

Friday, 15 June
15.15-18.00

Track: Mediations
Room: *National Library, Corner Hall (Nurgasaal)*

LAUNCHING THE ARCHITECTURAL MAGAZINE: THE FORMATION OF A GENRE

Session chair: Anne Hultzsch, Oslo School for Architecture and Design / University College London

It has now been a few years since one of the UK's leading weekly architectural magazines, *Building Design*, ceased its print production and moved all its contents online. Yet, at the point of its potential disappearance, we know little about the beginnings of the printed architectural magazine. Surfacing as a genre during a widespread publishing frenzy in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, nearly simultaneously in many countries, imitated and reinterpreted elsewhere later on, and re-launched as and when technological changes appeared, the architectural magazine is one of the most important material manifestations of architectural cultures besides the building itself. Its status as an often heavily illustrated serial with weekly, monthly, or quarterly publication, means it is placed as no other medium to capture the Zeitgeist of building and to map architecture's stakeholders, whether professional, institutional, scholarly, or lay.

While scholars have in the last few decades increasingly turned to investigate 1960s and 1970s architectural journalism, the nineteenth century has received surprisingly little attention. Aiming to close this gap, this session presents contributions that explore the genre of the architectural magazine by examining its editorial formation across the long nineteenth century, including the first decades of the twentieth century. This moment of formation took place at different times in different places, and shifts in the genre led to the reformulation of its characteristics. It is these moments of defining what it meant to conceive, write, illustrate, edit, print, distribute, or read a magazine on architecture that this session targets.

Papers in this session explore themes around the producers, audiences, distribution, economics, technologies, appearance, or geographies (both micro and macro) of the architectural magazine. Meandering across Europe, speakers discuss the first magazines launched in Finland and Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century, as well as in Portugal around 1900. A non-western perspective is provided of the genre's development in China during its transition from the nineteenth-century imperial dynasty to the twentieth-century republic. The session ends with an outlook towards Italy and the genre-defining early years of *Casa Bella* and *Domus* against the background of the rise of fascism in Italy. Questions discussed include:

- What constitutes architectural news, in text and image?
- How did the architectural magazine differ from, or overlap with, other forms of serial publication, both special and general interest?
- What role did debate and exchange play, and what was the ensuing relationship between professionals and the public, between professionals and critics, or between architecture and politics?

These and other issues will help to explore and define the crucial part that architecture, and its discourse, played in the public realm of the long nineteenth century.

PAPERS:

Printing a New Style: The First Swedish Architectural Magazine and the Creation of Modern Scandinavian Architecture in the 1850s

Anna Ripatti, University of Helsinki

This paper examines the first Swedish architectural magazine *The Journal for Practical Architecture and Mechanics*, etc. (in Swedish: *Tidskrift för praktisk byggnadskonst och*

mekanik m.m.), founded in Stockholm by a small circle of progressive architects and civil engineers in 1850. Published monthly until 1853 and briefly in 1855, the *Tidskrift* was launched to form a virtual community for Nordic architects, engineers, industrialists, landowners, and artisans, and to spread knowledge of the latest developments in the arts and sciences. Based on a close reading of texts and images published in this short-lived magazine, as well as the correspondence of its editors, this paper explores the periodical's objectives. It argues that the *Tidskrift*, a showcase of the most fashionable Scandinavian architecture and technical innovations, as well as an important pan-Scandinavian forum for topical architectural discussions and criticism, had highly ambitious aesthetic, patriotic, and societal aims. Even if the magazine aimed to enhance freedom in arts, its contents reveal that it promoted a coherent aesthetic ideal.

My paper seeks to show that the magazine was used as a laboratory in creating a new Swedish or Nordic architectural style. The editors conceived this new style as a malleable archive of forms and practices, forged from elements stemming from diverse national and international sources. The paper concludes that the ultimate aim of the magazine was to market this new style to be used all over the western world through the transnationally distributed architectural press.

'An Intimate Cooperation of the Intellectual Forces of German Technology' Professional Organizations and Their Journals in the German Countries

Christiane Weber, Universität Innsbruck

During the long nineteenth century, an independent technical education system was installed in the German speaking countries, following the example of the French *École Polytechnique*. Technical development in the context of industrialization caused an increased specialization of disciplines. Simultaneously, the institutions became diversified in levels: technical schools developed into technical universities, and schools of applied sciences for the building and construction industry were established.

It was in this context that the foundation and development of professional organizations took place. In 1856, engineers founded the *Verein Deutscher Ingenieure* (VDI, Association of German Engineers) and the architects assembled in *Architektenvereinen* (Associations of Architects). The *Berliner Architektenverein*, established in 1824, was the first of many of these associations incorporated during the nineteenth century in the cities of the German speaking countries. In Germany, the federalism and the political independence of the different *Länder* (states) hindered the exchange of technical knowledge, which was easier to accomplish in centralized countries like France or Great Britain. Thus, the professional associations established journals to promote communication between German-speaking technicians. One of the first publications was the *Notizblatt des Architekten-Vereins zu Berlin*, issued two times a year since 1833, to inform its members and to exchange technical experiences. The journal, edited periodically since 1851 by the *Berliner Architektenverein* in cooperation with the *Königlich-Technische Baudeputation* (the Prussian state planning authorities) as *Zeitschrift für Bauwesen*, addressed academically educated civil servants. Soon specialized journals for the non-academic building and construction trade were established, like the *Zeitschrift für Bauhandwerker*, founded in 1857.

The paper analyses the different professional organizations and their specific professional journals before and after the foundation of the German Empire in 1871, as well as their specific topics and their means of knowledge transfer with the aim of uniting a politically separated technical audience.

Architecture and Editorial Culture: The Role of the Architect and Criticism in the Formation of the Portuguese Architectural Magazines

Rute Figueiredo, ETH Zurich

This paper examines the origin of editorial culture in the Portuguese architectural magazines at the onset of the twentieth century. It argues that architectural magazines and professional journals are 'sites' that help us to better understand the constellations of relationships between editors, critics, architects, and the public audience.

While the publication of the first architectural magazine, *A Construção Moderna*, in 1900 might be seen as the introduction of a new instrument of architectural mediation, it was also an instance of disciplinary self-understanding and a place of architectural knowledge construction. The publication of a second magazine in 1908, *Arquitetura Portuguesa*, would reinforce the status of the architect and the presence of architecture in society. Unlike *A Construção Moderna*, which focused on the professional elites, *Arquitetura Portuguesa* set up its editorial strategy on the presentation of architects and architecture for public opinion. Taken together, these publications were a key juncture that allowed the rise of a mutually dependent condition: the architect's new professional status in the public mind and the introduction of architectural criticism as an autonomous field.

Based on different approaches and their distinct audiences, these magazines played a fundamental role in the formation of an architectural editorial culture. They were the common ground beyond the contingencies of constructive practice, enabling the rise of new orders of thought on the practice and representation of architecture.

The Emergence of the Professional Architectural Magazine in China

Kai Wang, Tongji University

Ying Wang, University of Leuven

By world standards, architectural magazines developed relatively late in China's history. Special interest magazines aimed at a particular public audience only began to appear in imperial China around the middle of the nineteenth century and were mostly produced by foreign missionaries resident in the country. Professional magazines in the modern sense only appeared after the establishment of the Republic of China in 1911. The first engineering magazines appeared a few years later, and the first art magazines (which included features on architecture) in the 1920s. Serious architectural publications only emerged in the 1930s, when the first generation of modern Chinese architects returned to China after studying abroad. Latecomers though they were, these Chinese architectural magazines provide an interesting example of the emergence of professional publications in the non-western world.

Although China has a long tradition of building design and craftsmanship, the western discipline of architecture and its concomitant, the architectural magazine, were introduced into China at the beginning of the twentieth century, during a period of profound upheaval which culminated in the collapse of the last imperial dynasty and its replacement by a republic. The changes that accompanied the 1911 Revolution, including a reorganization of China's social hierarchy and a drive for modernization, provided the essential conditions in which professional magazines could flourish.

In this paper, the authors discuss the rise of the professional architectural magazine in China, from its humble beginnings in the mid-nineteenth century to its emergence as a fully-fledged publication during the 1930s. While stressing the crucial importance of modernization as an enabling factor, they also give due weight to other developments, and show how the professional architectural magazine owed its rise to a combination of circumstances.

A Tale of Two Journals: The Early Years of *La Casa Bella* and *Domus*

Klaus Tragbar, Universität Innsbruck

January 1928 was a crucial month for all Italian architects, when they suddenly found two architectural magazines among the newspapers: the new *Domus*, founded by architect Gio Ponti and Barnabite father Giovanni Semeria, and the relaunched *La Casa Bella*, first published in Turin five years earlier. Both magazines were edited in Milan, the indisputable capital of culture in Italy at that time.

The first issue of *Domus*, subtitled 'architettura e arredamento dell'abitazione moderna in città e in campagna' (architecture and decor of the modern home in the city and in the country), illustrated the paper's mission to renew architecture, interiors, and Italian decorative arts, without overlooking topics that were portrayed as of female interest, such as the art of homemaking, gardening, and cooking. Ponti outlined the magazine's goals in his editorials, insisting upon the importance of aesthetics and style in the field of industrial production. The subtitles of *La Casa Bella* also hinted at the aims of the magazine: 'arti e industrie de l'arredamento' (arts and industries of decor), later 'rivista per gli amatori della casa bella' (journal for those who love the beautiful home). Within the following years, almost all important Italian architects participated in both magazines as authors, critics, and editors.

The paper explores the role both magazines played in the debates on architecture and interior design in Italy and the relationship between the magazines and their readers, as expressed in editorial staff, the magazine's choice of Italian and foreign samples, and their layout, which introduced new graphic design ideas. The paper also focuses on the development of modern Italian architectural culture against the background of Fascism.