

Rethinking Architecture in the Age of Printing (SAH Detroit, 2012)

Detroit, Apr 18–22, 2012

Deadline: Jun 1, 2011

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Call for papers

Annual Meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians

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RETHINKING ARCHITECTURE IN THE AGE OF PRINTING

Inspired by the writings of Jean-Louis Viel de Saint-Maux, Victor Hugo in *Notre-Dame de Paris* (1831) famously stated: “[t]he book will kill the edifice.” Frank Lloyd Wright similarly viewed the effect of printing on architecture in a negative light, while Siegfried Gideon characterized the Renaissance printed treatise as a false start which would be superseded by the “true mechanical reproduction” of the industrial era. In a reversal of this trend, Mario Carpo in his *Architettura nell’Età della Stampa* (1998) cast what Wright had called the “imitative realism” of the Renaissance in a positive light, characterizing “architecture in the age of printing” as the first truly image-based architectural culture, in contrast to the medieval period’s reliance upon oral transmission and “non-visual” imitation.

Despite these differing interpretations, what unites all of these views is the idea that mechanical reproduction fundamentally transformed architecture. With this session, we propose to ask: how truly revolutionary was printing to both the practice and production of architecture? This session seeks papers which challenge assumptions about the mechanical nature of printing, its ability to dominate all aspects of cultural production, and its marginalization of other representational media in regards to architecture. We invite papers relating to any period or region, especially those which consider questions such as: What is the mode by which printed images were translated into built form; conversely, how did the transmission of architecture through print condition its reception? Did printing in fact enable the codification and perpetuation of the architectural orders? To what extent did printing create stable, authoritatively identical reproductions that removed the creative drift associated with hand-made drawings? How did printed images interface with other media? Can any technology of representation define the architectural production of an entire period?

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be submitted online, by June 1, 2011, via the SAH website:

<http://asoft130.securesites.net/secure/sah/index.php?src=gendocs&ref=call%20for%20papers%202012>

[202012&category=Annual%20Meeting%20Detroit%202012](#)

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Reference:

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