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Jordan Kauffman

**Drawing on Architecture: The Object of Lines, 1970–1990**

Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2018, 384 pp., 57 color and 44 b/w illus. \$34.95 (cloth), ISBN 9780262037372

The debate as to whether architectural drawings are to be considered works of art in their own right or solely as tools for the construction of buildings is given specific historical grounding and thoughtful consideration in Jordan Kauffman's *Drawing on Architecture*. Focusing on two critical but still largely unexamined decades in architectural culture, the 1970s and 1980s, Kauffman earnestly and ably traces a shift in the status of architectural drawings as they went from being seen merely as “instruments” of the building process to being recognized as “autonomous objects outside the process of design” (9). What Kauffman brings to the commonplace assertion that architecture “retreated” from the realm of building into drawing during these two decades is not only a thoroughly researched study of the people and places that were instrumental in bringing about this change but also an exploration of the shift's broader implications, particularly in relation to the aestheticization and commodification of the architectural drawing.

The book begins with a brief introduction highlighting the author's use of a “sociological framework” as his principal methodology and providing a cursory overview of historical collection practices related to architectural drawings. The introduction does not provide chapter overviews—a traditional conceit that would have proven useful given that the chapters are structured around complex groupings of exhibitions, individuals, and organizations.

The first chapter explores a group of exhibitions mounted during the 1970s and 1980s that, Kauffman argues, initiated the shift from the view of architectural drawings as simply professional instruments to the perception of them as works of art. The first was *Education of an Architect: A Point of View*, held in New York at the Cooper Union and the Museum of Modern Art in late 1971, but the most influential was the

seminal Beaux-Arts show held five years later at MoMA. The chapter also discusses a number of exhibitions at the Drawing Center in New York—a lesser-known institution that emerges in Kauffman's study as a place of significance. A brief discussion of the influential 1972 publication *Five Architects*—which originated in conversations at MoMA—highlights a critical moment in this developing discourse, though it fits somewhat uncomfortably with the chapter's overall focus on exhibitions.

In the second chapter Kauffman focuses on the act of collecting, arguing convincingly that this functioned as both an outcome of and a contributing factor to the increasing perception of architectural drawings as autonomous objects. Kauffman introduces the reader to numerous New York gallerists, curators, and collectors, including Barbara Pine, an initial member of the Junior Council at the Museum of Modern Art; Judith York Newman, who opened the first gallery in New York to deal only in architectural drawings and prints; Barbara Jakobsen and Emilio Ambasz, who organized the first sale of contemporary architectural drawings at MoMA; and Pierre Apraxine, who worked with Jakobsen at MoMA and went on to assemble the bulk of the Gilman Collection—more than 180 architectural drawings created for the Gilman Paper Company during the late 1970s and donated to MoMA in 2000. Perhaps the most significant collection of contemporary architectural drawings, the Gilman Collection came about after Apraxine convinced Howard Gilman to collect architectural drawings in addition to conceptual art and photography, arguing that they had value as an art form that would be “accessible” to the Gilman Company's employees. One MoMA show in particular—*Architectural Studies and Projects*, organized by Jakobsen and Ambasz in 1975—emerges as a watershed moment, a surprising fact given that the modest endeavor was mounted in the penthouse cafeteria of the museum and produced little in the way of actual sales. Kauffman's analysis of the show is illustrative of the main strength of his book: it unearths critical but previously “hidden” events and protagonists that were pivotal to the shift in status of architectural drawings.

In the third chapter Kauffman explores the influence of the well-known gallerist Leo Castelli and his eponymous gallery in

New York, focusing on three seminal exhibitions held from 1977 to 1983. *Architecture I* (1977) displayed the works of seven leading American and European architects, who were asked to submit drawings of projects already completed, for exhibition and possible sale. That the show was curated by Ambasz, Jakobsen, and Apraxine reveals the murky boundaries of the museum, corporate, and gallery worlds. *Architecture II: Houses for Sale* (1980) introduced a different set of contradictions, as architects were asked to create new drawings with a “double role”: they could be hung on the wall as art, but they could also be used to construct houses. *Architecture III: Follies: Architecture for the Late-Twentieth-Century Landscape* (1983) again asked architects to create new designs, this time for theoretically more buildable follies, which many in the artistic and architectural community perceived as purposeless structures for the “idle rich.”

In the final two chapters Kauffman addresses the “normalized” presence of architectural drawings in galleries, museums, and auction houses around the world (including in Milan, Berlin, Amsterdam, London, Rome, Helsinki, and Venice, as well as Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia). New York, however, still looms large in his extended discussion of the Max Protetch Gallery, which provides some of the most compelling material in the book. Kauffman recounts, for example, the outrage that followed Protetch's exhibition and sale of several Frank Lloyd Wright drawings in the early 1980s after Protetch had gained the exclusive rights to their sale through Wright's widow, Olgivanna. Historians decried the splintering of the archive, fellow gallerists envied the high price tags, and museum officials lamented the fact that the drawings would be inaccessible to the public (although forty years later the bulk of Wright's archive was sold to Columbia University and MoMA). The book concludes with the rise of three institutions dedicated to the collection and preservation of architectural drawings: the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, the Deutsches Architekturmuseum in Frankfurt, and the Getty Center in Los Angeles. In buying entire collections and archives, these institutions, under the leadership of seminal figures such as Phyllis Lambert (CCA) and Heinrich Klotz

(DAM), reinforced the significance of architectural drawings as embodiments of ideas and carriers of historical significance, not simply aesthetic (or commodified) objects.

Among the strongest elements of Kauffman's study are the rich insights that arise from the author's interviews with key curators, gallerists, and collectors from the period: thirty-six in total, according to the index. These sources provide compelling—indeed, at times riveting—backstories, though they also lead, as Kauffman admits, to uneven treatment of certain subjects, depending on who shared what information. Kauffman supplements the interviews with archival research and extensive coverage of secondary sources, particularly exhibition reviews. His reliance on certain historical narrators (in particular, Ada Louise Huxtable and Paul Goldberger) becomes repetitive at times, though the writings of these figures help to establish the significance of certain events.

The impact of developments in the art world during the period examined is a fascinating undercurrent of the story. Kauffman highlights the fact that drawings emerged as a key aspect of contemporary art, which led collectors like Pine to reconsider architectural drawings as art. Related to this was the critical issue of valuation. As Kauffman notes, initial valuations of architectural drawings were essentially “arbitrary,” and even with the initially low prices, very few sold because of a lack of third-party dealers and the fact that the market was still undefined. Some architects sold drawings directly to collectors, while others (notably Richard Meier and James Stirling, and initially Michael Graves) refused to sell. The question of authorship is inevitably at play, and it is one that Kauffman could have explored further. Another question concerns the rise of the “starchitect”—something that is not explicitly tackled in the book, but that clearly underlies the valuation of certain architectural drawings over others.

The book is handsomely illustrated with archival photos of the exhibition spaces themselves (although it is frustratingly difficult to see the details of the drawings on the walls) as well as color reproductions of select drawings. Kauffman begins the book with two informational graphics, a “network diagram” that shows the relations among key figures, events, and institutions,

and a timeline of events. Dense with information, these graphics might have been better integrated with each other, as well as with the various appendixes that appear, somewhat awkwardly, between and within the chapters. A traditional index is included at the end of the book.

*Drawing on Architecture* sheds new light on a critical twenty-year period in architectural history. Kauffman has deftly woven together a complex cast of individuals and institutions, many of whom have never before received any sustained scholarly attention, to demonstrate the mechanisms through which architectural drawings emerged as autonomous artistic objects during the 1970s and 1980s, and to interrogate the repercussions of this shift. Although the book elicits as many questions as it answers—and never fully draws together its disparate elements—it is a timely study offering significant new insights into a seminal topic.

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### **Monumental Jesus: Landscapes of Faith and Doubt in Modern America**

Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020, 216 pp., 50 b/w illus. \$49.50 (cloth), ISBN 9780813943749

The United States is home to a number of outsize and controversial experiments in modern religious architecture that seemingly demand public engagement as well as scholarly analysis. In *Monumental Jesus*, architectural historian Margaret M. Grubiak heeds this call and reaps rich rewards. Her study gathers several eye-popping examples of modern Christian art on the edge: the University of Notre Dame's exuberant “Touchdown Jesus” mural; the castellated Washington, D.C., Temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; the evangelical theme park as exemplified by Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker's Heritage USA; the world's fair-type campus of Oral Roberts University; the manifestations of fundamentalism at the Creation Museum and the Ark Encounter; and the towering Christ of the Ozarks statue near Eureka Springs, Arkansas. For Grubiak, what ties together these various efforts—Roman Catholic, Mormon, Pentecostal, evangelical, and fundamentalist, ranging from the

1960s to today—is their operation in an arena that she conceptualizes as “landscapes of doubt,” in dialectic with landscapes of faith. Across such cultural landscapes, drawing religious insiders and outsiders and believers and doubters into complex communion, she finds powerful reactions ranging from devotion to satire to hostility and even blasphemy. What is at stake when we are confronted with the “Touchdown Jesus” moniker for the *Word of Life* mural at Notre Dame? Or the “surrender Dorothy” graffiti framing the Emerald City-like Washington Temple? Or the “Gumby Jesus” jokes at the feet of the Christ of the Ozarks? Grubiak concludes, “The power of landscapes of doubt is that they make the questions about religion and belief immediate and visible to us, engaging us in a conversation about the transcendent and the immanent” (13). That conversation is framed on individual terms, not on religious or political terms, so that such landscapes draw their power and purpose from personal situations and serve to prod or clarify our own beliefs.

It is a fruitful move for Grubiak to knit together into conversation all these differing examples, raised by different groups and individuals for different purposes. Grubiak's method builds on those developed by foundational scholars in the fields of religious architecture and material religion. Mircea Eliade's comparative conceptualizations of the sacred and the profane are central, as Grubiak traces the deployment of common tools for sacralization and for the organization of space, exemplified by the “cosmic mountain” and the *axis mundi*. The pioneering work of key scholars of American art and sacred spaces provides further inspiration, including that of Colleen McDannell, David Morgan, Sally Promey, and Gretchen Buggeln, all of whom helped to establish and invigorate the field. Grubiak also draws upon the work of religious studies scholars like R. Laurence Moore who have explored the sacred/secular boundary in America and its relation to sports and commerce.

To extend these categories of the sacred and the secular in developing her concept of landscapes of doubt, Grubiak necessarily draws on the discourse surrounding her artistic examples as much as on the material forms and histories of the works themselves. Hence features from