Booklist and Reader’s Advisory, July 2024
Recently published architectural books and related works, selected by Barbara Opar, Librarian for Architecture, Syracuse University Libraries. Barbara can be reached at baopar@syr.edu.

Reader’s Advisory
Opening September 30: Materialized Space: A Paul Rudolph Exhibition
A reassessment of the career of architect Paul Rudolph, from his modernist Sarasota houses to his controversial Brutalist buildings and later international projects, featuring unpublished drawings, models, and furniture. Based on the new book by Abraham Thomas.

Capital Brutalism
Capital Brutalism explores the history, current state, and future of seven polarizing buildings and the WMATA Metro system in Washington DC. The exhibition uses archival documents, drawings, construction photographs, architectural models, and contemporary photographs to provide context and shed light on the buildings’ stories.

Fumihiko Maki works

Endangered Modernism

Architecture on Film
Approaches to social engagement

Architects and nature

Articles and Segments
This task is taken on by Alexandra Gordon [pictured below] through July 2024.

Alexandra prepared the July selections. Alexandra recently graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture from Syracuse’s 5-year program along with a minor in sociology and interest in geography. Alexandra has worked for Babara Opar at the King + King Architecture Library since Fall of 2023. In the Fall of 2024, Alexandra will be pursuing a Post-Professional Master of Science in Advanced Urban Design from Cornell University’s program in NYC. Alexandra’s goal for the Articles and Segments recommendations is to locate articles at the intersection of design, social/cultural, housing, and urban matters, from a variety of voices and locations around the globe.

Here are her suggested readings:

July Magazine Picks


“‘Historically speaking, an embassy was the house of the ambassador,’ says Thomas Padmanabhnan, half of Zurich-based practice Lutjens Padmanabhnan- ‘a place where they would receive guests, where there would be no separation between private and public, in the modern sense.’ The firm’s new home for the Swiss ambassador in Algiers may be a colorful Memphis-inflected garden pavilion skited in canopies- more Ibiza party pad than government building- but it is still
informed by this historical understanding of the ambiguous relationship between private and public in embassy architecture, despite the bureaucratic functions the diplomatic profession assumed in the 20th century. The skills of the ambassador are used for public good, but they are personal in quality: friendliness, openness, conviviality” (29).

Amati, Marco. “The social psychologist as planner: the pioneering work of Oscar Oeser in urban and rural communities in the mid-twentieth century Australia”  

“Oscar Oeser was a polymath import to the Antipodes, primarily known as a social psychologist and as the founding Professor of Psychology at the University of Melbourne. But he was also a very effective network builder, and an important conduit for overseas ideas – not least with respect to urban and rural planning. With interest in urban planning surging in the immediate post-Second World War period, Oeser undertook a joint project with the Head of Architecture at Melbourne, Brian Lewis, along with a number of other notable figures. The project involved surveying and re-imagining the down-at-heel suburb of Prahran. It was ambitious in its empirical scope, and it showcased Oeser's sensitivity to the ‘human elements’ in planning that prefigured current participatory models. Nonetheless, the Prahran project’s impact was muted and ambiguous, its data selectively co-opted by local politicians and public servants to serve a pragmatic modernist agenda. Oeser’s subsequent planning work featured innovative approaches to designing remote rural communities and indigenous housing. Oeser's overall legacy in planning was thus a historically contingent one: it tells us something about what might have been as much as what was” (1281).


“Cutwork, Paris-based architecture design studio, has created ReHome, an off-site modular construction solution that, while originally conceived to address the housing crisis in war-torn Ukraine, seeks to address the global housing crisis equally in times of emergency and stability and the human right to shelter. Working with the Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation, ReHome was initially developed as
a low-cost solution to rebuild Ukraine, beginning with a demonstrator project in Livi” (24).


“In a gated garden behind a fairy-tale castle, I’m sipping a cold beer at an umbrella-sheltered picnic table. Crickets chirp in the background, and small white flowers linger on the bushes. Strings of lights twinkle overhead, illuminating the nighttime sky. I consider getting up to buy a giant pretzel. Despite appearances, I’m not on a European vacation. I’m in Washington D.C.’s busy Dupont Circle neighborhood, and outside the garden gates, the city and ebbs and flows at its regular pace. In here, there’s a distinct alternate-universe vibe. A helpful sign on the table reads, ‘Did you know you’re at a museum?’” (29).


“Our view of the value of civic architecture and infrastructure is colored by the past. Looming large in the Western imagination are the Roman achievements in colosseums, stadiums, forums, baths, aqueducts and roads. Their engineering brilliance and longevity help convince us that the regional, national and supranational state alone has the finances and far-sightedness to see beyond short-term profit and build lasting monuments to the public good. Roman grand projects were largely financed by the fiscus- the “basket” of funds emperors derived from taxes, levies and conquest. Largely, but not entirely…. Hubris, self-aggrandisement and politics may all have played a part in Aristion’s undertaking, but it shows that private finance has always played a role in public works. And that these can math and exceed in design quality and utility anything built at public expense” (14).


“Between 1917 and 1919, Bruno Taut wrote two books in which he proposed visionary projects, *The City Crown* and *Alpine Architecture*, where the architecture
and technology would be put in service of the spirit. In *The City Crown*, Taut established the basis of a new communal center, a secular space between the Gothic cathedral and the Buddhist temple, devoted to beauty and to hosting an array of nonspecific activities. After publishing that book, Taut developed similar ideas in *Alpine Architecture*, a series of 30 drawings with minimal text. In these uncanny blueprints, he depicted secular temples where the newly developed technology of time, glass and steel, enclosed overwhelming spaces for thinking. Modern materials were employed not for their own sake but rather as part of a broader revolution against rationalism and bourgeois society. As Taut put it, the “ultimate task” of the project was “to be quiet and absolutely turned away from all daily rituals for all time... Architects today need to find precedents for more expansive kinds of enclosed civic space—buildings that accommodate their inhabitations without restrictions. One potent example is the Barbican Centre in London, designed by the British firm Chamberlin, Powell and Bon in the 1950s and fully opened in 1982” (69).


“Surrealism is the longest-living ism, the only avant-garde movement that has withstood the turn into the 21st century. Surrealist today are Bjork’s videos (with explicit references to Man Ray), fashion (such as the collections of Rei Kawakubo, the Japanese clothing creator currently triumphing in Paris), design (impregnating even Scandinavian sobriety with eccentric items by the Swedish brand Front and its ionic life-size horse lamp), and so on and so forth. The word ‘surrealist’ is ingrained in everyday language, although its origins are falling into oblivion. This year; 2024, we celebrate the movement that Andre Breton made official through a manifesto written exactly a hundred years ago” (45).


“How do you draw a glacier? As terra incognita? As a destination for scientific expedition? As a sublime experience? As remotely sensed outlines? As evidence of the Anthropocene? Gudbrand Thorlaksson’s map of Iceland, published in 1590 in the *Additamentum IV Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* by Abraham Ortelius, is regarded as the first European map to depict glaciers. Yet, since the 16th century, glaciers and other phenomena of the cryosphere continue to appear sparingly in
maps and depictions of the world. The dearth of drawings of glaciers and the confusion around their cartographies betray their precarity and the conundrums of the cryosphere” (139).


“Quinn Evans is more than familiar with historical restoration and adaptive-reuse projects; approximately 75 percent of the portfolio of the AIA 2024 Architecture Firm Award recipient consists of work on existing buildings. So it is fitting that the firm’s Detroit and Ann Arbor offices led the multiyear renovation of the Michigan Central Station, which, after decades vacant, is reopening its doors as the central hub for the Ford Motor Company’s growing Michigan Central Innovation District campus... The scars of the station’s past are not completely effaced. At several moments, graffiti strewn walls and perilous access stairwells remain purposely untouched as visual records of the city’s and building’s nadir, standing in contrast to the renewed splendor and ambitions of the Michigan Central Innovation District. The Michigan Central Station is, after all the long decades, a symbol of the once, and future, Detroit” (55).


“Having narrowly escaped total demolition, Chicago’s pomo people’s palace will be remade in Google’s image... ‘Now we’re replacing the state with Google’, says the fresh- faced Evan Jahn, son of high-tech postmodernist Chicago architect Helmut Jahn and president of his father’s firm. Delivered in *Starship Chicago II* (2023), a documentary by Nathan Eddy, it is a praiseworthy statement, for its truth on both literal and metaphorical levels. Evan Jahn was referring to his father’s classically proportioned, structurally expressionist State of Illinois Building, later renamed the James R Thompson Center after the governor who commissioned it... Quirky, noisy, and chaotic enough to be understood as a truly democratic space, the building in Chicago’s Loop will survive. But its function, accessibility and signature 17 story atrium seem likely to change radically, denuding this messy public forum for grievance, commerce and service with technocratic anesthesiology of Silicon Calley’s surveillance apparatus” (44-47).

“Having benefited from Taliesin West myself, I pondered opening the experience to others, possible contracting my month-long experience into a three-day event, which would culminate in a class devoted to exploring issues related to notions of displacement and immersion. How does one leave a context and enter another to achieve mental unity? To answer these questions and more, the class relied on numerous pieces of literature, starting with *The Blithedale Romance* by Nathaniel Hawthorne” (5).


“In January 1966, US President Lyndon Johnson proposed the Model Cities programme to ‘improve the quality of urban life’ in the nation’s poorest areas through comprehensive action and citizen participation. That same month, John Lindsay became mayor of New York with a platform to create a more equitable city. Toward this end, Lindsay’s administration rejected earlier urban renewal approaches, prioritizing infill construction on vacant sites and reusing existing buildings, all while including local communities in the planning process. Eugenia Flatow spearheaded this ‘vest-pocket and rehabilitation programme’ as a ‘head start’ to future Model Cities funding. As she commissioned Raymond & May, Walter Thabit, Jonas Vizbaras, and Fisher/Jackson with housing plans for Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Harlem, she was acutely aware of the resulting tension between a desired democratic process and the timely delivery of the product. A close reading of archival materials reveals how these planners responded in very different ways to the prompt. The governmental programme had created a space of possibility for rethinking the relationship of product and process in planning through the specificity of housing design. The plans also highlighted the paradox in attempting to effect socio-economic change through housing supply, one that still resonates today” (31).
Booklist

The Topic is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility


The Subject is Architecture

Architects


Architecture, Ancient


Architecture-Algeria

Architecture - India

Architecture - Iran

Architecture - United States


Architecture - West Africa

Architectural Design


**Architectural Practice**


**Architectural Technology**


**Architectural Theory**


**Architecture & Society**


**Artistic Collaboration**


**Building Materials**


Building Types


Historic Preservation

Landscape Architecture


**Masterworks**


**Sustainability**
