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Kuenzli, K. A review of Mark Wigley, *Konrad Wachsmann's Television: Post-Architectural Transmissions.* Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2020.

Antonucci, M. A review of Dario Donetti, *Francesco da Sangallo e l'identità dell'architettura toscana.* Rome: Officina Libraria, 2020.

Williams, S. A review of Zoltán Somhegyi, *Reviewing the Past: The Presence of Ruins.* London: Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd., 2020.

The Art of Architecture

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Maureen Cassidy-Geiger (ed.), *Living with Architecture as Art: The Peter W. May Collection of Architectural Drawings, Models, and Artefacts.* London: Ad Ilissvm, 2021, 2 volumes, 773 pages, ISBN 978-1-912168-19-4

Reports of the death of architectural drawing have been greatly exaggerated. Computer-aided design (CAD) and 3D modelling did not kill the architectural drawing but freed it to be something else. Recent years have witnessed the birth of 'post-digital' architectural drawing, where drawing becomes not a means to an end, as it is conventionally conceived, but a kind of critical architectural practice in its own right. This, in a sense, is another form of 'paper architecture', though one where the creative tools are used in a way that go against themselves, creating images that are rough, grainy, and collagistic in opposition to the super-slick, photorealistic render.

Contemporary 'post-digital' drawings are, of course, a far cry from the overt technical virtuosity that characterizes the drawing collection of American businessman Peter W. May. Like many collectors, May began acquiring architectural drawings in the mid-1980s, yet, unusually, he kept on collecting even when taste and fashion changed in the early 1990s. The result is one the richest and most extensive collections of drawings from the late 19th and early 20th century — mostly Beaux-Arts presentation and competition drawings — in the world, the subject of *Living with Architecture as Art: The Peter W. May Collection of Architectural Drawings, Models, and Artefacts*, edited by Maureen Cassidy-Geiger.

This large and beautifully produced two-volume publication comprises a catalogue of the collection, preceded by five essays which contextualize both the drawings (and twelve models) within the periods in which they were created and the collection itself in relation to broader trends in the collecting of, and marketplace for, architectural drawings. May's interests in architecture formed early and were sharpened during college, despite his studies focusing on finance and business. However, his specific interests in architectural drawing, and the collecting that has resulted from it, arose later when as a successful businessman, May, with his wife, Leni, began decorating their New York City apartment. The couple hired interior designer Bunny Williams, who took them to London to buy furniture, and while visiting a gallery May's attention was grabbed by some architectural drawings, sparking a fascination that nearly four decades (and 600 drawings) later remains as strong as ever.

As his interests developed, May began to focus on Beaux-Arts drawings, which comprise the vast majority of his collection. He was, of course, far from alone in this interest. After suffering decades of derision by mainstream modernist opinion, by the mid-1980s, Beaux-Arts drawings were taken seriously by collectors and curators. Pivotal in this was Arthur Drexler's 1975–76 exhibition, *The Architecture of the École des Beaux-Arts* at the Museum of Modern Art, which heralded a shift from an exclusively modernist position to an all-encompassing post-modernist outlook both at that institution and in architectural and artistic culture more generally.

May's collecting did not, however, issue from a particular scholarly interest or agenda, or from the desire to acquire particular 'names', but from his love for the drawings themselves, which he saw as bona fide 'works of art'. Nevertheless, professional expertise was vital in forming the collection, notably that of the dealer Stephanie Hoppen, who also introduced May to the curator of his collection, Steve Andrews, whom he generously acknowledges as a collaborator: 'we really built the collection together' (xi).

Andrews combined a scholarly background with a good eye, working directly with dealers in sourcing the best drawings, and knowing instinctively how they should be framed and where they should be hung. As the book's title makes clear, this was a collection assembled to be 'lived with' and was in part driven by the need to fill new residences in New York, Connecticut, Colorado, and Florida. As such, the collection needs to be seen in relation to May's role as a client and commissioner of the buildings in which they would be displayed. (Fittingly, the book includes epilogues by Bunny Williams and Mark Ferguson of Ferguson & Shamamian Architects, who also worked extensively for May and his wife.)

May credits Andrews with the idea of publishing a catalogue of the collection. However, after Andrews' untimely death in 2016, the task of editing the project was taken on by the scholar and curator Maureen Cassidy-Geiger. Cassidy-Geiger's introductory essay concisely outlines the collection's formation before a further essay, co-written with Basile Baudez, lays forth clearly and concisely the various aspects of Beaux-Arts training and education.

The images used to illustrate the essay are beautifully chosen. In one, by *logiste* Jean Béraud, we read the somewhat terse comments of this patron, Victor Laloux: 'ombre mauvaise' (poorly rendered shadow) and, even more damningly, 'ces cartouches ne s'adaptent pas' (these cartouches don't work) (24). Elsewhere, a watercolour of the Ca' d'Oro, by Alphonse-Alexandre Defrasse, from c. 1900, is shown alongside his finished painting of the same subject: the former possessing the vibrancy of seemingly being made in situ, the latter the precision of the studio.

Figure 1: Frank Lloyd Wright, Price Tower in Bartlesville, Oklahoma (1952). The drawing appears in *Living with Architecture as Art: The Peter W. May Collection of Architectural Drawings, Models, and Artefacts* (332). Photo credit: Paul Holberton Publishing.

An essay by Charles Hind, the RIBA H.J. Heinz curator of drawings, exploring British architectural education, is also informative, although a touch formulaic in its telling of a familiar tale. A further essay by Hind on the architectural drawings market is more interesting, particularly on the role of private collectors in shaping the market; drawings with 'wall power' have come to be much more popular than site plans, for example, despite their obvious interest to scholars (71). Hind describes the market's rise in the 1980s before its sudden collapse in the early 1990s. In this, he draws a stark distinction between 'historicist' collecting and collecting contemporary architectural drawings, noting, for example, how collectors of contemporary drawings such as Barbara Pine acquired drawings directly from architects rather than through dealers, as May did. He cites Jordan Kauffman's recent book, *Drawing on Architecture: The Object of Lines, 1970–1990* (Kauffman 2018), yet, as in that study, there is little discussion between the structural operations of the market and content of drawings, particularly the emergence of postmodernism and the way it allowed historical styles and interests to become popular and forward thinking.

The final essay by Matthew Wells deals with the architectural models in May's collection, offering a good overview of the history of the model in architecture and of notable collectors and collections. Like the drawings, the models May has collected were mostly made for presentation and date from the 19th century. Among the exquisitely crafted examples, the standout for me is one that goes against the grain: a model by William Hayward Brakspear and William Sidney Brakspear for a chicken house for Bow Manor, Sale, Cheshire, c. 1860, which uses wood, cardboard, paint, and sand to give a vivid impression of this modest building type.

Reflecting May's approach to collecting, the catalogue itself is arranged according to thematic or typological groupings that correspond to where and how the drawings are displayed in May's various residences. The catalogue numbers reveal the years in which the drawings were collected and, given the very personal nature of the collection, it would have been interesting to get a sense of where and how each drawing was displayed.

There are far too many highlights of the collection to list individually, and the drawings that jump out are inevitably those that contrast with the general focus on Beaux-Arts classicism. Among the most notable are three amazing drawings (1933) by J. Whitfield Lewis for an art deco-cum-modern yacht club — all sleek lines and grey hues. Another example is the extraordinary presentation drawing by Frank Lloyd Wright for the Price Tower in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, originally conceived for New York City in 1929 and described by Wright as 'the tree that escaped the city' (332) (**Fig. 1**).

Although the collection focuses heavily on the late 19th century, there are a number of drawings dating much earlier, among them two preliminary drawings for the marble paving for the Dôme des Invalides, Paris, by Jules Hardouin-Mansart (1691–98). And among the copious presentation drawings are a smattering of construction drawings, notably two by Sir John Soane for a lodge or cottage.

The importance of May's collection derives both from the drawings it contains and from its very status as a collection that reflects personal taste and the broader fluctuations of the market. While the book aims to be of interest to amateurs and experts alike, its two massive volumes and the whopping £260 price point mean that it is hardly accessible. Yet it remains an invaluable resource, offering unsurpassed documentation of May's extensive collection, and containing some of the largest and best reproductions of architectural drawings in any book I have seen.

In the age of super-high-resolution digital images, one has to wonder whether books of this type are relics of another age. But as the rise of the 'post-digital' architectural drawing makes very clear, images of any kind, and especially drawings, do not exist — nor are they created — in a vacuum. The Beaux-Arts represented a moment when

architecture itself could be encapsulated in drawing, and architectural drawings took on the status of works of art. It is not possible to collect buildings, but in collecting Beaux-Arts drawings, Peter W. May comes as close as is possible.

Building Renaissance Venice: The Question of Architecture Amateurs

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Martin Gaier and Wolfgang Wolters (eds.), *Dilettanti di architettura nella Venezia del Cinquecento*. Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti, 2020, 162 pages, ISBN: 978-88-88143-99-6

In 16th-century Venice the figure of the architect is associated with the patron, on the one hand, and with the *proto* (or master builder), on the other. Manfredo Tafuri highlighted the singularity of this situation to the lagoon city. In his conclusion to a long reflection on the role of those who commissioned works in the 'public and private' dimension, he urged scholars to further expand their research by comparing data about families and *protos*, stonemasons, and *maestri* (Tafuri 1985; Tafuri 1994). The concept of the 'true' architect, who, as conventionally defined according to the characteristics of Leon Battista Alberti, conceives the building project and controls its realisation, does not exist in the Venetian context. Instead, the architect depended on the *magistrature* (the public authorities of the Serenissima), who were, in fact, the sole comptrollers of building programmes. Historians of Venetian architecture have adhered to Tafuri, and in recently published studies have examined 'intermediate' figures involved in the organisation of the construction site, such as the *protos* or 'experts'. In particular, attention has been given to the empirical practice of these professionals of *venetiana* architecture, who worked within local offices or supported them with their technical skills. The profiles of specific figures have also been defined, casting light on their education and professional skills. The Venetian *proto* was not highly educated, although he amassed considerable technical expertise. Within this context, Martin Gaier's *Architettura 'Venetiana': I proti veneziani e la politica edilizia nel Cinquecento* focuses on Venetian *protos* and on building construction policies in 16th-century Venice (Gaier 2019). Yet one figure remains missing: the architecture amateur. The streamlined volume, edited by Gaier with Wolfgang Wolters, *Dilettanti di architettura nella Venezia del Cinquecento* (**Fig. 2**), aims at filling this gap, tackling a topic that until now has only been marginally addressed.
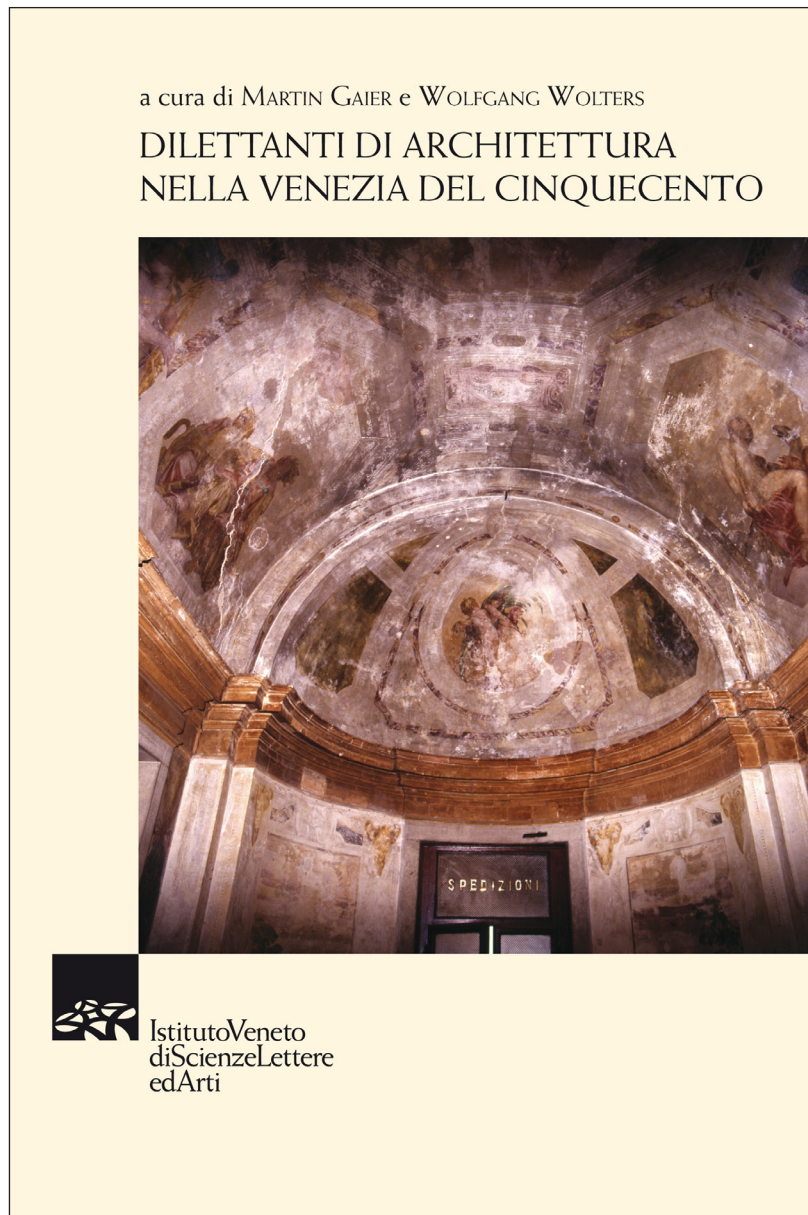
Figure 2: Cover of *Dilettanti di architettura nella Venezia del Cinquecento*. Photo: Istituto Veneto di Scienze Lettere ed Arti.

Dilettanti di architettura nella Venezia del Cinquecento collects six of the contributions that were presented on the occasion of a homonymous seminar hosted in Venice at the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti on 30 November 2018. The book opens with two thematic contributions: an introduction to the topic by Gaier and an essay by Wolfgang Lippmann that focuses on central Italy in comparison with Venice and the Veneto. The chapters by Paola Modesti and Wolfgang Wolters provide case studies on the Palazzo

Trevisan on Murano and the Palazzo Grimani a Santa Maria Formosa, respectively. The book's two final contributions are devoted to groups of architecture amateurs acting both in Venice and on the mainland. Deborah Howard examines Venetian rectors, while Gianmario Guidarelli casts light on monks and friars, reframing the amateur as an architecture *intendente.*

The 17th-century biographer Carlo Ridolfi, who is often quoted in modern art history, highlighted the fact that several artists embarked on architecture for their amusement. In his *Maraviglie dell'arte, ovvero le vite degli illustri pittori veneti e dello stato*, Ridolfi recalls that Paolo Farinati 'amused himself with military architecture' and made models of fortresses, but also entertained himself with fencing, among other things (Ridolfi 1648). In their individual contributions, both Gaier and Lippmann underscore that military architecture appeared to suit amateurs. But if an amateur could produce architecture, what role did the professed (and trained) 'architect' serve? Did he conceive of the building as an 'author' or was he the fully engaged building designer? Or, as suggested by Enrico Mattioda (and quoted by Gaier), did the architect fill the same role as the amateur, with the key difference that the architect belonged to a profession and worked for profit? Writing shortly after Ridolfi, Marco Boschini clarified the distinction between the amateur and the architect by introducing a new figure: the *intendente.* Not without artistic skill or training, the *intendente* differs from the amateur in his use of drawing as a design instrument. All the same, the *intendente* was not a professed '*architetto*'. These remarks remind us of the young draftsman and hopeful architect, depicted by Maso Finiguerra in the middle of the 15th century, who embodies the connection between the ability to draw, conceive, and communicate the project.

Since the architecture amateur cannot be defined clearly, focusing the research on Venice and the Veneto reduces the scope of inquiry, offering examples which, as Gaier states, reveal 'the active interference of the client in the building process' (9). Andrea Palladio and Vincenzo Scamozzi were aware of this, as was Sebastiano Serlio, who wrote his *Regole generali* for Venetian patricians who were not only architecture amateurs, but who were just as competent 'as the best masters'. Within the Serenissima territories, the famous associations between the client-amateur and the architect — Alvise Cornaro and Giovanni Maria Falconetto, for example, or Giangiorgio Trissino, Daniele Barbaro, and Palladio — complicate our ability to attribute specific works. As Paola Modesti demonstrates in her essay, these relationships make it clear that the buildings produced by these affiliations were collective works, the result of interactions among various figures. For example, in the absence of a single architect for his ambitious

palace, Camillo Trevisan relied upon the contributions of Daniele Barbaro and Palladio, Alessandro Vittoria, and Paolo Veronese.

Within history, it is exceedingly difficult to differentiate the contributions of the client from those of the architect, and as a result, the former is often not credited for his innovations. But as Lippmann states, there are ways to identify the architectural designs of the client-amateur. The case of Barbaro provides one example. On the upper part of a page of Barbaro's preparatory manuscript for the *Commentarii*, he drew the plan of a palace with a Roman *tablinum*, the function of which was to be similar to that of Camillo Trevisan's *palazzo*, connecting two separate areas of the home. In a similar way, the refinement and the original character of the *palazzo* at Santa Maria Formosa, with its famous *studio*, can be clearly tied to the amateur architect Giovanni Grimani. Wolters recalls that any attempt to attribute an architectural work is extremely difficult in the absence of 'explicit documents' or 'undoubtable evidence' and cautions historians in making such judgements. Howard echoes this sentiment and argues that the analysis of architecture attributed to Venetian rectors requires a focus on the surviving drawings. One well-known example is that of Michele Sanmicheli's portal for the Palazzo del Podestà in Verona, the compositional mistakes of which were attributed by Vasari to the rector Giovanni Dolfin. Such interferences, according to Howard, can be found on many Veneto public buildings, from Verona to Treviso and Belluno, and she expands the list of 16th-century rectors who might be recognized as amateur architects/designers. Howard raises broader research questions in regard to the individual cases of the Doiona gate in Belluno and the Loggia del Capitaniato in Vicenza, which invite additional examination of the role of city councils in architectural design decisions, the use of public funding and the political and celebratory meaning of loggias, gates, and other civic buildings. For Howard, the personal involvement of rectors in the planning of structures like the Doiona gate and the Loggia del Capitaniato, despite the numerous plaques, inscriptions, and documents celebrating their work, remains an open question. Modesti is likewise inconclusive in her consideration of the authorship of the Palazzo Trevisan. Guidarelli follows the same path, proposing first a study of the clerics who were architecture *intendenti*, followed by an in-depth analysis of the two respective monks who worked on the convent of Santo Stefano and in the Abbey of Praglia. Guidarelli identifies figures who were in charge of ecclesiastical construction sites but who could not be called 'building monks'. He refrains from making definitive conclusions about the origin and the authorship of refined solutions *all'antica*, and instead outlines a dynamic process of 'project' design, whereby the monk would have provided functional and distributional solutions, while the architect and the *proto*

focused on technical and formal elements. This division of tasks recalls the solution proposed by Ennio Concina about the authorship of the widely discussed Fondaco dei Tedeschi (Concina 1997). This building is the outcome of a hybrid project, the original plan of which was provided by a German architect, with subsequent interventions attributed to others.

Dilettanti di architettura nella Venezia del Cinquecento represents a significant step in the reconceptualization of early modern architecture and design processes. Following the guidance of Arnaldo Bruschi (Bruschi 2008; Bruschi 2009), the book's contributors acknowledge the fundamental fact that in complex architectural projects that demanded a broad set of skills and responsibilities, multiple contributors were at work. In this context, the book offers an interesting mosaic of case studies and figures involved in the building process. However, the question remains as to whether the Venetian context, to which this study is dedicated, was exceptional or reflected more widespread conditions. Ultimately, the characteristics of the architectural amateur, outlined in the two introductory essays, escape a clear definition. But in directly acknowledging this, the book's editors open the question for new research.

Techno-Optimism at Mid-Century: Konrad Wachsmann's Models for a Televisual Architecture

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Mark Wigley, *Konrad Wachsmann's Television: Post-architectural Transmissions*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2020, 397 pages, ISBN: 9783956795350

Mark Wigley envisions an alternative history of 20th-century architecture focused on architects who embraced the logic of television by modelling mobile networks of information to further an interconnected and democratic world. The seed for *Konrad Wachsmann's Television: Post-architectural Transmissions* (**Fig. 3**) was planted by Wigley's 2001 article 'Network Fever', in which he seeks to contextualize and historicize contemporary discussions of networks by asking, 'But what if we are actually at the end point of the network logic? What if contemporary discourse about the net simply realizes nineteenth-century fantasies that were acted out throughout most of the last century?' (Wigley 2001: 84). These century-old fantasies include a vision of architecture as mobile nodes in a world-wide telecommunications network first formulated in the 1930s by Buckminster Fuller.
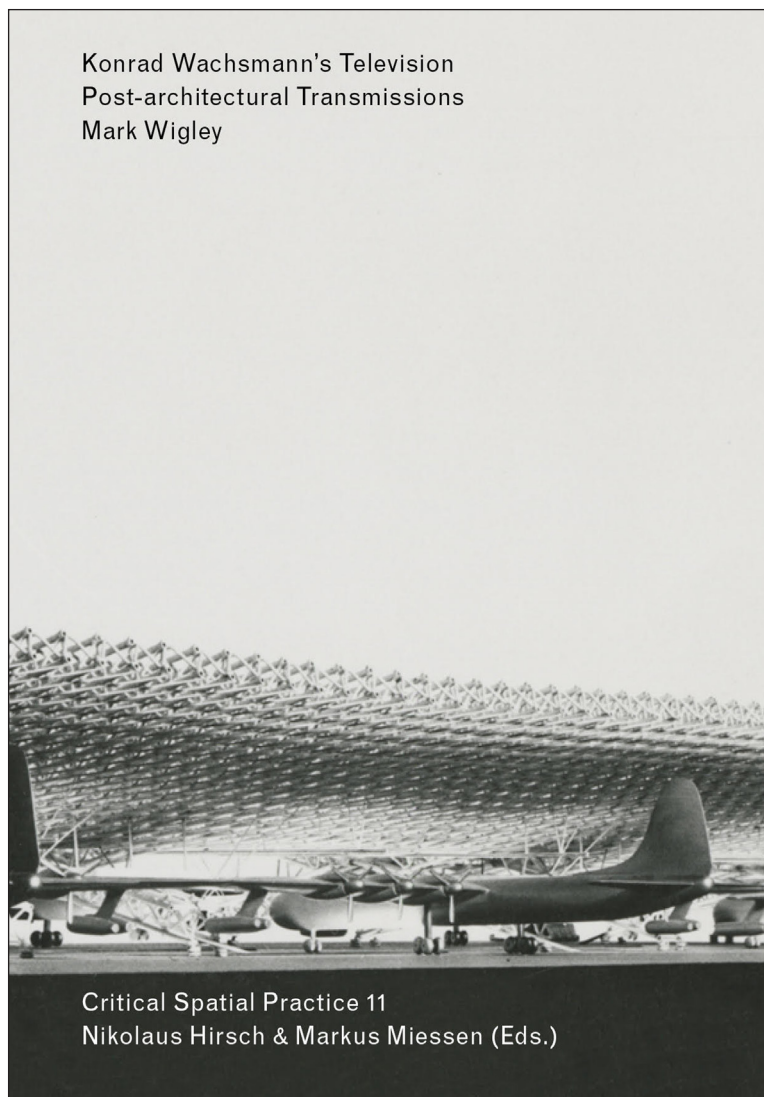
Figure 3: Cover of *Konrad Wachsmann's Television: Post-Architectural Transmissions.* Photo: Sternberg Press.

The author charts this history of architecture-as-network in this exploratory volume devoted to Konrad Wachsmann, a 20th-century German architect who stood at the crossroads of modern architecture in Germany in the 1920s before emigrating to the United States in the 1940s, where he worked for forty years. Hardly a household name, Wachsmann appeals to Wigley because, as he puts it, 'indeterminate figures often reveal more about the field than those whose place seems secure' (23). Indeed, Wachsmann interacted with some of the leading figures of the German Werkbund in the first quarter of the 20th century. He studied with Heinrich Tessenow in Dresden and Hans Poelzig in Berlin before working as a designer for Christoph & Unmack, the largest

prefabricated-wood-construction company in Europe. As a German Jew, Wachsmann fled Germany in the 1930s, seeking refuge in Italy before securing passage to the United States with the assistance of Walter Gropius. During the Second World War, Wachsmann and Gropius developed an industrialized system through which a variety of buildings could be constructed by connecting the same ten types of standardized wooden panels using a single compact joint. These practical projects were supplemented with more speculative thinking inspired by theorists and educators, such as Buckminster Fuller and Max Bill. These experiences and conversations provided the basis for Wachsmann's re-orientation of architecture around 1950, away from form and function and towards an idea of a flexible web or network of interconnecting points that could be adapted to just about any purpose and location. According to Wigley, the highest realization of Wachsmann's vision of architecture as an adaptable network was television — not television as we know it today but as a potentially transformative medium that combined computer and televisual technologies to facilitate a fluid and purportedly free exchange of information.

Wachsmann's contributions, as Wigley describes them, are above all conceptual. The architect's *Perspective Drawing of a Twisting Net* (1950–51) brings Wigley to observe how 'the drawing is an image not of electronic circuits but of the disorienting, unfamiliar landscape such circuits might provoke'. In this way, Wachsmann proposes 'that electricity compelled ways of thinking not accessible by the accumulated wisdom of the discipline of architecture' and 'pushes architects into the unknown' (171). Such speculative thinking gathered momentum in Wachsmann's practice, culminating in his unpublished manuscript 'Manifest for the Evolution of Assembling the Artificial Human Environment Between Time and Space' (1974).

Wigley charts Wachsmann's evolution from builder to theorist of industrial systems, noting how his work becomes ever-more dematerialized. Illustrations draw attention to Wachsmann's meticulous technical drawings, three-dimensional models, and detailed systems of manufacture, distribution, and assembly. Even though most of Wachsmann's projects for the United States were never built, his drawings, photographs, and models of them circulated widely throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan in the form of exhibitions and periodicals. However, drawings and models were the mere preparatory stages for Wachsmann's ultimate project: a TV series on the future of building in which building is redefined to encompass all areas of society, especially those related to information technologies and telecommunications, as well as to the social sciences and humanities. 'When I use the word "structure," 'Wachsmann notes in his lecture 'To Build Is Everything or Nothing Is Built', 'I am not talking about building structures but the structure of action of society, the structure of

everything what [sic] happens as well as the tangible and intangible elements which constitute the structure of life' (316).

Wachsmann's ever-expanding definition of building is explored by Wigley in a series of twelve short chapters, each approximately fifteen pages in length, and preceded by about as many pages of illustrations documenting his career, drawn from the Wachsmann Archive at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. The organization of the essays is thematic rather than historical and is far from comprehensive. Wigley focuses on the following projects which together demonstrate Wachsmann's progressive dematerialization of architecture: *Model of Airforce Hangar* (1954), *Perspective Drawing of a Twisting Net* (1950–51), *Model for the California City Civic Center* (1967), and the filming of his three-day televised symposium *Strategy for Human Survival* (1970). The book begins and ends with Wachsmann's never-completed manuscript for a TV series, 'Manifest for the Evolution of Assembling the Artificial Human Environment between Time and Space' (1974). Together the twelve chapters form a disciplined and coherent presentation of what Wigley terms Wachsmann's 'post-architectural transmissions'.

The book offers a selective, coherent, but not always critical account of Wachsmann's contributions to 20th-century architecture, whose social and political dimensions are under-explored. More attention could be paid to the architect's role in the military industrial complex. There is a disconnect, which Wigley acknowledges, between Wachsmann's complex, speculative, and ultimately hopeful ideas for architecture as a series of horizontal, anti-hierarchical relationships on the one hand, and the military industrial complex on the other, which provided the context for many of his projects during and after the Second World War. Artists' often uneasy relationships to the military industrial complex have been explored in recent studies by John Blakinger and Pamela Lee with a degree of nuance that the short-essay format employed by Wigley does not permit (Blakinger 2019; Lee 2020). Given that Wachsmann's work was funded by the US Air Force and State Department, the dimensions of his 'transgressive' vision of architecture and television remain underdeveloped. Furthermore, Wachsmann's vision of the built environment as an ever-expanding, flexible network, whose growth is data-driven and responsive to the needs of local and global populations, might be subjected to more scrutiny, given that it was enabled by the rise of government bureaucracy and data-gathering that could hardly be understood as fostering dissent or eliminating social hierarchies. Wigley hints at the nature of Wachsmann's resistance in the final chapter, entitled 'Programming Dissent', in which he cites the architect's repeated invocation of traditional Mediterranean fishing nets — an ancient technology — as perhaps the most sophisticated and versatile network, but this intriguing claim is not pursued.

While more could be said about the relationship between Wachsmann's work and the scientific and technocratic culture sponsored by the US military, *Konrad Wachsmann's Television* nevertheless offers a compelling and accessible account of a little-known career that in turn points to a broader conceptualization of architecture as a language informed by electrical waves and information technologies. Wachsmann's work, and Wigley's study of it, places architecture in a nexus alongside sociology, environmental studies, anthropology, philosophy, and science in a way that is meant to illuminate the present state of the practice rather than to analyse the fine grain of history. The book's size is both affordable and portable, although the detail of Wachsmann's more intricate drawings and models is lost in this small format. One surmises that Wigley's intent was to obtain the widest possible circulation of the architect's work — a laudable goal with which Wachsmann would no doubt have agreed.

In the Shadow of Michelangelo: Francesco da Sangallo and the Search for a 'Tuscan Identity'

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Giorgio Vasari's famous fresco, *Cosimo I de' Medici Among His Artists* (1558), in the Palazzo Vecchio is one of the most revelatory accounts of 16th-century Florence's protagonists of art and architecture. Alongside the venerable sculptors Baccio Bandinelli and Benvenuto Cellini, Vasari included the younger architects Battista del Tasso, Niccolò Tribolo, Nanni Ungaro, and Giovanni Battista Belluzzi, 'il Sanmarino', as well as the two architects and sculptors who in the mid-Cinquecento served as *capomaestri* of the Florentine cathedral: the celebrated Bartolomeo Ammannati and the more obscure Francesco da Sangallo.

Until now, Francesco Giamberti da Sangallo, known as 'Il Margotta' or 'il Margollo' (1494–1576), has remained in the shadow of the other members of the illustrious Sangallo artistic dynasty, studies on which have primarily focused on the brothers Giuliano Giamberti da Sangallo (1445 or 1452–1516), Antonio Giamberti da Sangallo (1455 or 1462–1534) and their nephew Antonio Cordini, commonly known as Antonio da Sangallo the Younger (1484–1546). The son of Giuliano, Francesco was a close collaborator with this family's renowned members, developing as a polymorphic artist

Figure 4: Cover of *Francesco da Sangallo e l'identità dell'architettura toscana*. Photo: Officina Libraria.

and devoted guardian of the Sangallo family's formidable legacy. Active as a draftsman, sculptor, medallist, and architect, Francesco worked in the two main Renaissance capitals (Rome and Florence) and in many Italian regions (Lazio, Tuscany, Romagna, and Campania). While scholars have long recognized his activity as a sculptor and medallist, his role as an architect has not been examined so far. Dario Donetti's book, *Francesco da Sangallo e l'identità dell'architettura toscana* (**Fig. 4**), fills what was a great historical lacuna, casting light on the architect and his architectural works.

Based on Donetti's previous research on the Sangallo family architects (Donetti 2013; 2014; 2018), this book offers for the first time a complete reconstruction of Francesco da Sangallo's long and rich career, unveiling new information and challenging previous

historical assumptions. The author tackles this complex task using drawings as the main investigative tool. This methodological choice is grounded in a recently consolidated historiographical approach based on the analysis of the outstanding corpus of drawings attributed to the Sangallo family members. Among the most significant exponents of this approach is the magisterial, three-volume catalogue of the Uffizi's architectural drawings of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger and his circle, which still lacks a final volume (Frommel and Adams 1994, 2000). In 2017, Donetti himself, together with Marzia Faietti and Sabine Frommel, was one of the curators of the beautiful Florentine exhibition on Giuliano da Sangallo's drawings. In the catalogue of that show, he had already emphasized the close link between Francesco's work and that of his father and his uncle (Donetti, Faietti, and Frommel 2017).

Indeed, from an early age, Francesco shared with his father a passion for antiquarian studies. He then worked as an engineer under the aegis of his uncle, followed by a long apprenticeship as a sculptor. Donetti understands architectural drawings as a central testimony of this 'double family training', employing them as primary source documents to gather fragmentary information about Francesco and as genuine evidence for reconstructing his stylistic evolution.

In the book's first chapter, Francesco's role in perpetuating his father's legacy emerges in Donetti's revelatory analysis of Francesco's collaboration in drafting two of Giuliano's most important graphic compilations (as already evidenced in Fabriczy 1902 and Nesselrath 1986): the *Libro dei Disegni* (Codex Barberiniamo Latino 4424, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana) and the *Taccuino Senese* (Biblioteca degli Intronati, Siena). This foundational experience grounded Francesco in the cult of antiquity, and Donetti effectively emphasizes this legacy directly in the chapter's title, quoting Francesco's famous letter in which he relates how as a very young boy, his father carried him to witness the discovery of the Laocoon statue in Rome ('E io così in groppa a mio padre').

In the second chapter, the main evidence of Francesco's collaboration with his uncle Antonio Giamberti is evinced through a notebook of drawings: the so-called Geymüller Codex, conserved at the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi in Florence. This notebook, to which Antonio da Sangallo the Younger most likely contributed as well, offers testimony to the handover of architectural knowledge between the two generations and to the richness of exchange within the family workshop.

Indeed, Francesco's relationship with his cousin spanned decades, through both the study of ancient architecture and the collaboration in projects and works, among the most splendid of which was the funeral monument of Piero de' Medici in the Abbey of Montecassino (see also Donetti 2018). This collaboration is affirmed in numerous documents, including two beautiful drawings deeply analyzed by Donetti (Uffizi 307

A and 1681 A), in which the two cousins exchanged measurements, information, and notes about ancient buildings.

Returning to Tuscany after his father's death in 1516, Francesco began working throughout Italy, a long and successful career that Donetti carefully reconstructs, debunking the erroneous image fixed by historiography of an artist stubbornly rooted in a local language. To the contrary, Donetti emphasizes how, through frequent travel, Sangallo developed an elaborate, composite language marked by a taste for variety.

Donetti's analysis focuses above all on the accurate reconstruction of Francesco's architectural works, from those of sound attribution to those of less certain authorship. Among the projects considered, the innovative proposal for the villa of Don Pedro da Toledo in Pozzuoli (1538) and the reconstruction of the Palazzo Alidosi in Castel del Rio (1542–45) stand out: both projects combine building typologies (a villa-palace and a palace-fortress, respectively) and testify to Francesco's proclivity to test new design solutions. What emerges is the portrait of an artist solidly rooted in tradition, master of both the 'all'antica' vocabulary and the languages of 15th-century Tuscan architecture, but also open to experimental research.

The oscillation between regional archaisms and antiquarian language typical of Francesco returns in the fourth chapter of the book, in which Donetti shifts the focus away from drawings to the artist's 'metal art' proofs. In particular, he examines foundation medals that were cast by Francesco da Sangallo to celebrate his work as a designer and a builder and testify to his desire to be recognized as an architect.

Donetti returns to the analysis of the drawings in the book's final chapter, focusing on the corpus of Francesco da Sangallo's sheets preserved at the Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, which illustrates his attempt to define the antiquarian inspirations in an unprecedented monumentalism, well suited to the context of ducal Florence in the mid-16th century. An exemplary case is the famous drawing for the arrangement of the Loggia dei Lanzi in Piazza della Signoria (Uffizi 1683 A), in which he proposed to modernize and, at the same time, to give an antiquarian tone to one of the most significant monuments in Florence. Francesco expressed the same attitude when, at the end of his career, he confronted the two most important Florentine *fabbriche*: Santa Maria del Fiore — where he was *capomaestro* from 1537 to 1576 — and Santa Croce, where he worked on behalf of Duke Cosimo I on the bell tower and, together with Giorgio Vasari, on the design of the new altars in the side aisles.

Francesco da Sangallo's collaboration with Vasari — the two men also produced the ephemeral backdrops for Charles V's entry into Florence in 1536 and worked together on the reconstruction of the refectory of Monteoliveto in Naples in 1544 — probably extended to the editing of the *Vite.* Indeed, the first edition of Vasari's most famous

book appeared in 1550 and Francesco da Sangallo was very likely a key source for the compilation of the *Vita di Giuliano e Antonio da San Gallo, architetti fiorentini*, which contains the famous epigraph 'Cedite Romani structores, cedite Graii, Artis, Vitruvi tu quoque cede parens. Hetruscos celebrate viros': these words celebrated the Sangallo brothers as the champions of Tuscan architecture or, literally, as *Etruscan* heroes who had rescued the art of construction and restored the splendours of Italy's first antiquity. As Donetti points out, this celebration of the Sangallo family's legacy is linked to the search for a 'Tuscan' style, inspired by the ancient Etruscan model. It is an inquiry that unites the architects depicted around Cosimo I in Vasari's fresco in the Palazzo Vecchio — a group of artists whose work mediated between Michelangelo's stunning work at the Sacrestia Nuova (for which Francesco da Sangallo collaborated as a sculptor) and the new monumentality promoted by the Medici in the mid-16th century.

Thanks to a scrupulous documentary survey, a profound analytical ability, and a cross-disciplinary approach, Donetti's book — as the title suggests — narrates the history of a 'total artist', Francesco da Sangallo, as well as the history of the Florentine and Tuscan 16th-century architecture and its search for an identity between tradition and classicism.

The Aesthetics and Power of Ruins

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This very thought-provoking book, *Reviewing the Past: The Presence of Ruins* (**Fig. 5**), approaches the phenomenon of ruins through the lenses of art history and aesthetics. As such, the bulk of the book is dedicated to artistic expressions of ruins as well as the aesthetics of how the ruins themselves are exhibited in museums and, to a lesser extent, viewed in situ. Zoltán Somhegyi describes the book structure as a 'free wandering around a ruin-site' (xvii), allowing the reader to move between chapters randomly. He does, however, organize the book into four thematic parts: 'Classical Tradition', 'Modern Appearances', 'When in Works', and 'Afterlife', each part divided into three chapters respectively. Although there is some truth to a reader being able to dip into the chapters at will, there is a lot to be said for at least starting at the beginning, where Somhegyi outlines three basic criteria for what constitutes a proper ruin: *functionlessness*, *absence*,
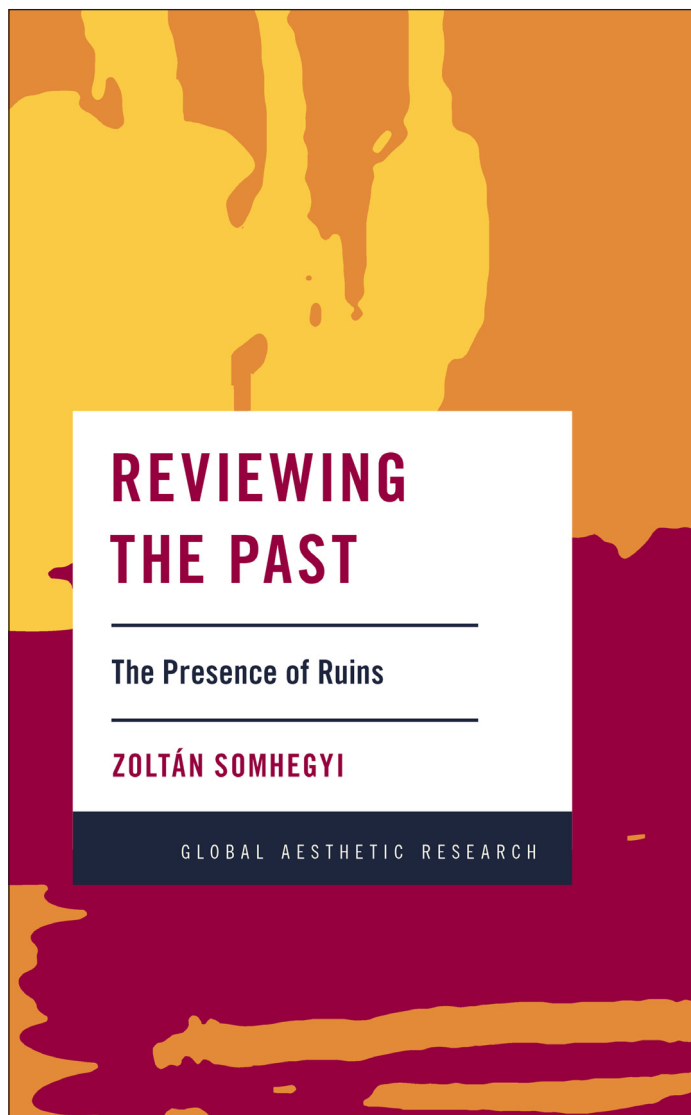
Figure 5: Cover of *Reviewing the Past: The Presence of Ruins.* Photo: Rowman & Littlefield International.

and *time* (5). The first chapters provide an explanation of these criteria, although they remain present throughout most of the book.

Given Somhegyi's emphasis on art history and aesthetics, much of the discussion in the chapters revolves around artistic depictions of ruins rather than the structures themselves. Somhegyi sees a universality in the perception and artistic expression of ruins and ruination despite the overt differences they display in respect to a given region or in the perspective adopted by the individual artist. His discussion in the first section is mainly concerned with ruins and how they are dealt with in art, drawing examples from the Classical period and subsequent periods in European history. Somhegyi uses

a Roman relief with a pastoral scene to discuss how a ruin can be used as 'sporadic decorative elements' (25). And he cites the genre of *capriccio* as exemplary of later periods. In contrast, he also deals with very contemporary 'ruins' in later chapters. For instance, in section two there is a chapter entitled '"Learning from Detroit?" — From Materialised Dreams to the Bitter Awakening. Aesthetics around Decayed Shopping Malls', and in the opening chapter of 'Afterlife', namely 'Mall with Lamassu: Imitated Decay and Aesthetic Education in Thematic Commercial Centres'. In his discussion, Somhegyi calls attention to the 'globally uniform, characterless' (114) nature of malls as they try to supplant a town centre, before going on to also celebrate mall architecture by noting that abandoned complexes can '"survive", if not physically, but at least on an aesthetic level' (115). Thus he notes that various art projects, blogs, conferences, and publications from recent years examine the array of issues evoked by these structures. Somhegyi references, for instance, Siobhan Lyons' edited volume *Ruin Porn and the Obsession with Decay* (2018). One could also mention Susan Stewart's *The Ruins Lesson* (2021) Quoting Jonathan Hill, 'Somhegyi also points out that while we are accustomed to ancient ruins, even admire them, modern ruins can be disturbing' (2019: 100).

The book's seventh chapter, aptly titled 'Cracks in the Wall', examines walls as 'indispensable architectural elements' that can also be 'very ambiguous constructions' (133). As in much of the book, Somhegyi deals mainly with artistic representation of walls. It is a little surprising that in such a chapter there is scant mention of the Berlin Wall itself, arguably the most ideologically charged wall in modern history, which itself became the subject of extensive artistic production. He only discusses the Berlin Wall in conjunction with the iconic Peter Leibing photo from 1961 depicting an East German border guard jumping over barbed wire to escape to the West. The 'wall' then was only in the first days of construction and obviously did not succeed in its intended function. It would become a solid wall over the years and Somhegyi points out that the remaining parts of the wall are 'functionless', in that they no longer serve their original purpose since one can now walk around them (138). One would also expect here a discussion of the ongoing symbolism of the Berlin Wall, from the many political speeches that used it as a background during the Cold War to the 1990 Pink Floyd concert. It would have been interesting, too, had he addressed the Wall itself as a canvas for art over the decades and the choices made as to what parts survive and where they are, much less the chunks of it that were taken, traded, and sold as well as the images showing its destruction. Those wall pieces are just as much fragments as the other pieces he discusses in Chapter 8, 'Eulogy to the Fragment'. When talking about the destruction wrought by war, he focuses on the damage done to the collection of Canova's plaster casts in World War I, which he sees as a 'politically loaded metaphor for the ruination of bodies' (151).

However, one could also just as easily talk about the way in which some countries preserve destroyed or partially destroyed buildings as a reminder of the devastation of war. Somhegyi looks at the 'potential aesthetics of fragments and fragmentation' and also the 'aesthetic status of partially destroyed pieces of art' (152–53). In this context, he might have further explored 19th century Romanticism, particularly its notion of the literary fragment as it connects to the contemporaneous fascination with ruins in art.

Somhegyi discusses ruins outside the western context in Chapter 4, 'Ruins in East-West Perspective', in which he calls attention to how different building materials affect the state of ruins, and the symbolic role of ruins in the construction of national historical narratives. Ruins, whether preserved in their original state or repeatedly reconstructed over time, are a means of both cultural and spiritual continuity. He notes the dominance of the Western perspective but also what some non-Western artists can do from that starting point. The artist's aesthetic approach can potentially make a broader statement. For instance, in discussing the photography of Noor Ali Rashid, the royal photographer of the United Arab Emirates, Somhegyi writes that

> rather than simply documenting the decaying edifice, he takes it as an opportunity to employ his vision by manifesting the qualities of the aesthetics of the local vernacular architecture. … Hence, through the photos the artist claims these decayed architectural works to be on the same level as other captivating ruins and their representation from other parts of the world. (82)

In the book's penultimate chapter, 'What Remains of That Which Has Remained', the pride that one can take in local architecture and cultural history is juxtaposed to the potential politics involved in the construction of artificial ruins: 'the artificial ruin reveals the hierarchical divisions of the society that engendered it' (202). Conversely, the demolition of ruins can also be politically and ideologically motivated. 'Ruins have power', Somhegyi writes (199). He notes, however, that the power of ruins, in many respects like a monument, can lead to its destruction if a different ideology takes hold and the ruins are deemed disturbing as a reminder of conflicting values. He mentions, for instance, terrorist organizations destroying Mesopotamian and Syrian monuments (198). Similarly, one thinks of the Taliban destroying the Bamiyan Buddha in 2001. More recently, and representing a different kind of ideological struggle, we have seen the political upheaval surrounding monuments in the United States and elsewhere as value systems change. The ideological force of ruins also contributed differently to the colonial mindset of the growing nationalism of Western countries in the 19th century. By possessing, transporting, and displaying ruins and other artefacts from antiquity,

Western countries tried to appropriate the positive image of those ancient cultures, and thus depict themselves as 'the rightful heir to a venerable history' and as the better stewards of the archaeological remains (209). Even museum design attempts to capture some of that image; the façade of the Istanbul Museum, for instance, was inspired by the Alexander Sarcophagus and the Sarcophagus of the Mourning Women, located in Sidon. Berlin's Pergamon Museum was in effect a building 'erected to contain another building', namely the Pergamon Altar, which was largely removed by the Germans from the Turkish Aegean coast in the latter part of the 19th century (210). Bernard Tschumi's Acropolis Museum was realized as part of a greater political appeal to have the Parthenon frieze panels returned to Athens. One might mention here, too, that ancient ruins have become part of the accepted image of ancient Greece and Rome. In Wolfgang Peterson's 2014 movie *Troy*, not only did they build an elaborate version of the city of Troy, they also built a 'ruined' temple where Achilles could practice sword fighting with Patroclus. Certainly, if there were ever a time when that temple would be whole and in good condition, it would be mythic Greece. By adding a 'ruin', the filmmaker fed into the public's association of ruins with ancient Greece making it seem more 'realistic'.

Overall, Somhegyi displays commanding knowledge of his subject matter, approaching the monumental topic from interesting and sometimes surprising angles. One could perhaps hope for even more direct engagement with the ruined edifices themselves in addition to their artistic representations, but what Somhegyi does present is impressive and generally convincing. The title of the final chapter, 'Time Transformed into Space', is borrowed from a 2008 novel by Orhan Pamuk referring to museums as places of remembrance (219). And although the chapter centres on museums, one could imagine applying the phrase to many of the edifices discussed in this well-written and fascinating book.

Competing Interests

The authors have no competing interests to declare.

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