

CALL FOR PAPERS

Pixels, Vectors and Algorithms. The Digital Revolution in Architecture

Conference at the Architekturmuseum der TUM, Munich, Germany

October 11, 2019

Deadline: May 24, 2019

Exhibition

The Architekturmuseum der TUM (Architecture Museum of the Technical University of Munich) will present an exhibition on the history of the computer in architecture, from July 16 through October 11, 2020. Covering several decades of both technical and artistic development, the exhibition will survey important turning points, key projects and technologies that have influenced architecture since the first architectural software—Sketchpad—was developed by Ivan Sutherland at MIT between 1960 and 1963. The exhibition will tell the stories behind digital architecture in four chapters, loosely following a historical trajectory: the computer as a drawing machine, the computer as a design aid, the computer as a tool for storytelling, and the computer as an interactive platform.

The first chapter focusing on the drawing machine will introduce the topic by looking into the origins of early CAD software and the interaction between human and machine. The second chapter on computer-aided design will present a wealth of key projects using architectural software to script, generate, parametrize or automate the design process. The third chapter will present the use of animations, renderings and films as means for storytelling and the last chapter will show current developments such as Artificial Intelligence, Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality within the broader historical context of interactive tools for the creation of architecture.

The exhibition will present both well-known pioneers of the digital movement as well as new discoveries. It is our aim to examine how the computer has changed architecture since the introduction of software opened up the digital world to architects. How have the new tools changed the way that architects design buildings and present their work to the public? How does the computer provide new tools that allow creating buildings that were previously impossible? What are the capabilities and limitations of architectural software?

Conference

As part of our research project supporting the exhibition, the museum will hold a one-day conference on October 11, 2019. We are seeking presentations that will focus on one of the four sections outlined above. We are interested in receiving contributions that either look at specific case studies roughly between the 1960s and today or papers that sketch out selected aspects pertaining to our chapters looking into the technical history (e.g. the history of computing and software or the history of CAD/CAM processes), the cultural background (e.g. digital theories and design philosophies) or an analysis following external methods of inquiry (e.g. gender theory, feminism, postcolonialism).

We strongly encourage emerging scholars from around the world to submit proposals on topics that have not been published widely. If interested, please submit a 500 word (max.) proposal including 1-3 images (max.). Please also indicate which of the four sections your proposal will be responding to.

The conference will be held at the Technical University (TUM) of Munich on October 11, 2019 and will be divided into two parts. The morning session, from 9:30 – 1 p.m., will include a workshop with authors commissioned to write for the exhibition catalogue and will be open to all conference speakers. The afternoon session, from 2 p.m. – 6 p.m., will be open to the public and include presentations submitted through this call for papers. Each presentation is not to exceed 20 minutes. Presentations should be held in English.

TUM will be able to assist speakers in finding accommodation and pay for a small stipend.

The deadline for submissions is May 24, 2019.

Please send your submission as a pdf to Teresa Fankhänel (head of the research project / curator of the exhibition): fankhaenel@architekturmuseum.de

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