Architecture kindly hosted the 30th anniversary of **icam**, providing us with the opportunity to remember and reflect on the circumstances of the Confederation's founding, and to discuss the future challenges facing our institutions. **icam** and **icamprint** once more proved to be the perfect platform for all these pressing issues, and will continue to do so for many years to come.

dietmar steiner, president

## icam 30 years, the founding of a confederation

juhani pallasmaa

4



*Museum of Finnish Architecture, 1956*

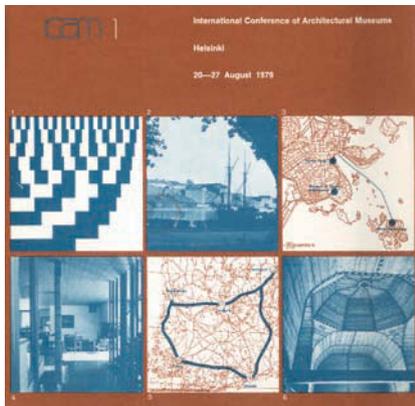
*photo Museum of Finnish Architecture*

\* We were aware of the drawings collection of the RIBA (established in 1834), the Burnham Library of Architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago (founded in 1912) and the Architecture Department of the Museum of Modern Art In New York (established in 1929), but we did not regard these institutions as independent museums of architecture.

The iconic building of the Pompidou Centre in Paris was opened ceremoniously at the end of January 1977 in the presence of several thousand invited guests. As the diverse range of activities of the new cultural centre also included a department for architecture and design, a dozen representatives of architectural museums and other institutions around the world active in the field of the art of building were invited to the event. I was myself present at the opening as the representative of the Museum of Finnish Architecture.

In the casual conversations between the guests it became evident that there were, in fact, more museums dedicated to architecture, or in the process of being launched in various countries, than were present at the Pompidou Centre. In Helsinki we regarded our own museum, founded in 1956, as the second oldest museum of architecture in the world (the Museum of Russian Architecture, which was later made into the Schusev Museum had been established eleven years earlier in 1945 in Moscow).<sup>\*</sup> It occurred to me in Paris that it would probably be beneficial for both the established and emerging museums to meet and possibly have an organisation of sorts for future contact and collaborations. It was evident that it would have been difficult in the political climate of the late 1970s for the oldest museum in our field, the Schusev Museum, to arrange such a meeting in Moscow. Upon returning from Paris I proposed to Aarno Ruusuvuori, the director of the Museum of Finnish Architecture at the time, the idea of organising a meeting of the architecture museums of the world in Helsinki. He immediately supported the idea, and we wrote a proposal and applied for funding from the Ministry of Education in Helsinki. In the late 1970s and early 80s the Finnish Ministry supported the activities of our museum very willingly, and it was quite evident, even before the submission of the application, that the funds would be granted for the organisation of an international conference of such significance. Asko Salokorpi, Head of the Research Department at the Museum of Finnish Architecture, was asked to serve as the secretary of the planned event. We sent out letters to a number of countries in order to identify the architecture museums that either already existed or were in the planning stage. At the time that we made the decision to organise the first international encounter of architecture museums we knew of a dozen institutions in the field altogether. By the time the invitations were actually sent out in early 1979 we had already compiled a list of fifty institutions. As the event needed to have a name we ended up calling the encounter icam, the International Confederation of Architectural Museums.

Thirty-six participants, representing twenty-five different institutions, finally attended the meeting that took place in Helsinki and the fortified island of Suomenlinna, off the South harbour of the city, on 20–25 August 1979. By the time the meeting took place Ruusuvuori had been appointed State Artist Professor, and I had been nomi-



1/ Folder, *icam1*

image *icam* archives, RIBA

2/ *Juhani Pallasmaa at icam1*

photo Kari Hakli, *Museum of Finnish Architecture*

nated as the Director of the Museum for the time of his five-year appointment. Having launched the initiative, I also ended up hosting the meeting. The arrival day, Monday 20 August, was reserved for allowing the participants to get to know each other as well as the hosting institution and Helsinki City. The conference was officially opened by Mr. Jaakko Numminen, secretary general of the Ministry of Education, the strong man behind Finnish cultural life.

The first conference day proper dealt with two topics: In the morning session, The Role and Organization of Architectural Museums, and Exchange of Information and Research Material in the afternoon. The morning session of the next day was dedicated to 'Exchange of Exhibitions'. The afternoon programme consisted of two general discussions, the first one on experiences and principles in the fields of archives, libraries, exhibitions and research, and the second on future cooperations between museums of architecture.

The general assembly held after the lecture and discussion sessions unanimously agreed that further cooperation between the institutions should be pursued, and that international conferences between architecture museums and other related institutions should continue to be organised. A committee was elected to prepare the following meeting of the *icam*, as well as a proposal for affiliation of *icam* with the ICOM, or some other covering international organisation. The appointed committee was also authorised to deal with any other matters of common interest. The general assembly elected seven members to the first *icam* committee: John Harris (chairman), Juhani Pallasmaa (vice-chairman), Henrik O. Andersson, Viktor Baldin, Olgierd Czerner, Phyllis Lambert, and Asko Salokorpi (secretary general). London was subsequently suggested as a possible location for the following conference. In addition to the Committee, three working groups were formed to prepare proposals for a joint newsletter, exchange of exhibitions, and a draft for the official resolution of the founding conference. The conference approved the following charter:

- 1 By individual and corporate effort, to raise the quality of the built environment.
- 2 By individual and corporate effort, to stimulate and receive a public response in the appreciation and understanding of architecture and its allied fields in the creation of the human environment.
- 3 To expand understanding of cultural continuity and environmental context through the knowledge of history as a source of information and inspiration in the field of architectural practice.
- 4 By individual and corporate effort, to foster a critical attitude towards architecture and its allied fields.
- 5 By individual and corporate effort, to act to protect the quality of the built environment when it is threatened.

6



**6** To exchange information by means of publications, exhibitions, film and other media, on matters concerning the whole history and practice of architecture and allied fields.

**7** To support and encourage the exchange of scholars, architects, and members of allied professions with the intent of fostering a mutual understanding of common issues.

**8** By individual and corporate effort, to monitor and record the whereabouts of architectural records, aid in their preservation, and to share this information.

**9** In the efforts to achieve these aforementioned objectives, the cooperation of all interested groups will be sought.

The first **icam** encounter was characterised by great optimism and idealism. Matters and views of the societal, cultural and ethical roles and tasks of architecture museums were discussed rather than technicalities concerning archives and libraries, or conserving and storing drawings etc.

After the founding meeting in Helsinki I personally participated only in the second **icam** conference in London in 1981 as I left my position at the Museum of Finnish Architecture to address other challenges. Consequently, the story of the formation and maturation of **icam** has to be told by other voices.

juhani pallasmaa, architect, helsinki



*1/ John Harris at icam1*

*photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture*

*2/ Asko Salokorpi at icam1*

*photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture*



*1/ icam1 participants*

*photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture*

*2/ icam1 pioneers at icam 30 years – helsinki revisited*

*From the left: Juhani Pallasmaa, Sirkka Valanto, Markku Komonen, Elisabeth Seip and Markku Lahti*

*photo Patrik Rastenberger, Museum of Finnish Architecture*



2/ The following institutions sent their representatives to the founding meeting of the icam in Helsinki:

- Alvar Aalto Museum Jyväskylä
- Architecture Museum Aachen
- Architecture Museum Ljubljana
- Arkiték, Archive of Modern Danish Architecture Copenhagen
- Canadian Architectural Archives Calgary
- Centro Studi Compensorio Milanese Milan
- Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records New York
- Deutschlandfunk Cologne
- Dutch Documentation Center for Architecture Amsterdam
- Frank Lloyd Wright Association Oak Park, Illinois
- German Architecture Museum Frankfurt
- Musée d'Orsay Paris

- Museum of Applied Arts Belgrade
- Museum of Architecture in Wrocław Wrocław
- Museum of Finnish Architecture Helsinki
- Museum of Hungarian Architecture Budapest
- State Service for the Conservation of Monuments Zeist
- Schusev State Museum of Architecture Moscow
- Swedish Museum of Architecture Stockholm
- Tekniikan museo (Museum of Technology) Helsinki
- The Burnham Library of Architecture at the Art Institute of Chicago Chicago
- The Canadian Centre for Architecture Montreal
- The Drawing Collection of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts Copenhagen
- The Horta Museum Brussels
- The Norwegian Museum of Architecture Oslo

# international confederation of architectural museums, a history

angela giral

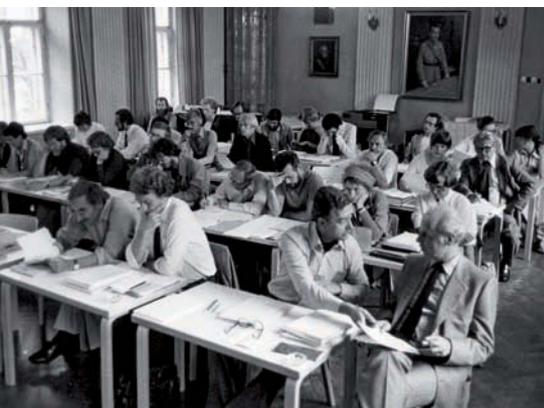
8

## the beginnings

“It was agreed to establish the Confederation on 22 August 1979 at the First Conference in Helsinki ... affiliated to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as an International Specialized Body and as a Member Organization. As defined by ICOM a museum is any permanent institution which conserves and displays, for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment, collections of objects of cultural and scientific interest. **icam** has adopted in its title Confederation to describe the looser knit character of architectural museums, archives, collections, libraries and information centers. **icam** shall be the international non-governmental or professional organization to foster links between all those interested in the promotion of architecture. Its Charter was also promulgated on 22 August 1979.” Thus reads the final report of the first International Conference of Architectural Museums (**icam** 1). Thirty years have brought some changes, but none of them substantial; the essence and the purpose remain the same, and the diversity of participating institutions has, if anything, increased. It was reported that 36 individuals representing 25 institutions in 15 countries attended this first Conference. Today the membership list includes 135 institutions in 38 countries, and the attendance at the last conference, **icam** 14, was over 100. Juhani Paallasmaa and John Harris (**icam**print 1) have both shared their memories with us of how the first idea for creating such an organisation emerged when the members of several ‘museums’ of architecture converged in Paris for the opening of the Centre Pompidou in 1977. The former took the initiative of convening the first Conference at the National Museum of Finnish Architecture, and thus is directly responsible for bringing this idea of association to fruition. The latter became **icam**’s first president and guided the early steps of the organization, slowly fading—perhaps dissolving is a better image—evoking the film technology of disappearance and re-appearance, and finally becoming the ‘eminence grise’ that he continues to be today. At that first meeting in Helsinki, not only did the newly constituted members develop a mission statement, a charter, and statutes for the organization, but they established a model that has been continued in conferences to this day: substantial talks on the issues of managing collections, preserving architectural records and organizing exhibitions, surrounded by official addresses (each hosting institution has used the occasion of the Conference to position itself within the appropriate official structures of the country in which the conference takes place) and, most importantly, visits to outstanding examples of local and regional architecture.

## *icam*1 conference

photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture



## **icam**, ICOM, ICA

Another important element already present at the beginning was the desire to include members from Eastern Europe—it must be remembered that **icam** was born



*Viktor Baldin at icam1*

*photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture*

in the days of the Cold War and the Iron Curtain, and of course before the Internet enhanced worldwide communication. It was in order to facilitate travel to the West by members of Eastern Europe that affiliation with UNESCO, through ICOM, was sought. This was particularly significant since the first museum of architecture had been created in Moscow, in 1934. This was the Schusev State Museum of Architecture, founded by the initiative of the Union of Soviet architects, and its collections reflect a thousand years of Russian architecture's history. Early in the Soviet Revolution a concern for architecture was manifested in the Proclamation about the Preservation of the Works of Art made by the Commission of Cultural Questions headed by Gorky in March 1917.

ICOM is the international organization of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible. Created in 1946, ICOM is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) maintaining formal relations with UNESCO and having a consultative status with the United Nations' Economic and Social Council. Initial membership in ICA was through the National Archives of each participating country.

In the early 1970s a Working Group on Architectural Records was established, and among its first tasks was the gathering of information on the location of those records. This enterprise was spearheaded by Elzbieta Harrach, an Hungarian architect who produced a substantial report on the location and status of architectural records in Europe. A meeting of this group was hosted in Paris by Jean Pierre Babelon of the French National Archives, who himself had a great interest in architecture. As early as **icam3** a report was made by Catha Grace Rambusch with the proposal of creating a Joint **icam**-ICA Committee for Standards for the Care of Architectural Records. Following the rigorously hierarchical procedures of large international organizations, and aware that many important archives existed outside of the framework of National Archives, the small, primarily francophone, group of individuals interested in architectural records slowly gained position within ICA, becoming first a Working Group headed by Lorenzo Mannino of Italy, then a Committee, and finally a Section on Architectural Records.

In view of the large overlap in interest, **icam** and ICA decided very early on to have a member of each Executive Committee become a sort of ex-officio member of the other, and at least send a representative not only to the biennial conferences but to all board meetings. That is why Maygene Daniels came to New York City when the Board met in 1985 and I went to Washington when she hosted a meeting of the ICA-PAR. In Europe, both Jean Pierre Babelon and Arnaud Ramière de Fontaner were assiduous participants of **icam** board meetings.

10



*Catha Grace Rambusch at icam1*  
 photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish  
 Architecture

In the United States it was neither a war nor a revolution that triggered an interest in the architectural fabric of the country, and concomitantly in the preservation of its records, but rather the anniversary of both. As the United States prepared for the celebration of the bicentennial of the American Revolution, people began to believe that the country had a history worth preserving, and that architecture was an important part of that history. It was in this context that a loosely knit group of individuals met and formed the Committee for the Preservation of Architectural Records (COPAR) in New York City in 1974. Catha Grace Rambusch was its guiding light, and single-handedly put out a newsletter, visited all 50 states meeting with interested people, and put together a Union Catalog of Architectural Records. By means of a widely distributed if modest newsletter, COPAR accomplished, on the one hand, the very preservation of vast quantities of architectural records which otherwise might well have been lost to posterity and, on the other, the creation of state and regional committees that surveyed and reported on their constituencies. The first series of COPAR's newsletter ran from March 1974 to 21 May 1980. Initially supported by the Architectural League of New York with administrative and grant management services, COPAR signed an agreement with The Library of Congress (LC) in January 1980, by virtue of which LC became the national "home" of COPAR and the publisher of its second series of newsletters (November 1980 to December 1985). Because COPAR at the Library of Congress was no longer a committee but rather a project, a new phrase was sought to justify the familiar acronym. The phrase chosen, "Cooperative Preservation of Architectural Records," accurately reflected the original and ongoing thrust of COPAR's efforts. It was in the dual capacity of COPAR's project Director and the acting director of an incipient Center for the Study of American Architecture at Columbia University, for which Catha had authored the proposal, that she decided to go both to the ICA meeting in Paris and to icam1 in Helsinki. From then on she laboured to bring the two organizations together and bridge their differences.

#### procedural formalization and geographic expansion

Every organization must undergo growing pains. In spite of having produced a Charter and Statutes at its initial meeting in Helsinki, icam was no exception. There were rumblings at icam3 in Amsterdam about the procedures followed for the selection and appointment of officers, and the restlessness had increased by icam4. Although some of us veterans resisted a competitive slate—with a small membership base it is counterproductive to instigate competition and the inevitably resulting disappointments—it was at the membership meeting in Wrocław that we first instituted a rigorously secret ballot and established mechanisms to ensure that there is more than one vote per member institution.



1/ *icam4* participants at Wojnowice Castle

photo The Print Room, Warsaw University Library

2/ Angela Giral with other participants at *icam 5*

photo Alain Laforest, CCA



The fact that *icam* was a confederation of institutions, and not of individual memberships, was something dear to the heart of several of the founders. One concern was that of protecting the organization from individual members who might use the institution's network as a platform for personal profit, such as dealers in drawings and archives. Yet over the years requests for individual membership have been received by the secretary general, on the one hand and, on the other, there was the intermittent desire to retain the participation of individuals who changed jobs or were unemployed or freelancing and whose good services had done much to promote *icam* goals. When Phyllis Lambert became president in 1984 she asked me, as member at large, to look into the ICOM bylaws and report on possible amendments to *icam* bylaws at the Paris meeting of the Board in 1985. One of the things I noticed was that ICOM had two official languages (English and French), and I suggested we might consider doing the same. To my surprise the French members of the Board firmly decided that it was an unnecessary change. The subject came up again in Madrid in 1994, but official plurilinguism was once more voted down. The prohibitive cost of providing simultaneous translation was one deterring factor.

At *icam8* in New York, in 1996, we tried to assuage this concern by providing abstracts of all papers in French, Spanish and German. This did not impede a franco-phone rebellion at the Edinburgh conference, in which the members of a session decided to deliver their papers in French, without available translation ... and so it goes on. The second amendment I proposed, and that was passed by the membership in Wrocław, was to accept personal members, and that their status would be one of full participation without a vote.

In the United States corporate support often plays a role equivalent to ministerial support in European countries. Thus, when planning *icam 8* we were able to avail ourselves of the support of the Getty Trust to subsidize the attendance not only of Eastern European members but also of colleagues from Latin America. Participation from this new geographic area gained a few members for *icam*, and led to the first conference held in the southern hemisphere—*icam 10* in Rio de Janeiro in 2000. Major support for this excellent conference was provided by the office of the mayor of the city, who happened to be an architect; a model unlikely to be repeated, yet worth noting among the diverse areas of support and involvement of *icam* and its membership.

### **icam** conferences

Conferences have been central to the mission of *icam*; let us remember that the C stood for Conference before it became Confederation. There have been 14 conferences since that first one in 1979. As stated above, they have generally followed the



*Vladimir Slapeta in front of a building by Jarislav Fragner during an icam board meeting in Prague, 1989*

*photo icamnews, vol.5, No. 6, March 1989*

pattern established in Finland: a series of working sessions with the presentation of papers interspersed with architectural visits, and culminating in a general assembly to discuss organizational matters and vote on new members and board positions.

Looking over the programmes and published proceedings of these fourteen conferences it is interesting to note a few of the recurring themes: The nature of an architecture museum, not surprisingly, appeared at the very first conference and keeps reappearing in a variety of forms. From the very first session on The Role and Organization of an Architecture Museum, in Helsinki, to Olgierd Cerner's disquisition, at **icam 4**, on issues such as giving up artistic values for the sake of documentary values and the impact of a shift in museum practices from delectare to docere. This culminated most recently in the discussion on Architecture Museums and Architectural Education, chaired by Barry Bergdoll at **icam 14**.

There are frequent presentations of the programmes and organizations of individual museums, often of those at the host venue, as was the case at **icam 2** in London, but also of guest participants, as with the presentation on The Architectural Collections of the Czech National Museum of Technology given by Vladimir Slapeta at **icam 4**, or on The House of Architecture in Graz, by Wolfdieter Dreiholz at **icam 6**. In the same vein, there have been many presentations and discussions on special aspects of museums of architecture, such as the Presentation of Architecture in Audio-visuals and Exhibitions, in a session chaired by Jean Dethier at **icam 3**, or The Role of the Museum in the Professional Development of Architects, presented by Viktor Baldin at **icam 4**, while an entire session was dedicated to the presentation of architecture through documentary film at **icam 6**, and another one, on Artefacts and Architecture, Collecting and Displaying the 3-Dimensional, was presented at **icam 9**. At **icam 12** there was a session devoted to Architecture and Photography, and another one devoted to Education Through Museums and Exhibitions of Architecture, while at **icam 8** The Role of the Architecture Museum for the Profession and the Public was taken up once more.

Architectural models appeared for the first time at **icam 6**, and at **icam 10** Hakon Lund discussed The Use and Abuse of Architectural Models, while problems in their conservation had an entire session devoted to them at **icam 13**.

At the time of **icam 5** there was a rising concern with the establishment of ethical principles for the acquisition of architectural records. Prompted by the fear among several European members that new American institutions with deep pockets, such as the Getty and the Canadian Center for Architecture, might plunder what they considered as their national treasures, it took many hours of discussion to draft a document that articulated general principles and urged consultation among institutions. As prices for the collections of a few star architects reach astronomical heights,



icam should perhaps turn its attention once more to surveys and registers and those practices that ensure that there is comprehensive documentation of the architecture of a region or a country, and accept the fact that international competition for star collections cannot be regulated.

Such registers or compilations have been more the province of ICA, but they have periodically been reported on at icam meetings. Lorenzo Mannino reported at icam 4 and Jean Pierre Babelon reported the preliminary result for France as 239 separate institutions holding architectural records throughout the country.

Cataloguing is another recurring issue. icam 3 was the first time that an entire day was dedicated to a variety of approaches to cataloguing and creating databases of architectural information. The theme was taken up again at icam 4 and icam 5.

The issues appear, perhaps marginally, in the session on Building Technologies: Their Documentation and Their Presentation to the Public, at icam 8, and there were a couple of presentations at icam 9, but in more recent years it seems no longer to be a concern.

Standards for the handling, loaning and exhibition of architectural drawings held great interest at several early conferences. There were three reports on these issues at icam 4, two more at icam 5, a round table at icam 6, and... nothing since; the recent session at icam 14 on touring exhibitions seems to take for granted that standards exist, and focuses instead on issues of content and audience.

On the other hand, computer generated design and the problems of its documentation and archiving has experienced a rising curve of interest since its first mention at icam 3. Culminating in the interesting reports on the Gau:di European Program by David Peycere, and on Collecting, Archiving and Exhibiting Digital Design Data by Martha Thorne and Kristine Fallon at icam 12 and icam 13. The publication of their study as well as the hot off the press publication on Architecture and Digital Archives from the Cite de l'Architecture in Paris are harbingers of more to come in this no longer new 21st century.

**icamnews and icamprint**

A newsletter for the exchange of information was considered an essential component of icam from its inception, but with limited resources it has not been easy to produce the two issues per year as was intended. The first issues were compiled by the Museum of Finnish Architecture, and distributed by the Swedish Museum of Architecture. Each member was supposed to send 100 copies of a report on its activities and acquisitions, the Museum of Finnish Architecture then compiled these reports, in different sizes and kinds of paper, prepared a colour cover with a table of contents and forwarded them to the Swedish Museum, which in turn mailed them to members.

1/ icam 7

photo icam archives, RIBA

2/ The first issue of icamnews, 1980

image icam archives, RIBA





Susan Stein was editor in 1985. Phyllis Lambert served as editor for vol. 5, no. 2 (Feb. 1986), vol. 5, no. 6 (Mar. 1989). Ruud Browsers, of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, took over from this point and he ceased to use volume and issue numbers; he published the newsletter until 1997. The first issue under the new editor, Charles Hind, was published in December 1997. By 2005 it was clear that the communication of ephemeral news was best accomplished through the *icam* website, and a professional looking *icamprint*, issued every two years, would record news of more lasting merit. Monika Platzer of the Architekturzentrums Wien capably edits both.

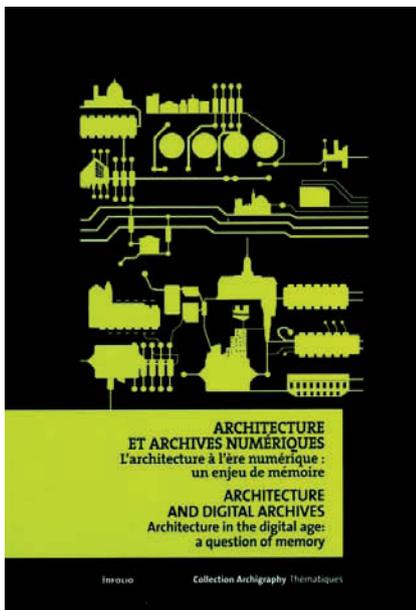
### regional organizations

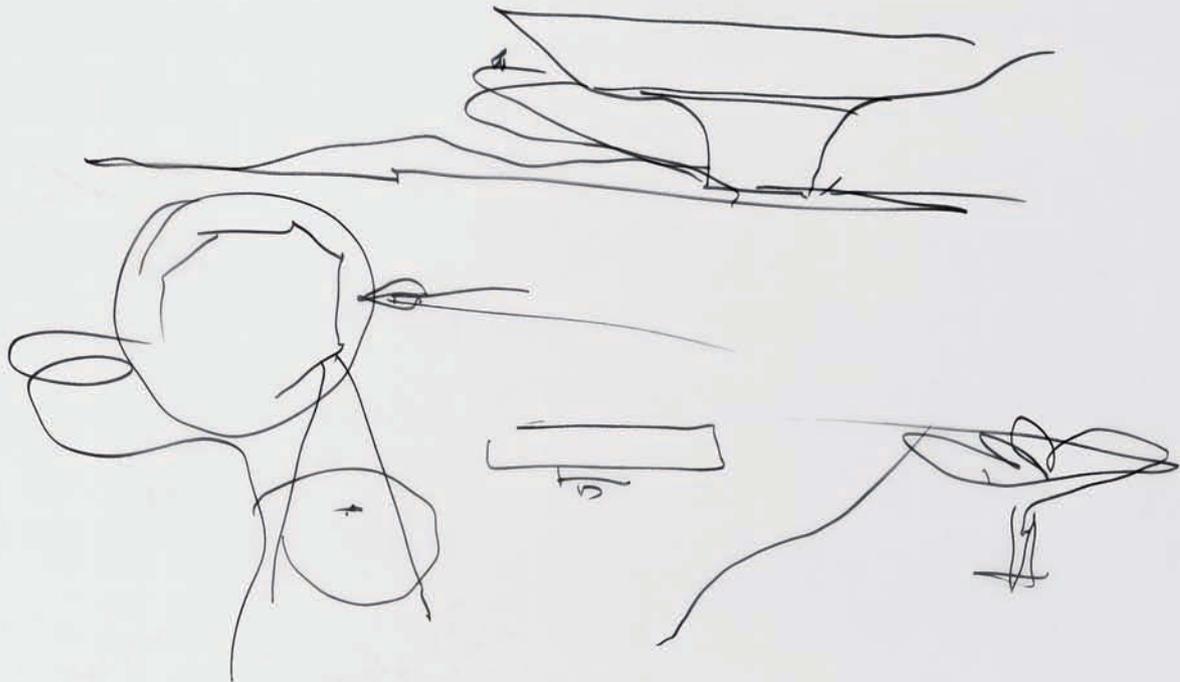
A sure sign of maturity in any organization is the spawning of regional offshoots under its increasingly broad umbrella. Of the various regional bodies, the most successful seem to be *icam Nord* and *icamUK*. There was talk of *icamGermany* but there has not been any news recently, while *icamNorthAmerica* has only been able to hold a couple of meetings among its geographically very scattered members.

*icam* members from Eastern European countries have taken advantage of *icam* conferences to schedule round table discussions in which to address issues of common interest in their shared circumstances. On the other hand a lively discussion on the possible creation of an *icamLatin America* took place over dinner in New York during *icam8*. None of the participants have followed this up yet, but it may still happen one of these years. Today, listed on the *icam* website are six regional groups: *icamEast*, *icamGermany*, *icamMediterranean*, *icamNord*, *icamNorthAmerica*, *icamUK* and Ireland.

### *icam* and the computer

The impact of technology on the practice of architecture and its documentation has been of concern to *icam* members from the outset. It started with the use of the computer in cataloguing and making architectural resources available to a wider audience. At *icam3* Ford Peatross spoke on the first Videodisc produced at the Library of Congress, although he was unable to demonstrate it in the exceedingly sophisticated graphics display monitor provided by the Dutch ministry of culture. Annie Jacques and Christiane Baryla had more success in presenting the videodisc of the Bibliotheque Ste. Genevieve only because they flew from Paris with their own heavy equipment. I will not relate the travails I took in trying to provide a live demonstration of the Avery Index to architectural periodicals, I was proud to relate that we had evidence that it was regularly used by clients in Finland and New Zealand... but we finally had to make do with overhead projections of screen dumps in Amsterdam. What a difference the internet and the world wide web have made in communications.





1/ *Regional meeting of icamEast in Tallinn*

photo Karin Hallas-Murula

2/ *Cover, 'Architecture et archives*

*Numériques / Architecture and Digital Archives', Gau:di, 2008*

image Az W

3/ *Sketch of the Museu de Arte*

*Contemporânea de Niterói, by Oscar Niemeyer during his lecture at icam10, 2000*

image icam archives, RIBA

Today **icam** itself has a web presence, [www.icam-web.org](http://www.icam-web.org), created in 2000 by the Architekturzentrum Wien, and very capably maintained by them since. Almost every participating institution today has a webpage and a great variety of access to its holdings and programmes.

Since 2005, the site [www.architecturearchives.net](http://www.architecturearchives.net) offers researchers and archivists a portal to architectural archives. For architecture professionals it provides recommendations concerning the preservation of their records, namely of digital archives. The Architectural Records Gau:di action broadens its investigation on digital archives: experimental studies are carried out in close collaboration with 'test' agencies in various European countries, and a most interesting report has been produced. In the December 2008 issue of the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* its current editor Hillary Ballon gives a brief outline and presentation of the *JSAH Electronic Multimedia Edition* that will begin publication in 2010, introducing another area in the promotion of the study and appreciation of architecture in which the computer is having a transformative impact.

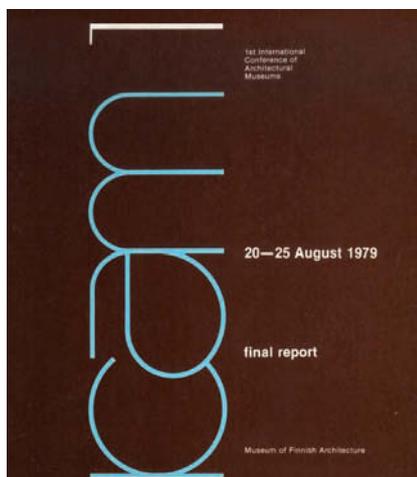
This brief history of **icam** could not have been written without the generous help of extensive conversations with colleagues, especially Catha Grace Rambusch, Maygene Daniels and Ford Peatros.

angela giral, former director of columbia university avery architectural and fine arts library, new york city

## icam conferences, a retrospective view

elisabeth seip, dietmar steiner

16



helsinki – stockholm

elisabeth seip

helsinki 1979

The meeting in Helsinki meant the start of a new era for a group of budding architectural museums. The Finns shared their experiences going back to the founding of The Museum of Finnish Architecture in 1956. The existence of still another hosting institution, The Alvar Aalto Museum in Jyväskylä founded in 1966, was impressive and served to confirm our picture of Finland as a country where the interest in architecture was well established, and that on a special level.

Juhani Pallasmaa, director of the Finnish Museum of Architecture at the time, has given an introduction offering his perspective. For this participant, meeting with other institutions and more than forty experts and enthusiasts combined was equal to being offered a lot of expertise and a future network of great value.

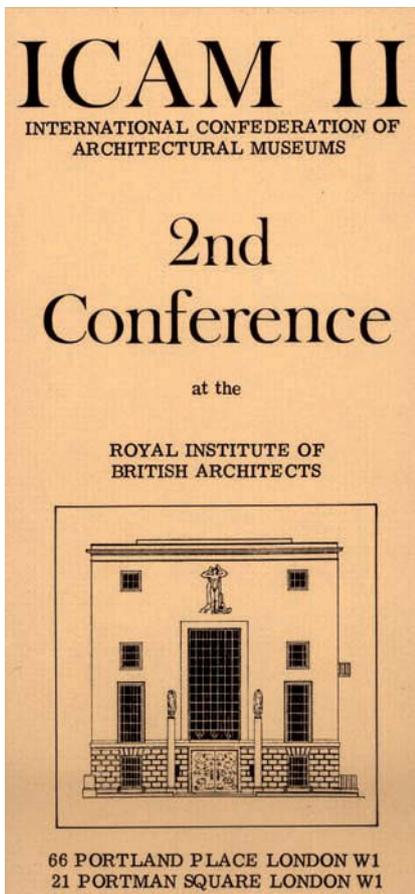
Not only had Finland a high standing regarding architects and architecture. Finland was also beautifully situated so to speak between east and west, which had secured participation from the USSR, most European countries as well as The United States and Canada. The Finns also gave us the **icam** logo which has been kept since – through all later **icam** events, no small achievement indeed.

Apart from actually founding the International Confederation of Architectural Museums, **icam**, the conference discussed affiliation to ICOM. No doubt the participants represented highly different institutions, ranging from complete museums devoted to architecture on one side of the scale, through departments within larger institutions, and with small drawings collections or galleries on the other side. Choosing “Confederation” seemed to allow for most relevant types of institutions. Getting linked to ICOM meant limiting **icam**-membership to non-commercial institutions. The decision to apply for affiliation to ICOM, taken in Helsinki, has given direction to **icam**-activities to this day.

The Finns introduced the very agreeable custom of taking participants to architectural highlights as well as offering a post-congress tour. During our stay we met with the forceful Art Nouveau architecture of the Helsinki area, a very nice evening at Hvitträsk included. The tour went inland, to Jyväskylä and several meetings with the architecture of Alvar Aalto – topped by the visit to Villa Mairea where Maire Gullichsen made us feel like exceptionally privileged people – which we were. With enthusiasm we decided to meet again within two years.

london 1981

London was a natural next meeting venue for **icam**. The conference was hosted by



The British Architectural Library and Heinz Gallery and Drawings Collection, both under the umbrella of the Royal Institute of British Architects, the RIBA. With history dating back to 1834, the RIBA collections offered a wealth of experience and knowledge in the field of architectural collections. Newcomers could but watch and learn when we were introduced to the extensive library, collections of photographs and last but not least, a wealth of impressive drawings. It was a comfort though to find that handling of drawing collections is demanding. A variety of drawing materials, old and new, received in all possible shapes and thinkable conditions, must be sorted out, cleaned and stored. Heaps of drawings in rolls are part of everyday life for those who collect them. Electronic media for drawing and storing was still just a glimmer in the horizon, and never a serious subject for studies at the time.

The working language of *icam* quickly became a subject for heated discussions. In London, where many participants had English as their mother tongue, the question of languages was first raised as a serious topic. Particularly French was strongly wanted as an official language of *icam*. This debate lasted for years, but economy as well as the fact that most participants could tolerably follow proceedings in English, pointed this out as the *icam* working tool.

It was agreed upon having *icam* conferences every second year. National groups, later regional groups, therefore quickly formed where possible, with *icam*UK, today *icam*UK and Ireland, as the first to formalise its existence.

The next *icam* meeting was scheduled for Moscow in 1983; *icam* could at the time easily have become an organisation dominated by institutions from Western Europe and North America, and this should be avoided and even counteracted. A meeting in Moscow could not be realised after all, and Amsterdam became our next meeting point.

#### amsterdam 1984

While *icam*2 in London had focused on collections as such, the conference in Amsterdam reflected the fact that times were changing. In 1984 the introduction of new techniques in archives was the subject. The use of electronic media for organising and retrieving material was one side of the matter. Storing of drawings on Video-discs was also demonstrated. While museum work of today is almost unthinkable without the aid of PCs and other electronic equipment, those were the days when this was still reserved for the few and more resourceful institutions.

An interest in architectural drawings as collector's items and objects for sale had been fertilised by the Post-Modern movement from the early 1980s and its focus on the architectural drawing as an independent object. While museums for architecture traditionally, or at least in many cases, had been founded on the basis of collections, new institutions were appearing who did not have this fundament. Consequently a

18

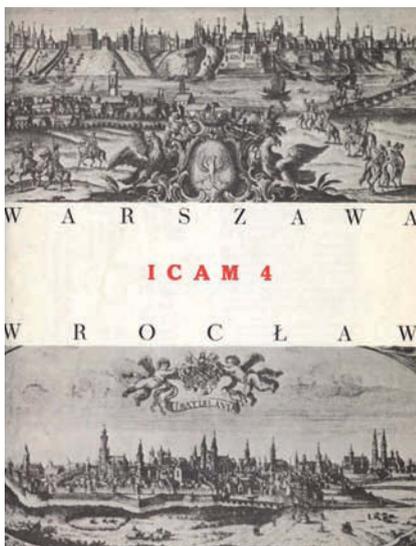


market was created, which led to **icam** discussing codes of ethics. At the time the Netherlands Architecture Institute had not yet been founded. Four years were still to pass before that took place. But the people working towards that goal were around and took us into the very rich museum landscape of the Netherlands, and also to highlights of Dutch modernism. Thus we visited both the van Nelle tobacco factory and the famous Schröder House. These meetings with outstanding samples of pre World War 2 architecture may have worked towards giving the participants an understanding of the buildings of modernism now becoming historic documents. Later, when **docomomo** was founded in Eindhoven in 1990, these visits may have prepared the ground for the relationship between **icam** and **docomomo**.

#### poland (warsaw and wrocław) 1987

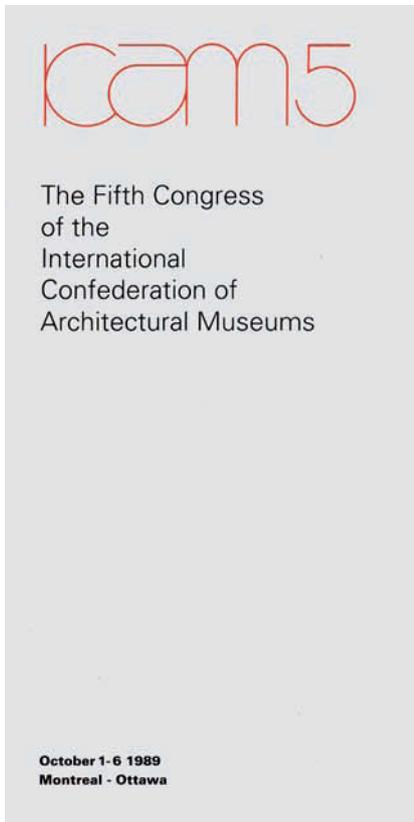
The Muzeum Architektury we Wrocławiu hosted **icam 4**, which took place in both Warsaw and Wrocław. Participants gathered first in Warsaw. It must be remembered that the Iron Curtain still was a very strong feature in the European landscape. It was of great importance to meet both in the East and the West, and the initiative of Olgierd Czerner, then the director of the museum in Wrocław, was most welcome. Warsaw offered the impressive reconstructions of the Old Town and Palace building, well known and much studied at the time due to the amazing efforts laid down in reconstructing the pre-war Warsaw city core.

The chosen theme of the conference was once more collections of architectural drawings and photography. This serves to demonstrate the importance of collecting and disseminating knowledge through these media with regard to architecture. Going by plane from Warsaw to Wrocław we were introduced to the museum of architecture, beautifully situated in a Bernardine convent dating back to around 1500. The museum had been founded in 1965 and building was still going on to convert the old site into a contemporary museum. Looking back from **icam 4** the post-congress tour has left the strongest mark on this participant: In and around Wrocław we met with the smoke-filled industrial landscape of the 19th century, in itself an experience. Next we were taken to Krakow and introduced to what Poland had been and could still have been, had not war damages been so extensive. Finally the Olympic site Zakopane and the Carpathian mountains were opened to us, displaying the rich timber architecture of southern Poland.



#### montreal 1989

**icam 5** became the first gathering of architectural museums in the New World, and as such represented an important step for **icam**, which could easily have remained dominated by European countries. The choice of Montreal was due to the recent



opening of the new building of the CCA, Canadian Centre for Architecture. The centre was initially built on the personal collections of Phyllis Lambert, architect and founder of the institution. The CCA was founded in 1979 and had quickly acquired a considerable collection of books as well as drawings. The conference program mirrored this fact, and sessions focused on the conservation and preservation of works of art on paper. Relevant themes were the storage and treatment of architectural drawings, as well as conservation techniques and the treatment of photographic collections and library preservation techniques. Thus a great step was taken towards lifting the awareness of the importance of architectural documents of all kinds to a new level. The archive facilities of the CCA presented the state of the art, and left a lasting impression on those who took part at the conference. Architect's drawings had by now clearly become not only the working tools of the trade, but also collectors' items. A growing market for architectural drawings had led to icam members recognizing the need for a charter regulating acquisitions of architectural documents. Thus a Charter for Ethics Concerning Acquisitions of Architectural Drawings and Documents was put up for discussion in a plenary session and later adopted. This author regrets she could not take part in the Montreal meeting due to organizing a new exhibition at home at the time. Thus this report was written with material brought back by Brigitte Sauge, also a member of the staff at The Norwegian Museum of Architecture.

#### stockholm 1991

Hässelby Manor offered a promising setting for the meeting, and Stockholm was never more sunny and beautiful than when The Swedish Museum of Architecture hosted icam6 in September 1991. The first professional Swedish architect, Simon de la Valle had designed Hässelby Manor in 1640. Thus the Manor was a very apt choice for our meeting. During the week in Stockholm we also met with names such as Nicodemus Tessin Jr. and his designs for The Stockholm Palace, and a visit to the beautiful Drottningholm and its baroque theatre was a highlight. Modern Swedish architecture was presented through a mini seminar on Gunnar Asplund and a visit to Skogskyrkogården, The Woodland Cemetery, later awarded the status of a World Heritage Site. Sessions were centred on ways to reach a larger audience through exhibitions as well as the role of museums of architecture in public debate. This included presentations of audio-visual methods of presentation, at the time a new world opening up, but still a light age away from the 3D and internet society of today. A special feature of the Stockholm conference was that many institutions from the countries of Eastern Europe were able to attend. The Berlin Wall had come down since we had last met, and our Swedish hosts had made a special effort to acquire new participants. A presentation of docomomo, founded in 1990, was given at the





Stockholm meeting. The representatives of the Swedish Museum of Architecture, with Jöran Lindvall in charge, were excellent and memorable hosts, and everything proceeded with Swedish thoroughness and thoughtfulness. The report from Stockholm is the last from this author. When we first met in Helsinki in 1979

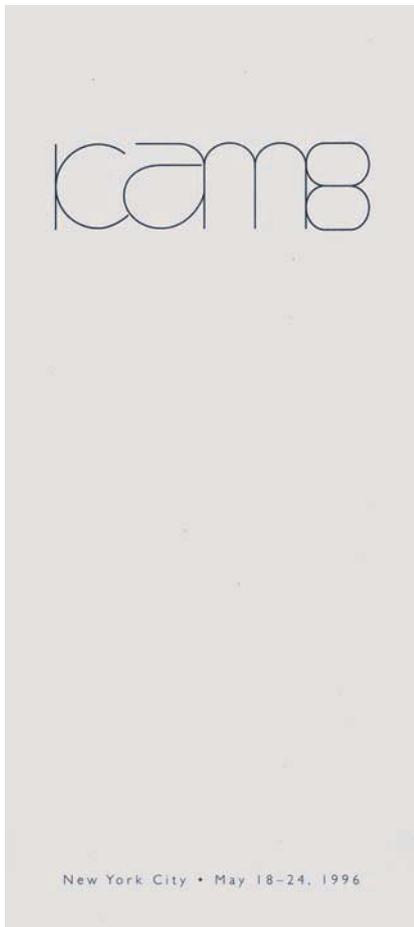
The Finnish Museum of Architecture had been able to gather 20 institutions, then a formidable achievement. When **icam6** met in Stockholm the number of institutions had risen to 84, and the number of **icam** members had surpassed one hundred!

### madrid – oslo dietmar steiner

#### madrid 1994

Madrid was my first **icam** conference. The Architekturzentrum Wien had opened just the year before. But we had heard about the existence of this world confederation of architecture museums called **icam**, and thought it sounded like a useful organisation even if the programme announced was not particularly encouraging for a still young institution like the Az W. It lacked contact with contemporary architecture. An interesting introductory contribution on the development of the architect's career in Spain: the Royal Academy was founded around 1740, from the end of the 18th century architects had to be qualified following a course of studies, and at the end of the 19th century a law followed decreeing that all buildings had to be built by architects. Today Spanish architecture rests on three pillars:

- 1 Collegios, who have the authority to check the plans drawn up by architects, are responsible for the fees charged, organise exhibitions and publish in the field.
- 2 Schools, architects and civil engineers have been trained at the academies since 1844. A boom followed in the 1960s. Today there are more than 12 such architecture schools with 20,000 students, as well as 20,000 practicing architects in Spain.
- 3 Administration, the Ministry for Public Works, Transport and the Environment (MOPTMA) has its own department for the study and the promotion of architecture. Visits to well-stocked museums ensued on the following days. El Escorial is impressive, the incarnation of Catholic Spain. A bombastic exhibition by Tadao Ando, who made a career with rather fine materials and economical buildings. With this PR exhibition he clearly wants to recommend himself for pending major projects. New methods of archiving are also shown in the lectures: for centuries archives had comprised the simple, direct storage of originals – storage cabinets, rolls and card index boxes. Now these archives are being computerised using different hardware and software. How will this data ever be compatible in the future? Can anybody still remember the Videodisc introduced a while back? A magnificent Flamenco evening



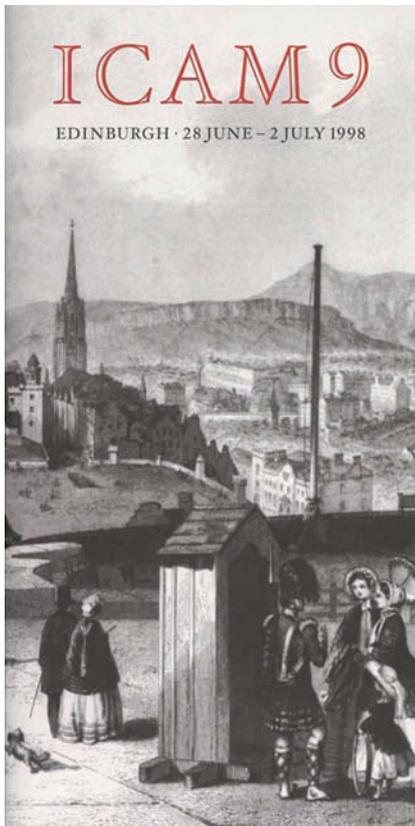
was void of any touristic ingratiation, energetic and consistent; folk culture executed with authenticity and pride.

#### new york 1996

The **icam8** conference began with an exclusive excursion to New Canaan and Philip Johnson's 'architecture museum'. It is immediately clear that Johnson 'Pavilions' are only virtuoso, plagiarised 'commentaries' on the architecture history of our century. In his opening lecture Robert A. Stern claimed 'New York: Center of American Architecture', and based this assertion on the dominance of conservative thinking. The presentation at the MoMA of the interactive Visionaries CD-ROM on Austrian architects who emigrated to the USA was a success. Everybody was fascinated. In the lecture it became obvious that they concentrate strongly on the art historical value of drawings. Although the general context and interconnections were hardly discussed. An example of this is also the permanent exhibition of architectural drawings at the MoMA. Only individual works on paper of doubtful value merely represented the architects' friendship with Philip Johnson. In their fixation with individual drawings with no established reference to specific projects, which are apparently veritable architecture pederasts to the Americans. The members of **icam** are currently split into two groups: the archives and those who organise events. In competition with Paris, I announced Vienna – in cooperation with Budapest, Prague etc. – as the venue for the **icam10** conference in 2000. Until then, however, the position of **icam** itself has to be consolidated. The current bias on archives has to change in favour of addressing currently active organisations.

#### edinburgh 1998

The **icam9** conference in Edinburgh. Classical architecture, sandstone façades like in Bordeaux. I hold a lecture on the culture industry and the role of the architecture museums. A day with an endless number of individual presentations, regrettably without any discussion of the contents. A trip to Glasgow. An introduction to Alexander 'The Greek' Thomas and C.R. Mackintosh, followed by a session at the Edinburgh College of Art. What's new? All on the Internet now. An exciting presentation of Jöran Lindvall's new museum in Stockholm. A visit to the restoration work in the King's Dining Room at Edinburgh Castle was disturbing. As if they were renovating the lobby of a Ralais and Chateaux Hotel. Also dubious in conversational terms: "It didn't happen here, but it could have done". At the General Assembly we rescinded the application to hold the **icam** conference in Vienna, which we had supported with élan and conviction, in favour of Rio de Janeiro because there was currently a favourable political climate there and **icam** would be leaving the Northern



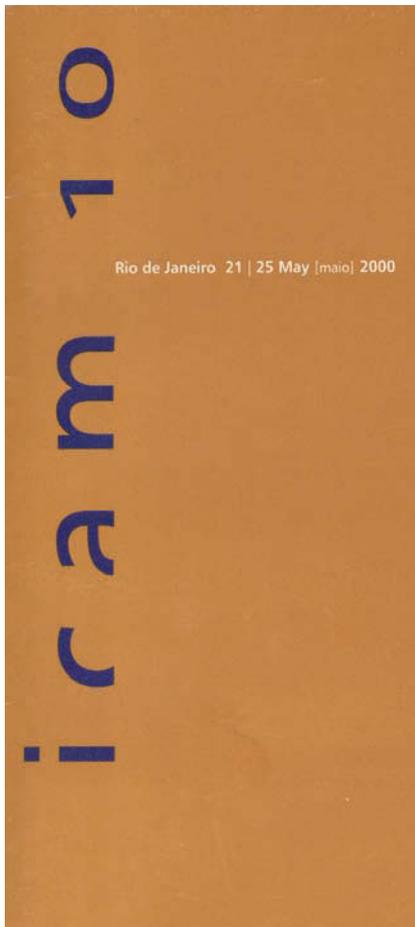
hemisphere for the first time. The election of the new board went smoothly: Michael Snodin is now president. Final event in the town hall. Humorous mayor, the food is an acquired taste but good whisky, and then everybody participated in traditional Scottish dancing till midnight. The problem for *icam*: the majority of work is still concerned with archives. In the new board I at last have an opportunity to bring the real issues today to the floor: architecture education, exhibitions etc.

#### rio de janeiro 2000

*icam10* was the first conference held in South America, with opening speeches by Jorge Czajkowski, Michael Snodin, the mayor of Rio — who is an architect — and Oscar Niemeyer. Roberto Segre provided a useful overview of the development of South American architecture. The Europeans were, above all, fascinated by the landscape: local urban and architectural traditions had been wiped out, although 300 new towns had been founded instead. In the 20th century immigration had been responsible for the development of the modern movement on the continent. Industrialisation and the Tango. Consistent modern architecture up into the 1950s and '60s. Then came dictatorship and economic collapse. Today: international business architecture for investment and invisible efforts to repair the mega-cities. The surprising explanation for the insoluble housing problem: it is simply a climatic necessity. What's new? Session: extensive collecting by the English. The oral history of architects. Apparently Scotland had collected all of the plans in existence. Session: in the age of digitalisation an 'original' is only the print from the original configuration of software and hardware as every export of the data alters the original document. Accordingly, above all hard copies should be collected alongside unstable storage media. A visit to the Centro Arquitetura in the evening. The next session was on 'Beyond Europe': informative on the identity and history of Latin American architecture. A trip to Samba school in the evening. Extremely dedicated, extremely energetic, passionate and sexy. It is still based on the slaves' insurrection against their masters. General assembly: our application to hold *icam11* is greeted with enthusiasm. The design for the *icam* website is approved. This was followed by a delightful trip on a charter ship to Niteroi, to Niemeyer's new museum. Now I was beginning to understand Rio, and to love the place. It really is the most beautiful metropolis in the world.

#### vienna 2002

The conference begins with a walking tour that ends at the Semper Depot (with its exemplary restoration by Carl Pruscha) as a highlight. Hermann Czech gives the opening lecture on Austrian architecture. Session on East Europe: Petr Krajčis' report on the catastrophic flooding in Prague was impressive. Maria Khurstaleva from the



Schusev Museum in Moscow held an impressive analytical lecture on the situation of archives in Russia. The first and last time since 1994 that the Russian architecture museum has been represented. Session on the architecture of museums: impressive projects by Roger Diener and Herzog and de Meuron. An interesting presentation of the new architecture museums in Oslo, Munich, Paris and Helsinki. The new connection of the RIBA collection with the V+A in London, and the new building for the MoMA in New York. Session on architecture and the digital image: an excellent presentation of the digitization of the gothic floor plans of St. Stephan's Cathedral was shown at the Academy of Fine Arts. Session on architectural exhibitions: all of the major players were present – CCA, MoMA, NAI, Cité Paris – and the discussion of concepts for architecture exhibitions was open and serious. The central curatorial rules are: biography, how is it, what does it mean. Permanent exhibitions are based on didactic principles. New paths are to be taken here.

Melk. The general assembly was held in the abbey. Discussion on the reworking of the Code of Ethics. Boat trip to Spitz and then on to Dürnstein. Coaches drove us to Mautern in the Nikolaihof. Excellent guided tour with an insight into the oldest winery in Central Europe... terrific buffet. A fitting climax with which to end the conference.

#### venice 2004

Palazzo Badoer, the location of the conference, is the Institute for the History of Architecture, by Francesco Dal Co. Publication of the twice yearly icamnews is to cease. The new icamprint is developed to replace it, along with the news section on the website. Beautiful lecture on Scarpa by Francesco Dal Co, followed by a trip to see the magnificent Archivio di Stato in the Frari church. An engaging bottom-up story from Turkey. The Arkitera Architecture Centre from Istanbul began with star speakers – the Internet – in the meantime they have become a member of icam – Gau:di, Fundació Mies van der Rohe – and is now looking for a location. The Benaki Museum in Athens has its Neohellenic Architecture Archives. The DARC is planned as the national Italian architecture museum and is to use the new MAXXI by Zaha Hadid. To date they have purchased the archives of Aldi Rossi, Nervi and parts of Scarpa, whose estate is still scattered. The MART is a special case, isolated in Rovereto with 30,000 square metres by Mario Botta. A presentation of a range of permanent exhibitions: V+A – *I am a Museum*; NAI – *I am a Gem*; Sweden – *Children's Educational Playground*; Az W – *The Storage of the Knowledge Base*; each has around 300 square metres at its disposal. The goal of the Gau:di A2 project was to merge and develop archival collections on architecture and urban development; the results can be seen online on the Architectural Archives in Europe website ([www.archivesarchitecture.gaudi-programme.eu](http://www.archivesarchitecture.gaudi-programme.eu)). In contrast, the pragmatic

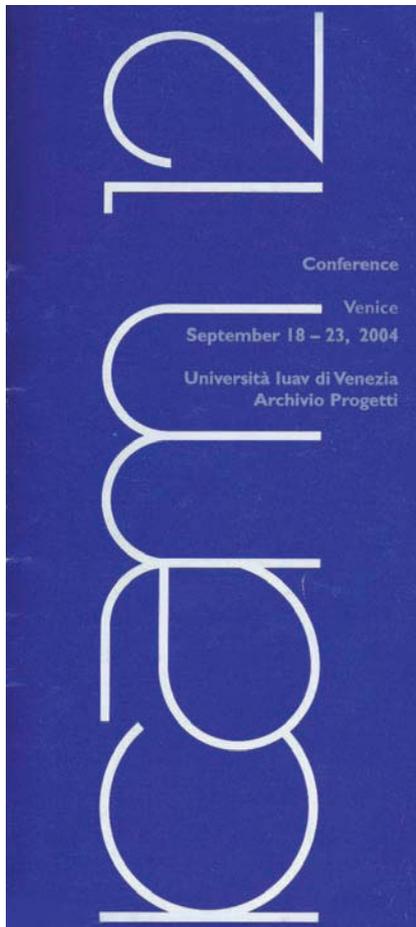


approach of the project by the Art Institute in Chicago: collecting digital material as PDF and in TIFF format, with a plethora of confusing standards to take into consideration. The industry intervenes heavily in museum work here, dictating standards and the technical equipment and support required for these. Basic culture-political thinking is required on the issue.

An afternoon trip to the Glyptothek, by Canova, and the Brioni complex of Scarpa. An extremely interesting morning session with Kurt W. Foster, Francesca Ferguson and Mirko Zardini on their concepts and exhibitions for the Architecture Biennial. Finally, the basic question for exhibitions: stage design or information? Session in Vicenza on education: a great deal of experimentation, the topic is still new. A legendary general assembly in the Teatro Olimpico. Opening of the Scarpa exhibition. Magnificent dinner at Villa Pojana, the Palladio villa that was in a dreadful state of repair 30 years before. It has now been magnificently restored, and serves as an exclusive location for receptions and weddings. **icam** Venice worked extremely well.

#### athens 2006

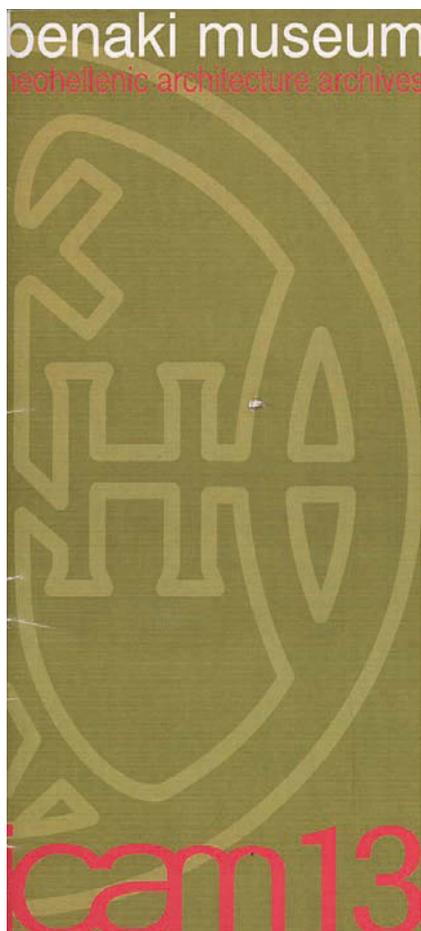
Reception in the old Benaki Museum. Smalltalk about the major collectors – CCA, Getty, Pompidou etc. – who have to talk to one another to avoid being taken advantage of over the purchases of their archives by star architects. The costs involved in the professional storage and management of archives have skyrocketed. A star architect should have two possibilities: donating his works free of charge to the archives of a professional institution, which keeps him alive in the history architecture, or selling his papers to private collectors, subsequently withdrawing them from the academic and scientific realms; or the establishment of their own foundation. Lectures on Byzantine urban design from the 10th to the 12th century, and Neo-classical architecture. Session on education: excellent project for the new Cité in Paris, where pupils and teachers from 17 technical colleges were reproducing an apartment from the Cité in Marseilles by Le Corbusier. Well reflected, with good pedagogic supervision. They introduce the craftspeople to be involved and their teachers to the modern movement. This closed with an excellent overview by Jean Linsner of the educational activities of the Architectural Foundation in Chicago. Session on disappearing data: again, the Gau:di programme on digitization with no really useful results. And again, the Art Institute in Chicago, whose research is being developed as an adapted database dedicated to digital-born data. They insist on PDF and TIFF format as standards. Slowly the question emerges as to why. Why should we collect digital data at all now? Doesn't a collection need a temporal distance for an evaluation to have been made. Shouldn't we wait 30 years, and then entrust what remains from today to the 'digital archaeologists'. Every database's structure, all software will



always lag behind developments in the industry. Millions of Euros in sponsoring and public funds are invested alone in catching up with the industry, which earns on this too. A surprising lecture on the history of the modern movement in Alexandria began with Adolf Loos and his 1910 department store for S. Stein. Then came the European influence from Switzerland, France and Italy. An exciting and genuinely multicultural modern city. Then Nasser and his contacts in the Soviet Union, and now kitsch, Mediterranean regionalism and embarrassing deconstruction by young architects. Wim de Wit showed the Shulman photographs of a house by Neutra in Palm Springs taken under Neutra's supervision, and the Shulman photos of the same building without Neutra. It could be seen how the architect stage-managed an iconoclastic modern approach in the images. On the beginnings of architectural research: Ellen van Impe, a student from Leuven, presented her doctoral thesis on the exciting work of Antoine Schaye, who documented the monuments of Belgium from 1849–52; Przemysław Wątroba presented Kazimierz Stronczynski's first state inventory of the monuments of the past in Poland (1844–1855); Bruce Laverty from the Philadelphia Athenaeum presented the early documents on Philadelphia using contemporaneous fire insurance sources. The general assembly was planned for the National History Museum, the former-Parliament building, but could not be held there because protesting students and the use of tear gas by the police barred our entry. An improvised session was held in the old Benaki Museum. The new board was approved.

#### oslo 2008

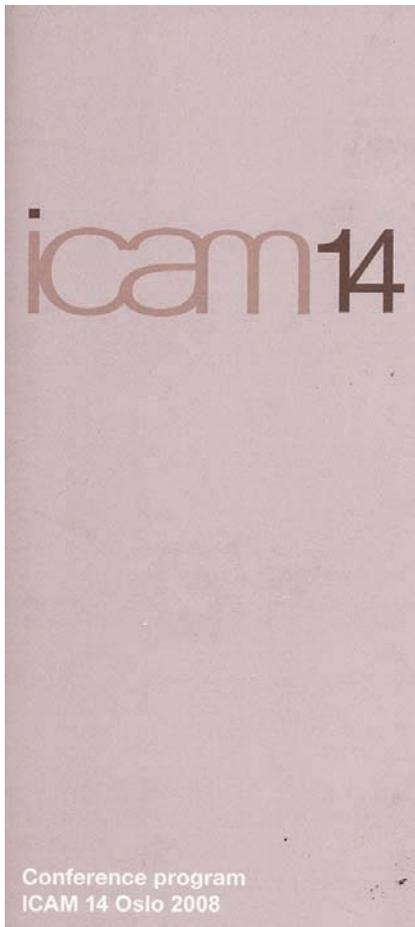
The conference is overshadowed by politically motivated changes in the world of the architecture museums. Independent houses are encompassed by large museum organisations, and lose their identity. Ingerid Helsing Almaas, editor in chief of Arkitektur N, gave an introduction into contemporary Norwegian architecture, followed by an inspiring lecture by Elisabeth Seip on the beginnings of the countries architecture. The Society for the Preservation of Norwegian Ancient Monuments, founded in 1844, has a beautiful name in Norwegian: Fortidsminneforeningen (Lit., society for the commemoration of progress). The discovery of the landscape began around 1820, from 1837 all of the stave churches were measured. Kaiser Wilhelm later bought one and had it rebuilt on the Czech border in Poland. The first half of the 19th century is dominated by the Swiss Style. The session on collecting architecture was primarily interesting due to the contributions made by Barry Bergdoll and Wim de Wit. Bergdoll showed the complicated history of the MoMA; Wim rejected the idea of museums purchasing buildings. Michael Govan, director of the LACMA, wanted to initiate such a project in 2007 as accommodation for his staff. Somehow the topic remained on the day's agenda. It is a pity that the European



situation was not taken into consideration here. Hedmark Museum: the director complained that Fehn's installation had been placed under protection order, and that the museum for local history only had a permanent display – also bemoaning the functional constraints where the glass-tiled roof let the rain in. The Lund glass protection over the ruins of the old cathedral has created a new cathedral with excellent acoustics. Session 2 on architecture museums and architectural education: Should students' works be collected? Of course not. Interesting models were presented at the **icam** sub-group on education – which should have had a separate session dedicated to the topic where target groups and the appropriate models could have been discussed. The topic for 2010: How to reach the people!

Session on architectural book publishing: the eBook was explained. Lars Müller insisted on the autonomy of a book even when published to accompany an exhibition. And Paul Finch of Architectural Record made an unorthodox announcement for the World Architecture Festival in Barcelona, explaining the marketing measures involved. This is somehow the pinnacle of former-architecture as a culture industry, which only counts as a business proposition. The new Code of Ethics was again under discussion at the general assembly, along with an initiative to save the Swedish Museum of Architecture.

A relaxed walk to the harbour, and an impressive boat trip over the Oslo Fjord to Hvalstrand. The many islands, and simple unpretentious houses everywhere explain the Scandinavian culture of building, where the egotistical aliens of a global culture of the spectacle could only be a disturbance. A country free of "architecture" has something moving about it. Wonderful food, a wonderful atmosphere, and there was even dancing. Just the right songs for the oldies.



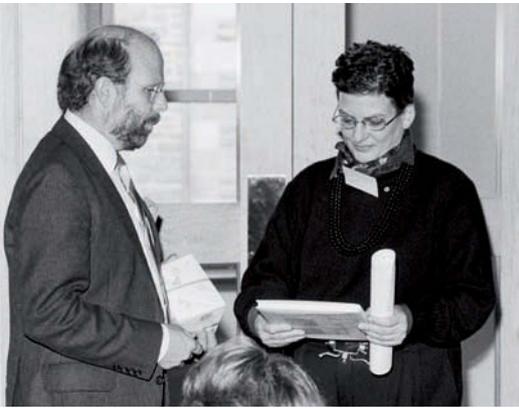
### epilogue

Every **icam** conference since 1994 has provided a profound overview into the architecture in each of the local situations concerned. Alongside the lectures and panel discussions, the networking that took place between the members of **icam** has led to a strengthening of the community both on a personal level and in terms of content. The dominant themes of these last 15 years of **icam** have been the reworking of a Code of Ethics under increasingly globalised conditions, the enormous challenges for the future of archives presented by the digital age, and the increasing significance of educational activities and workshops for all institutions. A dedicated **icam** website and **icamprint** have established new instruments for communication. This architecture epoch has also generated a gigantic boom of global star architecture, which we have now reached the end of. **icam** has increasingly dedicated itself to its critical contemporaries in this time and, with the collective memory of its members' archives, will continue to accompany current developments in architecture with curiosity and equanimity.

elisabeth seip, secretary general, fortidsminneforeningen, oslo  
dietmar steiner, director, architekturzentrum wien, president of **icam**, vienna

## 13 years with the **icam** board

**jöran lindvall**



*Jöran Lindvall and Phyllis Lampert at icam 5*  
photo Michel Boulet, CCA

I was quite new as director of the Swedish Museum of Architecture when Lisbet Balslev Jørgensen, at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, suggested that I should become the new secretary general of **icam**. Phyllis Lambert, who was still the president, sent John Harris to Stockholm in order to check me out. I was accepted, and I was elected at **icam** 4 in Warsaw and Wrocław, Poland in 1987. Monique Mosser became the new president.

**icam** was already a fairly well established organisation, even if we had less control over members and member registers and the finances were always bad. This was before the time when modern computers became commonplace. **icamnews** was a strength in the organization with its regular reports about important events among the members, lists of current exhibitions, seminars, new acquisitions and many other things. **icam** was quite a diverse organisation; a small number of museums with both collections, exhibitions and other activities; a number of archives, some of them were part of larger archival organizations, others were part of university archives or libraries; some institutions involved in the care of existing buildings, where archival knowledge is important; some research institutions and a few places mainly or solely devoted to exhibiting or publishing architecture. Later on city information centres and even private collectors were added to the list of members. To our surprise we later found that prominent members of **icam** also acted as dealers in the field of architectural drawings, documents and prints.

Many years later, when I had left as director of the Swedish museum, I was commissioned by the Norwegian Cultural Council to investigate the possible development of a Norwegian Museum of Architecture. I presented a more detailed description of **icam** and its members there. That part of my investigation was then translated into English by Micheal Snodin and published in **icamnews** July to December 2001. **icam** was heterogeneous not only in terms of organizations but also in terms of historical, cultural and economic background. Most member institutions were poor and some operated under miserable conditions, particularly those in the eastern European countries. A few were very rich and sometimes expected contributions from others that were far beyond their possibilities. Many individuals had an academic or a cultural background with at least something of a critical attitude towards architecture as a phenomenon. Others had their background in the world of architects, and some believed that architecture museums mainly existed to promote architects' works and successes. Some, like myself, were of the opinion that architecture museums should pay an interest in the entire built environment, not only what has been designed by architects, and to the processes in which the built environment is produced and maintained, whereas most members focused their interest only or mainly on architectural masterpieces.

The great diversities within icam caused many interesting discussions and sometimes also contradictions, which even became antagonistic in a few cases. But the differences mainly helped us to learn from each other, and made our meetings fruitful and inspiring. When I came back from icam board meetings or conferences my collaborators often felt anxious that I brought with me too many new ideas and initiatives – more than we had the capacity to carry out. And yet I believe that all icam institutions and individuals could have gleaned even more from our meetings and collaborations if we had listened even better to each other and been even more open to understanding our different positions and arguments. Architecture museums are, like many other institutions in the cultural world, subject to narrow-mindedness and stubbornly bound to preconceived ideas. I can easily place myself first in line of accused for having behaved accordingly. One of the first difficult problems that the new icam board had to deal with in preparing the 1987 icam5 conference in Montreal concerned the fact that rich institutions in one part of the world could buy drawings and drawing collections related to buildings in other parts of the world. My own museum was at that time deeply involved in this kind of issue as the entire Asplund collection at our museum had been offered for sale by those who owned parts of the collection and believed that they owned all of it. I had visited the Getty Foundation in L.A., who had planned to buy the collection, and explained all the complications in this affair to them, and they withdrew their interest. Other European institutions had similar experiences and some of these did not end as peacefully as my own dealings with the Getty. At the conference in Montreal the general assembly accepted the icam Code of Ethics that regulates how member institutions should respect one another's interests regarding drawings collections. It was however quite clear that some institutions with great financial resources were not quite satisfied with this decision and that some poor European institutions found that the Code of Ethics was far too weak. Montreal was also the place for hard and even antagonistic discussions about language. Maurice Culo from Brussels led the demand for French to become an official language, not because the French speaking delegates could not manage in English but for cultural political reasons. Their demand was rejected only after Andras Hadik from Budapest proposed that Hungarian should also become an official language. Some years later the French feelings for icam led to a sad and tragic result. Ann van Loo from Brussels had been an active member of icam and its board for a long time. She proposed that Brussels should take responsibility for icam7. Together with Winfried Nerdinger I went to Brussels in order to convince the board of their museum to support Ann van Loo. But they decided not to arrange the conference, and shortly afterwards Ann was forced to leave the museum. I must add that all French speaking members did not participate in the boycott of icam, on the contrary.

icamnews, July – December 2001  
image Az W





1/ *Andras Hadik at icam5 in Montreal*

photo Michel Boulet, CCA

2/ *'A Guide to the Archival Care of Architectural Records: 19th–20th centuries', ICA 2000*

image Az W

3/ *'Conference Proceedings'*

*Vision and Reality – Social Aspects of Architecture and Urban Planning in the Modern Movement, 5th docomomo conference, Stockholm, Sweden 1998*

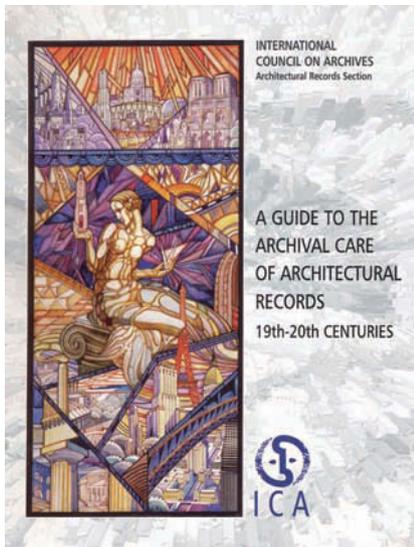
image Az W

One effect of the failure in Brussels was that the *icam* 7 conference had to be postponed for a year. Madrid successfully arranged *icam* 7 in 1994.

1991 my own museum arranged *icam* 6 in Stockholm, devoted to Methods for Architecture Museums to Reach a Larger Audience. It was hard work for most of us to prepare the conference but it also pushed us forward and inspired us in our efforts to develop a museum devoted to the general public. We had already taken the first steps toward a new and much larger museum, and when the new premises were inaugurated at the end of the 1990s we raised the annual number of visitors from 50,000 to more than 160,000. A few years later, when the museum had free admission for a period, the annual number of visitors came to more than 360,000. We had proved that architecture was a concern of interest to many and that knowledge about architecture and the built environment can be presented to the general public in an understandable way.

In the early 1990s I had advance from secretary general to vice-president and the idea was that I should then take over as president. But the preparations for my own new museum had come into a period of hard work and I decided not to candidate. Instead I agreed to devoting effort to the intensification of contacts between *icam* and ICA, the very large International Council on Archives. For a long time ICA had a special working group on architectural archival records. That group had regularly come to the *icam* conferences as a part of their own activities, and one of them participated in our board meetings.

In the late 1990s ICA established a Project Group on Architectural Records in order to formulate recommendations for archival care of architectural records. I had the privilege to visit and work with that group a couple of times and I found their work very efficient and intelligently carried out. Maygene Daniels and David Peycere, who are also active in *icam*, were some of the members in that group. The result was published by ICA 2000 as *A Guide to the Archival Care of Architectural Records*. I also once visited an ICA conference, held in Greece, gave a presentation of *icam* and had the opportunity to talk to many delegates about our work. To my surprise I found that some of these delegates were under the impression that *icam* was a “club of rich collectors of architectural drawings”. I did my best to correct this impression. I often had large ambitions for architecture museums – believing that we could play an important role in society with our knowledge of the built environment. Once in Prague Vlademir Slapeta had arranged for us to meet representatives of the ministry of culture. The meeting was held in the golden room by Plécnik at Prague castle. In the absence of the president I explained to the best of my ability how important *icam* was. To my disappointment they only listened very half-heartedly. Afterwards we discovered that representatives of the eastern European countries had been taking



important steps in liquidating the Warsaw pact next door in the castle. Our significance in the world was suddenly reduced to a different dimension – even for me. Some years before we opened our new museum in Stockholm I wanted to prepare for an international conference during the first year in our new premises. I was interested in a focus on a new and more open-minded understanding of the origins and the variations in the European modern movement. I know that some icam members collaborated on a similar research project and planned a seminar about this in Vienna. I asked if I could participate and present my offer of an international icam conference, and this was accepted. When I came to Vienna I was, however not admitted to the seminar and only offered an opportunity to present my ideas to a few people afterwards. I was also kindly invited to the evening party, where I met most of the participants, but was not in a position to present my offer of a conference to all of them.

Quite soon afterwards I established contacts with docomomo and in 1998, a short time after the inauguration of our new premises, we together organized a conference about Vision and Reality – Social Aspects of Architecture and Urban Planning in the Modern Movement. In preparing that conference I found that docomomo had a much more effective way of organizing this kind of conference than I had ever experienced at icam. There a call for papers resulted in a very large number of interesting contributions from which we had to select only the best. In preparing icam conferences we had always had only very few papers in response to our calls.

I found that docomomo and icam had a great deal in common. For me it was natural to think about future possible collaborations, perhaps even joint organization between docomomo and icam. I could see many advantages in collaborations between these two organizations, both were relatively new, small and in many senses weak, but had a number of the same kind of members. Unfortunately I did not receive a positive response to this suggestion within icam.

My memories of icam are mainly positive, but I think it is important also to remember the shortfalls and challenges. It is from these that we can learn for the future. After almost ten years I returned to icam in Oslo 2008, where I found icam to be strong and vital.



jöran lindvall, former director of the swedish museum of architecture, stockholm

## icam from 1979 to 2010

### 32 presidents

**John Harris**  
United Kingdom 1979–1984

**Phyllis Lambert**  
Canada 1984–1987

**Monique Mosser**  
France 1987–1989

**Winfried Nerdinger**  
Germany 1989–1994

**Wim de Wit**  
United States 1994–1998

**Michael Snodin**  
United Kingdom 1998–2006

**Dietmar Steiner**  
Austria 2006–present

### vice presidents

**Juhani Pallasmaa**  
Finland 1979–1981

**Heinrich Klotz**  
Germany 1981–1984

**Olgierd Czerner**  
Poland 1984–1987

**Winfried Nerdinger**  
Germany 1987–1989

**Jöran Lindvall**  
Sweden 1989–1998

**Marilyn Symmes**  
United States 1998–2002

**Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus**  
Switzerland 2002–2006

**Ulf Grønvold**  
Norway 2006–present

### secretary generals

**Asko Salokorpi**  
Finland 1979–1984

**Winfried Nerdinger**  
Germany 1984–1987

**Jöran Lindvall**  
Sweden 1987–1989

**Vladimir Slapeta**  
Czecholovakia 1989–1991

**Elisabeth Seip**  
Norway 1991–1994

**Angela Giral**  
United States 1994–1998

**Mariet Willinge**  
The Netherlands 1998–present

### treasurers

**Rudolph Brouwers**  
The Netherlands 1989–1997

**Dietmar Steiner**  
Austria 1998–2006

**Anna Tonicello**  
Italy 2006–present

### committee

**Victor Baldin**  
Russia 1979–1984

**Olgierd Czerner**  
Poland 1979–1984

**Phyllis Lambert**  
Canada 1979–1984

**Henrik O. Andersson**  
Sweden 1979–1981

**Annie Jacques**  
France 1981–1984

**Dick van Woerkman**  
The Netherlands 1984–1987

**Lisbeth Balslev-Jørgensen**  
Denmark 1984–1987

**Monique Mosser**  
France 1984–1987

**Jean Dethier**  
France 1984–1987

**Angela Giral**  
1984–1994, 1998–2002

**Monique Mosser**  
France 1984–1987

**Wim de Wit**  
USA 1987–1994, 1998–2000

**Elisabeth Seip**  
Norway 1987–1991

**Vladimir Slapeta**  
Czecholovakia 1987–1989

**Rudolph Brouwers**  
The Netherlands 1982–1989

**Eva Jasienko**  
Poland 1987–1989

**Lori Gross**  
Canada 1989–1991

**Ann van Loo**  
Belgium 1989–1994

**András Hadik**  
Hungary 1991–1998

**Wilfried Nerdinger**  
Germany 1994–1998

**Karin Hallas**  
Estonia 1994–2004

**Jill Lever**  
United Kingdom 1994–1998

**Werner Oechslin**  
Switzerland 1994–1997

**Ulf Grønvold**  
Norway 1998–2006

**Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus**  
1998–2002, 2006–present

**Jane Thomas**  
United Kingdom 1998–present

**Dominique de Font-Reaulx**  
France 2002–2004

**Nicholas Olsberg**  
Canada 2002–2004

**Anna Tonicello**  
Italy 2002–2006

**Peter Reed**  
United States 2004–2006

**Corinne Belier**  
France 2004–present

**Gerald R. Beasley**  
United States 2006–2008

**Irena Murray**  
United Kingdom 2006–present

**Barry Bergdoll**  
United States 2008–present

**icamnews**

**Henrik Andersson**  
Sweden 1979–1984

**Susan Stein**  
United States 1985

**Phyllis Lampert**  
Canada 1986–1989

**Rudolph Brouwers**  
Netherlands 1990–1996

**Charles Hind**  
United Kingdom 1997–2004

**icamprint**

**Monika Platzler**  
Austria 2005–present

**icamweb** 2000

[www.icam-web.org](http://www.icam-web.org)

**icamconferences**

icam1  
**Helsinki** 20–25 August, 1979

icam2  
**London** 26 April – 1 May, 1981

icam3  
**Amsterdam** 17–22 September, 1984

icam4  
**Warsaw, Wrocław** 22–25 June, 1987

icam5  
**Montreal** 1–8 October, 1989

icam6  
**Stockholm** 1–7 September, 1991

icam7  
**Madrid** 9–13 May, 1994

icam8  
**New York City** 18–24 May, 1996

icam9  
**Edinburgh** 28 June – 2 July, 1998

icam10  
**Rio de Janeiro** 21–25 May, 2000

icam11  
**Vienna** 22–26 September, 2002

icam12  
**Venice** 18–23 September, 2004

icam13  
**Athens** 4–6 June, 2006

icam14  
**Oslo** 26–29 May, 2008

**icam 30 years – helsinki revisited**  
20–22 August, 2009

icam15  
**Paris** 29 May – 3 June, 2010

## interview with phyllis lambert

gerald beasley

34

1/ Phyllis Lambert, founding director and chair of the board of trustees, with Mirko Zardini, CCA director in the galleries of the CCA exhibition 'Actions: What You Can Do With the City?'

photo CCA

2/ Helsinki Senate Square

photo Museum of Finnish Architecture



Phyllis Lambert, architect, first made architectural history as Director of Planning of the Seagram Building, New York (1954–58). She is Founding Director and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA) in Montréal, founded in 1979 on the conviction that architecture is a public concern. She was a Founding Member of the Board of the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (icam), which she served as President from 1984–1987 and as editor of *icamnews* from 1986–89.

1979 was a critically important year for museums of architecture, when both the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal and the International Confederation of Architectural Museums were founded. In their different ways, both organizations have promoted an enormous range of best practices in collecting, preserving and displaying architecture over the last 30 years. From your point of view, what was the impetus behind their creation?

I guess it was one of those extraordinary moments in history when there is a need for something and it just coheres. There was a great deal of destruction at that time, of our cities, of our past. There was also a new consciousness about the role of documents in the history of architecture. I decided I had to collect these documents, and a lot of other people had decided to do so.

In a sense there were all these actors in search of an author. Archives and collections had been forming in the Scandinavian countries. The Archives d'architecture moderne in Belgium had been formed. In the United States, Catha Rambusch was working on COPAR (the Cooperative Preservation of Architectural Records) founded in 1973. The Musée d'Orsay was in the planning stages, as was the DAM (Deutsches Architektur Museum). The RIBA collection was universally considered the lodestone under the direction of John Harris. The Getty was in some form of planning too. Meanwhile, particular problems arose from time to time, such as what would happen with Louis Kahn's drawings. I had been collecting architectural drawings since 1954 when working on the Seagram building, and John Harris and I were both intrigued and fixated on the archive – the whole body of work rather than the individual drawing. At first my contacts with John were quite formal. We started to discuss how to find such documents. We were also interested in libraries, and I was already interested in photographs. One day John told me there was a meeting of architecture museum curators in Helsinki, and I just said "Oh, terrific, I'll go". So I went, and met all these other people who were also wanting to connect.

That was the first meeting of *icam*, 20–25 August, 1979.

Yes. The sessions were held in a formerly fortified island. Helsinki is a beautiful city,



36



*Heinrich Klotz at icam 1*

*photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture*

with extraordinary late-19th century classical buildings lining the edge of the waterfront, reminding me of Montréal. And a fabulous study tour was arranged visiting the wooden stave churches, Eliel Saarinen and his colleagues and especially the work of Alto in all its stages. Such trips became a staple of *icam* conferences.

In all there were 34 participants from 16 countries. The point of the meeting was to see if we should form an organization. John Harris was vocal in his support. The kingmaker was Heinrich Klotz, Director of the DAM in Frankfurt. Viktor Baldin from the Schusev Museum in Moscow was also there, and we were excited about that, as none of us had ever visited the East European collections. In the end John was appointed chairman and Asko Salokorpi from the Finnish Museum of Architecture was appointed secretary general. I was appointed to the Executive Committee, representing North America. We then had to decide what the major issues were for the new organization, and these became the charter.

#### Was there a consensus?

Yes. We broke into smaller groups for workshops. Some went off to one room, some to another, and then we all just sat down and wrote. It is very interesting, by the way, that we eventually started off the text of the charter with a clause about our concern for the buildings themselves: “*icam* will, by individual and corporate effort, attempt to raise the quality of the built environment.”

The *icam* committee met again in Stockholm in December 1979. We established four working committees there: committee for cataloguing and monitoring architectural records; committee for establishing an international thesaurus of architectural records; committee for exhibitions; and committee for museum research.

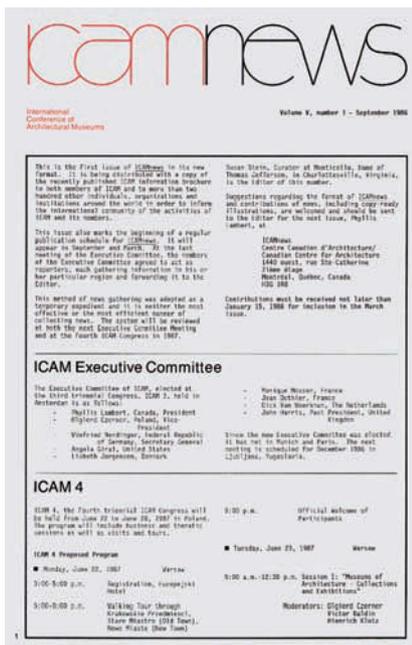
#### It sounds like you were defining a field — the establishment of a network, the formation of standards...

Well yes, there was no field before. Even the idea that you had to have standards for documents and works of art was new! I remember one respected American curator of prints and drawings who once said to me: “You know, a curator just has to know absolutely everything that’s in his collection.” Can you imagine anyone saying that now? One thing I was very intent on was to promote the cataloguing and registration of architectural records. To know what was in the various museums would have been a major step, since nobody really knew.

In Montréal, we knew we were not going to sit down and figure out how to do cataloguing on our own when lots of other places had the same problem. I worked on these issues with Catha Rambusch, and with Ford Peatross from the Library of Congress, and the AAT — the Art and Architecture Thesaurus — established then in

Williamstown, Mass. At the Executive Committee meeting in London in September 1980 I agreed to chair a session on architectural records at icam 2, to be hosted by the RIBA the following April. Then at icam 3 in Amsterdam I presented the work of the Architectural Drawings Advisory Group (ADAG), founded by Hank Millon at CASVA, the Centre for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts at the National Gallery in Washington in the Spring of 1983. It was aimed at developing international cataloguing standards for collections of drawings and by extension photographs, and applicable to both automated and manual catalogues. At the same conference Jan van der Wateren presented on the off-the-shelf databases that were available, Angela Giral on the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN), and Ford Peatross on “What you can do until the big system arrives”. Christiane Baryla did a terrific presentation of a Videodisc, showing how you could compile an inventory of visual elements. That technology has all changed now of course. In 1987 I returned to the topic in my Presidential Address at icam 4 in Warsaw.

icamnews, Volume V, 1986  
image icam archives, RIBA



What else was discussed at the early meetings?

Exhibitions were another topic, but I always thought the discussions were rather specious because they didn't address issues like the materials to be used, all the different media, and how to bring out the unique qualities of the works. I remember going to exhibitions of archives and seeing documents attached to a pegboard somehow, and at the time even the RIBA tacked up drawings. They were not treated as precious documents, and I thought it was absolutely essential for their special nature to be recognized. Early on, Italians used to discuss doing exhibitions “a la canadese”—meaning like the CCA, using varied media, books, photographs, drawings, toys and other ephemera focused on problems and issues.

How did icam members keep in touch between conferences?

Oh, that was great! First of all we had icamnews, which started out as a typescript sheet but was later expanded under my editorship, and now even more so. We also had regional groups – icamNA, icamFrance and icamUK. And we were always in contact with each other about various problems and issues – my correspondence file is vast.

These days I read a lot about how archives and museums ought to talk to one another. But it seems to me that architectural museums and archives were doing it 30 years ago.

I have always believed that it is good for icam that members have various kinds of collections. This diversity is important. I remember how active I was in getting people

38



*Call for material for icamnews, 1986  
images icam archives, RIBA*

to meet from the various photographic and archival collections. You know, there was often a problem of the big museums versus the little museums — at the 1984 Amsterdam conference especially — but I never got involved in that. Little museums learn from the big museums and the big museums learn from the little ones. I very much wanted to engage the Eastern Europeans. I pushed hard for having the executive committee meetings in Ljubljana in 1986 and in Brno in 1989, as well as the 1987 *icam* 4 conference in Poland. Sometimes the East European representatives at *icam* conferences did not have much money so we put them up somewhere or tried to help them out by finding somewhere for them to stay. Sometimes there were language issues — I remember Viktor Baldin always had his translator sitting next to him at meetings. But there were no real difficulties and now with the Iron Curtain having fallen it is taken for granted. But we must now engage Eastern museums.

**Getting architects and scholars together was also not so common.**

Totally uncommon! That has changed now of course, because architecture centres have become such a growth industry, and PhD programmes in architectural history and theory began to be created in schools of architecture. But I remember one of the very first study centre programs we had at CCA was when (Professor) Pierre du Prey did an exhibition on the villas of Pliny. In the session that brought architects and scholars together, the architects went to sleep when the scholars spoke and the scholars fell asleep when the architects spoke!

In my last address as a member of the *icam* executive, at *icam*5 in 1989 at the CCA, I reviewed the progress that the organization had made in its first ten years. I touched on many of its achievements in the various fields of facilities, administration, preservation and exhibition standards, before warning that (quotes) “many of these activities will be stalemated, will run thin, will not advance, without knowledge of the most basic element of our institutions: the architectural record. ...We have almost no knowledge of the world’s architects or the world’s architectural records. It is a very easy thing to say, a very small sentence, but it holds enormous consequences.” I ended that address as follows: “My vision and dream and hope for *icam* is that in the next ten years we will set into motion the ways and means of bringing together and disseminating the knowledge of the important resources on architectural thought, on the buildings and the gardens and the farms and the cities that are the locus and witness of civilization.”

**A wonderful vision. What vision do you think *icam* should focus on now?**

I don’t know. Organizations are like children, they learn so much in the first few years. For me, the very passionate moment was in the beginning. I’ve been going through



*Participants of icam5 at the conservation lab of the CCA*

*photo Michel Boulet, CCA*

the **icam** archives that are here at the CCA today, and I think they are very, very valuable. We asked such basic questions: How do you deal with architectural records? How do you conserve them? And then of course, how do you make people understand about architecture? That is the major job of the CCA right now. Collecting will go on, I'm sure, but museums increasingly collect contemporary archives and are perfectly happy to get a project here and a project there, which is more like a traditional museum. Also, at the CCA we have moved away from item level cataloguing and we have developed standards for basic access to very large archives. I think it would be tremendous if everybody could agree on those.

**Finding information has never been easier.**

Well, the internet and digitization has changed the dissemination of information so much, but you always have to have the basic record. And you need to connect drawings and archives to a library, and to a photography collection. You still need all the literature pertaining to a subject.

And obviously what you are always doing is getting to the public. It is about the community — about connecting to people and saying “Look, this is what is happening in your communities.”

**So a focus on the architectural record in all its dimensions, and on giving the public a better understanding of their own environment...**

A better understanding of the *potential* of their environment. **icam's** path will follow the interests of its members. Nobody is going to solve the big issues on their own. But the people who are most passionate will make a difference.

**And that makes **icam** still necessary after 30 years.**

I think **icam** is hugely necessary. Can you imagine a world without it?

gerald beasley, university librarian, concordia university, montreal

## interview with oligierd czerner

jolanta gromadzka

40

Olgierd Czerner was born in 1929 in Świętochłowice in Upper Silesia. Since 1947 he has been living in Wrocław and working as an architect, historian of architecture, conservation officer, theoretician of conservation of historical monuments and as a professor at the Department of Architecture of Wrocław University of Technology. Between 1955 and 1965 Czerner was a conservation officer for the historical monuments of Wrocław. In 1965 he established the Museum of Architecture and Reconstruction of Wrocław, which initially existed as a branch of the Museum of the City of Wrocław that he was running. Since 1971 The Museum of Architecture has been operating as an independent institution. Olgierd Czerner was a director of the Museum until 1999. In the years 1973–1975 he was also editor in chief of *Ochrona zabytków* (Preservation of historical monuments) quarterly. In 1965 Czerner participated in the founding conference of ICOMOS, and in 1979 in the founding conference of *icam*.

Professor, forty years ago, in the summer of 1979, you took part in the meeting in Helsinki during which *icam* was established. Could you share your memories of that meeting with us?

Yes, I was there. It was really difficult to justify this trip so it would be accepted by the officials at the Ministry of Culture and Art. It was the institution that had to delegate me to Helsinki, in those days there was no option for a private trip like that – I wouldn't have received the passport, and I couldn't afford it anyway. The Ministry usually reimbursed the cost of travels related to meetings with well known organizations, and here something was only about to be established... Anyhow, they agreed. Maybe it was the fact that Finland was a very specific country and it had harmonious relationships with its powerful neighbour, the USSR. Well, so it was politically justified to go to Finland. Earlier I was there on a trip from Wrocław City Department of Architecture and I visited the Finnish Museum of Architecture then. In those days, all such museums in the world could be counted on the fingers of one hand, The Finnish one was older than ours, and it was really intriguing for me. As a member of ICOMOS I had friends in Finland who arranged my visit to the museum, and then I met its first director, who was also the man who established it. Anyway, I went to Finland and it turned out that there were more institutions like ours in the world; finally, some twenty, twenty-five people met there. Heinrich Klotz arrived, a professor of history of art who established the German Museum of Architecture in Frankfurt am Main and who lectured in Marburg. John Harris was there, who represented the Royal Collection of Architectural Drawing, an institution partly connected to the Royal Institute of British Architects and partly independent. And there was also Phyllis Lambert, a volcano of energy but so well organized that

*Victor Baldin, Olgierd Czerner and Roald Kogevnikov*

photo 'Kunstforum International', vol. 8, 2/80, 1980





*Finlandia Hall by Avar Alto, 1971*

*photo Museum of Finnish Architecture*

she was nearly unbearable, a lady who participated in the establishment of the Canadian Centre of Architecture.

I must say that Finnish museum was very small at the time, it had a seat in a wooden 19th century villa and I didn't even know whether it occupied the whole building. We had some conversations about Helsinki, and then the Finns organized a trip and we were taken to visit different local traditional buildings, mostly architecture from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th. Of course, we also visited the works of Alvar Aalto since he was, and probably still is, the leading figure of Finnish architecture. Later we travelled far north, nearly crossed the polar circle, where we had a crayfish feast – there were these horrifying bowls heaped with red crayfish. We put on kitchen aprons, and flayed them with pocket knives. And there was a lot of dancin... So, we got acquainted with Finnish architecture and also, on adopting the resolution to attempt to establish an organization, the better organized among us started to work on texts that could be passed – in the form of a kind of declaration, or maybe a draft statute.

Well, we discussed to what extent it was to be an independent organization, and to what extent an organization connected to one of the existing big organizations – the most often mentioned one was ICOM, the International Council of Museums. On the other hand, there were already international committees of similar character in ICOM. I even worked for one of them, the International Committee for Architecture and Museum Techniques. But at that time, debating, we tried to arrive at a situation where we would be connected to such an organization and independent at the same time. Therefore, at some point, somebody suggested the name the International Confederation of Architectural Museums. And so we had an acronym similar to that of the International Committee for Architecture and Museum Techniques, ICAMT. So we had ICAMT and icam, the difference was really small. Of course, all of these decisions were made later, after the Board of the Confederation, which had been appointed in Helsinki, had exchanged letters and made arrangements with ICOM. I was appointed a member of this Board as my colleagues decided that one of us should come from the socialist bloc. And remember that Viktor Baldin, a director of the Schusev Museum in Moscow (Finland had good relationships with the USSR) and colleagues from Ljubljana in former Yugoslavia and from Hungary also participated in the meeting.

What was the initial concept of icam that you discussed in Helsinki? Was it supposed to cluster the museums of architecture, or maybe you assumed that it would also include archives, libraries and other institutions gathering architectural documentation?

42



1/ *icam 4 badge*

photo Monika Platzer

2/ *icam 2 participants in London*

photo Museum of Finnish Architecture

From the very beginning we assumed that the confederation would encompass various institutions. The number of museums of architecture was rather small, and during initial discussions it had already been mentioned that some of these institutions were of an archival character. Anyway, John Harris became the first president of the Confederation and he was a director of the Royal Collection of Architectural Drawing in London, which was not a museum. On returning to Poland, I was myself thinking about introducing another Polish institution to *icam*, and had the University Library in Warsaw, which had a great collection of designs from the time of Stanisław August Poniatowski, become a member of the Confederation.

**In what way did the establishment of *icam* and membership in this organization help our museum to broaden its activities and promote international achievements in Poland?**

First of all, we started to exchange information about the activities of our museums. We had cooperated before with some of the museums, like the Finnish one. Later we started cooperations with Swedish and Hungarian museums. We had to get in touch with individual museums.

Apart from that, I invited directors of some of the museums to Poland. The first one was from Stockholm. This enabled us to put on an exhibition which was a bit surprising here as museums usually present some achievements, and these guys mounted an exhibition which was critical of the municipality of Stockholm for tearing down 19th century houses.

Next, when we had a meeting of *icam* in Wrocław, I decided to arrange a presentation of posters of exhibitions mounted by *icam* members. This was an exhibition showing what we did.

**This, the fourth *icam* conference, held in 1987 in Wrocław and in Warsaw, was the only meeting organized in Central-Eastern Europe even before the fall of the Iron Curtain, wasn't it?**

At that time I was the vice-president of *icam* and our idea was to hold the meetings in different places. I took the responsibility for the organization of the conference, and the Ministry of Culture and Art agreed to sponsor it. This was the only way to do it. The situation was pretty difficult as the members of the Board wanted to stay in touch with me in order to fix the programme for the conference, so I had to meet them. We had met several times two years before, but then the authorities had been reluctant to grant permission to go abroad. Well, somehow I managed to travel. Even in 1981, during the martial law, I left for London to attend a conference. I remember there was the issue of aid for the workers of our museum.



Well, even before, just as they introduced martial law and everything stopped, I got an inquiry from London: “Olgierd, do you have enough food? How can we help you?” So I wrote back to London: “Food is not a big problem, it’s worse with washing one’s self and shaving.” And imagine, each of the members of the Institute bought a different bar of soap, they made a parcel and stamped it with an official seal of the Royal Institute of British Architects. Customs officers here didn’t even open the parcel because they thought it was diplomatic mail. And there was soap inside!

Visiting Poland in the mid-1980s had to be a pretty unusual experience for the majority of the participants in the conference?

Definitely. It was just after the abolition of martial law in Poland. In Warsaw neither me, nor University Library, the other *icam* member institution, had any facilities to host the conference. It was professor Gieysztor who helped us, offering the rooms at Warsaw’s Royal Castle. Then, to save time, I decided to hire a plane and to fly all the conference participants to Wrocław. It was an awesome experience – it was an old shattering turboprop, and our Western guests were used to flying by jet. On top of that, a couple of days before our meeting the Warsaw Pact manoeuvres had started in Wrocław, and the airport had been closed. It looked like the whole plan was falling to pieces, but we somehow negotiated stopping the manoeuvres just for this one flight. We were landing at an airport full of military planes, and our guests were really disturbed. Well, we managed somehow...

The farewell party was held in Wojnowice. It took place as I had planned it, on Midsummer Night’s Eve. The ladies threw garlands of flowers into the castle moat. The water in the moat was flowing slowly and I was talking about which garland would arrive first and would win the prize ... Everybody was really enjoying themselves, the garlands were flowing past and the gentlemen blew on them from the banks of the moat to make them flow faster.

But there was another issue which turned into a scandal. I was supposed to throw a party for the conference participants but none of the restaurants – you know, food was rationed etc. – agreed to organize it. Finally, we found one which agreed upon condition that I “arrange an increase of the meat mass ration for this restaurant”. After long negotiations at the Trade Department I got several extra dozen kilograms of meat for the restaurant. They prepared it and brought it to Wojnowice in old pickups. The participants of the conference and the invited officials were already there. Mind you, we came by bus and the officials in their cars. And, imagine, the last dish served at midnight was old-Polish style beef roulade. Later we went home, and on the following day left for Zakopane where the conference was concluded. Anyway, I returned to Wrocław three days later, bought a newspaper, and what did I see?

*Museum of Architecture in Wrocław, interior  
(north cloister)*

*photo Museum of Architecture Wrocław*





*Courtyard, Museum of Architecture in Wrocław, view from the south  
photo Museum of Architecture Wrocław*

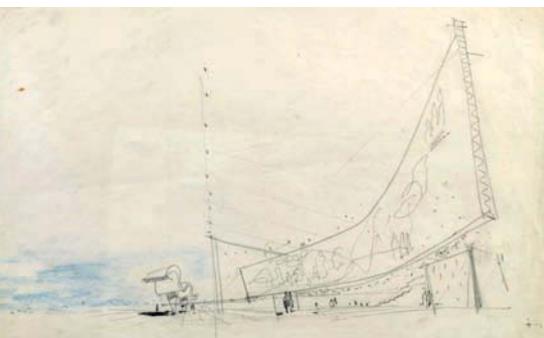
The District Sanitar-Epidemiological Station for Wrocław-Śródmieście had checked all restaurants and catering establishments in the district and discovered salmonella-infected roulades at “Grunwaldzka” restaurant. And I had been serving those roulades! I was sure that everybody had fallen sick and was now in hospital. But it turned out that those who came by bus not only had roulades but also drank vodka! So none of the conference participants got sick, while nearly all of the officials who had come by cars and hadn’t had vodka got sick... The conference participants never learned how risky that party had been.

**And finally, I would like to ask how it happened that the only Polish museum of architecture was established right in Wrocław?**

First, one of the reasons had something to do with the Observantine monastery, which I was renovating as a conservator. Initially, since during clearing Wrocław of rubble I had saved many architectonic elements, I had intended to create a lapidary. I was thinking of a lapidary that would complement the knowledge of the city we had then, the city one could see. But when it came to preparing resolutions – in those days that was the mode of operation, a resolution had to be passed by the ministry or some local authority organization – and I had to write justifications for them, then I started to doubt whether the lapidary would be enough. My doubts grew even bigger since these were the days when the element of post-war achievement was extremely important. And so the first name of the institution was the Museum of Architecture and Reconstruction. I decided that if we complemented this institution with a section focusing on the documentation of the post-war rebuilding of the city, then this move would be politically correct and win us support. However the ambitions of the city were even higher and objected to the establishment of such a museum in the form of an independent institution. City officials wanted to have the Museum of the City of Wrocław. I was obliged to establish the Museum of the City of Wrocław, which would comprise the Museum of Architecture and Reconstruction as one of its five sections.

There were also ideas justified for other political reasons. First, some people wanted to have some sort of – well, there were different names proposed – Museum of War and Martyrdom, or Museum of Liberation Movements, and such a section was in fact established. The Museum of the City of Wrocław also comprised the then being established Museum of Medallion Art, which already had a rich collection. There were also first activities aimed at the establishment of the Museum of Contemporary Art going on, its name was the Museum of Current Art.

It was only five years later, when it turned out that some of these sections were flourishing and others were not, that in 1970 a decision was made to let the Museum of



1/ Maciej Nowicki, study for the United Nations Organization Building in New York, circa 1947

image Museum of Architecture Wrocław

2/ Bohdan Lachert, design for furniture, 1926

image Museum of Architecture Wrocław

Architecture operate as an independent institution – without any addition in the name. I should add that at a certain moment we had had a serious competitor. In Warsaw they decided that if we were to have a museum of architecture in Poland then it had to be in Warsaw. Because everything had to be centralized, everything had to be in Warsaw. And professor Lorenz, who was a director of the National Museum, and professor Zachwatowicz, who had been the general conservation officer some time ago, started to work on a statute for such a museum. They wanted to locate it in the Modlin stronghold. But they wrote a project which assumed that it had to be a national institution, a central museum of architecture, and from the very beginning they assumed that it needed 400 employees. In Wrocław we had ten, maybe twelve people. So when I heard they wanted to employ four hundred people I deduced that the project would fail. And I was right, nothing emerged.

**What was the concept for the profile of a collection of the museum that you were then creating?**

From the very beginning I assumed that we had to have not only architectonic details but also drawings. Architects who initiated contemporary architecture in the interwar period were elderly people in 1965, they were gradually passing away. I knew that to acquire something valuable for the museum I had to act fast, right at that moment. And that was the way it happened. And that is why we have here collections of designs by, among others, Bohdan Lachert, Helena and Szymon Syrkus and Romuald Gut. Additionally, when I started to analyse the problem – hardly anybody was working on it in those days – I noticed that these art groups also included visual artists as well, and that there were some visual artists who were architects by education but later switched to painting etc. Moreover, in publications from the 1920s, like *Dźwignia*, you would find drawings by visual artists not by architects. So I understood that one had to research these relationships and gather works of art which confirmed their existence. We called it 'architecture-related visual art'. We created a premium class collection which includes a few interwar and many early post-war era works illustrating the issue of light and space in architecture.

Thank you very much for the interview.

jolanta gromadzka, curator, museum of architecture in wrocław, wrocław



## interview with mariet willinge

monika platzner

48



*Mariet Willinge on tour at Castle Howard, 1971*

*photo Mariet Willinge*

Mariet Willinge was head of the Collection department of the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI) in Rotterdam from 1988–2007. Before that she was (deputy) head of the Netherlands Documentation Centre for Architecture. Since 1998 she has been secretary general of the International Confederation of Architectural Museums (icam) and also the representative of icam in the Section of Architectural Records of the International Council on Archives. Since 2005 she has been chairing the advisory committee on monuments of the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds, and has been a member of the board of the National Glass Museum since 2008. She is an advisor to several foundations in the field of architecture and architecture history, and member of a working group on design archives.

The NAI is a founding member of icam, and members of its staff (Dick Van Woerkom, Rudolf Brouwers) have held various positions on the board. How influential has the exchange of information and professional expertise been for the NAI over the years?

icam was founded in 1979, when the NAI was not yet in the picture. The Dutch participants at the founding meeting of icam were Dick van Woerkom, architect, working at the Netherlands Documentation Centre for Architecture (NDB), and Rob de Jong, of the Netherlands Department for Conservation. The NDB was founded during the late 1960s as part of that Department, with a collection already started in the early 20th century. The reason for participating from the start of icam was that it was thought to be important to become member of an organization that was involved in the care of architecture, historic monuments and architects' archives.

The discussions in the icam board and the connection with members of institutions in other countries were and, over the years, still are important for the development of ideas around collecting and handling architects' archives. At the start icam was inspiring for ideas around the founding of an architecture museum in The Netherlands. The contacts with other museums were a constant source of inspiration for the work at the NAI, for the archives as well as for making exhibitions. The activities of the icam education group are also helpful for developments within the NAI.

What was your first encounter with icam, and when did you get involved?

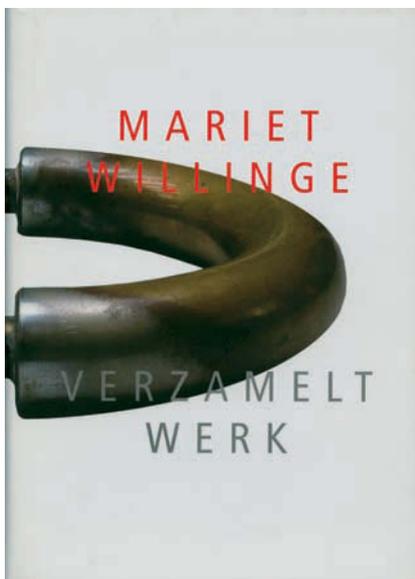
My first encounter with icam was the third conference, in 1984 in Amsterdam, organized by the State Department for Conservation/NDB. At that time we had worked hard to realize a new institution, with three partners: the NDB, the Housing Foundation (Stichting Wonen) and the Architecture Museum Foundation (SAM). During that conference a point of discussion was about the city where this new institute

should be located: Amsterdam, where the three organizations involved were based, or Rotterdam, the city preferred by the minister of Culture. At the end of that year the decision was made for Rotterdam.

#### What is your background, and when did you join the NAI?

My background is in art history with specialization in architecture history. At university I had two teachers who influenced my decision to go further in architecture, the first one, who did his thesis on Berlage, based on the archives of the architect, taught me to look at the 'younger' 20th century architecture, and the second one, a restoration architect, opened my eyes for monuments and the need for documentation. So after I finished my studies I first worked a while at the restoration office of my teacher, to help him with his documentation, and then at the Department for Conservation in Zeist, near Utrecht. The NDB, at that time still a branch of this department, was based in Amsterdam, and did work rather unfamiliar to the conservation department in Zeist, so it was felt to be a strange body within this State office. In 1980 I moved to the NDB in Amsterdam to strengthen the very small staff. They were hectic times, with very little permanent staff, many students, volunteers and other people, working on the archives and the library, a great deal of contact with architects and the art history institutions, organizing exhibitions with publications, always short of money and not yet experienced in making exhibitions with due care for the precious drawings.

*Festschrift for Mariet Willinge  
'Verzamelt Werk', NAI Rotterdam 2007  
image Az W*



The predecessor institutions of the NAI were the Stichting Architectuurmuseum, the Nederlands Documentatiecentrum voor de Bouwkunst, and Stichting Wonen.

#### What was the idea and the driving force behind this merger, and when and why did you move to the premises in Rotterdam?

The building where the NDB was housed was meant only for a short time (in the end we have stayed there for 18 years!) and therefore not much money was spent to adapt it to suit the care of archives. It was an old office building, where several public (governmental) services had been housed. And besides, it was an open building and everybody could just walk in. It was, understandably, not suited to the storage of archives. There was no climate control, it was too hot or too cold, too dry or too humid. That was why we wanted to move to another building. At that time, the early 1980s, we had frequent contacts with the Housing Foundation with Ruud Brouwers as head, also a small organization in Amsterdam involved in giving information about architecture and town planning, publishing a magazine, making exhibitions, and with a library and documentation. Their premises were also too small, so they too were looking for another building in Amsterdam. We had much in common, a reason

50



1/ Dick Van Woerkom at icam1

photo Kari Hakli, Museum of Finnish Architecture

2/ The Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI), Rotterdam

photo NAI

to think about a closer connection. As both institutions were financed by the Ministry of Culture, it seemed logical to start to look for combined housing, which was followed by the first ideas of working together. The result was a proposal for a new institute where NDB, Housing Foundation and the Architecture Museum Foundation (owner of the archives cared for by the NDB) would participate. The Minister of Culture endorsed these ideas and we were invited to search for new premises. A working group under the guidance of the Ministry of Culture was installed to develop ideas for a new institute. As soon as it became clear that the government was planning to erect an institution devoted to architecture, the city of Rotterdam offered a building to house this. Rotterdam, as a city with a very active architectural policy, thought that they could claim to have such an institute within their city limits. After the decision was made for Rotterdam the NAI was founded as a private institute out of the three institutions. It was possible to erect a new building financed by the government.

**Keywords 'new building' – was it a competition?**

To create a new building was quite challenging for all of us. Nobody had experience with the process of designing and building, but with the help of the government building department we were able to make a building programme. A closed competition was organized and commissioned by the steering committee (the ministries of culture and housing and the participating institutions), which was responsible for the process of starting this new institute. The choice of the 6 invited architects was mostly based on their different design visions. Invited were the Dutch architects Benthem Crouwel, Jo Coenen, Rem Koolhaas /OMA, Wim Quist and two from other countries, the Swiss Luigi Snozzi and Swedish Ralph Erskine. The latter withdrew because of lack of time and was replaced by Hubert Jan Henket.

Eventually the choice had to be made between Jo Coenen and Rem Koolhaas. Jo Coenen was selected. More or less at the same time Koolhaas got the commission for the Kunsthal, at the other end of the Museumpark, with a design by Yves Brunier of the OMA office. Somewhat later the director and exhibition department of the NAI moved to a temporary building in Rotterdam, where several exhibitions were held. The collection department stayed in Amsterdam to prepare the move of the archives, at that time already with a length of 14 km, to the new building in Rotterdam. This building opened in October 1993.

After several years of collecting we were confronted with a lack of space for the storage of the models. So we had to look for a new place and a new concept for the model collection. We found such a place in a hall next to the Van Nelle factory. It was remodelled to a storage place, open to the public. This not only provided more





*Open Model Storage of the NAI at the Van Nelle Factory, Rotterdam  
photo NAI*

possibilities to accept models, but also to show the public this wonderful collection, from which only some models had been shown in exhibitions until then.

The NAI is one of leading architecture institutions worldwide, the political support and dedication to establish a national institution dedicated to architecture is quite unique. Is there a special national interest in architecture?

Why was it possible to start this institute at that specific moment, the early 1980s? Because of special national interest in architecture? The ideas came at the moment that the reconstruction period after the war was over. Instead there was a concentration on housing and the renovation of older neighbourhoods. Architecture with an A came up again, with a new generation of architects. And there was a new interest in architecture as such, in general, and also in the history of architecture. The economic situation was better than before so the climate was positive for starting something new. There was also the lucky combination of a minister of culture and a minister of housing both interested in architecture and ambitious and therefore willing to consolidate the growing – political – interest in architecture. There was a collection (NDB and Architecture Museum Foundation) that at that time already had a certain caché in the world of architecture and architecture history, there was an institute that cared for the building environment (Housing Foundation) and enough

enthusiasm within these institutes to cooperate. The government published a national policy plan for architecture, and money was made available for initiatives in the field of architecture, for the NAI and, for instance, for local architectural centres, and a fund for stimulating activities in the field of architecture. In short, a positive climate to start this new Netherlands Architecture Institute in a new building.

Nowadays the government still works with policy plans for architecture, although with a broader scope on the built environment, and are spending money on this.

*Was it intentional to avoid the term museum in the naming of the Netherlands Architecture Institute, and what is the policy behind it?*

The NAI was called an Institute and not a Museum because of the idea that the notion of the Institute covers more than just a museum. Besides being a museum for architecture (including the designed environment, urban planning and landscape architecture) the NAI is also a platform for debates, an archive, a research institute and a library. As a matter of fact, the name Institute is sometimes a bit confusing; people think that it is a technical institute, not a museum, or even archives. Therefore, now and then, the suggestion arises to change the name into Netherlands Museum for Architecture, but the title NAI is still used, because this name is well known all over the world.

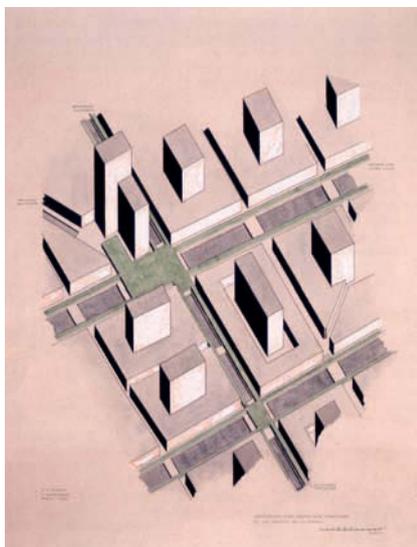
*The collection policy of the NAI focuses on national productions. Do you think this still works in the globalized world of today?*

From the beginning, in the early 20th century, the aim was to collect archives of Dutch architects, so the collection now consists of the archives of the most prominent architects from the 19th and 20th centuries, and is quite comprehensive up to the 1980s. It has always been the aim to document the design process and not to collect individual drawings as pieces of art, so not only the beautiful but the whole archives with the working drawings and all around the work of an architect, such as their correspondence with clients etc, are collected. To change this policy would change the character of the collection as it has been for the last century. There are several reasons to stick to the national architecture: nowadays it would not be possible to collect a comprehensive and interesting collection of international architects because of the cost. And the collection would not have the value for research and education as it has now, because of the lack of completeness.

Of course from time to time we do have discussions about collecting based on another policy. All the more so as the space available for our archives is coming to an end. And at this moment we are discussing the possibilities of collecting themes instead of architects' archives. But themes are time bound, and change over time,

*Lobby, NAI  
photo NAI*





*C. van Eesteren, axonometric plan, 1926*  
image NAI

so the collection would lose its consistency. I myself would prefer to research the issues important for the time and then look for architects who are prominent in general and of specific significance for these issues – issues like sustainability, rehabilitation and the like.

#### What are your most sought after archives?

It is difficult to name the most 'wanted' archive. It differs from year to year, depending on research for exhibitions and publications (as is now the case for Rietveld). Over the years the most inquired after archives have always been those of Berlage, Cuypers (last years), Koolhaas, and Brinkman/Van der Vlugt/Van den Broek and Bakema (Van Nelle factory), C. van Eesteren and always the De Stijl archives, because there are always De Stijl exhibitions being held somewhere in the world. (Van Doesburg, Rietveld, Oud).

#### Has there been a change in the approach over the years?

When you look over a couple of years to what researchers are looking for in the archives, and I have been able to do so, you can see a sort of gulf movement. Some archives are always searched, but different times deliver different types of research: monographic, thematic, stylistic or more philosophical in a approach.

#### Due to the media and the marketing of their creators the architectural documents have entered the art market. Has this affected your work?

The policy of the NAI not to buy archives is generally known. Only in exceptional cases is the NAI willing to look for funds for purchases. So the existence of a market for architectural archives has not affected our daily work, although there have always been architects trying to sell their archives to us. The general feeling is that an institute has to spend so much money to handle these complicated archives, with personnel and costly space that buying is not an option (sometimes architects are even willing to pay for handling!).

#### This brings up the Koolhaas issue.

One of the archives the NAI, of course, thought to be of utmost importance, was that of Koolhaas/OMA. Already in Amsterdam the NAI had acquired the early projects of Koolhaas, (Yplein Amsterdam, the The Hague Dance theatre and others). Later on the NAI succeeded in finding funds to buy some models. So we do have quite a lot of key projects by Koolhaas/OMA. Since OMA is so much more international nowadays and known worldwide, the office only wants to sell the archives for a considerable amount of money. In spite of the fact that the government and

54



Folder, 'NAI Archive and Library'  
image NAI

funds were willing to make a substantial sum available, it was apparently not enough. Nevertheless we still hope to save this important archive for The Netherlands one way or another.

#### Looking back, what are the parameters for an ideal archive and collection?

Looking back: an ideal collection is meant for study, education and fun (from the ICOM museum definition). For architectural archives this means that the archives must be as complete as possible, to meet this definition and be available to the general public and interesting for specialists as well. The archives should therefore contain all material an architect uses to make the design possible. In a way, it does not matter whether the collection is of a local, national or international nature.

#### Looking to the future, what are the crucial changes and challenges in our profession?

Looking to the future, and the future is already here, the most challenging changes are the way architects design nowadays. Only seldom do architects make sketches by hand, all designing is done in CAD programmes, and in (many) models. Architects' websites are also a new method for exposure, and worthy of collecting. So contemporary archives contain mostly digital material and models, which brings us to find other methods of handling them. The challenge is first of all how to keep the digital archives readable, but also how to do research with and make architectural exhibitions based on digital archives. An advantage of this new era for architectural museums and collections is that they are forced to work together. As the digital issue is international it is worthwhile conducting research together, as happens already on the sustainability of archives. See, on this matter, the ongoing research and conferences the Gau:di group organized and will continue to organize. But the task is the same as it was: as architectural museums and collections have a cultural and a social mission, they should show architecture as it is, in all its visual manifestations and its importance for humanity.

#### After 30 years of icam, where do we need to work harder and what is on your wish list for the organization?

icam has proven to be a good intermediary between institutions caring for architectural collections, whether they belong to an archival institute, an art museum, a library or a separate architecture museum. Its existence has improved the status of these collections. An exchange of experience is most important for the better maintenance and accessibility of the collections. The exchange of experience with exhibitions and publications could be better promoted. The website should play a



*Participants at icam6 in Stockholm  
photo Museum of Swedish Architecture*

greater role in this. I realize that this costs a great deal of energy, time and money but I think that we should concentrate on urging the members to use the website more, and try to find people who can help with sending messages, newsletters etc. to all members. So that a more active commitment among the members can be attained. Another point of attention should be, as I have experienced from members' questions, to help members starting combined projects or at least to stimulate working together on projects. icam as mediator. Furthermore, we should be more active in helping member institutions with actions to save buildings or sites in their countries.

**Your personal résumé on the icam experience!**

My personal experience with icam: I found good friends, a warm and inspiring climate where I learned a lot about architecture, museums, archives and collections. It helped me in my daily work, and I am sure that these professional contacts have improved my work for the NAI collection.

monika platzer, curator, architekturzentrum wien, vienna

## icam, 30 years lecture: architecture museums today

an address delivered on Saturday 22 august 2009 at the future of architecture museums symposium

**dietmar steiner**

56

1/ Friedrich von Gärtner, study, Corinthian capital, Rome, 1815

image Collection, Architekturmuseum der TU München

2/ Jiří Kroha, 'The Sociological Radius of a Proletarian Woman'

image Muzeum města Brna



If I am going to talk about architecture museums I have to start by mentioning that there is really no such thing as a typical architecture museum. What are architecture museums? Three phases of development are to be seen. Outlined roughly, these moved from The Graphics Collection via The Proclamation of Modernity to The Culture Industry Beacon. I will finish my talk by presenting you with an overview of a study commissioned by the Architekturzentrum Wien on Architecture Museums Today.

### 1 the graphics collection

What one could possibly term the architecture museum of the 18th and 19th centuries was a collection of architecture drawings and frequently also architecture models.

The graphics on paper by architects were collected on the basis of art historical and artistic criteria and evaluations.

Architecture in collections at that time was based on a culture where architects were seen as artists, and based on the graphics they produced. Architects' sketches and drawings were collected by museums and art historians as illustrations of the act of creating architecture.

Alongside this art historical focus there was, and remains to this day, a geographical territorial orientation to the collections of local authority and state archives and collections. That there are even more hidden state, local authority, university and private archives and collections where significant documents of architecture are to be found does not necessarily need to be mentioned.

Essential also for the future is that there can never be a comprehensive architecture collection of a region in one place because all of the documentation is always spread among several of institutions.

### 2 the proclamation of modernity

This situation changed radically with the advent of modern movement. The aspiration to totally reform living conditions began with the world exhibitions in the middle of the 19th century, and went beyond the previous demand for historical collections of drawings and models to create a new quality of architecture mediation, too. The architectural idea, the architectural artefact, the architectural product emancipated itself from clients' agendas and the stylistic canonisation of art history. The system of references for modern architecture was, then, the new per se, and it became an instrument of propaganda for the totality of a different life.

What had been communicated over the centuries of architecture collecting in the form of tracts and textbooks became propaganda in modernism. The world exhibitions promoted new forms of living. For Prince Albert in London and Napoleon III in Paris, in the mid-19th century the solution of the workers' housing problem was

# PSYCHOLOGICKÝ RADIUS ŽENY PROLETARSKÉ TR



přemýšlí o jak si zkr život

mladí

ENSTVÍM SE NESPEKULUJE

SE Z LÁSKY

tato žena odkoji šest a více dětí

PRACOVITÉ RUCE

TATO ŽENA RODÍ SPOLUŽIVITELNÉ A UDRÁ TĚŽKÝCH DŮVĚŘI POVINNOSTÍ HOSPODYNĚ A SPOLUŽIVITELKY RODINY

OKOV POVINNOSTÍ HOSPODYNĚ

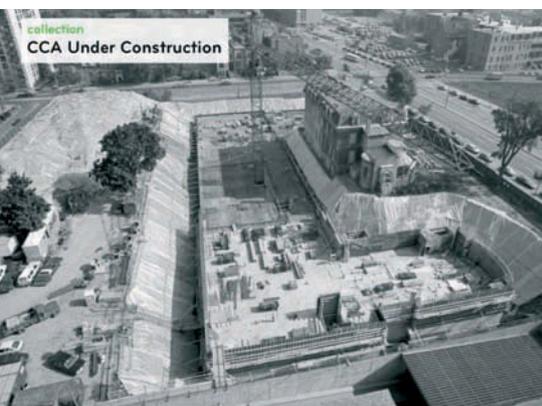
OKOV POVINNOSTÍ SPOLUŽIVITELKY RODINY

A PŘECE MATKA !

živoči

stá

*Canadian Centre for Architecture (CCA)  
under construction  
photo CCA*



the key issue. Then came the Werkbund with its exhibitions showing scenarios for a new architectural living environment. The result was the architecture exhibition as a proclamation, as a propaganda event that availed itself of the most divergent materials and media. It was no longer dependent solely on the authenticity of the architectural design but supplemented this with photographs, models, installations and settings.

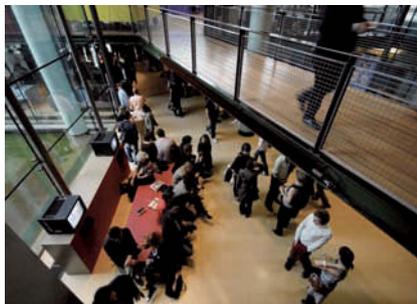
This released the architecture collection from the constraints of a purely art historical perspective. The architecture exhibition itself became an architecture project. It took a while until this propaganda instrument reached the museum level, i.e. called for its own buildings for storage and mediation.

It was then the period following the second world war, when modernism saw the fruit of its own productivity for the first time, which led to the concrete founding of independent museums for architecture. In the 1950s and '60s the independent modern architecture museum began to be defined as part of the architecture debate for the first time – the first being the Soviet Architecture Museum in 1934, divided into one museum for Russian architecture and the Soviet Schusev Museum, followed by Finland in 1956, Sweden in 1962, and Hungary in 1968.

### 3 the culture industry beacon

These two types, The Graphics Collection and The Proclamation of Modernity, basically describe the architecture museum in historical terms. However since the end of the 1970s there has been a development that has embedded architecture in a more comprehensive strategy of culture-political communication. It is surely no coincidence that *icam* was founded at that time, in 1979. Juhani Pallasmaa is to be thanked for the information that its necessity had been informally discussed at the opening of the multicultural Centre Pompidou in 1977, which had an architecture department from the outset.

At the same time, architecture was impacted on by a decisive socio-cultural change: Architecture became an autonomous part of the culture industry, and accordingly demanded appropriate institutions like any other discipline. With the Venice Architecture Biennial of 1980 and the 'strada novissima' the status of the 'stars' was established in the realm of architecture just as it had been in the broader culture industry. Increasing public and media interest in contemporary architecture in general followed. This was accompanied in the 1980s by a veritable wave of newly founded architecture museums. Major new institutions were set-up, like the Centre Canadien d'Architecture (CCA, 1979), the Getty Center (1984), or the Netherlands Architecture Institute (NAI, 1988) – all large new collections. Smaller national institutions were also founded: the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt (DAM, 1979),



*The Netherlands Architecture Institute  
(NAI), Rotterdam*  
photo NAI

the Institute française d'Architecture (IFA, 1980), the Architekturmuseum Basel (1984) and the Gammeldok centre in Copenhagen (1985).

This subsequently provided a network of official venues for presenting architecture and holding related events – no longer solely as museums for historical artefacts but also as arenas for presenting contemporary achievements. This architecture debate was extended to include the broader context of projects, processes, construction and the production of text, images and exhibitions. Today all of these elements form a key level of the architecture debate in conjunction with the venues. The new museums and architecture centres addressed many current developments in the architecture sector while endeavouring from the outset to position key individual architects with shows of their work. In doing so they were adhering to an obsolete avant-garde notion that, put simply, promoted the architect as an artistic genius to posit individualism as an antidote to ill-considered everyday building.

It has only become clear in recent years that for these solo shows by contemporary star architects the network of the new architecture museums became a marketing instrument for increasing the value of the individuals concerned. This made the role of the architecture museum as an agent of the culture industry evident. (We know the stories of the OMA and Herzog & de Meuron Exhibitions in the beginning of the 1990s.)

#### 4 the architecture museum today

What, then, do architecture museums do today? And, can a development for the future be gleaned from this?

Back in 2000 the Az W engaged the International Archive for Cultural Analyses to carry out a study on the situation of the architecture museums and centres. This study was updated in 2008, with an extensive questionnaire completed by the following institutions: Swedish Museum of Architecture, Architekturmuseum der Technischen Universität München, Canadian Centre for Architecture, Cité de l'architecture et du Patrimoine, Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Museum of Finnish Architecture, The Netherlands Architecture Institute, The Lighthouse, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Norway, and the Architekturzentrum Wien.

#### the results of this survey

The role of the architecture centres and museums has altered significantly in recent years. This is primarily tied to the reception and new status of architecture in our society. Architecture (and art in general) is increasingly being received and 'consumed' by broad segments of the general public, its mediation is becoming broader in appeal and is experiencing an increase in participation. The result has been

broadened public interest in the built environment. Architecture has become popular. The achievement of the architecture centres and museums lay in promoting a deeper understanding of architecture in society at large as well as broader public awareness. The architecture institutions went beyond their classical function of purely storing the architectural heritage, and expanded their radius of activities to reach a larger audience. The challenges and demands facing institutions that collect and archive architecture nowadays proved similar for all of the institutions questioned. The largest challenge is the continual growth of archive material without a proportional increase in storage capacity, staff or financial resources.

Alongside the traditional function of conserving architecture in the cultural heritage of a country and making this material physically accessible to the public, it is increasingly becoming the task of architecture institutions and museums to digitize these historical documents and compile virtual databases.

The exhibition and mediation work in the architecture institutions is a key task geared to informing visitors on the architecture of the country concerned as well as on an international level. In retrospect, architecture centres and museums have been relatively late to find their position within the museum world, and were initially primarily directed at a specific professional target audience. This role has changed increasingly over the years, primarily as a result of new educational and mediation programmes that address a broad public and, above all, the younger generation. Special programmes for kids, families, schools or universities are experiencing ever increasing demand. Such approaches appeal primarily to an interaction with the visitors, where the experiential character of architecture is made tangible and the goal is to create an awareness of the culture of building.

Architecture centres and museums have gone well beyond their classical function in recent years, with the focus on modern and contemporary architecture. A transition is increasingly occurring from a traditional museum to a service orientated operation as centres of knowledge with publicly accessible libraries and archives.

Parallel to programmes of exhibitions and educational events, various supplementary events are gaining in significance. Alongside conferences, symposiums, talks, public discussions and workshops, film screenings, architecture award ceremonies or Pecha-Kucha Nights have recently been enjoying widespread popularity.

#### overview of the mission statements

The core tasks of the architecture institutions as outlined in their mission statements can be summarised as: architecture institutions as depots for the built cultural heritage, breaking open the narrow traditional definition of architecture, the opening up of the institutions, from being museums to becoming modern service-oriented

*On tour with Dominique Perrault*

*photo Az W*





*Children's workshop at the Bauhaus-Archiv  
Berlin*

*photo Monika Platzer*

operations and/or platforms for discussions, mediation programmes that promote public participation in the architectural cultural heritage and the designed environment, the documentation and interpretation of contemporary trends in architecture. Working focuses are becoming increasingly significant that go beyond these core tasks:

- 1 The intensification of the research and educational work in the architecture sector (esp. cooperations with schools and universities).
- 2 The digitization of architecture production in archives and collections, as well as creating databases and making archives accessible.
- 3 The provision of target group specific activities and new ideas in the mediation of archive fonds and collections in the form of special programmes.

These new preoccupations and tasks are increasingly becoming core to operations, and have a major impact on the image and self-definition of the institutions, which are opening up and becoming increasingly visible to the general public.

A kind of ideal national architecture museum for our times can be constructed on the basis of the findings of this study: The first requirement is for an annual budget of approximately € 6 million. A division into staff costs, infrastructure costs and project costs is not feasible as all of the institutions questioned submitted different figures. 80% of this annual budget should be covered by public funding. Around 20% can be raised from sponsors and revenue.

A functioning architecture museum today requires about 30 members of staff. This is enough to cover running archives and mediation or education, the administration and marketing, and organising exhibitions and events – i.e. the full spectrum of activities involved.

Holding temporary exhibitions is and remains a core assignment in this context. They provide a research field on their own, and ensure media attention independent of the actual number of visitors, which lies between 5,000 and 15,000. An interesting phenomenon ought to be mentioned here: The number of visitors is directly dependent on the size of the exhibition space. The rule is that the larger the area the more visitors will come – independent of the quality of the exhibitions on offer! A total of around 2,000 square metres is required for the presentation of larger and smaller shows parallel to one another. In addition, temporary exhibitions should always tell a story that accords with local expectations if they are to succeed with the public. Alongside these temporary exhibitions, which address the development of the culture of architecture as a whole, there is evidently a demand for permanent exhibitions on the history of the nation's architecture. These permanent shows can, and should be, embedded in the ongoing educational and mediation programme. One of the core functions of an architecture museum today concerns the programme of events. With public discussions, presentations, lectures and talks, conferences and



*Winning project at the Venice Biennial,  
for A Minimum Leisure House for the  
21st Century, 2008*

*Gau:di European Student Competition on  
Sustainable Architecture*

*photo Az W*

symposiums, an architecture museum today establishes itself as a content-based location for engaging with the current debate in architecture and the culture of building. Around 40 events per year are organised by the architecture institutions questioned.

### the prospects for the future

The study provides a broadly based overview of the architecture museums' strategies and situation today. So, with the findings of this study, I can shed light on the three phases in the development of architecture museums mentioned at the opening to this talk, looking at them from today's perspective:

- 1** The architecture museum of the future is a centre of knowledge on architecture. Accordingly, the first phase of the architecture museum, 'The Graphics Collection', remains intact today, too. As a cautionary background to a contemporary architecture discussion where any historicity is increasingly becoming lost, the architecture museum is the last remaining place of memory, of the historicity of architecture. The historical dimension of this knowledge is gleaned from their own archives and collections, but also generated from close collaboration with universities, with conservation organisations and docomomo. This knowledge about architecture is also gleaned, however, from new research carried out by the museums and centres on the future of architecture.
- 2** The architecture museum of the future is an institution for mediation and education. Accordingly, the second phase of the development of architecture museums, which I called 'The Proclamation of Modernity', also remains in tact. This mediation is achieved with strong diversity and programmes for the most varied segments of the public. It bridges the gap between the expertise of the architectural discourse and a less informed public with a new creative range of events.
- 3** In the 30 years of icam the architecture museum has, of all the culture institutions, developed from being a niche organisation to become a respected institution of status. This was the result of the last wave of new foundings from the end of the 1970s to the present day. For the third phase I called these 'The Culture Industry Beacons'. The first two phases have an approach to content that is beyond debate for the future, too. But this poses the question of the position to be occupied by architecture museums in the future, a position which is initially closely tied to the role they play within the culture industry. The structural institutional consequences are self-evident: every culture industry requires offensive publicity work, advertising and marketing. It needs a strong media presence. To finally address content, towards the end of this talk: Does this call for a strong media presence mean that the glamour of star architects is needed? This has without

doubt been the key issue in contemporary architecture over the past 20 years. However the experiences of the past few years have shown that the presentation of star architects is a very risky business. For, firstly, an architecture museum should not be misconstrued as the extended marketing department of an architecture office. Secondly, as has also been shown by experiences of recent years, even with exhibitions by stars, no blockbuster result can be achieved among visitors that equals that of art exhibitions.

Compared with the culture industry in general, architecture still interests and reaches a minority. Although an interest in the improvement of the concrete living situation and the living environment is a majority concern within the population.

Architecture impacts on everybody and is an artistic discipline, which is why the architecture museums will always have to step between the two: Research for the future and the conservation of heritage, providing a platform for the insiders' architectural debate and low-threshold information for everybody.

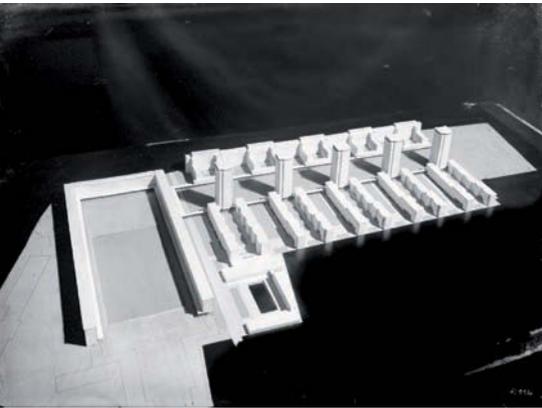
So I return to the start of my talk: The architecture museum does not exist. Each architecture museum must find an appropriate role for itself within the local culture and its own context, and dedicate itself to the improvement of the culture of architecture by continually finding new ideas for mediation.

And a personal comment on the findings of our study and recent discussions (Paris, Oslo, Stockholm): An architecture museum is subject to culture political forces just like every other museum. Even the history of the wide range of members of icam shows a heterogeneous structure. Many architecture museums are 'only' departments in other museums, and many architecture museums will now once again become departments of other museums. Political decision-makers see the promise of economic and political advantages and an increase in efficiency in the organisational amalgamation of many museums. My experience of working with the members of icam over the past 15 years, however, shows the opposite to be true: The larger an institution is, the more departments it assembles, the larger the unproductive bureaucracy becomes. Which is why my wish for the architecture museums of the future is for a large number of small, highly mobile content-driven speedboats in every country of the world.

dietmar steiner, director, architekturzentrum wien, president of icam, vienna

## exhibitionism and its limits

jean-louis cohen



1/ *Cité de la Muette, Drancy (1931–1934), model*

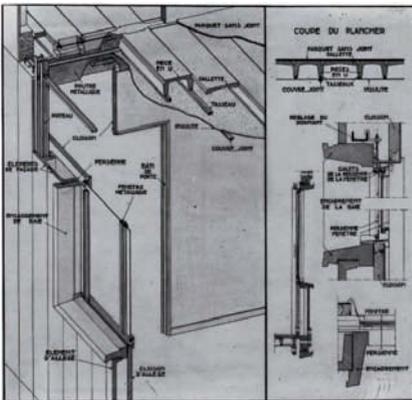
photo Académie d'architecture/CAPA.

Fonds Marcel Lods

2/ *Detail sections and axonometric view of constructive principles*

image Académie d'architecture/CAPA.

Fonds Marcel Lods



To exhibit architecture: this might seem a most simple injunction, but it is one that can be understood in many ways. Is the issue simply to offer it to the public's glance, as the newly born babies were "exposed" at the teller of charity houses, waiting to be adopted, or is it to unveil its mysteries? Presenting architecture in all its dimensions, unmasking its founding networks from the most public to the most secretive ones, but also bringing to the light all the documents, all the traces, such can be the ambition of a contemporary museum, and such was the ambition of the collections and the programmes I imagined between 1998 and 2003 for Paris' Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine.

Having to expose, to put on display the most public of all the arts is nothing short of astonishing. A discipline shaping the frame of everyday life, architecture is by itself eminently visible. Unavoidable in the most physical sense of the term, the art of building has a blinding presence. Yet, even if it is overexposed by its sheer evidence, architecture can become nonetheless almost invisible in its finer grain. Such invisibility derives from multiple determinations, aesthetic or historical. The peculiar formal codes according to which buildings are laid out can generate a certain opacity. The sophistication of the language used in some of the most prosaic programmes is sometimes overlooked. In other cases, the identification of buildings to oppression or exclusion tends to obliterate their initial innovative character. I would mention as an example the case of the La Muette housing scheme built in Drancy, near Paris, by Eugène Beaudouin and Marcel Lods, with a major contribution by Jean Prouvé (1934), which lost the aura it carried as a radical experiment in prefabrication by having been transformed into a concentration camp during World War II.

If I may use the metaphor of photography, at the risk of eroding it, architecture needs to be focused, in order to be captured in its components and its materiality. A wide range of strategies have been deployed in the past two centuries to reveal its image, to fixate it, and to communicate it. 18th century salons were the first settings in which architectural drawings, i.e. documents hitherto meant to serve in the dialogue with the patrons and in the internal dealings of the studios, were for the first time offered to public inspection. Drawings had long before become collectibles, and buildings had been designed with the specific goal of hosting them, such as the library conceived around 1710 by John Talman to preserve the Palladio and Inigo Jones drawings he owned. Astonishing collections then emerged, as far East as St. Petersburg where, several decades later, the Academy of Fine Arts would host large size baroque models of the new capital's buildings.

Toward the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the following one, a series of parallel endeavours contributed to the invention of the architecture museum, an institution where collections sometimes created for didactic purposes were displayed



*Musée de Sculpture comparée, circa 1900*  
photo Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine

to the public. The agents of this process were painters passionate about ancient sites or buildings, such as Louis-François Cassas, who opened a gallery of cork and talc models in Paris' rue de Seine in 1808, or architects, such as John Soane, whose collections of sculpture, ornaments, models, and drawings were offered to London's viewers in 1826. Painter Alexandre Lenoir's Musée des monuments français resulted from a totally different genesis, and was shaped out of the theatrical display of sculptural fragments and building parts rescued from dispersion and ordered according to a chronological sequence, a major innovation at the time. Beyond their dissemblance and their ephemeral existence — at least in the case of the Paris ventures — these first attempts manifested a double aspiration at edifying the lay audience and at presenting to architects and artists models capable of shaping their taste and stimulating their fantasy.

Beginning with this inaugural scene, the presentation of architecture followed the two distinct lines of the permanent collection, in most cases an assembly of historical pieces, and of the exhibition. The development of these programmes would be rather unbalanced. Museum collections expanded after the French Restoration, yet they remained basically an exception, whereas exhibitions became the theatre of technological invention and aesthetic innovation. Devoted to the spectacle of the commodity, universal or national expositions encountered throughout the 19th century the new architecture of the industrial age. They combined the encompassing forms

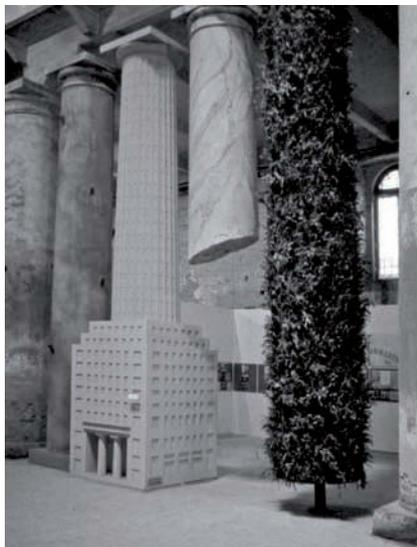
*Le Corbusier, house at Weissenhof in**Stuttgart**photo Az W*

of the great metal and glass containers in which they were enveloped, and the multiplicity of pavilions built in regional or exotic languages, all hysterically aspiring to originality and variety.

In this context, two distinct lines of development for exhibition strategies appeared, from which contemporary policies have derived. The first one dealt with the evocation at real scale of the edifice through the restitution of some of its elements or its complete reconstruction. Common in universal exhibitions, from London to Paris and Chicago, this strategy led to the first open air museums created in Scandinavia or in the Balkans, and devoted to the celebration of folk architecture. The plaster casts commissioned by the Victoria & Albert Museum or by the Musée de sculpture comparée created in 1879 in the Trocadéro palace in Paris derive as much from this approach as they do from the tradition of reproduced sculpture which originated at the time of the Renaissance.

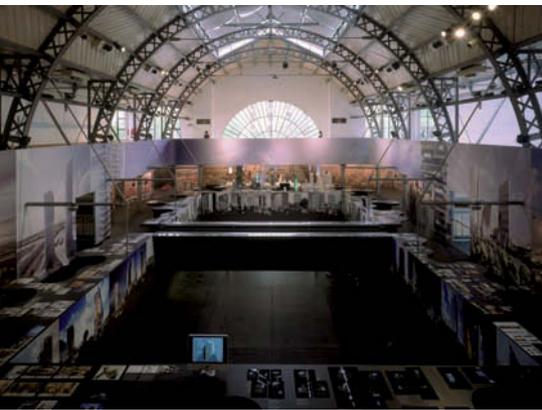
In the relationship between the large architectural elements it houses and the vast iron and glass structure wrapped around them, Chaillot's Musée de sculpture comparée was unique. It brings to mind Walter Benjamin's interpretation of 19th century construction as the "bodily process," around which "artistic" architectures are applied as dreams around the "skeleton" of the physiological process. In fact, in a museum devoted, not without chauvinism, to the celebration of French architecture, it was, inversely, the industrial vault comparable to the ones covering stations or market halls that acquired a dreamlike status.

The other tradition at work in architectural exhibitions dealt with the presentation of documents relative to the edifices, whatever their status might be. From models, used since Classical antiquity, drawings, to photographs and all the instruments used to simulate reality, these representations have shaped throughout history a sequence parallel to the transformation of construction itself. The former tradition has led since the industrial revolution to the displacement of structures into the enclosure of an ephemeral event or into an open-air museum, and has manifested itself in schemes such as Stuttgart's 1927 Weissenhofsiedlung and all the similar enterprises. In a parallel diachronic sequence, the latter has revealed changes taking place within architecture culture to the point of becoming seemingly more significant than the buildings themselves in the sequencing of history. The famous exhibition with which New York's Museum of Modern Art propagated the slogan of an "International Style" in 1932 belongs to the latter tradition. The myth of a new 'style', reducing to a handful of principles the socially generous strategies of the *neues Bauen*, which had been presented at full scale in Stuttgart, was built thanks to black and white photographs and models of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Gropius' Bauhaus in Dessau, Mies van der Rohe's Haus Tugendhat, and Oud's Johnson House project.



*Hans Hollein's contribution to Paolo Portoghesi's 'Strada Nuovissima' at the 1980 Venice Biennial*  
photo Az W

The conventional definition of architecture used in France is unfortunately almost untranslatable, despite its relevance. It differentiates between the ouvrage, i.e. the built work, and the œuvre, i.e. the intellectual modelling and the representation of the physical structure. The first tradition mentioned, as embodied in open-air museums and universal expositions, but also in the galleries of the Musée de sculpture comparée, transformed in 1937 into the Musée des monuments français, deals with the ouvrage. And the œuvre is core to the second tradition, which has developed from drawing and model cabinets to artistic exhibitions. Of course, boundaries between these two genres were sometimes porous. For instance, the memorable exhibition curated by Paul Nelson under the title *Techniques américaines de l'urbanisme et de l'habitation 1940–194X* assembled in 1946 under the nave of Paris' Grand Palais full-scale prefabricated houses and graphic documents, all serving the propaganda for an "American Way" of Building meant for postwar reconstruction. Far from having made a univocal contribution to the transformation of the discipline and the planning of cities, architectural exhibitions have had an unforeseeable impact. Their initial function of emulation and distinction, shaped in the age of Classicism by salons and academies, has survived on the walls of educational institutions and cultural events. However, in opposition to official ceremonies and celebrations, exhibitions have also been a privileged vector for rebellion against conservative forces or hegemonic generations. From the Viennese Secession of 1896 to the exhibition of "unknown architects", which opened the season in Berlin of German expressionism after the 1918 defeat, rebel factions operating within Austro-German culture fully relied on this medium. Half a century later, provocative exhibitions were the vehicle used in London by artists and architects who were members of the Independent Group to assert positions that contributed to the revisionist discourse of Team Ten and, to a certain degree, to the emergence of Pop Art. Instruments available for subversion and rebellion, architectural exhibitions have also been used for conservative, nostalgic campaigns. When the Museum of Modern Art's curators decided to put an end, or at least to question, the cycle of modernity, in 1976 they focused public attention on the Nemesis of the radicals, i.e. Paris' École des Beaux-Arts. Several years later, Paolo Portoghesi's Strada Nuovissima at the 1980 Venice Biennale would be the trigger for the restoration of historicism and eclecticism. From the revelation of new concepts to the return of all the repressed ones, architectural exhibitions have also allowed, in some cases, for a real discovery of architectural design strategies, opening in a certain manner a window on the secret laboratory of invention, thanks to traces like notes, sketches, and all the minute indices of the creative process. Remarkable monographic exhibitions have opened new paths in understanding the practice of Frank Lloyd Wright, Adolf Loos,



*Exhibition, 'L'Invention de la Tour Européenne' at the Pavillon de l'arsenal 2009  
photo Jean-Marie Monthiers*

Le Corbusier, Louis I. Kahn, Carlo Scarpa, Alvar Aalto, Mies van der Rohe, and many others. This pattern is, of course, not limited to the most recent figures, as the case of the contrasted exhibitions devoted to Andrea Palladio in 1973 and in 2008, and exploring widely different sets of issues, makes clear.

Yet, exhibiting architecture cannot be limited to a mere celebration, albeit an intellectually sophisticated one, of great figures. In several cases, exhibitions have become supports for democratic interaction. The epochal Berlin city-planning exhibition of 1910 has provided the opportunity for a discussion about the extension and the structure of Greater Berlin, establishing a precedent referred to by exhibitions held in 1931, 1957, and 1984, which have allowed for the presentation of new modes of city life to the population. Edmund Bacon, Oskar Stonorov, and Louis I. Kahn, organized the Better Philadelphia exhibition in 1947, which became a turning point in the discussion of the city's public policies. From a somewhat different perspective, the creation of an exhibition centre such as Paris' Pavillon de l'Arsenal in 1988 has marked a significant break with the culture of secrecy typical of French bureaucracy. Through the visual resources mobilized, these types of exhibitions have stimulated the collective imagination without which open discussion of urban policies is doomed to remain an illusion.

Relatively exceptional occurrences until the early 1970s, architectural exhibitions produced by a wide range of institutions, from local authorities and professional organizations to major museums, have grown exponentially during the last four decades, while also becoming indispensable moments in research and design invention. Their printed double, the catalogue, has become a fundamental carrier of historiographic discoveries. Initially an exception, the engagement of historians and architects in exhibitions has ceased to be a simple extension of their basic professional practice to become, in itself, their primary field of operation. A palpable market of exhibition curatorship and design has emerged, leading to fierce competition between academics, museum professionals and designers of various origins. The number is actually very small of thematic museums or the departments within general art museums to have the necessary in-house staff for an inflation of architectural programs, and rhizomatic networks of specialist expertise have spread out.

Exhibitions bring an obvious contribution to the labour of History, as they reveal the breadth of overlooked or misrepresented works. The Paris Viollet-le-Duc exhibition staged in 1979 in the Grand Palais, or the 2007 Pierre Cuypers show at the Nederlands Architectuurinstituut have, for instance, reshaped the understanding of two 19th century architects. But exhibitions also tend to manifest tendencies, to reveal situations of crisis, and can become indices of deep disturbance. The incidence of Biennials, Triennials, and other cyclical programs in the temporal segmentation



1/ Exhibition, 'Cuypers. Architecture with a Mission', 22 September 2007 – 2 February 2008

photo NAI

2/ Exhibition, 'Palladio 500', Vicenza, 20 September 2008 – 6 January 2009

photo Pino Guidolotti



of professional production seems sometimes to have the perverse effect of leading to an architecture which would have its exhibition as its primary goal, much as some films are primarily destined for festival screenings. The spectrum of the Beaux-Arts, where designs were reduced to mere posters, is sometimes behind the door. In contrast with monographic or thematic exhibitions and with programmes dealing with the most burning contemporary issues, architecture museums are also an emerging species. It would be vain to look for a unique model, and the spectrum of collections and policies met in Stockholm, Helsinki, Frankfurt, Rotterdam, Vienna, Paris, Moscow or Rome, to mention only some of the institutions created in the past decades, is breathtakingly broad. The architecture museum's ethos, if there is one, is precisely to suggest a structure conveying duration and change, to allow for the understanding of the way historical time impacts on architecture, in order to contribute through the interpretation of past figures to the reception of contemporary convulsions.

Despite the wide differences in their aim, both the temporary exhibitions and the museums' permanent collections face similar problems dealing with the representation, the depiction of built work: What is the relevance intrinsic to the notion of authenticity in the age of virtual reality? How can objects, films, and digital animations assembled in a gallery produce an experience more stimulating than the distanced consultation of a website? What is, beyond fetishism, the meaning of collecting drawings, models, and original documents? In *Le Problème des Musées* poet Paul Valéry wrote in 1924 that "ideas such as ordering, collecting and public utility, which are both clear and bust, have little to do with delight." How is it possible to combine discovery and play within the space of a gallery, in order to let knowledge meet delight? Finally, in the case of the museum, how can one face the deterioration in time of the exhibits, which inescapably results either from their static character or from their exceedingly slow rotation, or also, primarily, from the obsolescence of the interpretation which has legitimized them.

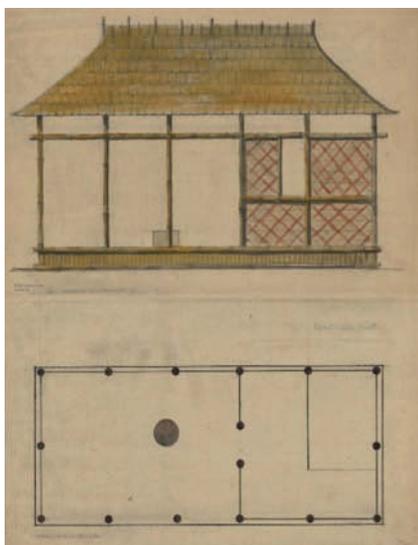
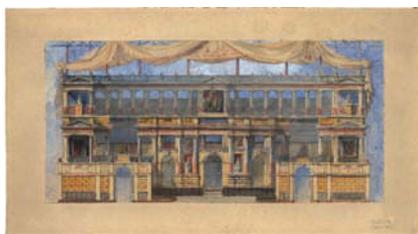
Exhibiting is nothing other than exposing, unveiling architecture. Revealing the mystery of invention through the presentation of the architects' way of thinking and professional techniques is not only a matter of knowledge. If a better understanding of design strategies and their arcane procedures doesn't suffice to transform citizens into architects, it might contribute to the construction of their position in the dialogue with architecture, and hence allow them to exert their rights as urbanites and inhabitants.

jean-louis cohen, professor of architecture history, institute of fine arts, new york university, new york

## collecting architecture today and tomorrow

'discursive archives', based on the example of the archives of the institute for history and theory of architecture at the eth zürich  
**andreas tönnesmann, bruno maurer**

70



1/ Estate of Gottfried Semper: theatre installation at the Crystal Palace in Sydenham, circa 1860

image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

2/ Theoretical Archives of Gottfried Semper: Carribean Hut, drawing for the book 'Der Stil', circa 1860

image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

In Switzerland, as in other countries, buildings and urban ensembles and the goods relating to them represent primary and long-term manifestations of the cultural heritage. What is the contribution of architecture to the safeguarding of this cultural memory? First, throughout large historical tracts exceptional structural monuments in Switzerland have survived, their significance as monumental testimonies both to the period of their completion as well as of their own historical existence being beyond doubt. Ensembles of spaces in the towns, small communities and estates, as well as gardens and engineering constructions that bear testimony to history while still fulfilling a wide range of functions today can demand conservation or careful handling.

Key significance is claimed for the extremely differentiated and rich heritage of secondary material on the history of architecture and urban development in Switzerland, to which new fonds of material are being added every day. Collections and archives in Switzerland have long been dedicated to the conservation, recording and researching of this property. Included are architecture drawings, models and images of all kinds, manuscripts and other text material and sound and film documentation that provide valuable insight into the history of the architectural culture in Switzerland and its position in an international context, frequently going beyond this, and have a rightful claim to conservation as artworks. These are, in part, collected in municipal and cantonal archives of building records, which are often closely tied to the conservation authorities, and there are sections in the academic archives. Among the latter are the Archives of the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture at the ETH Zürich, the Archives de la construction moderne at the EPF Lausanne and the Archivio del moderno at the Accademia di architettura at the Università della Svizzera Italiana in Mendrisio. In the fields of architecture and planning these three archives are the centres of gravitation for an extremely diverse landscape of architectural archives in Switzerland, one that reflects the Federal organisation of communities, and to which numerous private archives also belong. Together with the Werner Oechslin Library Foundation in Einsiedeln they have for a while been united in the ABA\_AR-CH (Association bibliothèques/archives d'architecture Suisse).

### museum, collection, archives

Every architecture archive is the product of its history and its institutional context. A clearly defined core goal is often predefined in a founding charter. Accordingly, in the late-19th century municipal archives were established to fulfil a perceived need to document the buildings and urban ensembles threatened by the construction fever of the Gründerzeit using written testimonials, original plans and the new medium of photography. Today municipal archives of planning records are often closely tied to



*View of the gta Archiv, ETH Zürich  
photo gta Archiv, ETH Zürich*

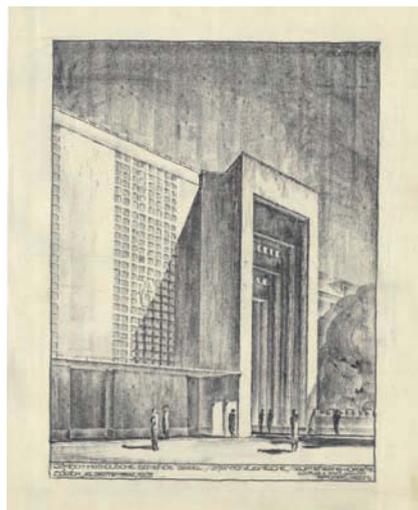
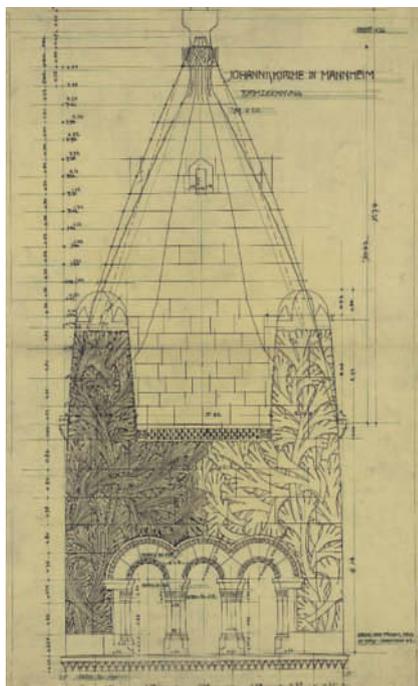
the appropriate conservation authorities. The holdings enable historical research to be carried out as the basis for taking decisions regarding the extent of protective measures, and in finding suitable approaches to the renovation of and eventual extensions to historic substance. Usually these archives operate purely as a service. They are frequently under the jurisdiction of the planning authorities, which impacts on their level of independence.

So too, the Archives of the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture at the ETH Zürich (gta Archives) fulfils the function of an archive of planning records and building documentation. With the estates of architects, which comprise the main stocks, and the extensive collections of images and plans, it is a key resource for researchers engaging with a specific object, an urban ensemble, or architecture history and theoretical issues. Nevertheless, its profile is significantly different to that of the municipal planning record archives. It has developed successively, whereby three phases are to be ascertained.

The background to the gta Archives goes back to 1880 when students of Gottfried Semper's (1803–1879) founded the Semper Museum, modelled on the Schinkel Museum in Berlin, in the domed hall of the new Zurich Stock Exchange, which had also been built by a student of Semper's, and the realisation of which Semper had played a role in as a member of the competition jury. So Zurich became the first town in Switzerland to have an architecture museum. Although at the time it was a museum almost devoid of a public so it soon had to close down. The museum's stocks – plans and sketches by Gottfried Semper – were donated to the polytechnic where, as the Semper Archives, they lay largely ignored for decades in the library even though continually being added to: additional material for the Semper Archives, and gradually also the estates of Semper's successors were integrated, including the estate of Karl Moser, the 'father of Swiss modernism'.

In 1967 the architecture department of the ETH founded the Institute for History and Theory of Architecture. The driving force behind it was Adolf Max Vogt. At his side was a panel of curators comprising art historians, architects, and the head of the architecture department Heinrich Hauri, a civil engineer, also being involved. Even from this composition it is clear that the aim was to teach and research history and theory in an interdisciplinary exchange while retaining a strong relevance to current issues. To do this, however, a material basis is required.

Even at the opening event for the newly founded Institute Adolf Max Vogt spoke about wanting to expand the library soon, to supplement its existing stocks of architecture periodicals and treatises and expand the Semper Archives – here he explicitly referred to the project for an archive of the Congrès internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). Although things actually turned out the other way

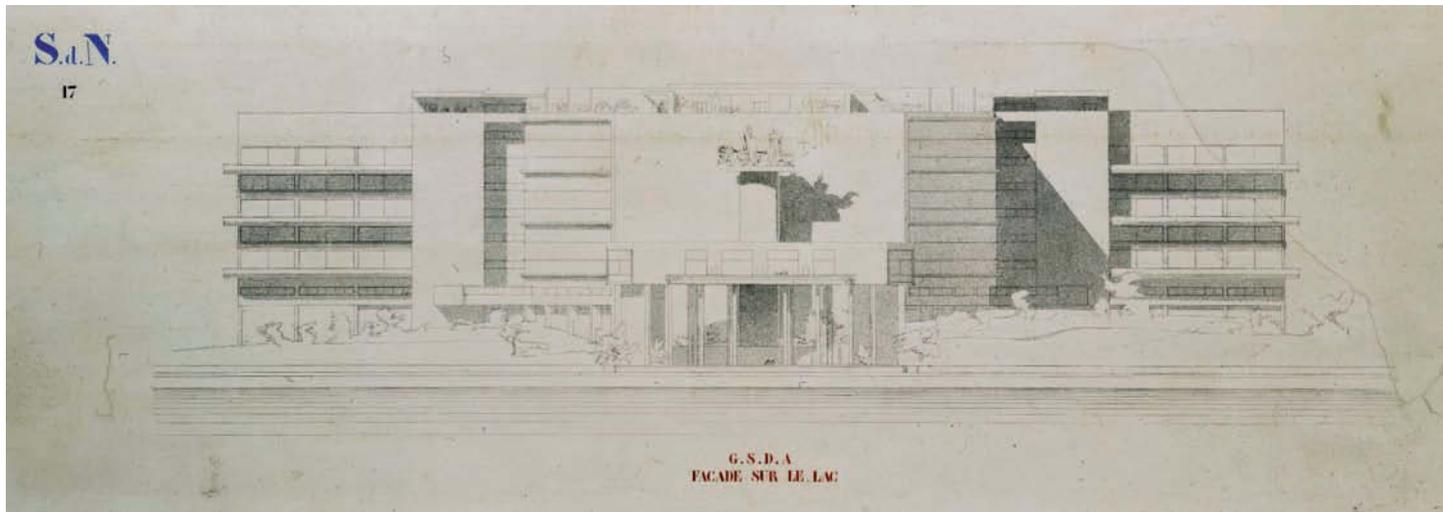


round: The Semper Archives were donated by the library to the gta, so making the gta Archives a *fait accompli*. The research programme in the founding years reflected the areas of research being pursued by the current professors and lecturers, while also being orientated on the major estates.

### acquisition and selection

The early years of the archives were marked by a very active acquisitions policy. A rapid expansion resulted, especially in the collection of modern Swiss architecture. There was also a successful appeal to the protagonists at CIAM – whose secretary general, Sigfried Giedion, we were able to welcome among the guests at the celebrations to mark the founding of the gta Institute. In the four decades of their existence the gta Archives have hardly altered in terms of the collection's profile and its basic agenda. The archives still basically make new (when possible, comprehensive) acquisitions based on donations of estates and living testaments. The authors of the designs, their complete oeuvre and their networks in the national and international architecture system are the key. The actual authors from the disciplines within the planning process are supplemented by individuals who reflect on the process in theoretical terms (historians and theorists like Sigfried Giedion and more recently Stanislaus von Moos). Even if the archives have a heterogeneous range of users, the primary orientation is on the academic and scientific discourse, and so on the needs of those conducting the research – finding direct access to original material whenever possible.

The 20th century produced material like no other century before it. This applies in particular to the building culture of the boom years following the Second World War, when a third of the current stock of buildings and major parts of the infrastructure were completed. The sustainable conservation of the documentation from this period is the challenge currently being addressed. In the past 15 years the number of estates in the gta Archives has roughly doubled (to approx. 200 today), further acquisitions of key archives are scheduled to go ahead shortly (among these being the extremely extensive archives compiled by Fritz Haller, the key proponent of what is known as the Solothurner School). Faced with a situation where reserves of space and staff resources can in no way keep pace with this growth there is now a call for intelligent collecting strategies. The evaluation of cultural exponents, an essential prerequisite for the necessary selection process, is an area of indispensable expertise in the development of a collection. Precisely here is where the advantage can be seen in having archives integrated within a university context. Even if the selection has to take pragmatic considerations into account, especially concerning the availability – or not – of existing space for archives, it requires ongoing academic



1/ Estate of Karl Moser, Johanneskirche  
(St. John's Church) in Mannheim by Curjel &  
Moser, 1902

image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

2/ Estate of Karl Moser, Antoniuskirche  
(St. Anthony's Church) in Basel, 1925

image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

3/ Archiv Le Corbusier, Palais des Nations in  
Geneva by Le Corbusier & Pierre Jeanneret,  
competition project, 1927

image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

4/ Nachlass Alfred Roth, Atelier  
Le Corbusier with the competition project  
for the Société des Nations, 1927

photo gta Archiv, ETH Zürich



1/ Estate of Sigfried Giedion, layout sketch  
for the book 'Bauen in Frankreich', 1928  
image gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

2/ Estate of Sigfried Giedion, Giedion and  
Hugo Herdeg in the cave Tuc d'Audoubert  
near Montesquieu-Avantès, Ariège, 1952  
(photo: ascribed to Achille B. Weider)  
photo gta Archiv, ETH Zürich



support. An acquisitions policy always means an aware, i.e. scientifically grounded, approach to exercising restraint – or the search for alternatives.

In fact, the Swiss landscape of architectural archives has long shared the view that instead of competing in the acquisition of archive material, cooperation is essential. In their function as centres of expertise, the gta Archives as well as its sister archives in Lausanne and Mendrisio support the initiatives of regional centres (i.e. metropolitan and cantonal archives) as well as private archives. They guarantee orientation in the splintered 'landscape of memories' of Switzerland in the area of building culture, to which alongside architecture the local, regional and state planning measures, garden and landscape architecture and the civil engineering sector are taken into consideration.

#### digital archives

In May 2008 the Swiss ministry for culture compiled a report on the country's commemorative policy.\* The report addressed the key issue of the conservation and mediation of the cultural heritage of Switzerland, and provides an overview of the challenges that have to be met by cultural policy in the face of the digital revolution. Digital storage systems have long been established as standard technology in many areas. Often there is, however, the question as to what the technical challenges will be that we can expect to arise in the long-term storage of digital data, and how we can find reliable ways to address these. Just as urgent has proved the challenge of how to engage with the virtually unlimited storage capacity of digital systems in the future and the need for an appropriate and adequate selection process, and a clear organisation for the material worth conserving.

At the gta Archives, too, the digital era has long dawned. There are already vast quantities of digital data in the archives that were compiled by retro-digitization and amassed in the course of large-scale research projects. If this data were not well cared for, then in the face of the current state of financial resources it would be equivalent to the destruction of valuable material. The digital data includes a second area generated in the course of conservation measures. This applies in particular to film and sound documentation, which is very fragile in comparison to paper archive material or models. A major challenge is presented by the estates and living testament donations that already contain a large quantity of digital information for which there is no analogue counterpart, no 'original document'. To date this has only applied (as generation specific) to only a few estates. Nevertheless, like all archives with an active acquisitions policy, the gta Archives must now address this challenge, and make provision, with proactive know-how and infrastructure ready. It goes without saying that the 'digital challenge' can only be met with a networked approach and by working in cooperation.



### cooperations and networking

With the institutions named above, Switzerland has at its disposal a network of highly competent centres of expertise that take responsibility for the safeguarding and mediation of the architectural heritage. The exceptional work in the sectors of conservation and research that is done here is among the clearly visible and respected achievements in the service of the conservation of the cultural and social heritage of Switzerland. For the future it will be important not only to ensure the continued provision for the tasks previously undertaken by these institutions, but also to apply the knowledge available here and the scientific and academic expertise to develop and work on new strategies and techniques for preserving the heritage. Various projects have recently already been completed successfully in Switzerland that are based on the new information technology and that use existing networks. Of these, worth mentioning in particular are the online retro-digitized periodicals on architecture and civil engineering (Baugedächtnis Schweiz online: [www.retro.seals.ch/digbib](http://www.retro.seals.ch/digbib)); online databases with information on the contents of archives and location details (especially the Guide des sources, which covers the west of Switzerland online at [www.archisources.epfl.ch](http://www.archisources.epfl.ch)) and the Stiftung Planungswettbewerbe Schweiz database ([www.research-design-competitions.org](http://www.research-design-competitions.org)). They are all based on institutions concerned with cultural memory, libraries and archives that view, conserve and mediate the archive material received, enabling a critical engagement with our built environment, its past and its origins.

andreas tönnesmann, institute head, gta archives, eth zürich, zurich  
bruno mauerer, director, gta archives, eth zürich, zurich

1/ Estate of Fritz Maurer, Märkisches Viertel  
in Berlin by Ernst Gisel, 1965–69

photo: Fritz Maurer

2/ Estate of André M. Studer, Sidi Othman  
housing estate in Casablanca, 1955

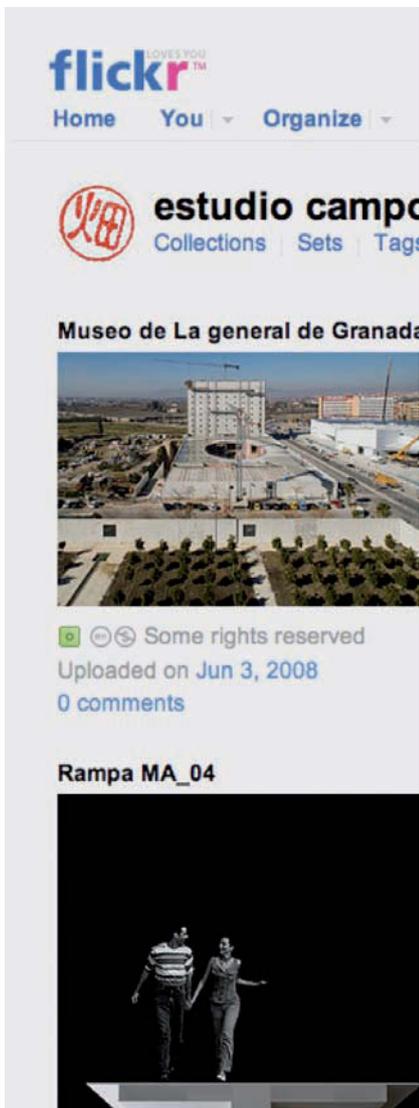
photo gta Archiv, ETH Zürich

\*Memopolitik. Eine Politik des Bundes zu  
den Gedächtnissen der Schweiz,  
Bundesamt für Kultur BAK, 1 May 2008

## vanishing paper, vanishing records

manuel blanco

76



1/ Web page, flickr  
 image Manuel Blanco  
 2/ Google search  
 image Manuel Blanco

Delving into the matter of what architectural archives are to be called in our contemporary world entails a very important problem of branding with our collections if we are to refer to them as Architectural Archives.

Talking about branding in the Internet era involves talking about Google, the online search engine that we have all turned into the universal mediator to the extent that we do not search for things we “google” them. Google has rearranged and set priorities in the world of knowledge over the past decade, so it is important to attempt to interpret this. If we search for “architectural archives”, we get 386,000 replies in 0.14 seconds, headed by the Irish Architectural Archives website, followed by the Pennsylvania Archives and then, the Carnegie Mellon Archives, and the Northwest and Southeastern Archives, which precede the CCA that finally turns up. I realize that my talk is about collection, but collecting means money, or the donation to a known institution, and we have a general branding problem, and in our contemporary society brand means money and the resources to be able to develop our work and to access the means we require to complete our task. The problem is, I have many more questions than answers about what is happening in such a fluid situation as the one we face today in the midst of an economic crisis that is part of a general crisis, in which a dominant element is a change in the system of production and conservation. Since the Industrial Revolution, I don’t think there has been such a huge change in the working system of a collective as that which the introduction of the digital world has entailed in the practice of the architecture offices and studios. Both from the point of view of studio management and the different tasks involved in it, as well as from the point of view of the possibility of obtaining new forms from the different means of managing their construction. Of course, many could be obtained through the use of traditional systems prior to the digital age, as all traditional shingle architecture reveals, or Candela’s magnificent studios, but not on the scale currently taken, nor with the accessibility and extent to which it is being produced and spread at this time. We are not speaking of something radically new that is happening only in this new digital world, since if we look at some of our existing figures we see the interaction among the different media, supports or systems in which their creativity has developed and how they are related to one another. It is impossible to understand Calatrava’s Malmö tower if one does not observe at the same time his earlier sculpture *Twisting Torso* or his drawings of the human figure in motion. You cannot understand his design for the Ysios Winery if you do not know the preceding sculpture *Wave*, a copy of which can be found in the private gardens belonging to the King of Spain. Therefore, the issue is probably not in all of the kinds of elements related to a work of architecture that one must collect if one wishes to offer the most complete panorama possible of the work of our creators.



architectural archives

Buscar

[Búsqueda avanzada](#)  
[Preferencias](#)

Buscar en la Web  Buscar sólo páginas en español

La Web Resultados 1 - 10 de aproximadamente 386,000 de architectural archives. (0.14 segundos)

Major collections:

**Archivio Progetti** More than 20 collections comprising around 8,000 documents.

**Le Centre Canadien d'Architecture** Designs and prints containing more than 100,000 pieces, a collection of more than 5,500 photographs and 150 archive collections.

**The Victoria & Albert-RIBA Architecture Partnership** The RIBA alone includes more than 750,000 drawings and more than 750,000 archive elements and more than 1,500,000 photographs.

**NAI, Netherlands Architecture Institute** Holds around 800 archives.

**The Alvar Aalto Museum** More than 200,000 drawings, more than 20,000 letters.

**Cité de la Architecture et du Patrimoine** More than 4.5 kilometers of shelves.

**Getty Center, the new Department of Architecture and Design** An archive of more than 250,000 items.

**Museum of Finnish Architecture** About 350,000 drawings. The photographic collection includes about 85,000 photographs.

This problem has always existed, from the Renaissance to our days. The problem today is most likely more related to the exponential increase that the new media and systems are provoking in the creativity of our young and not so young creators, leading them to make works very closely tied to technical systems that allow a certain assessment of them, and above all to the scale on which all of this has occurred. The fact in itself has already been analysed and assessed in all the areas of art collecting, both institutional and private, and solutions have been sought for it, from the most anecdotal, such as the guaranteed stock of fluorescent lights that the collectors of Dan Flavin's work have, to the problems that certain collectors might have with installations in which the apparatus for which they were conceived no longer exist. A slide show of the collection of Mauricio Morra Greco recently presented at Malmö had a problem because Kodak no longer produces the systems of synchronization with which it was conceived, and the artist was absolutely opposed to replacing any element that comprised the piece.

Clearly, in the cases of art installations, the machines supporting them have an aesthetic content that forms part of the piece, while in most of the installations of architecture, they are simply elements that allow their visualization. We know that the recipe is a migration of systems, but to what point can we allow ourselves this migration, given the volume of incoming material and above all given the volatility of the systems. Such volatility that by the time the necessary settling of a creator's work has occurred so as to consider it worthy of being collected, it is no longer accessible. The speed with which a private collector makes decisions is always much greater than the acquisition procedures any institution must follow.

But it is not only a problem of support, but also of where an attractive part of the architect's practice has gone and how the terrains between the world of art and that of architecture have fluctuated in this border territory of confluence. The mechanisms of the art and architectural market can also differ in this case, since the art market is much faster in exalting and digesting its creators, while to date architecture has shown itself to be more cautious generationally and we still speak of 40 year old architects as "young architects". However, probably thanks to the rapid diffusion that the Internet now permits of elements related to architecture, if not of architecture and the constructed work themselves, this professional cursus honorum will find its pace accelerating. On the other hand, the mechanisms of the dissemination of architecture have changed and they are also the object of search and collection.

Phenomena like Flickr have blown all of the mechanisms of information dissemination on architecture into the air, converting the images of architectural reality into archives, with a spontaneous tag system that makes it possible to locate or group what is



*Exhibition, Alberto Campo Baeza in Tokyo,  
curated by Manuel Blanco  
photo Manuel Blanco*

being searched for or deposited. Important figures of architecture, such as Campo Baeza, are not only depositing the information about their work on flickr, but they are also digitizing the entire content of their sketch archives and giving them to students that visit their exhibit at the Fundación del COAM. The next immediate step to be taken is the publication of this material on the Internet, and it probably no longer needs to be an online publication as sophisticated as the one that the University of Columbia made, in collaboration with other universities, on the holdings of the Greenes, which brings up the question of whether we are speaking of an online archive or an online publication, although the limits between the two are daily becoming more and more confused, and we should perhaps forget about trying to define them and focus our energy on providing access to information.

We are also facing another kind of material that goes beyond the unique piece or drawing of traditional collecting. In many elements of the generation born digital, this concept largely disappears. We are facing pieces that may be multiple or simply replicable, as many as desired. Obviously if there is a will to convert them into a collector's item with its market value, this can be achieved. The collectors have already solved the problem in the art world; there are three copies of Bill Viola's video piece *Emergence*, commissioned by the Getty Museum in 2002: the Getty owns the first, the Berlinghieri Collection another and I don't remember who has the third. Is there really a difference between having a video from this series by Bill Viola or the corresponding project by Zaha Hadid, should she ever decide to convert it into a multiple or a unique collector's piece?

Of course the original has a value, which, beyond the descriptive, conveys an emotion to the researcher or the beholder that goes far beyond the informational elements it possesses and may catalyze new ideas. We obviously have to recognise the fetishism involved in this activity. The commemorative exhibition presented this year by the Palladian Centre in Vicenza with original Palladio drawings, mostly from British archives, RIBA, is absolutely unforgettable precisely because of this physical presence. Yes, we are specific, despite the fact that I am drawing parallels with parallel artistic worlds once again, to the point that today we are attending a conference of **icam** and not of ICOM, to which we all belong as a collective but only a few as an affiliated institution.

Collecting to preserve is not the same as collecting to possess, exhibit or exchange; they are two different fields and the priorities of one or the other depend almost entirely on the world in which we live. Or on the hemisphere in which we find ourselves. The problems that undeveloped or emerging economies have in order to be able to establish a catalogue or social priorities that include an understanding of the necessity of preserving the documentation of architecture and relating it to the

protection of the rural and urban environment are tremendous. The survival of archives has been due, in large part, to the personal and disinterested dedication of academics and heads of institutions who have achieved, little by little, the preservation of part of the existing documentation in their cultural territories.

Of course, conserving and providing access are also the objectives of the collections of our leading museums and institutions, and without that understanding a large part of the material that is deposited in most of the founding centres of icam would not exist, but also, obviously, the conditions are not the same. And the focus on these two superimposed images that constitute icam and ICA-SAR also changes.

The chosen topic in my paper is collecting, not preserving. And this collecting also implies a reality made up of unique pieces that has been extended to collecting not only the single leaf but also the tree, and in these moments we are probably heading for the forest, while in the reality of the professionals who make up this parallel world that is ICA-SAR, it is a universe of forest collectors that sometimes come to catalogue the tree, but can rarely reach the taxonomic description of the leaf.

We are crafting a new model of institution that opens up a new field in the culture of our society to understand what Architecture means. Through this we may be able to expand, from memory to primary sources, represented by original documents, to studies conducted and kept in libraries, and to the exhibitions displaying, as their name indicates, the development of a given theme presented before our eyes.

I recall here Louis I. Khan's concept whereby an Institution is the place where a kid can discover what he may want to be as an adult. In fact, all of these mixed institutions that are being created around architectural archives are to a great extent already playing this role. They allow a better understanding of the nature of the habitat in which our lives take place and show how the traces left behind by all those events that have led us to create these vital foundations are kept in our archives and, finally, they help us get to know ourselves better and discover our own identity. But collections are our food, and to a great extent we are modified by what we eat. Just as in the dishes at Ferran Adrià's Bulli, we find a proliferation of exotic foams and mists that almost disappear in the air when they are tasted, we now have before us the challenge of collecting and preserving something as volatile as the smile of the Cheshire cat. We know that there is something of a Vanity Fair in all collecting, but we should try to ensure that it is not also a Vanishing Fair. Vanishing Paper has been a cultural and technological choice, the Vanishing Record could mean oblivion, and in classical times that was the ultimate tragedy.

manuel blanco, professor, universidad politécnica de madrid upm, member of ica-sar, madrid

*Vaults at the gta Archiv, ETH Zürich*

*photo gta Archiv, ETH Zürich*



## the presence of the past: tendencies in architectural history

claes caldenby, johan linton

80



'Architectural History', a special issue of the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 58, no. 3, September 1999  
image Az W

The 1970s saw what might be called an architectural history turn. There are indications all over of this, from conservation over documentation to new building. 1975 was the European architectural heritage year, stating in the declaration of Amsterdam that the preservation of that heritage is "a matter of vital importance". 1979 was the founding year of icam, an organisation with, among others, the aim to "foster the study of architectural history in the interest of future practice". 1980 was the year of the first Venice architecture biennial, with the very contemporary and post-modern title 'La Presenza del Passato'.

In 1999 the *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* published an issue (volume 58, number 3, September 1999) devoted to the state of the subject. The conclusion was that the developments during the last quarter century had been very strong, from the "repatriation" of architectural history to schools of architecture to the remarkable increase in the number of architecture museums from 15 to 90 in 20 years. But what has happened since then, in the last 10 years? Has architectural history had its 25 years of fame, or is there a future for the past? Where is architectural history made today, and how? Faced with such fundamental questions (from icam!) we saw the necessity to broaden our limited Swedish perspective. We have done that with the help of a number of questions sent to a selection of 14 architectural historians around the world. The selection is biased in the sense that it is made from our network of connections. On the other hand, we have tried to have a representation of different countries and institutions within the selection.<sup>1</sup>

One of the conclusions from this small questionnaire is that we are not alone in having a perspective limited to our own environment (this is not only our conclusion, but something stated explicitly in many of the answers). Another is that situations obviously differ, even within the same country and maybe between individuals. It is thus a risky undertaking to talk about international tendencies in architectural history. Bearing this in mind we will nevertheless try to make some remarks on the question.

### what is architectural history?

To start with, there are some important questions to consider. One regards the definition of the subject. What is architectural history? Or, what could it or should it be? A way of approaching such questions might be taken from one of the answers received. Josep Quetglas from Barcelona proposes as an example Ötzi, the mummified man found in Ötztal Alps in 1991. Quetglas points out how historians, departing from analyses of the body and the other found objects, have managed to reconstruct the framework of the social life of this distant ancestor. In his words the find "transforms into an extraordinary window through which one could be present... in a distant moment of the past".

<sup>1/</sup> The architectural historians who have been so kind and helpful in answering our questions are Nicholas Adams, Tim Benton, Peter Blundell Jones, Maristella Casciato, Adrian Forty, Giuliano Gresleri, Qinghua Guo, Mari Hvattum, Falk Jaeger, Peter Thule Kristensen, Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Stanislaus von Moos, Aino Niskanen, Josep Quetglas. The quotations in the article are from their email correspondence, unless otherwise stated.



Cover, Ákos Moravánszky (Ed.):  
 'Architekturtheorie im 20. Jahrhundert',  
 Springer, Vienna/New York 2003  
 image Az W

In contrast to the historian, Quetglas then puts the example of a shoemaker. As a craftsman he would instead be interested in the footwear of Ötzi, and relate these to his own work. It would be an anachronistic study of the object. "Here there is no past", writes Quetglas. "Here there is, with a word sometimes misunderstood, 'tradition'." We can refer to the Swedish Royal Academy professor Göran Lindahl for a similar distinction between "architectural knowledge" and architectural history. The former was taught as a repertoire in schools of architecture well into the 20th century. The latter is about change its conditions and contexts, according to Lindahl. "And it can actively contribute to give other subjects in the architectural education the concrete content they obviously lack".<sup>2</sup>

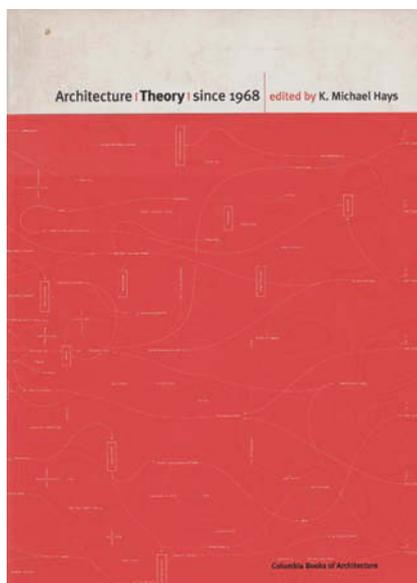
It is evident that the relation between these two categories is complex and that the conditions for the one or the other is governed by a wide array of different factors. It also seems that the question about these two 'modes' of architectural history today is, by necessity, dominated by pragmatism. Peter Blundell Jones from Sheffield School of Architecture, for example, approaches the subject through interpretations in term of strengths and weaknesses when he writes that: "Trained architectural historians are often more diligent in their methodology than architects doing architectural history, and may also be more open to models of analysis that are more culturally general, less personal and specific. The architect moving into architectural history is on the other hand more likely to be able to read spaces from drawings, more aware of technical issues, more able to envisage work from the designer's point of view." He finds these differences between institutions a benefit: "Both are needed, and their works should be complementary".

#### where is architectural history (and who is an architectural historian)?

The institutional basis of architectural history is, of course, a vital aspect of its status as a subject, today and in the future. The already noted 'repatriation' of architectural history to schools of architecture as well as the rapid growth of architectural museums were important to an understanding of the "architectural history turn".

The key significance of the 1970s institutional changes is recognised in all of the answers to our questionnaire. In fact several of those answering held their positions as a consequence of such changes, mainly in schools of architecture but also in art history institutions. But when it comes to the question of the situation today the perspectives are much more diverse. We asked, somewhat provocatively, whether a "backlash" could be seen today. One striking example of that diversity concerns the British situation. Adrian Forty describes the situation at Bartlett: "In this department at least, history teaching and research expanded in the 1980s – with the establishment of a graduate programme in architectural history – and in the mid-late 1990s,

2/ Göran Lindahl: 'Nyttan av historia' [the usefulness of history], in *Tidskrift för Arkitekturforskning*, volume 4, nr. 4, 1991



Cover, Hays, K. Michael: 'Architecture Theory since 1968', published by Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, New York, MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass. and London, 2000  
image Az W

the history section of the faculty expanded quite substantially. So I would say that the institutional support and interest has increased very considerably since the 1970s." While at the same time Tim Benton at The Open University is much more pessimistic: "The high point of architectural history and theory in Schools of Architecture is over. ...Most schools of architecture in Britain now have a lamentable level of history and theory teaching." Problems are also indicated by Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani of the Institute for history and theory (gta) at the ETH in Zurich: "We at gta are in a somehow privileged situation, but also in an increasingly isolated one. In many architectural schools historical teaching and research have become marginal, only a few strongholds remain." He also points to a productive collaboration with the art history institute in Zurich, while the recently retired Stanislaus von Moos of that same institution argues that "the fact that architectural history was no more an issue when my position was re-filled in 2005 may be seen as a symptom of the 'backlash' you are referring to." There was a similar situation at Stockholm University when the retired architectural historian Thomas Hall was recently replaced with a "pure" art historian. This is perhaps the place to remind ourselves that the Council directive of 10 June 1985 (in the middle of the "turn"! ) of the European Communities states that architectural education "shall ensure the acquisition of: An ability to create architectural designs that satisfy both aesthetic and technical requirements. And, an adequate knowledge of the history and theories of architecture and the related arts, technologies and human sciences" followed by another nine (less important?) aspects. One conclusion of all this is that the position of the subject acquired from the 1970s is never guaranteed but has to be achieved again and again, notwithstanding the Council's institutionalised support. This also means that the situation will vary considerably, depending on individual ability as well as the challenges met. And the same goes for the collaboration between architectural history at schools of architecture and at art history institutions, something wished for (thus indicating a lack!) in many of the answers.

Besides the academic basis of architectural history there is perhaps more significant demand from the conservation and cultural heritage sector. This was a field that increased rapidly with the European architectural heritage year 1975 as a symbolic turning point. The historians we have asked are not themselves in the field of conservation but obviously more or less take that for granted as a part of the subject. Falk Jaeger from Berlin mentions all the practical tasks facing German building historians after the fall of the Wall when the large heritage in the former GDR had to be documented and taken care of. Even if there has not been so much basic historical research there have been rapid technological developments with laser, computer photogrammetry etc. He also sees the necessity as well as the jobs in this sector,

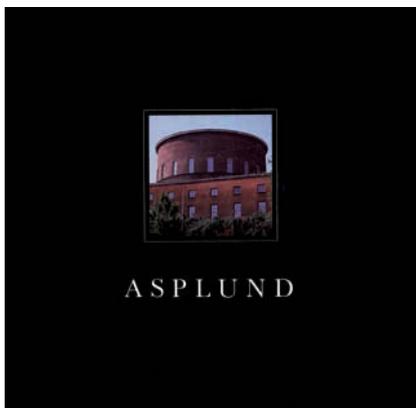
“considering the growing importance of the conservation of the existing building stock as opposed to the environmentally harmful new building”. In Denmark restoration and building archaeology have been important, also as a professional task for architects. Peter Thule Kristensen points out that the Danish magazine *Architectura*, launched in 1978, reflects this interest.

Architectural criticism is another field where architectural historians might have a role to play. According to Falk Jaeger there are some 100 active architectural critics in Germany. Half of them have studied architecture, several art history. Almost all are working part-time. The perspectives on the possibilities in this field vary greatly. Adrian Forty is optimistic: “The architectural press is generally hungry for good criticism, so there is no great difficulty in getting published”, Tim Benton again very much the opposite: “Architectural criticism in Britain is at an all-time low... partly due to the collapse of intelligent architectural journals and partly to the power of the big architectural firms, which control much of publication on architecture” (or do they say the same thing? That if there is a lack of good criticism there is also likely to be a hunger for it). Nicholas Adams from Vassar College in the USA sees “immense problems” here: “All magazines are compromised to one degree or another by their need to see the next work of the famous architect in their pages and architectural historians who engage in criticism in these magazines are, for the most part, civilized public relations mouthpieces”.

Maristella Casciato of the university of Bologna answers the question about the historian as critic with a clear: “I have been educated under a precise vision that I still consider my banner: There is only history, and no criticism. ...Contemporary architecture is part of our history; do we need new tools to read it?”

#### how is architectural history made?

Obviously the role of the architectural historian could be seen as taking a critical stance and keeping a certain distance to contemporary trends. However there are many ways of making architectural history and there seem to be intellectual trends as well as architectural fashions, and there might even be a connection between the two. In Sweden research into architectural history grew rapidly in the 1970s. The number of dissertations in the 1970s was 3–5 times higher than in previous decades. There was also a change in focus for the research. The 1970s showed a marked interest in typological studies of building types like public social institutions (hospitals, prisons etc.), banks, offices, university buildings, breweries, town planning, generally speaking the everyday architecture. A book by seven young architectural historians from Uppsala university, published in 1970, ends with a short postscript where Anders Åman makes a sort of ideological statement: “It was not the singular building



Cover, Claes Caldenby/Olof Hultin:  
*'Asplund'*, Gingko Press Inc., Corte Madera,  
 CA 1997 (1st edition 1985)  
 image Az W

or the singular architect which was the focus of interest. Architectural history, but not monument history".<sup>3</sup>In the mid-1980s there was a clear return to architectural biographies. One indication of this were the publications on Gunnar Asplund in connection with the 1985 centennial, but dissertations also turned to the heroes, even if sometimes a bit uneasily. Many of the leading Swedish 20th century architects had their biographies written during the ensuing decade. During the 1990s you could see the international theory trend mirrored in Swedish dissertations, recently perhaps shifting to an interest in broader cultural studies. It is partly a generation question, but you will also find architectural historians who have tried all these ways, very ecumenically.<sup>4</sup> These categories seem to be recognised elsewhere too, as our questionnaire shows, even if the timing and order might have varied. Clearly this is a question that evokes strong sentiments and resentments. "Looking at architecture as an individual production by single personalities is a rather sterile activity, but this activity is becoming more and more common. It is the spectacular image of a contemporary star cult that is ruining any serious architectural discourse", Lampugnani writes. "Exhibitions and conferences (whose anniversary is coming up next?) have driven architectural history for quite a while", says Nicholas Adams. "Biographies offer a simple way out for doctoral dissertations. Step by step third rank local architects of all epochs are researched", according to Falk Jaeger. Stanislaus von Moos says he has tended toward monographic studies in his own work, but including issues of typology within those. But, on second thoughts, he considers this mix to be atypical. The younger architectural historian Mari Hvattum from Oslo School of Architecture finds herself part of a "theory turn in the late '80s", towards which she takes a critical stance. "At the moment we are still trying to recover from the theory turn, finding new ways of uniting meticulous historical research with interesting theoretical perspectives. ...It is a real challenge, not least because it means that both, the 'straight' historians and the theory-buffs, have to make an effort." She continues: "The tendency today is more marked by a return to broad, contextual and social models for interpretation — often based on meticulous archival research — which makes it possible to reinterpret standard historiographical assumptions." Nicholas Adams adds another aspect to this. He thinks that "perhaps architectural and art history should be folded into history departments rather than media departments. I find the inability of historians to read objects — not to mention maps...to be shocking". Architectural history, so Adams, risks being instrumentalised at schools of architecture. "But if you look at the ways that historians either use or overlook the evidence of architectural history you can see that the general methods of architectural history (the evidence of the eye) would have a special place there and might be allowed to develop for itself." We ourselves are happy to support the both-and

perspective, “uniting meticulous historical research with interesting theoretical perspectives”, thus keeping open the options of making architectural history in many ways, including biographies. Perhaps a very Swedish perspective?

### next turn?

It looks as if the conditions for architectural history today promote a broadened view. As we indicated at the beginning of this article, our impression of the situation is that it is governed by pragmatism, an impression supported by the questionnaire. Nicholas Adams, for example, continuing his reflection upon the instrumentalisation of architectural history writes: “But perhaps that has always been an attitude among design faculties and I have no special problems with it. Rarely (and that is probably correct) do architectural historians lead design faculties.” He also makes clear that for the time being he regards the chances for a “special place” for architectural history at schools of architecture as “almost zero”.

It seems evident that the institutional basis of architecture history has in many ways weakened. The economical resources and the stability provided by institutions such as the university, architectural reviews, museums and archives seem, from a general perspective, to have declined, as have society’s interest in humanities.

This change is documented throughout the questionnaire, and it naturally forces the architectural historians to act. When Falk Jaeger underlines “the necessity” of turning to restoration, he does so after stating that “architectural history has to fight for its place at the university”. Another testimony of the same kind comes from Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani: “With respect to the profession of the ‘pure’ architectural historian, its possibilities are evidently limited. Students are very aware of this.”

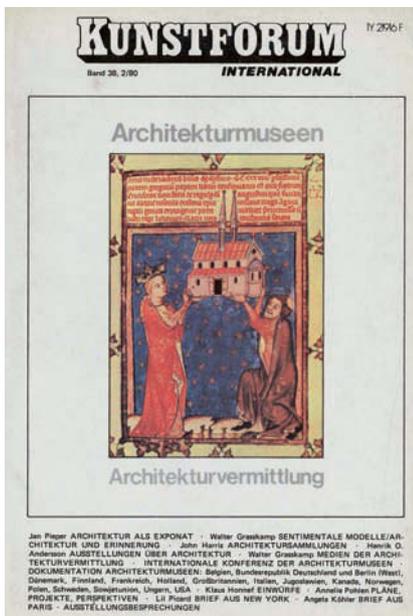
In fact, many of the answers bear witness to the difficulties that the universities have in providing continued possibilities for doctoral students after their dissertation.

In Sweden an inquiry indicates that 40% of the research at universities is done by doctoral students; a figure that clearly shows that a large part of the post-doctoral research will have to be conducted elsewhere or in other ways, if at all.

Another aspect of the situation for architectural history at university is manifest in relation to the practitioners. Peter Thule Kristensen gives a view that certainly isn’t only applicable to Denmark: “Often art historians with a university background have difficulties in coping with contemporary architecture in a way that is interesting for architects to read”. He consequently underlines the necessity of making the subject relevant for architectural practice when he continues: “It is important that architectural history in the future can be linked to a contemporary architectural practice”. It seems as if the architectural historian will have to promote his or her competence and knowledge in different contexts in another way than before.

3/ Ulf G Johnsson m. fl. *Sju uppsatser i svensk arkitekturhistoria*, 1970, p. 234

4/ We are thinking, for example, of Anders Åman with his books on public social institutions, *Om den offentliga världen* (1976), his broad cultural study of East European postwar architecture, *Arkitektur och ideologi i stalletidens Östeuropa* (1987), and his last book, a biography on a national antiquarian and restoration architect, Sigurd Curman (2007).



1/ Cover, Kunstforum International,  
'Architekturmuseen/Architekturvermittlung',  
vol. 38, 2/80, Mainz, 1980

image Az W

2/ Library, Cité de l'Architecture et du  
Patrimoine

photo Monika Platzer

Such changes are also related to other new conditions. The subject of architectural history has come to depend – more than before – on the forces of media, globalization and commercialism. It is evident from the questionnaire that all of these new conditions are problematic, but that they at the same time open up new possibilities. Giuliano Gresleri points out how the profession of the architect has lost some of the “noble exclusivity” it had during modernism, and writes that: “as a consequence the culture in general has become more interested in the less difficult questions of design and fashion than in the complex and complicated problems of building and the history of building.” The importance of communicating is emphasized by Adrian Forty, who sees one of the tasks for architectural history in the future as to “sustain cultural criticism, and give people a reason for seeing architecture on the same level as other cultural practices like literature or film, which regularly get far more attention.” Similar constructive attitudes can be found in relation to architectural practice, as in the answers from Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani: “Being an optimist, I like to believe that architectural history has a brilliant future. If we want to free the practice of architectural design from whimsical attitudes and arbitrary gestures, we need a systematic approach. More and more young architects, more and more students are getting tired of wilful extravagancy and are looking for a more solid basis for their projects. This basis can be provided only by history and theory.” Basically sharing Lampugnani’s optimism and constructive attitude, we would like to end our discussion with a proposal for action, a What is to be done? Or, five points for a new (or rather continued) architectural history:

- 1 Fight for architectural history’s place at universities: make the solemn declarations of its importance come true!
- 2 Historiography is needed as a mode of self-reflection: turning inwards to turn outwards.
- 3 Take the obvious role of architecture in a broad cultural criticism: architecture is everybody’s concern.
- 4 Argue for the need of architectural history as a solid basis for architectural practice: question ‘whimsical attitudes’.
- 5 Don’t mourn. Organize! There are already forms for that: Like the European Network for Architectural History and the Swedish ArkitekturHistorikerForum.

claes caldenby, architect, professor in theory and history of architecture, chalmers university of technology, gothenburg

johan linton, architect, architectural theorist and historian, chalmers university of technology, gothenburg



## art and architecture, artists and architects

ulrike jehle-schulte strathaus

88



1/ Installation, 2nd floor, Charles Simonds, Architekturmuseum Basel

photo Charles Simonds

2/ Installation, ground floor, Charles Simonds, Architekturmuseum Basel

photo Charles Simonds

3/ Installation, Christo, Architekturmuseum Basel

photo Wolfgang Volz

Nobody really argues anymore about whether architecture is the 'mother of all the arts' or not. To a large extent the boundaries between disciplines have been blurred and become almost obsolete. At the same time, however, no small number of architects claim artist's status, the architect quasi as the 'father of all the arts' or, in today's vernacular, as a 'star architect'.

On the basis of a number of examples from my twenty years' experience of museum work at the Swiss Architecture Museum and my current activities as an editor, I should like to pursue the extent to which artists contribute to a deeper understanding and more accurate perception of architecture and urban issues, i.e. how they can improve the tasks of an architecture museum in the broadest sense.

As an art historian, not as an architect, it was natural for me to approach or try to get to the bottom of the difference and common interests of art and architecture. In the years 1970 and later, when "attitudes become form" (this was one of the most influential exhibitions by Harald Szeemann in Bern), artists as well as architects began to break the traditional typology of their profession. So it was important for me to ask artists and architects to react to given spaces in the museum. To see what artists or architects do in the new situation.

### schweizerisches architekturmuseum

I started with my very first exhibition in summer 1984 with a work by Christo (at that time together with his wife Jeanne-Claude but without her name). He wrapped the interior of the museum. He covered the floors with fabric and brown paper on the curtain walls to mute the light of the interior space. So he confronted the building interior in his style, also masking its stairs and banisters. *Wrapped Floor* was the artist's title for this installation. By wrapping he made the space extremely visible. 'Installation': a word for artists in these years, later a duty for each architect invited to present his work in a museum.

After rather traditional, but nevertheless impressive exhibitions, like the first show with Luigi Snozzi in Switzerland, I invited Charles Simonds to work in the house in 1986. *The Three Trees* was his answer. The architecture museum became a showcase for the powerful tree trunks, Simonds' work could be viewed in several ways. Of the three approximately 140-years-old firs, one was living, the second blighted, the third dead. Seen from outside, the "glass container" had been broken open; the cityscape injured. Simonds had taken the Museum's urban location into consideration to remind the viewer of nature and growth where the economy of construction otherwise determines what is experienced.

With these examples I would like to present the interpretive force artists can develop in understanding, mediation and the perception of architecture, for a broad public too.





1/ Forum 3: Diener, Federle, Wiederin

Forecourt with the 'Seven Stones'

photo Ruedi Walti

2/ Car park, from the Main Gate

photo Lukas Roth

Now to a recent example of my theme Art and Architecture. Still in Basel, I will show you some examples of collaborations between architects and artists in Novartis Campus. The master plan for the Campus stems from Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, 7 years ago, to which different architects were and are invited to contribute.

### forum 3: diener, federle, wiederin

The first collaboration is the building Forum 3 by the architect Roger Diener with the artists Helmut Federle and Gerold Wiederin. The address is Forum 3. Each house in the Campus has an address like in a Swiss or German city: a street name followed by a number. The glass the Basel architects use has different sensual qualities. It depends on the angle it is viewed from whether the glass is coloured by the internal light or by external light, whether it seems yellow-grey or yellow-green or, when the sky is overcast, whitish grey. The Novartis design now radicalizes this use of glass. There are no windows, or rather: there is nothing but windows, floor-to-ceiling windows, and in front of them panes of glass in different shapes and colours form an envelope, fastened on evenly spaced rods. This envelope turns out to be multi-layered; the glass panes are placed in front of and behind each other with gaps, so that they are evidently there for no other purpose than that of forming an envelope which is visible because of colour. Hence, precisely speaking, they do not fit in with what is called the conditions of building, in the spirit of Hans Schmidt's statement that building is first a matter of necessity. The long, 22 metre wide building provides space for the Novartis managers' offices on four identical upper levels. These floors protrude on the Novartis site side, forming a covered area from which the building is entered. It accommodates the hall, a large space, a lounge, and two smaller spaces. A large painting by Helmut Federle is to hang in the hall. The upper storeys are articulated by three cores containing stairs, lifts and toilets. There are also glazed spaces that can be curtained off for meetings. The square between this and the Novartis office building dating from 1939 is thus extended into the building. It gives public character to the ground floor with its large sliding windows. Otherwise the upper levels are open. The balance of forces brought to bear must keep recreating itself in our perception. Diener is referring to this effect, I think, when he says their buildings are "as if moving slightly". Seen in this way, the "artistic setting" that Federle has given to the design for Novartis radicalizes a search that runs through all of Diener & Diener's work as "recherche architecturale". It does this in a way that is not accessible to architecture in its bond with what I have summed-up as the conditions of building. It radicalizes the search by disregarding its rules, as part of architecture. "Only like this does it make sense, this is the only way art can extend architecture", is Diener's summary of the co-operation between the painter and the architect.



1/ Fabrikstrasse 6: Peter Märkli, Jenny Holzer

photo Paolo Rosselli

2/ Main Gate, Eva Schlegel

photo Lukas Roth

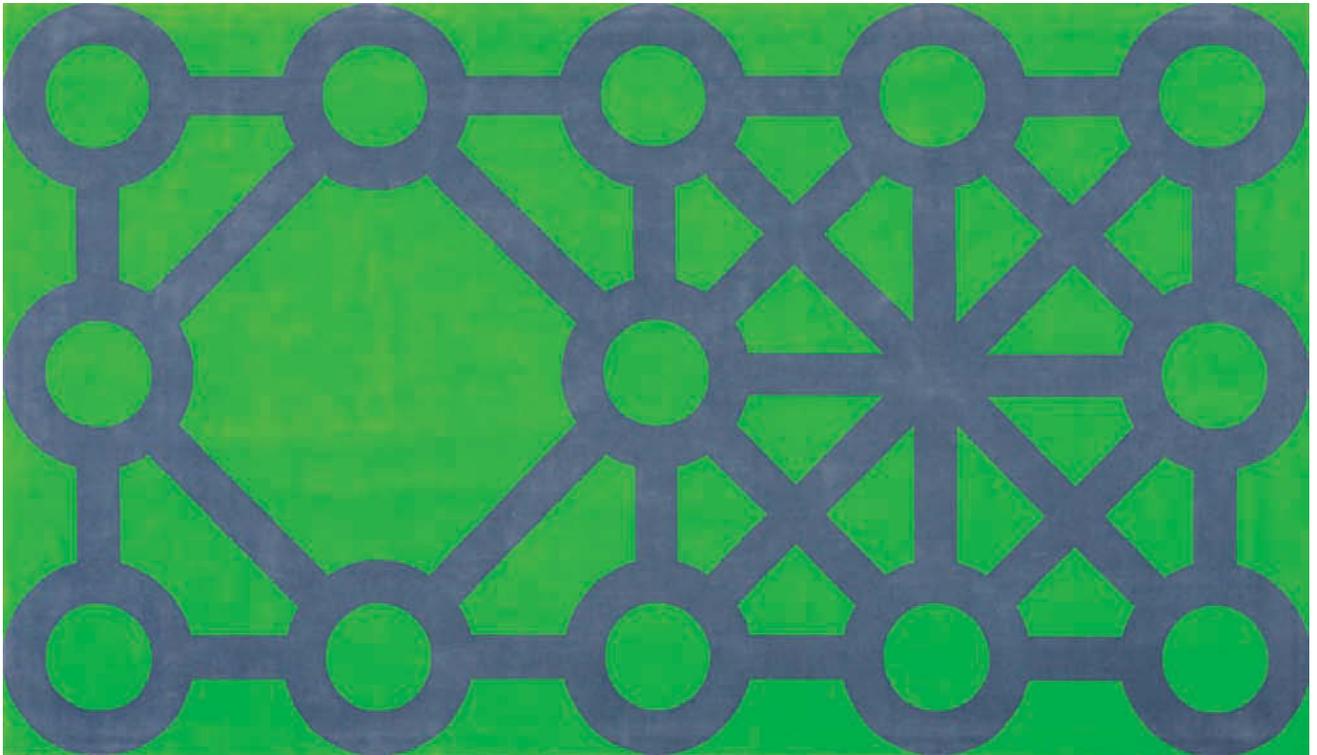


### fabrikstrasse 6: peter märkli

The visitor centre stands directly on the eastern side of the Forum. Like its contemporary neighbours, it follows the master plan by Lampugnani. The plan fixed the position, the perimeter and the high arches of the main façade, though these seem visually cut in half horizontally by the large band of vertical bars forming the LED screen for Jenny Holzer's light piece. Jenny Holzer's shimmering rows of horizontal letters have become an integral part of the façade, not an element that has simply been stuck in front of or added onto the building. The various width typefaces require close attention — as always in the case of Jenny Holzer's horizontal or vertical cascades of words. They can scarcely be made out when the sun is shining, and they appear in a whole variety of colours in different lighting. Holzer wanted her work with Peter Märkli to be seen as an integral component of the work, and to conceive it appropriately to this approach. The idea of an "animated façade" bringing together information and structure was the starting-point for the concept, in which art, architecture and content are inextricably linked. The statements are taken from the Campus' international team, and were chosen from over 1000 "sayings" of all kinds evoking happy memories and conveying good news. The relationship between the size of the letters and the position of the viewer is particularly exciting. At a height of only three meters, i.e. fairly close, words three meters high "fly" through the air so fast as to be immaterial, demanding attention. Visitors outside the building cannot resist the lure of these ceaseless statements, they actually want to read them all and do not know whether they will ever have sufficient inspiration. Jenny Holzer's work makes an artistic contribution that is addictive in the best sense of the word.

### fabrikstrasse 2: marco serra, architect, and by the artists ulrich rückriem, franz west and eva schlegel

With construction work continuing on the site at a feverish pace, the Novartis Campus is shaping up ever more clearly into a brilliant blend of tailor-made functionality and distinctive architectural identity. Whenever such bold claims as these are made, art is bound to come into the frame sooner or later. Artists are, after all, specialists in creativity and innovation, which is why art has been seen as an integral part of the overall complex right from the start. One of the international art world's most experienced exhibition-makers, Harald Szeemann already mentioned, was involved in a consultant's capacity during his final years, proposing such artists as Jenny Holzer, Richard Serra, Eva Schlegel and Ulrich Rückriem to create works for the Campus. Now Jacqueline Burckhardt has taken up the baton, proposing projects by Laurie Anderson, Olafur Eliason, Dan Graham and Sigmar Polke, and arranging the acquisition of the chairs by Franz West for the South Gate.



*Fabrikstrasse 16: Gilbert Bretterbauer,  
carpet design  
photo Gilbert Bretterbauer*

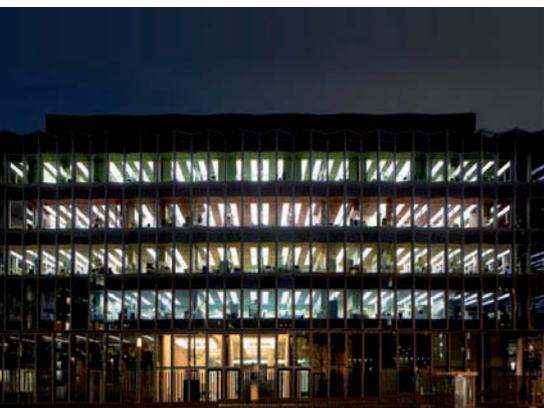
1/ Fabrikstrasse 16: Adolf Krischanitz

photo Paolo Rosselli

2/ Fabrikstrasse 12: Vittorio Magnago

Lampugnani

photo Paola De Pietri



In expressing their wish for an engagement with art on the campus, the board of Novartis have embraced a certain ideal that is today's version of a humanist culture. In broader terms, this involves an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary openness as a means of countering the risk of atrophied one-dimensionality so prevalent in a harshly competitive and specialised environment. Art is a good source of inspiration and can metaphorically harness productive potential in the gaps and grey areas of 'knowledge' in unexpected ways. It is precisely through these emerging contexts that an essentially different kind of engagement flourishes in art. Most artists want to break down the distance between art and life so that their works can address society in an everyday situation. The breakwater by Ulrich Rückriem together with *Seven Stones* and a table, and Eva Schlegel's *Pedestrian Walkway* and *Underground Parking Access...* Some works positively demand a direct physical, hands-on approach. The stairwells in the grounds are deliberately designed to be lower than the walkway. Above ground they look like a glass house with a steel roof. A mirrored segment has been vapour-welded onto the glass walls. This segment is complemented by a mirror spanning two storeys, embedded flush with the concrete so that the two components together form a mirrored area ten metres in diameter. Because the vapour-welded mirror is semi-transparent the daytime effect is one of looking out of a darker space into a lighter one and seeing both the gardens and the mirrored architecture at one and the same time. Whereas the descent into an underground car park can often be somewhat unsettling, here it becomes an interesting spatial experience. Dan Graham's *Two-Way Mirror Pavilion* has already been realized, the sound-sculpture by Laurie Anderson is in planning.

#### fabrikstrasse 16: adolf krischanitz

Fabrikstrasse 16 was the first laboratory on the new Campus. In Basel Krischanitz found himself facing the task of devising the labs as open plan systems that no longer have anything in common with the traditional cell structure of early lab complexes — Louis Kahn's Salk Institute, for example. The centre of the building is an atrium dominated on the ground floor by a powerful colour and the clear pattern of a carpet, which is taken up again in the terrazzo floor covering in the upper storeys. Krischanitz and the artist Gilbert Brettebauer are returning to 19th century theories with the change from fabric to stone. The German artist Sigmar Polke brings off an impressive interpretation of chemical processes with his pyrite suns' relief in the entrance area. Anyone coming into the foyer from Fabrikstrasse is standing only a few metres from a frieze at eye level that seems ornamental at first. It is six metres long, running along the full width of the wall, and eighty-three centimetres high. The question rapidly arises: should this work be called a frieze, a relief, or even a





*Fabrikstrasse 12: Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani*

*photo Paola De Pietri*

picture — especially as this work is unique in Polke's oeuvre as well? It is made up of three hundred and sixty-five pyrite suns, mounted discreetly in brass and seeming to float against a background of matte black paint. This natural material has never featured in the history of art before. There are very few people at all who are aware of pyrite suns: mineral collectors or people with esoteric interests who ascribe properties of pain relief to them. Pyrite suns are found in deep sediment strata about 350 million years old, but in only a few places in the world. There, they are embedded in mud deposits that have transformed themselves unimaginably slowly into a slate-like mother-roc. Under pressure and heat, they changed from a biological material into the chemical substance, iron sulphide (FeS<sub>2</sub>), in an infinitely long process of crystallization. In the context of the laboratory building, the presence of these pyrite suns with their relationship to natural history exudes a special aura: biologists, crystallographers and chemists are conducting research here to find new medicaments, and pursuing similar transformations.

#### **fabrikstrasse 12: vittorio magnago lampugnani**

Fabrikstrasse 12 is also a special building because a different line has been taken: no artists have been invited to co-operate, but Lampugnani has drawn on the company's collection and archives. The walls of the restaurant dodici display over 200 photographs from the company history of Ciba and Sandoz on their dark-red varnished panelling, recording leisure and sporting activities involving employees of Novartis' two predecessor firms. It feels like a typical osteria with photographs of eminent guests, often with grateful autographs. Paintings from the Novartis collection in the other rooms provide evidence of the artistic commitment that accompanies all the activities in the Campus and also the firm's previous history. The lobby and the stairs have European walnut cladding, a Murano chandelier and art déco chairs from the 1930s.

#### **fabrikstrasse 14: josé rafael moneos**

Any work of art in this location must be able to make its presence felt not only in contrast to the conspicuous and distinctive steel construction of the supporting façade but also to the sweeping, muscular shape of Frank Gehry's building, which is seen through the glass wall. The German artist Katharina Grosse rose to the challenge with a contribution that is an exceptional visual event and a compelling statement that reaches out into the landscape when the building is illuminated at night. The gestural painting with its superlative colouring was created on site, not with a paintbrush but with a spray gun. Sweeping across the corners and edges of the rooms, it boldly floods the walls and ceilings, not only ignoring the structure and



*Fabrikstrasse 14: José Rafael Moneos,  
Katharina Grosse  
photo FBM Studio*

order of the architecture but cheerfully subverting the conventionally propagated hierarchy of sublime architecture versus accommodating artistic embellishment. With equal liberality, Rafael Moneo has given Katharina Grosse free rein for her adventurously heretic interventions.

Katharina Grosse's strong spontaneous reaction to the very restrained architecture of Rafael Moneo is one of the various possibilities open to artistic interventions. As varied as the examples given are, whether those from the Swiss Architecture Museum or those from the Novartis Campus, they have one thing in common: The participating artists have reinterpreted the architectural context, and in doing so provided visitors with an opportunity to find new ways of looking at the built environment, and so challenging these and at best making them comprehensible. It would suit an architecture museum of the future to integrate artists alongside their previously known range of pursuits to increase awareness of the built environment, and to sharpen this awareness.

ulrike jehle-schulte strathaus, founding director, swiss architecture museum, basel

## icam 30 years: helsinki revisited

michael snodin

98

Between the 20 and 22 August 2009 the Museum of Finnish Architecture welcomed **icam** delegates to a conference in sunny Helsinki. Its purpose was to celebrate the foundation of **icam** 30 years ago and to discuss the past and future of architecture museums.

The business part of the conference was divided into three symposia. On 21 August the MS Monica took delegates to the island fortress of Suomenlinna, the setting of the historic of the first **icam** conference between the 20 and 25 August 1979.

Sixty-two delegates were present, six of whom had been there in 1979. After a welcome by Severi Blomstedt, the Director of the Museum of Finnish Architecture, the first symposium began with a keynote speech by President Dietmar Steiner. He reminded delegates of the cold-war background of the original initiative and the huge changes that have occurred since, including the shift towards an architectural star system and the hugely increased level of public interest in architecture. The anniversary speech was by Juhani Pallasmaa, who had initiated the first meeting of **icam**. In looking at shifts in architectural culture and the role of architecture museums since 1979, he stressed the role architecture museums had to play in strengthening architectural culture – a form grounded in the aspirations and values of society, and one that should provide an existential foothold for the world. He viewed with dismay the tendency towards commerce and the utilitarian, twinned with the purely aesthetic, resulting in a “Sargasso Sea of mediocrity and kitsch” as well as the emergence of a global star system, although he saw hope in the recent appearance of biological models that suggested a complete re-evaluation of its approach. In this context architecture museums had to be more than just places of record but needed to be critical, visionary, dedicated and brave in strengthening and defending the artistic autonomy of architecture. The symposium concluded with a history of **icam** by Angela Giral (in this journal). The second symposium, moderated by Barry Bergdoll, took the form of a panel of past and present presidents and secretaries general on the role and future of **icam** (Angela Giral, Jöran Lindvall, Juhani Pallasmaa, Elisabeth Seip, Michael Snodin, Dietmar Steiner and Wim de Wit). There was general agreement that the situation of architecture and architecture museums had changed profoundly over the last thirty years. At its foundation, many **icam** institutions, then very closely linked to the architectural profession, were mainly seeking government recognition of their work. Institutions now have a wider audience, both general and specialist, and are less closely related to the profession. A number of panellists asked for a broader approach and an application to the broader context of the environment. Much of this has been recognised in **icam** activities, including the formation of an education group, and stronger links to ICA-SAR and docomomo. The creation of new institutions dedicated to the better understanding of the built environment (but

*Future perspectives*

photo Karin Hallas





*Participants, icam 30 years – helsinki revisited  
photo Patrik Rastenberger, Museum of Finnish  
Architecture*

without permanent collections) means that icam needs to expand its membership to this type of institution. Concern was expressed about continuity in an organisation in which personal contacts were often more important than institutional ones. A number of panellists, developing on Pallasmaa's speech, called for a re-examination of architectural culture and the role institutions could play. On a technical level, too, the developments have been huge, notably in the field of electronic information, totally transforming access to collections and the approach to collecting among icam members. The moderator asked why the original charter concentrated on the built environment; architecture is not mentioned and collections come at the end of the charter, not the beginning. It was recognised that icam began with idealistic aims, and architecture was seen as too exclusive. Discussion then turned to the better functioning of icam in the present climate, including seeking funding for members, the building up of networks of allies or a body of friends, and the sharing of exhibitions. At a more local level, great possibilities lay in the encouraging of local business support, as done at the Architekturzentrum Wien. The discussion concluded with contributions from the panel and the floor on the question of the relationship between architects and icam institutions. Pallasmaa sounded a warning on the need to keep a critical distance at the same time as maintaining a close relationship with architects. For this to happen, public funding is essential. It was pointed out that in the USA such funding is entirely absent, so the architects (in the form of the AIA)



have a great deal of influence. There, the concept of the built environment is poorly understood. Allied to this topic was the future of the archives of a small group international 'starchitects', which are generally too expensive for institutions to acquire, at any rate in their entirety. The possible emergence of new markets for archives on Pacific rim countries and the middle-east was raised. In general, there were few instances of such archive sales, suggesting that the way forward may lie in the formation of foundations by the architects themselves, and the likelihood that many such foundations will eventually pass into the public domain. It was agreed that this subject could be more fully explored at a future icam conference.

The third session, on the following day, took place in the splendid national romantic surroundings of the Finnish National Museum, designed by Gesellius, Lindgren and Saarinen. The subject, the Future of Architecture Museums, was covered in papers by Dietmar Steiner, Jean-Louis Cohen, Manuel Blanco Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus and Claes Caldenby, with a discussion moderated by Jean-Louis Cohen. The papers are printed in this journal. Steiner's paper on the recent history of architecture museums and their status today filled out some of the subjects raised the day before, and helpfully distinguished the 1970s and '80s role of the museums as part of the architectural culture industry from the much broader present approach, a move highlighted by the present tendency towards the architecture museums with others. A lively discussion followed his presentation of average museum attendance figures. Cohen explored the role of temporary exhibitions, offering solutions to their challenges, both thematic and financial, and suggesting how they could challenge orthodoxies and establish trends in architecture history. Blanco addressed the challenge of electronic information on many areas of icam members' activities, going well beyond the question of the design record to the manner in which blogs and flickr and similar systems may challenge the existence of the museum itself. Strathaus explored the interaction of works of art and architecture, while Caldenby warned of the retreat of architecture history in the last ten years, and how it may be recovered, including its promotion within architectural practice.

The discussions were interspersed with visits and a series of celebrations. The splendid anniversary dinner was held against a background of cheerful crayfish parties in the historic Klippan Restaurant, on a tiny island 50 meters from the shore. Excursions were made to Helsinki's remarkable range of social housing and to three great architects' houses: Hvitträsk, Villa Aalto and Studio Aalto. The closing reception, in the study room of the Museum of Finnish Architecture, was attended by Asko Salokorpi, icam's first secretary general, fittingly bringing the events full circle. On 23 August, 28 delegates departed on the post conference tour to St Petersburg, brilliantly led by Charles Hind and Timo Keinänen. On the way to the border the tour



visited the wooden imperial fishing lodge at Langinkoski (1888, Magnus Scherfbeck, for Alexander III) and the Sunila pulp mill housing by Aalto, with a stop over the border to look at Aalto's famous library at Vyborg (Viipuri), a town still largely Finnish in its architecture. Helpfully armed with the Romanov family tree, over the following three days delegates were treated to an intense tour of the architectural wonders of St. Petersburg (from Peter the Great to Stalin), as well as a trip out to the Catherine Palace and Pavlovsk Palace and Garden at Tsarskoe Selo. To the newcomer, it was the huge scale, impossible to convey in photographs, that was so surprising, as well as the extraordinary quality of the works by Charles Cameron and Leo von Klenze. Delegates also saw the remarkable archive of drawings kept in the Peter and Paul Fortress (which should be a member of icam). The last building to be visited was the tiny pink Chesme church in the suburbs, built in 1780 for Catherine the Great in the Strawberry Hill gothic style. St. Petersburg remained full of surprises to the end.

101

michael snodin, past president, icam, london

- 1/ 30 years of icam, panel discussion  
Juhani Pallasmaa, Wim de Wit, Angela Giral  
photo Patrik Rastenberger, Museum of Finnish  
Architecture*
- 2/ 30 years of icam, panel discussion  
Dietmar Steiner, Barry Bergdoll, Elisabeth  
Seip, Michael Snodin  
photo Patrik Rastenberger, Museum of Finnish  
Architecture*
- 3/ Symposium, The Future of Architecture  
Museums  
Manuel Blanco, Jean-Louis Cohen, Ulrike  
Jehle-Schulte Strathaus  
photo Monika Platzer*
- 4/ Visit to the archives in St. Petersburg  
photo Manuel Blanco*
- 5/ Charles Hind, our St. Petersburg expert  
photo Manuel Blanco*



The delegates lucky enough to attend icam14 in Oslo were welcomed to Norway with great warmth, both by its people and by the glorious weather that held throughout most of the week. The conference was hosted by Ulf Grønvold of the Norwegian Architecture Museum and his team, all part of The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design. Pre-conference tours introduced us to the city, both to its historic buildings and its most high-profile recent addition, the National Opera by Snøhetta. The Mayor of Oslo hosted our opening reception at Oslo City Hall, an impressively scaled building, familiar as the venue for the annual Nobel Peace Prize award ceremony.

As usual with icam conferences, the programme began with a lecture grounding the event within the host country's architectural history; Ingerid Helsing Almaas focussed our thoughts on what characterises the northernmost country in the world. Appropriately enough given the impact of the maritime tradition on the nation, the first visit was to the Viking Ship Museum. We continued on to the Norwegian Museum of Cultural History, one of the first open air museums in the world and presumably the only one whose curator has been shipwrecked in his youth while sailing a replica Viking ship of his own construction.

The food for thought provided by the morning's visit prepared us for the first session that afternoon, in which we

considered the intriguing subject of Collecting Architecture under the chairmanship of Marc Treib. The considerable challenges faced by collecting and preserving buildings, or even fragments of structures, was addressed by Corinne Belier and Timo Keinanen while the specific instance of the house museum was given a fresh perspective by Barry Bergdoll and Wim de Wit, who examined it as an inherently transient concept.

The Norwegian Architecture Museum hosted a reception that evening at which we ate fantastically well, courtesy of its first class restaurant, and sat outside late into the night.

Day two was based at one of Sverre Fehn's major works, the Hedmark Museum which stands beside lake Mjøsa to the north of Oslo. Barry Bergdoll chaired a session here on the subject of Architecture Museums and Architecture education, in which Alan Powers and Waverly Lowell considered what we should collect in order to reflect the evolution of pedagogy, Janet Parks described two exhibitions on the subject of architecture education while Natalia Boura presented a paper by Maro Kardamitsi-Adami which looked at the way in which the architectural archives of the Benaki Museum are used to educate architects and schoolchildren. Two sessions were held on the following day, the first chaired by Peter Schmal on the ever popular subject of travelling exhibitions, this time with a particular

focus on the display of surrogates in digital form. Looking back after a year of world financial turmoil at the inspiring examples presented by Diane Gray, Eva Madshus, Francesca Ferguson and Patricia Alkhoven in this session, we can only hope that the public continues to benefit from this vital aspect of our members' work. Irena Murray chaired the second session on Architecture Book Publishing, another key area that is in the process of adapting (or not) to the digital age. Although the session concluded that E-books are not much used for architecture history at this stage, it is clear that as technology develops this will inevitably change. A day based at the National Archive enabled delegates to tour their enviably secure store-caves, which are being created by tunnelling through solid rock. Mariet Willinge chaired a session on selecting architectural archives, a challenge that every institution that collects material must face at some point. Maygene Daniels presented the pragmatic approach being taken by the National Gallery of Art in Washington, which regularly reviews its collections with a view to ongoing prioritisation and consequent disposal, while Letizia Capanini, Eva-Maria Barkhofen and Sofie De Caigny gave insights into responses taken to particular examples on national, local and private collection levels.

At the General Assembly we were given a report from the Gau:di group before

taking a sunlit boat trip to a 1930s restaurant pavilion on the shore of Hvalstrand for our final reception.

Those lucky enough to participate in the post-conference tour experienced the majestic landscape of western Norway as they travelled to Bergen, enjoying stave churches, glaciers, fjords and waterfalls amongst many other delights along the way.

*jane thomas, royal commission on the ancient and historical monuments of scotland, edinburgh*

*1/ Participans at icam14*

*photo Norwegian Architecture Museum*

*2/ Official opening of icam14 in Oslo*

*photo Monika Platzer*



*The icam board in front of the Maison Louis*

*Carré by Alto*

*photo Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine*



icam board had its first meeting after the Oslo conference in Paris, which is where the next conference is to be held in 2010, members having voted unanimously for Paris during the general assembly held during icam 14. As well as its magnificent architectural landscape, one of the major reasons for Paris' being such a good venue for icam 15 is the support for the event offered by Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine. The Cité, which comprises the Musée des Monuments français, the Institut français d'architecture and the Ecole de Chaillot has an incredible range of material in its collections, from casts of medieval monuments up to 20th century architectural archives as well as impressive permanent exhibitions. Visits to these collections will form part of the programme but there will also be opportunities to see the collections of, Le Musée d'Orsay, Le FRAC and L'Ecole nationale supérieure des Beaux Arts.

Site visits are an important part of the icam conference programme, and the board visited several of the buildings proposed including the Villa Savoye, which continues to evolve in response to the fascinating challenge of conserving and presenting a structure of such a modest scale to a predictably large volume of visitors. Les Docks de la mode, which was still under construction when the board visited, gave us a sense of the ambitions of the City in terms of its future development, as did a tour of the Masséna north area.

Finances are obviously at the forefront of everyone's minds at the moment, and the board spent time examining the funding situation for icam. It was decided that it was time to discontinue the membership of organisations and individuals who have not paid their subscription for some time because this is expensive for icam in terms of administration, printing and postage and so on, and it seems better to spend time and resources on current members as well as encouraging new members to join. The generous sponsorship from Zumtobel has made it possible to develop the icam website and icamprint to a high standard but this will end and further sponsorship is needed to support these elements. Members are increasingly sending in material for inclusion on the website, and we hope that this will increase further because it is not only a helpful way of communicating with other icam members but also of promoting our activities to the wider world. icamprint is also an excellent means of promoting our organisation, in addition to being an invaluable source of information about our work and ideas, and is attracting new members. Although money continues to be available to support regional meetings, none were held this year and the board decided that the money allocated for this purpose should instead be offered to the icam education group to enable them to meet before the next conference, which will be held in London in

November. The board still feels that helping members to meet up within a regional group between icam conferences is a good use of icam funds however, and it will welcome future applications to encourage links between its members in this way.

After the last board meeting in Oslo and the announcement of new members at the general assembly there have been further applications to join icam. These have been considered by the board and we are glad to welcome the new members who are listed at the end of this issue: Fondation de l'Architecture et de l'Ingénierie, Luxembourg; Guilahn Naslavsky, Brazil. We are always glad to widen our membership, particularly when we gain a member from a country that has not been represented in icam before, and we look forward to building links with these institutions and individuals.

*jane thomas, royal commission on the ancient and historical monuments of scotland, edinburgh, on behalf of mariet willinge, secretary general, icam*



*Maison Bloc*

*photo Monika Platzer*

*Cité de l'Architecture et du Patrimoine,  
gallery of modern and contemporary  
architecture*

*photo CAPA/Gaston Bergeret/MMF*



In 2010 icam will be coming to France for the first time. When the Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine opened its doors in 2007 it seemed quite natural for the newly founded institution to host the next icam conference since two of its departments, the Institut français d'architecture and the Musée des Monuments français, had previously been independent members of the Confederation.

icam15 is being held from Sunday 30 May to Thursday 3 June, with an opening reception on Sunday evening. A pre-conference tour is provided on Saturday 29 May. The post-conference tour starts in Paris on Friday 4 June and ends in Lyon on Tuesday 8 June. The main location for the conference is the Cité's headquarters: in the Palais de Chaillot, on the Trocadéro square, facing the Eiffel Tower.

#### **architecture and heritage**

The Palais de Chaillot's history is linked to that of the French Universal Exhibitions. It was first built in an eclectic style for the 1878 Exhibition by architect Gabriel Davioud; it then saw the rise of the Eiffel Tower for the 1889 Exhibition, after which it was completely remodelled by architect Jacques Carlu for the 1937 Exhibition with the monumental classicism that characterizes the building today. The renovation of the building, undertaken in 2007, unveils these different historical layers while adapting the building to the needs of today's

large cultural institutions. The name Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine, which combines the two terms of "architecture" and of "heritage", reflects the founding principle and the originality of the institution. Its aim is to prove that architecture and heritage go hand in hand, to help promote architectural awareness and architectural quality. The Cité is made up of three departments: the Musée des Monuments français (the museum and the heritage department), the Institut Français d'Architecture (devoted to French contemporary creation and to the archives of 20th century architects), the École de Chaillot (a renowned school dedicated to the training of architects specialized in the preservation and restoration of historic buildings).

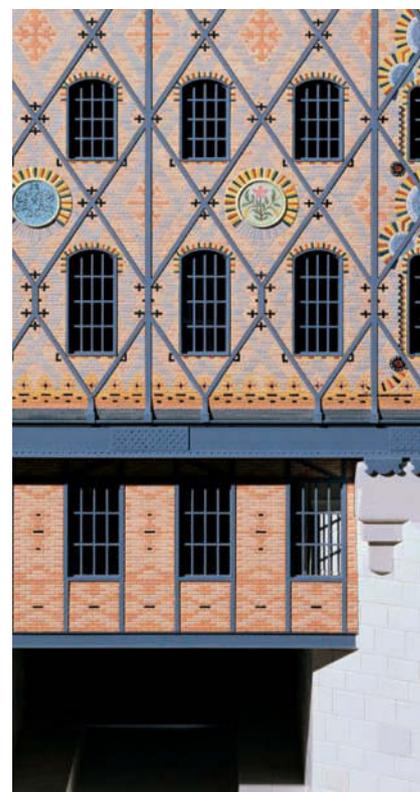
#### professional and strategic issues

Five sessions engage with issues put forward by icam members during the Oslo conference. The first three concern architecture museums' strategies. Are we engaged in a period of changes concerning the organisation of our institutions, their budgets or their acquisition policies? Can this foster, for example, the merging of cultural institutions of various scope (on architecture, design, visual arts etc.), or lead to a greater focus on 'star' individuals or material? What new opportunities stand before us? One session will deal with Mergers and Partnerships. Another is to focus on prominent figures (The Icon and the Star). The third looks into current challenges

and opportunities in building up an archival collection. The two last sessions address more practical matters. In previous conferences icam has explored professional issues as diverse as the making of permanent and temporary exhibitions, or the conservation of photographs, of architectural models, and even, as in Oslo, of buildings. In 2010 two sessions are to raise issues not yet addressed: the architecture book as an exhibit, and the use of text in exhibitions.

#### architectural collections

As the conference is a unique place for meeting and exchange between professionals, visits are scheduled to see key French collections, and to discuss their nature or acquisition policies while getting acquainted with the institution's activities. Conference members are being welcomed by the Musée d'Orsay to hold a full session in its auditorium and to discover its exceptional collection of architectural drawings, which covers a period ranging from 1848 to 1914. It was founded with the transfer of prestigious drawings from the Louvre and was continued with an important acquisition policy. Among the most significant items are the Gustave Eiffel and the Hector Guimard collections. The Ecole des Beaux-Arts holds another major architectural collection inherited partly from the Royal Academy. It includes a large collection of books, models collected for teaching purposes, and over 40,000 drawings, works



*Menier chocolate factory by Jules Saulnier, 1871–1872, model of the mill's facade  
image CAPA / Gaston Bergeret / MMF*

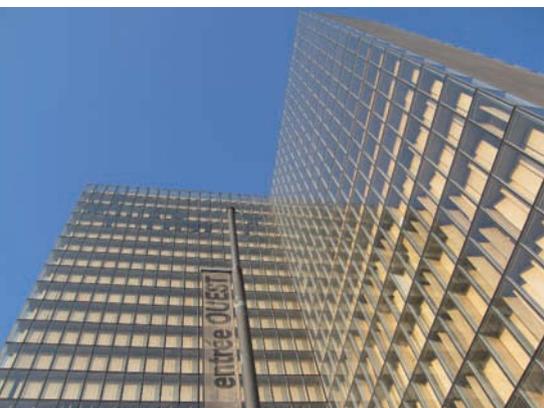
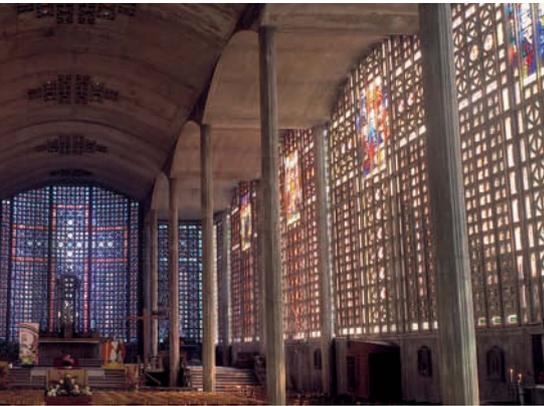
1/ *Church of Notre-Dame in Le Raincy* by  
Auguste and Gustave Perret, 1922–1923

photo François Poche

2/ *Paris Rive Gauche, Bibliothèque*

*Nationale de France* by Dominique Perrault,  
1989–1995

photo Corinne Bélier / CAPA



which won the annual Prix de Rome or the various monthly competitions. The Frac Centre (the Regional Contemporary Art Collection of the Centre Region, based at Orléans) recently joined **icam** as a new member and is presenting its collection, which focuses on experimental architecture and research from 1950 to the present day. The collection now comprises some 350 works, 700 architectural models and over 10,000 drawings, including works by many international architects. The Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine's collections will be presented on the first two days of the conference.

The Musée des Monuments français's collection of life-size casts and models was founded in 1882, by architect Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc. It allows for a structural and decorative analysis of sculpture and architecture from the 12th to the 18th century, and has been extended with collections of mural paintings and stained glass. Founded in 1989, the archive centre of the Institut français d'architecture protects and curates a collection of more than 350 archives of French architectural agencies of the 20th century. Lastly, in 2007 a new gallery devoted to the architecture of the 19th and 20th centuries was opened with a collection of analytical models specially created for the purpose.

### from 19th century monuments to current urban planning

There will be plenty of site visits. They will allow for the discovery of exceptional buildings, often protected National Heritage sites and opened specially for **icam** members. Visitors will also be shown the latest developments in Parisian town planning.

Among other examples, the Menier chocolate factory, built in 1871–1872 by architect Jules Saulnier, will be open for a visit. Its celebrity lies in the façade of its mill: a dialogue between metal structure and glazed brick infill which reintroduced the taste for polychrome architecture. The rationale of this façade turned it into an architecture model as well as a publicity tool for Menier chocolates. The mill was listed as a Historical Monument in 1992, and the factory was renovated by architects Reichen and Robert in the late 1980s following its acquisition by the Nestlé Company to become its headquarters.

The Sainte-Geneviève Library is another outstanding 19th century building. It was built by architect Henri Labrouste between 1839 and 1875, and acquired its fame through the particular use of ironwork made by Labrouste. He chose metal for its fire resistance but also for its new aesthetic: the large barrel arches and cast columns are integral parts of the interior ornamentation, whereas on the Place du Panthéon a sober stone façade reflects the function and the spirit of the building.

To view current developments in Paris, a tour through the Massena district is planned. The urban redevelopment of this area started in 1995 and is part of the greater urban plan of Paris Rive Gauche, which covers a vast strip of land from Austerlitz station to the Boulevard Périphérique. The master plan was designed by architect Christian de Portzamparc, with landscape specialist Thierry Huau. Though it is built on a concrete slab partially covering existing railway tracks, it puts the emphasis on street level and articulates the buildings in “open blocks” with interior gardens. In this general outline different architects are called upon to introduce various programmes: housing, but also public programmes such as the conversion of the Paris Great Mills into a university facility by Rudy Ricciotti.

The modern movement will not be forgotten, with visits to the works of Le Corbusier or Auguste Perret. The Notre-Dame church at Le Raincy was built in 1922–1923 by Auguste Perret, and has become an icon in French architecture history. In accordance with the rationalist theory that form derives from structure, the different elements constituting this building are deliberately clearly visible. The columns, for instance, soar upwards, slightly detached from the lateral walls of stained glass. Notre-Dame du Raincy was one of the first 20th century buildings to be protected as a Historical Monument by André Malraux in 1966.



*Siège du Parti Communiste Français by Oscar Niemeyer, 1968–1980  
photo Corinne Bélier / CAPA / MMF*



*1/ Villa Savoye by Le Corbusier, 1928–1931*

*photo FLC/ADAGP 2008/Paul Kozlowski*

*2/ Maison Carré by Alvar Aalto, 1957–1959*

*photo CAPA/MMF/Corinne Béliér*

*3/ The salt factory of Arc et Senans by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux, 1775–1779*

*photo CAPA/MMF/Corinne Béliér*

The pre-conference tour brings together two modern villas for an exciting comparison: the Villa Savoye by Le Corbusier and the Maison Carré by Alvar Aalto. The former was designed in 1928–1931 as a “machine à habiter”. It illustrates Le Corbusier’s theory of the “five points of a new architecture”: pilotis, roof garden, open plan, horizontal windows, and free façade. Inside, it is designed as an “architectural promenade”. The second, built in 1957–1959 for the art dealer Louis Carré, conveys a very different atmosphere, where modernity rhymes with cosiness. Alvar Aalto conceived the house, its furniture and garden. It is thus an integrated artwork, as fine in its details and materials as in its setting in the countryside. It was only opened to the public recently, in August 2007. Last but not least, the conference’s general assembly is scheduled to be staged at the headquarters of the French communist party, a truly exceptional building by Oscar Niemeyer.

**from claude-nicolas ledoux to  
jean nouvel**

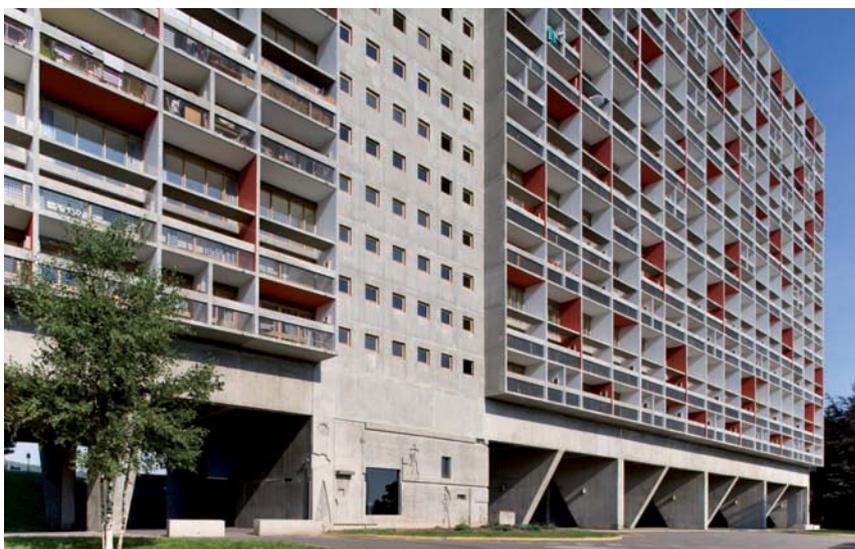
The post-conference tour will head south for 5 days from 4 to 8 June. The first stop is at the Salines of Arc et Senans. This semi-circular salt factory, designed by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux in 1775–1779, is to give us a taste for utopia. The royal manufacture was indeed the starting point, and the centre, of Ledoux’s ideal city of Chaux. It is also an exceptional example of eighteenth century French

visionary architecture and has been listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The tour goes on to Lyon. The third largest French city offers a very rich architectural panorama that stretches from antiquity to the present day. The Gallo-Roman Lugdunum is engaged with by two archaeological museums, which are also noteworthy for their buildings and settings: at Fourvière, built in 1975 by Bernard Zehrfuss, an underground architecture of concrete, and at Saint-Romain en Gall, built in 1995 by architects Chaix & Morel, a floating glass box overlooking the Rhône. A ride along the Saône river banks introduces us to the 19th century urban developments. Architecture of the 1920s and 1930s will be prominently represented, especially through two social housing schemes: the Cité des gratte-ciel (City of Skyscrapers) by Mōrice Leroux, and the Cité des Etats-Unis by Tony Garnier. A whole afternoon is dedicated to a visit to Le Corbusier's works at Firminy (1954–1965), where he designed an Unité d'habitation, the sports and cultural centre and the church of Saint-Pierre. The city of Lyon manages the largest urban renewal plan in France today: the Confluence area, a district located at the symbolic junction of the Rhône and the Saône. The tour ends with a thought for Oslo's white Opera House while visiting Lyon's black Opera House, designed by Jean Nouvel from 1986–1993. So we hope that you can all come to Paris and enjoy the conference.

corinne bélier, curator, icam15 project manager, cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine musée des monuments français, [www.citechallot.fr](http://www.citechallot.fr)



*The Unité d'habitation at Firminy by Le Corbusier, 1967*  
photo FLC/Olivier Martin-Gambier



**icam** international confederation of architectural museums  
[www.icam-web.org](http://www.icam-web.org)

icam is the international organisation for architecture museums and an organisation of architectural museums, centres and collections. It is dedicated to fostering links between all those interested in promoting the better understanding of architecture.

icam and its members aim to:

- Preserve the architectural record
- Raise the quality and protection of the built environment
- Foster the study of architectural history in the interest of future practice
- Stimulate the public appreciation of architecture
- Promote the exchange of information and professional expertise

icam is affiliated to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as an international specialised body and as a member organisation. In addition, icam has special links with the International Council on Archives (ICA).

For information concerning membership, contact  
Mariet Willinge, secretary general, Netherlands Architecture Institute, NAI  
P.O. Box 237, 3000 AE Rotterdam, The Netherlands, [m.willinge@nai.nl](mailto:m.willinge@nai.nl)

## executive committee

Dietmar Steiner, president  
Architekturzentrum Wien, Vienna  
[steiner@azw.at](mailto:steiner@azw.at)

Ulf Grønvold, vice president  
The National Museum of Art, Architecture  
and Design, Oslo  
[ulf.gronvold@nasjonalmuseet.no](mailto:ulf.gronvold@nasjonalmuseet.no)

Michael Snodin, past-president  
Victoria & Albert Museum, London  
[m.snodin@vam.ac.uk](mailto:m.snodin@vam.ac.uk)

Mariet Willinge, secretary general  
Netherlands Architecture Institute,  
Rotterdam  
[m.willinge@nai.nl](mailto:m.willinge@nai.nl)

Anna Tonicello, treasurer  
Istituto Universitario di Architettura di  
Venezia IUVA, Archivio Progetti  
[annatoni@brezza.iuav.it](mailto:annatoni@brezza.iuav.it)

## committee

Corinne Belier  
Musée National des Monuments  
Français, Paris  
[cbelier@citechailot.org](mailto:cbelier@citechailot.org)

Barry Bergdoll  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
[Barry\\_Bergdoll@moma.org](mailto:Barry_Bergdoll@moma.org)

Ulrike Jehle-Schulte Strathaus  
Architekturmuseum Basel  
[u-jehle@bluewin.ch](mailto:u-jehle@bluewin.ch)

Irena Murray  
RIBA Royal Institute of British Architects,  
British Architectural Library, London  
[irena.murray@inst.riba.org](mailto:irena.murray@inst.riba.org)

Jane Thomas  
Royal Commission on the Ancient and  
Historical Monuments of Scotland,  
Edinburgh  
[Jane.Thomas@rcahms.gov.uk](mailto:Jane.Thomas@rcahms.gov.uk)

