

History & Precedent in the Design Process (Pittsburgh, 28–30 Mar 19)

Pittsburgh, PA, USA, Mar 28–30, 2019

Deadline: Sep 28, 2018

Kai Gutschow

We are happy to invite paper proposals for a panel on "History & Precedent in the Design Process" at a conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA) being held in Pittsburgh, PA, USA, on March 28-30, 2019. Proposals are due Sept. 28, 2018.

History & Precedent in the Design Process

Kai K. Gutschow, Carnegie Mellon University

This panel asks about the changing role that history and precedents take in the design process and the core of architecture, both in the academy and the profession, in beginning and advanced work, past and present.

Schools continue to teach traditional precedent studies, even as we profess that the world in which we build is dominated by accelerating change. Typology and program, based on precedents, remain central in justifying design decisions for many buildings, even as we acknowledge that functions rarely last as long as constructions. After being central during Postmodernism, and then sidelined during the turn to pragmatism and the digital in the beginning of the 21st century, some say "history is back," though surely different than before. Many recent publications proclaim the ever-increasing importance of history for contemporary discourse and practice. Architects are finding innovative ways to engage history: as a driver for design, as a way to rethink materials and site, even as a research methodology. In a world ever-more obsessed with contemporaneity, progress, new technologies, and the future, and with neoliberalism, efficiency theories, and pragmatism posing ever greater challenges to the humanities and history, architecture remains remarkably bound to the past.

We are interested in papers that challenge or validate the dominant methods for precedent study such as those proposed by Colin Rowe or Roger Clark. We seek case studies on new ways that history has been pulled into the design process, especially processes featuring the newest design, computation, and fabrication tools. We invite theoretical discussions about how cutting-edge design sensibilities focused on ideas such as sustainability, emergence, or complexity incorporate or supplant existing historicist ideologies that presume history's clear connection to the future. We are curious about how an emphasis on "design principles" and "formal abstraction" based on precedents poses challenges to technologies and techniques that promote precision and uniqueness in building design and construction. We invite all manner of papers that scrutinize and speculate on how history and precedents might take on a different role today than in the past.

Reference:

CFP: History & Precedent in the Design Process (Pittsburgh, 28-30 Mar 19). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 20, 2018 (accessed Sep 18, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/18999>>.