

Public Events Programme of "Tendenzen at 50" (25 Mar–5 Mai 26)

ETH Zürich, Hönggerberg, HIL D 57.1, gta exhibitions, Mar 25–May 5, 2026
archiv.gta.arch.ethz.ch/de/events/tendenzen-at-50

Frida Grahn

The 1975 exhibition «Tendenzen – Neuere Architektur im Tessin» at ETH Zurich marked a decisive moment in Swiss architecture. Curated by Martin Steinmann and designed by Thomas Boga, it introduced a younger generation of Ticino architects, including Luigi Snozzi, Aurelio Galfetti, Livio Vacchini, and Mario Botta, to a wider public. In addition, it drew attention to a regional architectural culture based on material precision and conceptual autonomy. The exhibition and the accompanying catalogue quickly became reference points in contemporary architectural discourse and gained international attention: journals such as *Oppositions*, *A+U*, and *L'Architecture d'aujourd'hui* devoted special issues to Ticino architecture.

Fifty years later, «Tendenzen at 50» returns to the original event. Drawing on extensive research by Irina Davidovici and Frida Grahn, the current exhibition examines the original one from 1975 both as a cultural document and as a vehicle for disseminating architectural ideas in the analogue age of Xerox copies, letters, photographs, and slides. «Tendenzen at 50» explores how these ideas circulated, how the exhibition shaped architectural discourse, and why certain curatorial decisions have remained relevant over decades. Previously unpublished manuscripts, working notes, correspondence, layout studies, and architectural drawings offer insight into the curatorial process and the international reach of the historic exhibition. These archival materials are complemented by a large-scale model that reconstructs the original exhibition and by newly commissioned photographs by Stefano Graziani.

Curated by Irina Davidovici and Frida Grahn.

A collaboration between gta exhibitions and gta Archive.

Model by Studio Christ & Gantenbein.

PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY, 25 March, 18:00–20:00

Communicating Architecture: A Roundtable on Mediatization

Tour of the exhibition followed by a panel discussion

With: Adam Caruso, Linda Schädler, Adam Szymczyk, Roland Züger

Moderated by Irina Davidovici and Frida Grahn

This roundtable will focus on how situated, inhabited, and immovable architecture reaches a wider audience through exhibitions and publications as well as through the varied media that are

usually included in such outputs: text, photography, film, archival materials, and architectural drawings. The discussion is anchored in the 1975 Tendenzen exhibition, which put on display only copies of original drawings – and in its contemporary “portrait” 50 years later, which for the first time allows a comparison between the originals and the exhibition panels on which they were mechanically reproduced. What information do drawings contain that their reproductions leave out? And under what conditions can copies themselves become a different kind of “original”?

WEDNESDAY, 15 April, 18:00–20:00

Preserving Culture: A Roundtable on Heritage and the Archive

Tour of the exhibition followed by a panel discussion

With: Tom Avermaete, Silke Langenberg, Nicola Navone, Regula Steinmann

Moderated by Irina Davidovici and Frida Grah

50 years after being featured in the Tendenzen exhibition and gaining international acclaim in its aftermath, Ticinese architecture illustrates the wide range of attitudes towards the built heritage of the 1960s and 1970s. As Stefano Graziani’s exhibition photographs show, some projects are protected and lovingly maintained, while others suffer from neglect, insensitive renovation, or demolition. This fate is mirrored by the life of architectural documents: some are conserved in archives, while others are forever lost or discarded, their value unrecognised. This roundtable addresses the preservation of architectural culture of the 1960s and 1970s, in both built and paper form.

TUESDAY, 21 April, 12:30–14:00

Architecture and Photography

Tour and lunchtime talk by Stefano Graziani

TUESDAY, 5 May, 18:00–20:00

Finissage: The Catalogue as Paper Apparatus

Tour of the exhibition with a lecture by Irina Davidovici

Informal discussion on experiences of the exhibition and the uses of the Tendenzen catalogue.

Reference:

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