



# COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA

DEL ORIGEN DE LA MODERNIDAD A LA ERA DIGITAL

eug

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JUAN CALATRAVA  
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(EDS.)

# **COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA**

del origen de la modernidad a la era digital

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INTRODUCCIÓN . . . . .	XXIII
Juan Calatrava, David Arredondo Garrido, Marta Rodríguez Iturriaga	

## TOMO I

### FOTOGRAFÍA, CINE, PUBLICIDAD: LA COMUNICACIÓN VISUAL

DOS PELÍCULAS SOBRE LA COMIDA Y LA CIUDAD . . . . .	29
Juliana Arboleda Kogson	
EL PAISAJE DE LA ESPAÑA MODERNA DEL <i>BOOM</i> DESARROLLISTA A TRAVÉS DE LAS TARJETAS POSTALES . . . . .	37
Cristina Arribas Sánchez	
CLOTHING, WOMEN, BUILDINGS. THE ARCHITECTURAL IMAGES IN FASHION MAGAZINES. . . . .	49
Chiara Baglione	
LA PLAZA (BAQUEDANO) EN LA CIUDAD (DE SANTIAGO DE CHILE) EN DIEZ FOTOGRAFÍAS: DISCURRIR DE UN IMAGINARIO URBANO A TRAVÉS DE SU REGISTRO VISUAL . . . . .	61
Pedro Bannen Lanata, José Rosas Vera	
ARQUITECTURA POPULAR Y PAISAJES SIMBÓLICOS: LA HUELLA DE FEDERICO GARCÍA LORCA EN EL CINE ESPAÑOL . . . . .	75
Paloma Baquero Masats, Juan Antonio Serrano García	
ESPACIO URBANO Y ARQUITECTURA EN LA REPRESENTACIÓN CINEMATOGRAFICA DE LA MARGINALIDAD COMO TEXTO MODELIZADOR DE LA CULTURA. UNA APROXIMACIÓN DESDE LA SEMIÓTICA DE LA CULTURA . . . . .	87
Diana Elena Barcelata Eguiarte, Andrea Marcovich Padlog	

<b>FILMS AS MANIFESTO. GIANCARLO DE CARLO AT THE X TRIENNALE OF MILAN . . . . .</b>	<b>101</b>
Gemma Belli	
<b>LAS CELOSÍAS DE LA ALHAMBRA: CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UNA IMAGEN . . . . .</b>	<b>113</b>
Bárbara Bravo-Ávila	
<b>TRANSITAR SOBRE EL TEJADO: HACIA NUEVOS IMAGINARIOS URBANOS A TRAVÉS DEL CINE. EL MEDITERRÁNEO Y BARCELONA . . . . .</b>	<b>125</b>
Marina Campomar Goroskieta, María Pía Fontan	
<b>ORIGEN Y DIAGNÓSTICO DEL <i>COLLAGE</i> POSTDIGITAL COMO EXPRESIÓN ARQUITECTÓNICA DE LA DIFERENCIA A INICIO DE LOS AÑOS 2000 . . . . .</b>	<b>137</b>
Alejandro R. Carrasco Hidalgo	
<b>FOTOGRAFÍA, ARQUITECTURA Y PATRIMONIO: CONSTANTIN UHDE Y LOS <i>MONUMENTOS ARQUITECTÓNICOS DE ESPAÑA (1888-1892)</i> . . . . .</b>	<b>151</b>
Miguel Ángel Chaves Martín	
<b>ESCRITORES Y DIBUJANTES VIAJEROS EN LOS REALES SITIOS. EL ESCORIAL EN LAS REVISTAS ILUSTRADAS ESPAÑOLAS Y FRANCESAS DEL SIGLO XIX . . . . .</b>	<b>163</b>
Pilar Chías Navarro, Tomás Abad Balboa, Lucas Fernández-Trapa	
<b>BUILDING THE IMAGE OF MODERNITY: THE INTERACTION BETWEEN URBAN ARCHITECTURE AND MONTAGE IN EARLY FILM THEORY AND PRACTICE . . . . .</b>	<b>175</b>
Bernardita M. Cubillos	
<b>UTOPIA IN ARCHITECTURE AND LITERATURE: WRITING IDEAL WORLDS . . . . .</b>	<b>191</b>
Jana Čulek	
<b>LA FORMA DE LA LUZ. PROYECTOS, IMÁGENES, RECUERDOS (S. XX-XXI) . . . . .</b>	<b>205</b>
Maria Grazia D'Amelio, Antonella Falzetti, Helena Pérez Gallardo	
<b>LA MIRADA SOBRE LA VIVIENDA COLECTIVA CONTEMPORÁNEA EN EL CINE: DE LA DISTOPÍA A LA REALIDAD SOCIAL. . . . .</b>	<b>217</b>
Rafael de Lacour, Ángel Ortega Carrasco	
<b>ESPACIO Y TIEMPO EN LA ADAPTACIÓN CINEMATOGRAFICA DE UNA OBRA LITERARIA. <i>SOLARIS, BLADE RUNNER Y 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY</i> . . . . .</b>	<b>229</b>
Juan Deltell Pastor	
<b>LA MURALLA ROJA. ENTRE EL ESPACIO REAL Y EL VIRTUAL . . . . .</b>	<b>243</b>
Daniel Díez Martínez	
<b>CRÓNICAS DE UN ARCHIVO LATENTE. LOLA ÁLVAREZ BRAVO: FOTÓGRAFA, TAMBIÉN, DE ARQUITECTURA . . . . .</b>	<b>257</b>
Alicia Fernández Barranco	
<b>ARCHITECTURE AND PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE MODERN ERA. THE ITALIAN SETTING BETWEEN THE TWO WARS (1920-1945) . . . . .</b>	<b>269</b>
Adele Fiadino	
<b>GEORGIA O'KEEFFE Y BERENICE ABBOTT: MIRADAS CRUZADAS DE NUEVA YORK . . . . .</b>	<b>281</b>
José Antonio Flores Soto, Laura Sánchez Carrasco	

<b>REALIDADES Y FICCIONES DEL SUEÑO AMERICANO: LA CASA PUBLICITADA EN EL SUBURBIO ESTADOUNIDENSE DE POSGUERRA</b> . . . . .	293
Estibaliz García Taboada, Javier Fernández Posadas	
<b>CARTOGRAFÍAS CINEMATOGRAFÍAS: LOS DESCAMPADOS DEL CINE QUINQUI</b> . . . . .	309
Ubaldo García Torrente	
<b>DOCUMENTOS DE ARQUITECTURA: PASIÓN POR DOCUMENTAR</b> . . . . .	321
José Ramón González González	
<b>COMUNICAR LA ARQUITECTURA MEDIANTE LA FOTOGRAFÍA: TRES MIRADAS SOBRE LA CASA URIACH</b> . . . . .	335
Arianna Iampieri	
<b>GRAND HOTEL ARCHITECTURE AS DEPICTED, PHOTOGRAPHED, AND FILMED IN THE CASE OF THE CIGA: COMPAGNIA ITALIANA DEI GRANDI ALBERGHI</b> . . . . .	349
Ewa Kawamura	
<b>THE IMAGINED AND THE LIVED: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF KOWLOON WALLED CITY IN CYBERPUNK SCIENCE FICTIONS AND HONG KONG URBAN CINEMA</b> . . . . .	361
Zhuozhang Li	
<b>PHOTOGRAPHED ARCHITECTURE: THE CASE OF THE VILLAGGIO MATTEOTTI IN TERNI BY GIANCARLO DE CARLO (1969-1975)</b> . . . . .	371
Andrea Maglio	
<b>LA REPRESENTACIÓN DEL ESPACIO URBANO A TRAVÉS DE LA FOTOGRAFÍA. ESTUDIO COMPARATIVO DE LA PLAZA MAYOR DE SALAMANCA, PIAZZA SORDELLO EN MANTUA Y MOUNTJOY SQUARE EN DUBLÍN</b> . . . . .	383
María Gilda Martino	
<b>STEEPED IN INFLUENCE: THE IMPACT OF TEA ADVERTISEMENTS ON BLACK URBAN DOMESTICITY IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS.</b> . . . .	393
Nokubekezela Mchunu	
<b>EXPLORING LANDSCAPES THROUGH VISUAL NARRATIVES: BETWEEN CARTOGRAPHY AND FIGURATIVENESS</b> . . . . .	407
Giulio Minuto	
<b>LA ARQUITECTURA COMO PASARELA DE MODA</b> . . . . .	421
Marta Muñoz	
<b>IMÁGENES QUE COMUNICAN Y SONRIÉN. EL HUMOR GRÁFICO EN LA ARQUITECTURA, DE LA CARICATURA AL MEME</b> . . . . .	431
Idoia Otegui Vicens	
<b>EL LUGAR COMO GENERADOR DE LA IMAGEN: EL <i>STREET ART</i> COMO PATRIMONIO DE LA CIUDAD</b> . . .	443
Larissa Patron Chaves, Bernardino Líndez Vílchez	
<b>LO SINIESTRO EN EL ESPACIO DOMÉSTICO. ENCUADRES Y RELACIONES VISUALES EN LA CREACIÓN DE NARRATIVAS DE SUSPENSE</b> . . . . .	455
Aina Roca Mora, Maria Pia Fontana, Juan Deltell Pastor	
<b>GAUDÍ BAJO EL ENCUADRE: LINTERNA MÁGICA, <i>FOTOSCOPI</i>, CINE DOCUMENTAL</b> . . . . .	469
Carmen Rodríguez Pedret	

<b>ROBERTO PANE Y EL PAPEL DE LA FOTOGRAFÍA COMO HERRAMIENTA DE INVESTIGACIÓN CRÍTICA E HISTORIOGRÁFICA</b> .....	483
Raffaella Russo Spena	
<b>EL MENSAJE DE LOS PREMIOS PRITZKER: DISCURSO OFICIAL Y REACCIONES CRÍTICAS</b> .....	493
Laura Sánchez Carrasco, José Antonio Flores Soto	
<b>ENTRE PLANOS. LA ESCALERA EN LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DEL IMAGINARIO ARQUITECTÓNICO A TRAVÉS DEL CINE</b> .....	507
Juan Antonio Serrano García, Paloma Baquero Masats	
<b>DIAPHANOUS WHITE. THE INDUSTRIAL GARDEN CITY OF ROSIGNANO SOLVAY THROUGH THE COLORS AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY MASSIMO VITALI</b> .....	521
Chiara Simoncini, Giulia Gabriella Sagarriga Visconti	
<b>CHILE EN <i>HOGAR Y ARQUITECTURA</i>, 1970. SERIES FOTOGRÁFICAS DE PATRICIO GUZMÁN CAMPOS SOBRE LA OBRA DE SUÁREZ, BERMEJO Y BORCHERS</b> .....	533
Andrés Téllez Tavera	
<b>ITALIAN SKYSCAPERS IN THE CINEMA DURING THE PERIOD OF ECONOMIC BOOM</b> .....	547
Annarita Teodosio	
<b>THE SPLENDOR (AND THE <i>SHINING</i>) OF SPACE: COMMUNICATION AND ARCHITECTURE AS STORYLINE CATALYSTS IN KUBRICK'S WORK</b> .....	559
Manuel Viñas Limonchi, Antonio Estepa Rubio	
 <b>CONSERVAR, ORDENAR, DIFUNDIR: ARCHIVOS, MUSEOS Y EXPOSICIONES</b>	
<b>OPEN-AIR MUSEUMS IN BORNEO AND THE DIALECTIC OF VERNACULAR FORM</b> .....	575
Azmah Arzmi	
<b>PRESERVING/SHARING/COMMUNICATING 20TH-CENTURY ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE: THE CASE OF THE IACP-NAPLES ARCHIVES.</b> .....	587
Paola Ascione, Carolina De Falco	
<b>COMMUNICATING MUSEUM ARCHITECTURE: THE ROLE OF EUROPEANA COLLECTIONS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF ARCHITECTURAL MEMORY</b> .....	599
Helena Barranha, Isabel Guedes	
<b>TRAS LOS REGISTROS DEL CONCURSO DEL PLATEAU BEAUBOURG</b> .....	609
M. Fernanda Barrera Rubio Hernández	
<b>CATEGORIZACIÓN DEL <i>MELLAH</i> EN MARRUECOS</b> .....	621
Julio Calvo Serrano, Carlos Malagón Luesma, Adelaida Martín Martín	
<b>SOBREEXPOSICIÓN. EL MITO DE LA ARQUITECTURA CHILENA CONTEMPORÁNEA Y SUS ESTRATEGIAS DE CIRCULACIÓN</b> .....	633
Felipe Corvalán Tapia	

<b>ARCHITECTURE FILM FESTIVALS: AUDIOVISUAL NARRATIVES, PROTAGONISM AND ACTIVISM IN CONTEMPORARY URBAN SPACE</b> .....	645
Liz da Costa Sandoval, Tania Siqueira Montoro	
<b>TURÍN 1926: LA MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE DI EDILIZIA, LA NARRACIÓN DEL CAMBIO</b> .....	657
Annalisa Dameri	
<b>ECOLOGÍAS PRODUCTIVAS: HIBRIDACIONES ENTRE LO RURAL Y LO URBANO A TRAVÉS DE TRES EXPOSICIONES RECIENTES</b> .....	669
Eduardo de Nó Santos	
<b>UNA RECOPIACIÓN DE LOS PROYECTOS DEL GRUPO NORTE DEL GATEPAC (1930-1936)</b> .....	681
Lauren Etxepare Igiñiz, Leire Azcona Uribe, Eneko Jokin Uranga Santamaria	
<b>PRODUCTIVE ARCHIVES AND ARCHITECTURAL MEMORY</b> .....	691
Michael Andrés Forero Parra	
<b>“ABOUT THE STYLE AND NOTHING BUT THE STYLE”: EL ESTILO INTERNACIONAL Y LA MODERN ARCHITECTURE: INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION DE 1932</b> .....	701
Daniel Gómez Magide	
<b>BRASIL CONSTRUYE. LA ARQUITECTURA MODERNA COMO ICONO IDENTITARIO DE BRASIL, 1943-1957</b> .....	715
Ramón Gutiérrez, Ana Esteban Maluenda	
<b>URBAN CONCERNS IN CURATORIAL ASSEMBLAGES: AN INQUIRY INTO DESINGEL'S ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME AROUND THE 1990S</b> .....	731
Alice Haddad	
<b>LA PRODUCCIÓN PLANIMÉTRICA DE LEOPOLDO TORRES BALBÁS COMO ARQUITECTO CONSERVADOR DE LA ALHAMBRA. RESTAURACIÓN DE LA COLECCIÓN TRAS EL CONOCIMIENTO DE SUS MATERIALES</b> .....	747
Rafael Lorente Fernández, Ana M <sup>a</sup> López Montes, M <sup>a</sup> Rosario Blanc García	
<b>LA MEMORIA VIRTUAL: DOCUMENTACIÓN Y HERRAMIENTAS DIGITALES DE TRATAMIENTO Y DIFUSIÓN</b> .....	761
Jorge G. Molinero-Sánchez, Concepción Rodríguez-Moreno, María del Carmen Vílchez-Lara	
<b>DEL ARCHIVO DIGITAL AL ARCHIVO FÍSICO. LA EXPERIENCIA DEL ARCHIVO DIGITAL DE ARQUITECTURA MODERNA DEL ECUADOR</b> .....	773
Shayarina Monard-Arciniegas	
<b>ANÁLISIS DE ESTRATEGIAS CURATORIALES POR MANUEL BLANCO. MOSTRAR ARQUITECTURA PARA COMUNICAR</b> .....	787
Héctor Navarro Martínez	
<b>THE SERGIO MUSMECI ARCHIVE AS A KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HIS FORM FINDING</b> .....	801
Matteo Ocone	
<b>COMMUNICATING THE CONTEMPORARY CITY. PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES IN A PARTICIPATORY PERSPECTIVE</b> .....	811
Serena Orlandi	

<b>"MUSEOS" DE ARQUITECTURA: UNA COLECCIÓN DE IDEAS . . . . .</b>	<b>825</b>
Nuria Ortigosa	
<b>LA APLICACIÓN NAM (NAVEGANDO ARQUITECTURAS DE MUJER): RETOS Y OPORTUNIDADES DE UNA HERRAMIENTA BIDIRECCIONAL PARA LA INVESTIGACIÓN Y TRANSFERENCIA DE CONOCIMIENTO . . . . .</b>	<b>835</b>
José Parra-Martínez, Ana Gilsanz-Díaz, María-Elia Gutiérrez Mozo	
<b>VENECIA, 1976: LA BIENNALE ROSSA DEL PABELLÓN ESPAÑOL. UNA COMPROMETIDA EXPOSICIÓN INTERDISCIPLINAR, FINALMENTE "SIN" ARQUITECTURA . . . . .</b>	<b>847</b>
Antonio Pizza	
<b>ENTENDIENDO LOS PAISAJES DE DESIGUALDAD URBANA. ENFOQUES, MÉTODOS E INSTRUMENTOS PARA UN ATLAS OPERATIVO ESTRATÉGICO PARA EL SUR DE MADRID . . . . .</b>	<b>859</b>
Alba Rodríguez Illanes, Miguel Y. Mayorga Cárdenas	
<b>"ASÍ VIVE EL CAMPESINO ESPAÑOL": RECONSTRUCCIÓN, HIGIENIZACIÓN Y PROPAGANDA EN LA EXPOSICIÓN NACIONAL DE LA VIVIENDA RURAL (1939) . . . . .</b>	<b>873</b>
Marta Rodríguez Iturriaga	
<b>LOS BARDI Y EL MUSEO DE ARTE DE SÃO PAULO: TRANSFUSIONES MUSEOGRÁFICAS ENTRE LO POPULAR Y LO ERUDITO, LA CALLE Y EL MUSEO. . . . .</b>	<b>889</b>
Mara Sánchez Llorens	
<b>EXPONER ARQUITECTURA. LA EXPERIENCIA DEL MUSEO MAXXI DE ROMA . . . . .</b>	<b>901</b>
Elena Tinacci	
<b>URBAN STORYLINES OF CON-TEMPORARY MURALS IN MINOR ARCHITECTURES . . . . .</b>	<b>913</b>
Luca Zecchin	

## TOMO II

### REVISTAS, LIBROS, TEXTOS: LA COMUNICACIÓN ESCRITA

<b>CRÍTICA Y DIFUSIÓN DE LOS TRABAJOS DE RESTAURACIÓN DEL ARQUITECTO LEOPOLDO TORRES BALBÁS EN LA ALHAMBRA A TRAVÉS DE SUS PUBLICACIONES . . . . .</b>	<b>927</b>
Fernando Acale Sánchez	
<b>EL MANIFIESTO DE LA ALHAMBRA YA ESTABA ESCRITO. LA ARQUITECTURA ESPAÑOLA EN DEUTSCHE BAUZEITUNG (1915-1920) . . . . .</b>	<b>939</b>
Pablo Arza Garaloces, José Manuel Pozo Municio	
<b>BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS IN 17<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY LONDON . . . . .</b>	<b>953</b>
Gregorio Astengo	
<b>LA REVISTA HERMES (1917-1922) Y LA NUEVA IMAGEN DE LO VASCO. DEL CASERÍO AL CHALÉ NEOVASCO . . . . .</b>	<b>967</b>
Ana Azpiri Albistegui	

<b>FOR A REFOUNDATION OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE: <i>METRON</i> IN THE FIRST YEARS (1945-1948) . .</b>	979
Guia Baratelli	
<b>LA REVISTA <i>ARQUITECTURA</i> Y EL DEBATE TEÓRICO EN UN PERIODO DE DESCONCIERTO (1918-1933): LA APORTACIÓN DE LEOPOLDO TORRES BALBÁS . . . . .</b>	997
Juan Manuel Barrios Rozúa	
<b>LA GUÍA DE ARQUITECTURA MODERNA ANTES DE 1951: TRES PUBLICACIONES PIONERAS . . . . .</b>	1009
Ángel Camacho Pina	
<b>RONDA, VISIONES DE UNA CIUDAD Y SU ARQUITECTURA POR CRONISTAS Y VIAJEROS (SIGLO XII AL XIX) . . . . .</b>	1023
Ciro de la Torre Fragoso	
<b><i>FABRICATIONS</i>. 35 AÑOS DE LA REVISTA DE LA SOCIEDAD DE HISTORIADORES DE LA ARQUITECTURA DE AUSTRALIA Y NUEVA ZELANDA (1989-2024) . . . . .</b>	1035
Macarena de la Vega de León	
<b>LA VIVIENDA SOCIAL ANDALUZA DE LA SEGUNDA MITAD DEL SIGLO XX EN LAS REVISTAS DE <i>ARQUITECTURA</i> . . . . .</b>	1045
Rafael de Lacour, Alba Maldonado Gea, Ángel Ortega Carrasco	
<b>RESACA MODERNA: LA TRANSCRIPCIÓN DEL “AFTER MODERN ARCHITECTURE DEBATE” PARA LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UN CORPUS TEÓRICO ESPAÑOL . . . . .</b>	1057
Jorge Díez Estellés, Pablo Marqués Otero, Raúl Castellanos Gómez	
<b>THE DIFFUSION OF ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE THROUGH TREATISES AND MANUALS ON THE ART OF BUILDING IN DENMARK BETWEEN THE 18TH AND 19TH CENTURIES . . . . .</b>	1069
Monica Esposito	
<b>HISTORIAS GRÁFICAS: “EL ALOJAMIENTO MODERNO EN ESPAÑA” DE FOCHO . . . . .</b>	1083
Héctor García-Diego Villarías, Jorge Tárrago Mingo, María Villanueva Fernández	
<b>VISIONES CRUZADAS: HACIA NUEVAS PERSPECTIVAS DISCIPLINARES EN LA COMUNICACIÓN DE <i>ARQUITECTURA</i> (1959-1973) . . . . .</b>	1095
Eva Gil Donoso	
<b>LAS PRIMERAS MICROESCUELAS DE RAFAEL DE LA HOZ. ARTÍCULOS EN PRENSA 1958-1959 . . . . .</b>	1109
Alejandro Gómez García	
<b><i>PIVOTAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF UNSEEN EVENTS</i>: FIVE ARCHITECTURAL NARRATIVES FROM UNITED STATES HISTORY, 1871-2020 . . . . .</b>	1121
Irene Hwang	
<b><i>HOUSE BEAUTIFUL</i>: INTRODUCING AMERICAN WOMEN TO THE WORLD . . . . .</b>	1131
Kathleen James-Chakraborty	
<b>A BERLIN CATALOGUE. A REPERTOIRE OF ARCHITECTURAL FIGURES FROM MICHAEL SCHMIDT’S PHOTOBOOKS . . . . .</b>	1141
Marco Lecis	
<b>EL SOPORTE PAPEL Y LO DIGITAL. DESVELANDO LA VIDA Y OBRA ARQUITECTÓNICA DE MILAGROS REY HOMBRE . . . . .</b>	1153
Cándido López González, María Carreiro Otero	

<b>LAS PIRÁMIDES DESPUÉS DE LE CORBUSIER. <i>THE NEW ARCHITECTURE IN MEXICO</i> DE ESTHER BORN, 1937</b> . . . . .	1165
Cristina López Uribe	
<b>THE ROLE OF ILLUSTRATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE EARLY MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY</b> . . . . .	1183
Fabio Mangone	
<b>SINERGIAS Y DIVERGENCIAS: LA REPRESENTACIÓN DE LA ARQUITECTURA BARCELONESA EN <i>ILUSTRACIÓ CATALANA Y ARQUITECTURA Y CONSTRUCCIÓN</i> (1897-1908)</b> . . . . .	1191
Pilar Morán-García	
<b>THE HERALD OF A NEW WORLD. ALDO ROSSI AND <i>THE ADVENTURES OF PINOCCHIO</i>: AN ARCHITECTURAL THEORY</b> . . . . .	1205
Vincenzo Moschetti	
<b>DEL <i>LIKE</i> AL <i>BYTE</i> PARA LLEGAR A LO “ECO”: LAS REDES SOCIALES COMO <i>INFLUENCERS</i> DE OTRA ARQUITECTURA EN LA ERA DIGITAL</b> . . . . .	1219
Francisco Felipe Muñoz Carabias	
<b>REVISTAS COLEGIALES DEL COAM (ESPAÑA) Y EL COARQ (CHILE). DE BOLETINES GREMIALES A ENTORNOS DE PUBLICACIONES</b> . . . . .	1229
Gonzalo Muñoz Vera, Paz Núñez-Martí, Roberto Goycoolea Prado	
<b>A THICK MAGAZINE: MANUEL GRAÇA DIAS' <i>JORNAL ARQUITECTOS</i> AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CULTURALIST ARCHITECT</b> . . . . .	1243
Vitor Manuel Oliveira Alves	
<b>ANÁLISIS COMUNICATIVO DEL LIBRO <i>PLUS</i> DE FRÉDÉRIC DRUOT, ANNE LACATON &amp; JEAN-PHILIPPE VASSAL</b> . . . . .	1257
Ángel Ortega Carrasco, Rafael de Lacour	
<b>LA EXTRAÑA PARADOJA: LAS REVISTAS GARANTES DE LA VERDAD</b> . . . . .	1271
José Manuel Pozo Municio	
<b>CUANDO LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UNA CIUDAD PASA POR LAS PÁGINAS DE UN PERIÓDICO: <i>LA CIUDAD LINEAL. REVISTA DE URBANIZACIÓN, INGENIERÍA, HIGIENE Y AGRICULTURA</i></b> . . . . .	1285
Alice Pozzati	
<b>LA DIVULGACIÓN Y ANÁLISIS DE LA ARQUITECTURA HABITACIONAL FUNCIONALISTA A TRAVÉS DE <i>ESPACIOS. REVISTA INTEGRAL DE ARQUITECTURA Y ARTES PLÁSTICAS EN MÉXICO, 1948-1957</i></b> . . . . .	1301
Claudia Rodríguez Espinosa, Erika Elizabeth Pérez Múzquiz	
<b>DISCURSOS PATRIMONIALES EN LA REVISTA <i>ARQUITECTURA</i> Y LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UN RELATO HISTÓRICO NACIONAL</b> . . . . .	1313
Elina Rodríguez Massobrio	
<b>THE MAKING OF ARCHITECTURAL IMAGERY IN THE AGE OF UNCERTAINTY AND DISEMBEDDING</b> . . . . .	1329
Ugo Rossi	
<b>ARCHITECTS AND THE LAY PUBLIC IN AN AGE OF DISILLUSIONMENT: SOME NOTES ON ACTIVISM, SATIRE AND SELF-CRITICISM IN BRITISH ARCHITECTURAL PUBLISHING</b> . . . . .	1341
Michela Rosso	

<b>ESCAPARATE PÚBLICO DE UNA NUEVA ARQUITECTURA. LA COMUNICACIÓN DE LAS EXPOSICIONES UNIVERSALES . . . . .</b>	<b>1357</b>
Alberto Ruiz Colmenar, Beatriz S. González-Jiménez	
<b>GEOMETRÍA, UNA REVISTA PARA COMUNICAR EL URBANISMO DE LOS ARQUITECTOS . . . . .</b>	<b>1369</b>
Victoriano Sainz Gutiérrez	
<b>ESTADOS UNIDOS EN LOS BOLETINES DE ARQUITECTURA ESPAÑOLES. 1945-1960 . . . . .</b>	<b>1381</b>
María del Pilar Salazar Lozano	
<b>ARQUITECTURA Y ANSIEDAD EN LA OBRA DE ISAAC ASIMOV . . . . .</b>	<b>1393</b>
Mario Sánchez Samos	
<b>MIES Y EL PERIÓDICO <i>TRANSFER</i> . . . . .</b>	<b>1407</b>
Rafael Sánchez Sánchez	
<b>FROM DOMESTIC INTERIORS TO NATIONAL PLATFORMS. MODERN ARCHITECTURE AND INDIAN WOMANHOOD IN THE <i>INDIAN LADIES' MAGAZINE</i> . . . . .</b>	<b>1417</b>
Pooja Sastry	
<b>COMMUNICATING THE WELFARE ARCHITECTURE FOR WOMAN AND CHILD IN FASCIST ITALY . . . . .</b>	<b>1427</b>
Massimiliano Savorra	
<b>MOBILIARIO Y DISEÑO INTERIOR EN EL MÉXICO MODERNO EN TIEMPO REAL: LAS PUBLICACIONES ESPECIALIZADAS EN LA PRIMERA MITAD DEL SIGLO XX . . . . .</b>	<b>1441</b>
Silvia Segarra Lagunes	
<b><i>SUN AND SHADOW</i> Y LA TRANSICIÓN DEL PROGRAMA DOMÉSTICO A LA OBRA MONUMENTAL DE MARCEL BREUER . . . . .</b>	<b>1453</b>
Erica Sogbe	
<b>EL REGISTRO FOTOGRÁFICO DEL <i>PLAYGROUND</i> COMO CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LOS IMAGINARIOS MODERNOS DE ESPACIOS DE JUEGO URBANOS . . . . .</b>	<b>1463</b>
Nicolás Stutzin Donoso	
<b><i>LES PROMENADES ET LE PAYSAN DE PARIS</i>. EL PARQUE DE BUTTES-CHAUMONT ENTRE LA LÍRICA Y LA TÉCNICA . . . . .</b>	<b>1471</b>
Diego Toribio Álvarez	
<b>EL PROYECTO URBANO EN LAS PUBLICACIONES DE ARQUITECTURA EN CHILE: UNA SECUENCIA ANALÍTICA (1930-1980) . . . . .</b>	<b>1483</b>
Horacio Enrique Torrent	
<b>LE CORBUSIER, 1933. UN LIBRO Y UNA <i>CRUZADA</i> CONTRA LA ACADEMIA . . . . .</b>	<b>1495</b>
Jorge Torres Cueco	
<b>OTRA <i>ARQUITECTURAS BIS</i>: LA APORTACIÓN CRÍTICA DE MADRID . . . . .</b>	<b>1511</b>
Alejandro Valdivieso	
<b>LA ARQUITECTURA DEL CONOCIMIENTO . . . . .</b>	<b>1523</b>
Ruth Varela	
<b>LA CASA EN EL MAR Y EL JARDÍN: LA COLABORACIÓN DE LINA BO EN EL DEBATE PROPUESTO EN LA REVISTA <i>DOMUS</i> DE 1940 . . . . .</b>	<b>1535</b>
Carla Zollinger, Eva Álvarez, Carlos Gómez	

## LA ARQUITECTURA EN LA ERA DE LA COMUNICACIÓN DIGITAL

<b>LA DIFUSIÓN DE LA ARQUITECTURA EN LA ERA DE LA POST-FOTOGRAFÍA: EXCESO Y ACCESO . . . .</b>	1547
Luisa Alarcón González, Mar Hernández Alarcón	
<b>UNA MIRADA DESDE EL METAVERSO A LA CIUDAD . . . . .</b>	1557
Mónica Alcindor, Alejandro López	
<b>MANIERISMO <i>ON STEROIDS</i>: REFLEXIONES EN TORNO A LOS PROCESOS CREATIVOS EN LA ERA DE LA COMUNICACIÓN DIGITAL . . . . .</b>	1565
Serafina Amoroso	
<b>APLICACIONES DE LA INTELIGENCIA ARTIFICIAL EN ARQUITECTURA. CLASIFICACIÓN Y ANÁLISIS DE OBRA EN LA ERA DIGITAL . . . . .</b>	1577
Guido Cimadomo, Vishal Shahdarpuri Aswani, Jorge Yeregui Tejedor	
<b>FROM PHYSICAL TO DIGITAL: THE IMPACT OF TWENTY YEARS OF WEB 2.0 ON ARCHITECTURE . . . . .</b>	1587
Giuseppe Gallo	
<b>NIKOLAUS PEVSNER EN LA BBC: LA COMUNICACIÓN ORAL DE LA HISTORIA DEL ARTE Y LA ARQUITECTURA . . . . .</b>	1599
David García-Asenjo Llana, María Pura Moreno Moreno	
<b><i>CREAFAB APP</i>: HERRAMIENTA DIGITAL PARA LA INVESTIGACIÓN Y GESTIÓN DE PROCESOS DE REINDUSTRIALIZACIÓN CREATIVA EN CIUDADES HISTÓRICAS . . . . .</b>	1613
Francisco M. Hidalgo-Sánchez, Safiya Tabali, María F. Carrascal-Pérez	
<b>REPRESENTACIÓN Y DIFUSIÓN DIGITAL DEL PATRIMONIO MONÁSTICO: EL PROYECTO <i>DIGITAL SAMOS</i> . . . . .</b>	1627
Estefanía López Salas	
<b>ARQUITECTURA PARA REDES O ARQUITECTURA PARA LA VIDA . . . . .</b>	1639
Ángela Marruecos Pérez	
<b>ENSEÑAR EL PROYECTO (Y TRANSFORMAR LA CIUDAD) EN LA ERA DE LA COMUNICACIÓN DIGITAL</b>	1649
Paolo Mellano	
<b>REVISTAS DE ARQUITECTURA LATINOAMERICANAS: EXPERIENCIAS Y RESULTADOS DE ARLA . . . .</b>	1661
Patricia Méndez	
<b>LA MUTACIÓN DEL DIBUJO PLANO A LA REALIDAD AUMENTADA. UNA NUEVA FORMA DE COMUNICAR EL ESPACIO Y SU CONSTRUCCIÓN EN LA ARQUITECTURA . . . . .</b>	1673
Alejandro Muñoz Miranda	
<b>¿INVESTIGACIÓN O ACTIVISMO? EL CASO DEL <i>MAPA INTERACTIVO DIGITAL DE ARQUITECTURAS IDEADAS POR MUJERES EN ESPAÑA, 1965-2000</i> . . . . .</b>	1683
Lucía C. Pérez Moreno, David Delgado Baudet, Laura Ruiz-Morote Tramblin	

# ***House Beautiful: Introducing American Women to the World***

*House Beautiful*: presentando a las mujeres americanas al mundo

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## **Abstract**

La primera revista especializada en arquitectura doméstica, artes decorativas y jardinería, *House Beautiful*, comienza sus publicaciones en 1896. En ellas, presentan a sus lectoras los nuevos enfoques de la arquitectura doméstica, que hasta la fecha solían publicarse en revistas académicas estadounidenses dirigidas a un público principalmente masculino y con formación específica en la materia. Entre 1896 y 1920, la mayor parte de los artículos, muchos de ellos escritos por mujeres, defendían los estilos más tradicionales, como los neocolonialismos; no obstante, era habitual la publicación periódica de artículos sobre las novedades de los estilos más innovadores y reformistas, como el movimiento Arts & Crafts; la editora, Ethel Power, antes de la celebración de la exhibición en el Museo de Arte Moderno de Nueva York de 1932, ya defendía en sus artículos novedades como el estilo internacional y apoyaba la construcción prefabricada. Es importante valorar este tipo de revistas especializadas como una herramienta fundamental para que las mujeres, fuera cual fuese su formación en arquitectura, pudieran acceder a las novedades que, hasta la fecha, se divulgaban únicamente por y para un público masculino, y, por lo tanto, no valoraban todas las innovaciones, perspectivas y progresos.

The first shelter magazine, *House Beautiful*, which began publication in 1896, introduced its largely female readership to a range of innovative approaches to architecture, typically before they appeared in journals published in the United States that targeted architects. Between 1896 and 1920, most of its writers, many of whom were also women, championed the Colonial Revival and other conventional styles, but the magazine also consistently published the work of Arts and Crafts reformers. Editor Ethel Power later featured the International Style well in advance of the exhibition held in 1932 at New York's Museum of Modern Art and later yet championed prefabricated construction. The role of well-informed female consumers as well as the women who wrote for them thus needs to be taken into account in histories that too often only privilege male architects and architectural critics in their accounts of taste formation and the dissemination of new styles.

## **Keywords**

Prensa arquitectónica, revista de decoración del hogar, mujeres en arquitectura, crítica arquitectónica

Architectural publishing, shelter press, women in architecture, architectural criticism

## Introduction

*House Beautiful*, established in 1896, was the first shelter magazine, that is a publication that focused on introducing readers, most of whom were women, to new ideas regarding architecture, interior design, and gardening. Its audience, in other words, primarily comprised the consumers rather than producers of domestic architecture and closely related fields. Its role under the editorship of Elizabeth Gordon, at the helm from 1941 to 1964, in shaping the taste for particular strands of modern architecture in the United States has been closely examined by Alice Friedman and Monica Penick.<sup>1</sup> Less attention has been paid, however, to the ways in which its previous coverage balanced attention to both international trends and to what its editors saw as national tradition. The degree to which it empowered middle-class and wealthy American women to make informed choices about the appearance of the environments in which they lived has also been overlooked. The first journal to publish the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, and to introduce American readers to that of Henry van de Velde, it was also at the forefront – well ahead of the Museum of Modern Art – in alerting readers in the United States to what became known as the International Style.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, its educational mission encompassed teaching its readers about the historic and contemporary crafts traditions of places as diverse as Mexico and Iran. Understanding the role *House Beautiful* played in American architectural culture before 1941, when Gordon took over, enables us to reconstruct the degree to which American women, including the many who wrote for it and whose designs appeared in its pages, as well as those who read it had agency in relation to what was at the time the almost exclusively male profession of architecture. It also enables us to understand the degree to which this agency made them citizens of the world, often before they acquired the right to vote.<sup>3</sup> It thus also challenges the idea that modern architecture migrated along lines defined largely by the travels of male architects and the publication and exhibition of their work in venues that largely targeted other architects. Although the access to information *House Beautiful* offered middle-class and wealthy women in the United States happened from within the frame of capitalist consumer culture, and although the editors largely targeted fellow white readers, the division between editorial and advertising content was often quite apparent, and the image of domesticity presented in its pages proved to have more widespread appeal. Historians of architecture have

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<sup>1</sup> This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement No 101019419). I thank Kate Buckley for her editorial and research assistance. Alice Friedman, *Women and the Making of the Modern House* (New York: Abrams, 1998); Monica Penick, *Elizabeth Gordon, House Beautiful and the American Home* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017). See also H. Allen Brooks, *The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and His Midwest Contemporaries* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), 23-24, 294.

<sup>2</sup> "Successful Homes III", *House Beautiful* 1 (1897): 64-69; and V. C. "A Simple Dining Room", *House Beautiful* 3 (1898): 96-97.

<sup>3</sup> The Nineteenth Amendment to the United States constitution, which granted women the right to vote, was adopted in 1920. Before its passage women enjoyed full suffrage in only fifteen of the then forty-eight states. New York was the only one of these on the East Coast.

long focused on journals that targeted architects.<sup>4</sup> The earliest of these were established in the middle of the nineteenth century. The oldest such journal published in the United States is *American Architect and Building News*, which began publication in 1896. In particular, Beatriz Colomina's influential argument equating modern architecture and mass culture has spurred a renewed attention to these often easily accessible sources.<sup>5</sup> I have argued elsewhere for the importance as well of newspapers, including women's pages, as offering valuable information about how a literate public was informed about architecture.<sup>6</sup> Between these two, the first addressing professionals and the second an often very general public, the shelter press emerged in many countries in the twentieth century as a robust publishing sector. This vibrant sector targeted women who could afford to make decisions about the decoration and furnishing of their houses and who were also interested in keeping abreast of trends in domestic architecture and eager for information about gardening, although because it was widely available in public libraries, many readers may only have aspired to be able to afford the houses, interiors, and gardens illustrated and discussed in its pages.

### Women Readers, Writers, and Editors

Published originally in Chicago, and from 1910 to 1933 in Boston, before it was bought by the Hearst publishing conglomerate, which moved its offices to New York, *House Beautiful* was founded in a golden age of magazine publishing in the United States. As the literary critic Richard Ohmann has described, editors were basically selling to advertisers the attention of their readers, not yet diverted by radio, cinema, television or the internet.<sup>7</sup> Readers, many of them members of a rapidly expanding middle class residing in small towns and cities across the country, were from the beginning disproportionately female at a time when most women did not work outside the home and in which many magazine readers were able to afford household help. Indeed, magazines targeted specifically at women, which began to be published in the United States already in the middle of the nineteenth century, already dominated the country's list of best-selling titles when *House Beautiful* began publication.<sup>8</sup> While it is not clear whether *House Beautiful* was intended from the start to have a largely female readership, within less than a decade it was clear that women were playing a major role in writing for as well as reading the magazine.

The prominence women quickly assumed among contributors to *House Beautiful* is hardly surprising as journalism was one of the professions, alongside teaching, nursing, and

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<sup>4</sup> Vincent Scully, *The Shingle Style and the Stick Style: Architectural Theory and Design from Richardson to the origins of Wright* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), is an early and excellent example.

<sup>5</sup> Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> Kathleen James-Chakraborty, "Architecture, Its Histories, and their Audiences", *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 77 (2018): 397-405.

<sup>7</sup> Richard Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Verso, 1996).

<sup>8</sup> Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *A History of Popular Women's Magazines in the United States, 1792-1995* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1998).

librarianship, that was most open to middle-class women in the United States already at the time the magazine was founded.<sup>9</sup> One of the early female contributors to the magazine was Harriet Monroe. Before she established *Poetry* magazine in 1912 and made a prominent contribution to the history of American literature, Monroe supported herself writing as often about architecture as literature.<sup>10</sup> She was the sister-in-law as well as the biographer of John Wellborn Root, one of Chicago's most important architects before his premature death in 1891.<sup>11</sup> Another was Lucy Fitch Perkins.<sup>12</sup> The wife of architect Dwight Perkins, she later became a children's book author, renowned for her series of books on twins from around the world. Other notable women who wrote for *House Beautiful* in its early years include Candace Wheeler, the first woman to support herself in the United States as an interior decorator, and the English landscape gardener Gertrude Jekyll.<sup>13</sup> In her article "A Successful House in England," Jekyll focused on the garden of Orchards, mentioning only in the final sentence that the house was the breakthrough work of Edwin Landseer Lutyens.<sup>14</sup> The young architect had already designed Munstead Wood for Jekyll, but he was not named when it was published in *House Beautiful* in 1901.<sup>15</sup>

For all but seven years between 1913 and 1969, women edited *House Beautiful*. These included Ethel Power as well as Gordon. Power's tenure stretched from 1923 to 1933, although she continued to write for it until 1937. Power, who had campaigned for women's suffrage, also highlighted women's contributions as architects and landscape architects, paying particular attention to fellow graduates of the all-female Cambridge School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, as well as to women like the architect Lois Howe, who were already based in the Boston area. But already long before she took over, the magazine was advertising the design services of Chicago women such as Ida Burgess and Alice Neale, who took out advertisements in the inaugural issue.<sup>16</sup>

### Upholding Convention versus Introducing Innovation

Not surprisingly, considering the importance of selling a fairly substantial number of copies each month (in the early 1930s circulation topped 100,000, with the total number of readers

<sup>9</sup> Brooke Kroeger, *Undaunted: How Women Changed American Journalism* (New York: Knopf, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> For instance, Harriet Monroe, "A Successful House", *House Beautiful* 6 (1899): 266-275; Harriet Monroe, "A House for all the year", *House Beautiful* 14 (1903) 327-332.

<sup>11</sup> Harriet Monroe, *John Wellborn Root: A Study of His Life and Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1896).

<sup>12</sup> Lucy Fitch Perkins, "On Seeing Pictures", *House Beautiful* 1 (1897): 113-130.

<sup>13</sup> Candace Wheeler, "The Art of Stitchery", *House Beautiful* 5 (1899): 195-199. For more on Wheeler see Amelia Peck and Carol Irish, *Candace Wheeler: The Art and Enterprise of American Design, 1875-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

<sup>14</sup> Gertrude Jekyll, "A Successful House in England", *House Beautiful* 13 (1903): 151-160. See also Jane Brown, *Gardens of a Golden Afternoon. The Story of a Partnership: Edwin Lutyens and Gertrude Jekyll* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1982).

<sup>15</sup> "Munstead House", *House Beautiful* 9 (1901): 177-182.

<sup>16</sup> *House Beautiful* 1 (1896): VI, XI.

probably considerably higher), much of *House Beautiful's* coverage was quite conventional.<sup>17</sup> Between 1896 and at least 1940, the focus was often on the Colonial Revival, and quite specifically upon houses built in New England in the eighteenth century as establishing the most useful precedent for modern free-standing suburban dwellings, although late medieval and Tudor styles were also common during the 1910s as were bungalows. Larger mansions, undoubtedly beyond the reach of most subscribers, also featured regularly, but so did urban apartments and far more modest dwellings affordable by almost all of the middle class.<sup>18</sup> Nor was the emphasis entirely on new buildings or indeed furnishings. Bringing a historic structure, especially a pre-industrial New England farmhouse, back to life was a reoccurring topic, as was altering a Victorian dwelling to suit modern tastes, usually by making it appear older than it actually was.<sup>19</sup> Educating the readership in the history of the European furnishings they could possibly buy on the antiques market or view in museums, helped create a market as well for reproductions that were more affordable than the originals. Moreover, the antique business was perceived to be particularly appropriate for women.<sup>20</sup> Yet although readers were presumed to be white, as African Americans and members of other minority groups did not feature in editorial content or even advertisements, coverage of the decorative arts in particular was by no means limited to Western cultures. Chinese export porcelain and "oriental rugs," as well as Mexican and Native American contemporary crafts were all examined as well, as to a lesser degree was East Asian architecture.<sup>21</sup> Finally, there was also extensive coverage of gardening.

I have written elsewhere about the degree to which Power ensured that her readers were well informed about the International Style well before two of her authors, Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson, were involved in the organization of the 1932 exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York often credited with introducing it in the United States.<sup>22</sup> Here I would like to focus instead on the range of more innovative designs featured in the magazine across its first two decades and the degree to which it continued to engage the new in the period between 1934 and 1940 after Power resigned (she continued to be a regular contributor through 1937).

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<sup>17</sup> The figures are from the Audit Bureau of Circulation and were supplied to me by Kathy Woodrell of the Researcher and Reference Services Division of the Library of Congress.

<sup>18</sup> The November issue was often devoted to apartments.

<sup>19</sup> Lee Porter, "The Rescue of an Old House," *House Beautiful* 9 (1901): 86-88; Mary Kellogg, "Expanding a Cape Cod Cottage," *House Beautiful* 53 (1923): 624-625, 660-662, for which the architects were Lois L. Howe & Manning, a woman-run firm based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

<sup>20</sup> "Women Dealers in Antiques," *House Beautiful* 18 (1905): 20.

<sup>21</sup> For instance, Olive May Percival, "Indian Basketry: An Aboriginal Art," *House Beautiful* 2 (1897): 152-156, in which she emphasizes that these were made by women; Walter E. Browne, "Iran, Circassian and Samarcand Rugs," *House Beautiful* 4 (1898): 60-61.

<sup>22</sup> Kathleen James-Chakraborty, "Agenda expandida: Mujeres, raza y la diffusion de la Arquitectura moderna," *ZARCH: Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Architecture and Urbanism* 18 (2022): 16-29. and Kathleen James-Chakraborty, "Expanding Agency: Ethel Power, *House Beautiful*, and the writing of the history of American Architecture", in *Rereading Women and Architecture: Female Agency and the discourses of architectural history*, ed. by Dana Arnold (London: Routledge, forthcoming).

The very first volume of *House Beautiful* also included the very first publication of the independent work of Frank Lloyd Wright.<sup>23</sup> It profiled the house in Oak Park in which the young architect had just three years earlier opened his own practice in the studio appended to the dwelling he had designed for himself and his family. *House Beautiful* continued to regularly publish Wright's work, often in general articles that did not focus on a single building or architect, through 1913, four years after Wright departed for Europe in the company of Mamah Cheney, the wife of a former client, triggered a scandal that greatly damaged his reputation in Chicago and its environs.<sup>24</sup>

Wright was acutely conscious of the importance of addressing female consumers rather than fellow architects. He famously also published beginning in 1901 in *Ladies' Home Journal*, at the time one of the country's best-selling periodicals.<sup>25</sup> This, too, was before his independent built work began to appear in the architectural press in 1904.<sup>26</sup> In Oak Park, Wright's clients were neighbours familiar with his approach. Often they also knew him and his family personally through such social networks, perhaps even attending the same Unitarian Church or his wife's kindergarten. It was arguably the coverage in *House Beautiful* and *Ladies Home Journal*, which targeted exactly the progressive, well-educated women whose families were most likely to commission him and other Prairie School architects, that facilitated his gaining commissions in the early twentieth-century communities much further afield, stretching from Minneapolis in the west to Buffalo in the east.

In its first two decades, *House Beautiful* also highlighted the work of Arts and Crafts architects and designers in Britain and their counterparts on the continent responsible for reforms beginning with Art Nouveau. Already in the 1890s, it featured the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh from Glasgow as well as van de Velde in Belgium. While readers of the British journal *The Studio* had access to similar content, those who relied on architecture journals published in the United States did not.<sup>27</sup>

Women could be at the forefront. Wheeler opened her article "The Art of Stitchery," with the observation that "The Art of the Needle has been a women's art since the days of Eden." Yet her article was illustrated with works designed by two men, Mackintosh and his German counterpart Bernhard Pankok. This was in keeping with the attention *House Beautiful* paid at the turn of the century to Mackintosh and his sister-in-law Frances McNair, as well as to their counterparts in Germany.<sup>28</sup> In particular, the Austrian architect Joseph Maria Olbrich, who from 1899 until his death in 1908 was based in the German city of Darmstadt, at-

<sup>23</sup> "Successful Homes III", *House Beautiful* 1 (1897): 64-69.

<sup>24</sup> For instance, it returned to his expanded home in Alfred H. Granger, "An Architect's Studio", *House Beautiful* 7 (1899): 36-45.

<sup>25</sup> Kathryn Dethier, "The Spirit of Progressive Reform: The 'Ladies' Home Journal' House Plans, 1900-1902", *Journal of Design History* 6 (1993): 247-261.

<sup>26</sup> Arthur C. David, "The Architecture of Ideas", *Architectural Record* 15 (1904): 361-384.

<sup>27</sup> The first publication of Mackintosh in an American architecture journal was "House for an Art Lover", *American Architect and Building News* 85 (24 September 1904). Van de Velde did not feature until Henry Russell Hitchcock, "Paris, 1937", *Architectural Forum* 67 (September 1937): 168.

<sup>28</sup> For instance, Donald Warren, "The New Furniture", *House Beautiful* 5 (1899): 51-60.

tracted admiration. The display of his work at the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 sparked sustained interest over the next three years in *House Beautiful* about what he and other Germans were doing, although there was no comprehensive address of mechanisms, such as the German Werkbund, established in 1907, through which reforms were being implemented there.<sup>29</sup>

The preference for German over French styles may also have been a response to the presence of a large German community in Chicago and to the fact that the architecture school at the University of Illinois had been founded in imitation of its counterpart in Berlin rather than Paris.<sup>30</sup> The magazine's editorial staff were less enamoured with French Art Nouveau than what the Germans termed Jugendstil, although they were certainly aware of it, especially in the wake of the Universal Exposition held in Paris in 1900, as well as cognizant of the relatively quick collapse of the fashion for it afterwards.<sup>31</sup> Instead, they preferred the more durable British Arts and Crafts movement, which mapped more readily as well onto the Prairie Style in Chicago. In addition to featuring Jekyll and Lutyens in its pages, it commissioned a series of articles in 1909 and 1910 from C. R. Ashbee on the subject.<sup>32</sup> Ashbee, who had already visited Chicago, was familiar to the magazine's readers before offering this in-depth survey.

The outbreak of World War I in 1914 cut access to Europe off even before the United States entered the war in April 1917, nearly three years after the start of the conflict. At an initial glance, the coverage in *House Beautiful* became more conservative. This is not surprising in a wartime context, as support for avant-gardes collapsed, especially in the Allied countries, and was not quickly revived after the armistice.<sup>33</sup> Perhaps the most adventuresome house published in *House Beautiful's* pages across the course of the next decade was Irving Gill's Walter Dodge House in West Hollywood, California. The magazine already had a robust interest in the state, but it was unusual for it to profile a house that had been completed seven years earlier, as was the case when it turned its attention to it in 1921. The author, Eloise Roorbach, reported that the house "is without ornament save that furnished by vines, for [Gill] believes beauty should be organic and that no amount of ornament can redeem a badly designed structure," one that in this case was built entirely out of reinforced concrete in a style that she found "in the Spanish spirit so far as the plain walls, arches and patios

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<sup>29</sup> Once again *House Beautiful* was out in front. Olbrich's first appearance in the architectural press in the United States was "A Court, Reception Hall: German Exhibit of Arts and Crafts", *Architectural Record* 17 (1905): 122-124.

<sup>30</sup> For the importance of the German community to Chicago's architectural culture see Joseph Siry, *The Chicago Auditorium Building: Adler and Sullivan's Architecture and the City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> "Emile Gallé and His School", *House Beautiful* 3 (1898) 172-175, for the first article on French Art Nouveau. See also Jean Schopfer, "The New Art Furniture of France", *House Beautiful* 9 (1901): 271-275.

<sup>32</sup> C. R. Ashbee, "Arts and Crafts in England", *House Beautiful* 26 (1909): 14-16, 34-35, 46; and also "Man and the Machine", *House Beautiful* 28 (1909): 23-25, 53-56, 89-90, 109-111.

<sup>33</sup> Kenneth E. Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914-1925* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989).

are concerned and thus is in harmony with the romantic inheritance of the West, but in all else is distinctly modern."<sup>34</sup>

It took until 1925 for the magazine to fully re-engage with developments on the European continent. In that year Power travelled to Paris to visit the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts, which showcased what is now widely known as Art Deco. It was at that point as well that Power began publishing the work of more avant-garde architects such as Le Corbusier. Power returned to Europe in 1928 and 1930 in the company of her partner, the architect Eleanor Raymond. During the last of these journeys, she travelled to Sweden to see the Stockholm Exhibition and to Berlin, where she and Raymond had tea with Ise Gropius, who the following year contributed an article to the journal in which she advocated standardized functional furniture.<sup>35</sup>

After Power stepped down as editor, she continued to write for the journal. Her most important contribution in this period was as a supporter of prefabrication.<sup>36</sup> The arrival to the United States in 1937 of Walter Gropius, a German architect who had long been interested in the topic, and the changes World War II made in the country's construction industry are often credited with spurring interest in pre-fabrication, but once again *House Beautiful* was well ahead of the curve.

*House Beautiful* kept its readers well-informed, but it never criticized them for continuing to make relatively conventional choices about the appearance of their dwellings. The Colonial Revival in particular was a conscious choice preferred by women and men who were more enthusiastic about the new technologies the magazine also profiled than they were about new styles.<sup>37</sup> The years 1896 to 1940 were a time of enormous change in the United States for most of *House Beautiful's* regular readers. While they welcomed electric lighting and appliances, as well as replacements for dirty and labour-intensive wood and coal heating, they also often found the Colonial Revival reassuringly familiar even as they may have been interested and even excited to be informed about alternatives to it. Those commissioning or buying new houses chose styles, not necessarily because talented architects like Wright and Gill, or for that matter van de Velde and Olbrich, invented them, but because they assisted in constructing the identities they wanted to inhabit. White conservatives favoured continuity with the past because they feared that African Americans and recent immigrants from Europe would mount successful challenges to the status quo. Others, including Power as well as New Deal progressives such as first lady Eleanor Roosevelt and Frances Perkins, her husband the Secretary of Labour, found in pre-industrial farmhouses and twentieth-

<sup>34</sup> Eloise Roorbach, "A California House of Distinguished Simplicity", *House Beautiful* 49 (1921): 94.

<sup>35</sup> Power's journals from this period are preserved in the archive of her partner. See Eleanor Raymond Collection Frances Loeb Library Repository, Gund Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. See also Ise Gropius, "Modern Dwellings for Modern People", *House Beautiful* 69, n.º 5 (1931): 506, 532-534.

<sup>36</sup> Ethel B. Power, "Prefabricated – No Waiting", *House Beautiful* (March 1935): 50-53, 90ff.

<sup>37</sup> For example Elva D. Hoover, "Do You Hate Dishwashing?", *House Beautiful* 56 (1924): 59, 87; Gladys Beckett Jones and Jenise Brown Short, "New Electrical Appliances", *House Beautiful* 56 (1924): 248, 284- 286; and F. J. St. John, "Artificial Refrigeration", *House Beautiful* 57 (1925): 404, 435.

century imitations of them informal and, they believed, inherently democratic alternatives to the infatuation of Gilded Age plutocrats with dwellings and furnishings of European aristocrats.<sup>38</sup>

### Conclusion

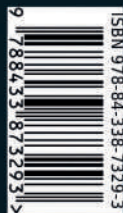
The story of *House Beautiful* demonstrates that female consumers rivalled male architects as instigators of change as well as choice in architecture in the United States between 1896 and 1940. Moreover, although the shelter press emerged in the United States, by the middle of the twentieth century at the latest it had spread throughout many parts of the world where consumer choice was driving design decisions. This suggests that the story told here may have parallels in many other countries, albeit beginning at a slightly later date. Even in Communist Eastern Europe, magazines, such as *Sibylle* in East Germany, often informed women readers about new approaches to design and architecture as well as fashion.<sup>39</sup> To understand why the twentieth-century built environment looked the way it does, historians of architecture have to turn away from their overwhelming focus on architects. They need to address the multiple channels through which potential clients learned about the spectrum of designs available to them, and how this was presented to them in a way that might encourage them to be adventuresome.

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<sup>38</sup> The politics of the Colonial Revival continues to be much discussed by historians of the architecture of the United States. See Richard Guy Wilson (ed.), *Re-creating the American Past: Essays on the Colonial Revival* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006). For Eleanor Roosevelt's involvement in Val-Kill industries and her appropriation of its former quarters as her home see Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt* (New York: Viking, 1992/1999). Perkins often spent her summers in a mid-nineteenth century farmhouse in Sugar Hill, New Hampshire, that belonged to her friend Margaret Winterbotham Poole and is currently owned by the author's mother.

<sup>39</sup> Ute Mahler (ed.), *Sibylle: Zeitschrift für Mode und Kultur* (Stuttgart: Hartmann Projects Verlag, 2017).





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