SAH Announces NEH Grant for SAH Archipedia

The Society of Architectural Historians announces this week that it has been awarded a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to significantly expand Rotunda's SAH Archipedia.

Chicago, IL (PRWEB) June 27, 2013 -- Newly launched, SAH Archipedia (http://sah-archipedia.org) is an online resource developed in collaboration with UVA Press and edited by Gabrielle Esperdy, Associate Professor of Architecture at NJIT, and Karen Kingsley, Professor Emerita at Tulane University. A richly illustrated, peer-reviewed database, SAH Archipedia offers a comprehensive view of some of the most notable architecture in the United States. This new resource examines thousands of buildings in the context of their communities and landscapes, explores all the forces that shaped them—from the aesthetic to the historical, economic, and geographical—and presents them in a fully searchable XML-based environment.

"This generous NEH grant is outstanding news for the Society of Architectural Historians," said Abigail Van Slyck, President of the SAH. "Its immediate outcome will ensure that SAH Archipedia is as robust in its American content as it is beautiful in its design and elegant in its navigation."

Published by Rotunda—the digital imprint of the University of Virginia Press— SAH Archipedia contains more than 10,300 building entries, 6,500 photographs and drawings, 5,000 individual architects and firms, 1,300 unique building types, and hundreds of periods, styles, and building materials, each tagged for search-facet discovery. All search results and individual entries appear on dynamically generated maps. The site also includes the interpretive introductions from the first twelve volumes published in print.

"SAH Archipedia incorporates the spatial turn in digital humanities for the first time in a Rotunda publication," said Mark Saunders, Interim Director of the University of Virginia Press. "As a collaboration between a university press and a scholarly society, it represents a new chapter in scholarly communications. From a publishing perspective, the project will be released in a hybrid model, blending licensed and free material, with a commitment to open metadata."

Drawn from the award-winning Buildings of the United States (BUS) series, SAH Archipedia includes histories and thematic essays on Massachusetts (Metropolitan Boston), Rhode Island, Pennsylvania (Eastern and Western), the District of Columbia, Virginia (Tidewater and Piedmont), West Virginia, Michigan, Iowa, Colorado, Nevada, and Alaska. This cross-section of the country demonstrates the richness and diversity of architecture and building practice across many centuries, from mud brick to steel, from ancient cliff dwellings to contemporary office towers. The NEH grant allows SAH to commission new scholarship from teams of collaborating historians to provide content for the remaining states.

"Our goal with the new NEH funding is to add more than 4,000 histories of the most significant and representative buildings from all 50 states and the District of Columbia," said Pauline Saliga, Executive Director of the Society of Architectural Historians.

SAH Archipedia is being released in two complementary versions: a scholars edition for license to libraries, and a free website, SAH Archipedia Classic Buildings, which features over 100 open-access entries on the most important buildings for each state. Both editions will offer content from states that have not yet been represented in the BUS series.

"The launch of SAH Archipedia is another step in the development of online scholarly resources that incorporates peer review, contextual information such as maps and satellite images, and tagging that provides further historical context," said Ann Whiteside, Librarian and Assistant Dean for Information Resources, Frances Loeb Library, Harvard Graduate School of Design. "SAH Archipedia has the potential to transform how architectural history is studied because of the way in which it marries imagery, scholarly rigor, and database searchability within a single resource."

SAH Archipedia was developed with major funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. It has been designated a "We the People Project" by NEH for its role in encouraging and enhancing the teaching, study and understanding of American history, culture and democratic principles. Additional funding was provided by the American Institute of Architects, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Study in the Fine Arts, and Two Cat Digital.

Rotunda was created for the publication of original digital scholarship along with newly digitized critical and documentary editions in the humanities and social sciences. Rotunda collections combine the originality, intellectual rigor, and scholarly value of traditional peer-reviewed university press publishing with thoughtful technological innovation designed for scholars and students.

Rotunda publications are produced by staff members of the University of Virginia Press. For more information on Rotunda or UVa Press, please contact Emily Grandstaff at 434-982-2932 / egrandstaff(at)virginia(dot)edu.

The Society of Architectural Historians promotes the study, interpretation, and conservation of architecture, design, landscapes, and urbanism worldwide for the benefit of all. SAH serves a network of local, national, and international institutions and individuals who, by vocation or avocation, focus on the built environment and its role in shaping contemporary life.

Contact Information
Kara Elliott-Ortega
Society of Architectural Historians
312-573-1365

Online Web 2.0 Version
You can read the online version of this press release here.