

Session at SAH 2021 Annual International Conference (Montreal, 14–18 Apr 21)

Montreal, Canada, Apr 14–18, 2021

Deadline: Jun 3, 2020

G. A. Bremner, University of Edinburgh

Panel session CFP: 'Energy and Architecture: A History and Pedagogy for Our Times'

The architectural profession has struggled over recent decades to reconcile the immense contribution it makes to greenhouse gas emissions. Much architecture is now heavily dependent on energy-hungry services, material procurement, and construction methods powered by fossil fuels. Campaigns like 'Architects Declare' and 'Architectural Education Declares' encourage practitioners and educators to commit to reducing these emissions. To date architectural history has made only a modest contribution to understanding this critical problem. In addressing our current climate emergency, awareness of energy consumption must be inculcated at every level in architectural education, including through the teaching of history.

Such an agenda cannot be limited to the history of 'green' architecture, or that of pre-industrial, passive forms of building. As important as these are, they are not (of themselves) capable of foregrounding (and thus confronting) the historical nexus between architecture and energy consumption. Crucially, this nexus must be understood beyond the level of design, function, and use to include the contexts of production, transportation, and assemblage. Embodied energy is a key index to the true energy costs of building. Only when the various chains and networks of procurement and supply are taken into account can the carbon footprint and wider thermodynamic consequences of building production be properly appreciated.

We invite contributions that highlight the nexus between design, building practice, and energy consumption in the history of architecture, including strategies for repurposing its pedagogies. Papers may include assessments of embodied and operational energy in architecture (of any period and place); case studies of the relationships between energy change and architectural change; and interrogations of the historiographic assumptions around architectural history in light of increased energy use, climate change, and notions of the Anthropocene. We welcome contributions that consider the pre-industrial, industrial, and post-industrial past worldwide, including the architecture of early modern, medieval, and ancient civilisations.

Session Chairs: G. A. Bremner, University of Edinburgh and Barnabas Calder, University of Liverpool

Submission Guidelines:

- Abstracts must be under 300 words.

- The title cannot exceed 65 characters, including spaces and punctuation.
- Abstracts and titles must follow the Chicago Manual of Style.
- Only one abstract per conference by an author or co-author may be submitted.
- A maximum of two (2) authors per abstract will be accepted.
- Please attach a two-page CV in PDF format.
- Abstracts are to be submitted online using the link below.

Please submit proposals via: <https://www.sah.org/2021/call-for-papers>

Reference:

CFP: Session at SAH 2021 Annual International Conference (Montreal, 14-18 Apr 21). In: ArtHist.net, May 15, 2020 (accessed May 29, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/23094>>.