Architecture

Kim Förster

BUILDING INSTITUTION

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York 1967–1985

[transcript]

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»Building Institution« chronicles the expansion of architecture as a profession and discipline in the postmodern era. Kim Förster traces the compelling history of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, which was active in New York from 1967 to 1985. Drawing on extensive archival research and oral histories, he constructs a collective biography that details the Institute's diverse roles and the dynamic interplay between research and design, education, culture, and publishing. By exploring the transformation of cultural production into a practice as well as the culturalization and global postmodernization of architecture, the volume contributes significantly to the institutional history of architecture.

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Introduction: Institutional and Cultural History

The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies (IAUS), realized as a distinctive institution of architecture culture, was—for the eighteen years it operated in New York—already a legend in its own time.[1] Founded in 1967 by architect Peter Eisenman, the Institute received support in terms of premises, personnel, and finances, etc. from major institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and the Department of Architecture at Cornell University, which eventually conferred legitimacy on it, with strong support from Arthur Drexler and Colin Rowe, respectively. Conceived as an interface between academia and architectural practice, the Institute was officially registered with the School Board of the State University of New York from its inception and served as an alternative educational organization that offered both its Fellows and students from multiple universities the opportunity to acquire practical experience by working on actual projects. And yet it was not easy to establish. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Eisenman assembled an entire circle of people around him, several of whom, with the support of the Chicago-based Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, were made Fellows. These were (in chronological order): Emilio Ambasz (who was made a Fellow in 1968 but left the Institute soon after to become a curator at MoMA), William Ellis (1968), Kenneth Frampton (1970), Stanford Anderson (1971), Peter Wolf (1972, coequal with Eisenman for years as chairman of the Board of Fellows), Mario Gandelsonas (1972), and lastly Diana

1 In its by-laws, the formal abbreviation for the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies was "Institute," a term also used by the Fellows. This name, in capitalized form, is therefore used in this book. The acronym IAUS, which existed early on, did not become common until the second half of the 1970s, around its tenth anniversary, mainly as a brand name in public relations.

Agrest (1973).[2] Over the years, the Institute came to work in diverse groupings and with varying emphases—research and design, education, culture, and publishing, adapting to changing circumstances and sociocultural contexts—surviving until 1985.

The Institute's history shows that in its founding years, despite being a rather small organization comprising only a few Fellows and Research Associates as well as a secretary and several administrative assistants, it was extremely successful at weaving itself into existing architecture networks in New York and on the East Coast and using its institutional relationships and especially its Board of Trustees for legal, political, and economic gain.[3] Because the Institute was able to acquire research and design contracts almost immediately—personal relationships helped to secure relatively small contracts from municipal planning offices at first and larger contracts from both state and federal agencies soon thereafter—its budget grew quickly, and it was able to expand. In 1970, a high-paying government contract from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) enabled the Institute to move from its small office space on 47th Street to more spacious and prestigious premises: a two-story loft on 40th Street overlooking Bryant Park in Midtown Manhattan, which once housed the publisher of Le Corbusier's *When the Cathedrals Were White* and was closely identified with the Institute from then on. After winning its only construction contract as an architecture firm from the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) of New York State in 1972, before a change in the political landscape put an end to public housing projects, the Institute's vision and values, strategy, and culture underwent a series of significant transformations. In the years that followed, especially in its heyday from the 1974–75 academic year onwards, the Institute, as a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, gained in importance, offering programs for undergraduate and high school students as well as internships, organizing thematic, group, and solo exhibitions, and holding lecture series every night during the semester for a period of six

2 With funds from the Graham Foundation, the Institute initially awarded individuals the title of Visiting Fellow for one year to prove themselves. In addition to those appointed as Fellows, Joseph Rykwert and Anthony Vidler were also granted Visiting Fellow status in 1970, but they left the Institute after a short time.

3 The concept of institution is defined in social, cultural, and historical studies; see "Institution," in Raymond Williams, *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 139–140; John Searle, "What is an Institution?" *Journal of Institutional Economics* 1, no. 1 (2005), 1–22; and *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, "Social Institutions,", last modified April 9, 2019, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/social-institutions/ (last accessed: May 31, 2023). Institutional critique emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the visual arts, less so in architecture; cf. Stefan Nowotny and Gerald Raunig, *Instituierende Praxen. Bruchlinien der Institutionskritik* (Vienna: transversal texts, 2016). Even though the Institute succeeded in positioning itself vis-à-vis existing institutions, especially museums and universities, its existence and the nature of its work was not understood as institutional critique. The institutional analysis approach was popularized in France by sociologist Rémi Hess, and then used for school education. I have applied it to architecture in my narrative on the Institute's various educational programs; see George Lapassade, *Gruppen, Organisationen, Institutionen* (Stuttgart: Klett Verlag, [1967] 1972).

years until spring 1980. Now enjoying support from the New York State Councils as well as the National Endowments for the Arts and the Humanities, the Institute served as a home for aspiring architects and scholars from the United States and abroad, particularly Europe, to a somewhat lesser extent from Latin America, and eventually Asia, providing a workplace that facilitated a novel kind of practice in education and culture and, along with research and design, increasingly combined its teaching, lecturing, exhibiting, and, of course, publishing activities.

The Institute's significant contribution to instigating a shift toward cultural production in architecture stands at the center of the historiography presented in this book, which combines an institutional analysis and a cultural critique of architecture.[4] Even though the Institute displayed a stable, successful pattern of institutional and financial growth in the further course of the decade, based on revenue from tuition fees, cultural funding, and philanthropic efforts, and was able to continuously expand its social and institutional networks to encompass liberal art colleges and schools of architecture at Ivy League universities, provide its own education program as an architecture school, and offer individual architects and academics as well as established art and architecture publishers the opportunity to produce, curate, and edit content within the scope of lecture series, exhibitions and publications, its existence was always at risk.[5] It was its published output, most notably the ambitious architecture journal *Oppositions*, which was launched in 1973 and distributed by MIT Press starting in 1976, but also the monthly architecture newspaper *Skyline*, the quarterly art journal *October*, the comprehensive IAUS Exhibition Catalogues and the exclusive Oppositions Books series, that brought the Institute much acclaim, reaching readers across North America, as well as internationally. Having found its way onto the bookshelves of architecture firms and university libraries around the world, *Oppositions* and Oppositions Books are perhaps the Institute's most enduring and robust cultural products. Its theory-heavy, jargon-laden publications portrayed the Institute as an architecture "think tank" that aimed to influence both the profession and

4 Here, I rely particularly on Pierre Bourdieu's seminal work on the field of cultural production and a symbolic economy that valorizes individual producers and their artworks and apply this to architecture in my narrative on the Institute's lecture series, exhibitions, and publications; see Pierre Bourdieu, "The Market of Symbolic Goods," *Poetics* 14, no. 1–2, ([1971] 1983), 13–44; "The Field of Cultural Production, or: the Economic World Reversed," *Poetics* 12, no. 4–5 (1983), 311–356; republished as "The Field of Cultural Production, or: the Economic World Reversed," in Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production. Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 29–73. Interestingly, Bourdieu's analysis and the terms he used were echoed in the reflections on autonomous and critical practice by Institute Fellows, see Peter Eisenman, "A Critical Practice: American Architecture in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century," in *Education of an Architect*, eds. Elizabeth Diller, Diane Lewis, and Kim Shkapich, (New York: Rizzoli International, 1988), 190–193.

5 Bruno Latour's actor-network theory has been discussed in regard to the sociology of art, see Niels Albertsen and Bülent Diken, "Artworks' Networks. Field, System or Mediators?" *Theory, Culture & Society* 21, no. 3 (2004), 35–58.

the discipline—a cultural myth that persists to this day.[6] As the Institute became increasingly institutionalized and professionalized throughout the 1970s, while being able to reinvent itself several times with the rise of neoliberalism and a postmodern cultural logic, it sought not so much to rehearse a modernist approach and attitude, but rather to initiate not only an epistemological, but also a historiographic paradigm shift—or even a postmodern turn.

Over the years, the Institute was continually associated with Peter Eisenman; Philip Johnson, who emerged as the Institute's gray eminence even spoke of the "Eisenman Institute." With Eisenman as its long-time director, the Institute had a charismatic, intellectually ambitious, and also entrepreneurially savvy leader at its helm. Not entirely selfless, he took up ideas about establishing an institute that were floated at the time and made them his own. Instead of starting his own firm, Eisenman launched the Institute as a kind of start-up (a move he ultimately made from necessity, after being denied a permanent teaching position at Princeton) with a workforce made up of students and Fellows, and as a new work environment for himself and others, one that allowed him to focus on his abstract house designs (1967–77) and theoretical texts. As a "project maker" and "auto-entrepreneur," he knew how to initiate large-scale projects and, above all, manage the Institute's affairs. The Institute's later success as a cultural venture in the field of architecture based on its capacity to produce and disseminate new architectural knowledge can be attributed to Eisenman's success as an "impresario" and "publicist" in building and continuously expanding the inner circle of Fellows which, despite the idiosyncratic constellations of the group and its dynamics, grew to include:[7] Leland Taliaferro (1974), Julia Bloomfield (1975), Andrew MacNair (1975), Carla Skodinski (1977), Frederieke Taylor (1977), Anthony Vidler (1977), Suzanne Frank (1978), Stephen Potters (1979), and Myles Weintraub (1979); further additions to the Fellowship in the early 1980s, when the first long-time Fellows began to step back, being Deborah Berke (1980), Silvia Kolbowski (1980), Lawrence Kutnicki (1981) Rosalind Krauss (1981), Joan Ockman (1981), Robert Silman (1981), Joan Copjec (1982), Douglas Crimp (1982), Christian Hubert (1982), Annette Michelson (1982), and Lindsay Stamm Shapiro (1982). Until he himself stepped down as the Institute director in 1982, after which the Institute collapsed like a house of cards, Eisenman single-handedly oversaw its day-to-day operations, only consulting the Board of Trustees when this became unavoidable, and redesigned its

6 Documents from the early 1970s indicate that the Institute thought of itself as a "think tank" at the same time as it was trying to make money by producing theory. Eisenman, with his characteristic subtlety, repeatedly referred to the Institute as a "halfway house" because of the position it took between academia and architectural practice, thus adding another provocative meaning to the Institute with this play on words; in American, "halfway house" colloquially stands for an open psychiatric ward or rehabilitation clinic.

7 For this characterization of Eisenman, see Joan Ockman, "Resurrecting the Avant-Garde: The History and Programme of Oppositions," in *ArchitectuReproduction*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), 180–199, here 183.

bureaucratic structure, strategic orientation, and programmatic content. At the same time, the wider circle of the Institute was continuously expanded in the second half of the 1970s to include international architects such as Rem Koolhaas, Bernard Tschumi, Grahame Shane, Rafael Moneo, Arata Isozaki, Giorgio Ciucci, Massimo Scolari, Aldo Rossi, and others, all of whom stayed for some time as Visiting Fellows before moving on. Not only the Institute's international presence, which it maintained by editing journals and curating the American contribution to the 1976 Biennale di Venezia, but also the commitment of the Visiting Fellows to the Institute contributed to its international recognition. Ultimately, Eisenman, as well as many Fellows and Visiting Fellows, used the Institute to make a name for himself and build an international career.

This book is the first to examine the Institute's eventful, tumultuous, and varied history, which encompasses its formation and organization, the restructuring of its activities, and reciprocal relationships—particularly the shift from construction to cultural production—in terms of its contributions to the new economy of attention and to complex mechanisms of marketing or self-marketing with implications for education, culture, and discourse, and the key role it played in the early careers of its protagonists and their canonization in the present day.[8]

Research Status

While the protagonists of postmodernism, among them also the main figures of the Institute, and their contributions to the built environment and architectural debate, as well as the Institute's specific media, such as exhibitions and periodicals, have previously received attention in historiographical research, as the next generations of architects, theorists, and historians felt the need to inscribe themselves in or dissociate themselves from this legacy, and other museums and universities that were active at the time have also been historicized, the Institute, as a project office, an educational and cultural institution, and as a publishing house, has not yet been systematically studied—in spite of a few but promising attempts and despite the fact that leading and subsidiary Fellows have repeatedly asserted and underlined its importance and enduring relevance.[9] This is all the more surprising given the role it played in institutionalizing a particular strand of architecture

8 The architect and philosopher Georg Franck, drawing on both Bourdieu's and Karl Marx's concept of capital, has examined the economy of attention in relation to deconstructivism, i.e., the architecture culture of the 1980s, but not that of the 1970s, cf. Georg Franck, *Ökonomie der Aufmerksamkeit* (Munich and Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 1998) and "*Ökonomie* der Aufmerksamkeit," in *Perspektiven metropolitaner Kultur*, ed. Ursula Keller (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 2000), 101–118; also Georg Franck, *Mentaler Kapitalismus. Eine politische Ökonomie des Geistes* (Munich and Vienna: Carl Hanser Verlag, 2005).

9 Suzanne Frank, "Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies. New York, New York," in *Encyclopedia of 20th Century Architecture*, ed. R. Stephen Sennott (New York: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2006), 677–678; Harry Francis Mallgrave, *Modern Architectural Theory. A Historical Survey, 1673–1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and *An Introduction to Architectural Theory. 1968 to the Present* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

culture in North America, and soon across the globe, in terms of institutionalized postmodern beliefs and practices. Peter Eisenman has in particular laid claim to this, repeatedly making bold comparisons between the Institute's influence and that of the Bauhaus in Dessau (in the period from 1925 to 1931) during the Weimar Republic, and claiming that it shares a lineage with contemporary schools of architecture, notably the Cooper Union in New York under John Hejduk (1975–2000), where Eisenman himself taught design after 1968, the Architectural Association (AA) in London under Alvin Boyarsky (1971–90), and the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia (IUAV), in particular the circle of neo-Marxist architects, historians, and critics around Manfredo Tafuri (1967–80).[10] From an institutional and cultural-historical perspective, however, the Institute eludes such comparisons with other schools of architecture established in their respective national educational system by virtue of its exuberance and changeability, and because of its erratic and ultimately unfulfilled institutional constitution. The historical desideratum, therefore, consists of nothing less than an exploration of the structure and work of the Institute, how it defined and presented itself and became relevant and powerful in the context of the North American educational system, the intellectual and artistic life of New York, and the academic and commercial publishing landscape in North America, especially on the East Coast of the United States, if not in the transatlantic, transpacific, and global cultural spheres.

Thus far, the Institute's history has been told primarily by Eisenman or by people from the Institute's inner circle; surprisingly, these were all women who initially served as Institute staff and were then granted Fellow status based on their merits (less so from the *Oppositions* editorial board, which, in addition to Eisenman, first encompassed Kenneth Frampton and Mario Gandelsonas, and later Anthony Vidler). Joan Ockman began this work in 1988 with a well-informed and incisive essay on the institutional strategies, discourses, and materialities associated with *Oppositions* in the anthology *ArchitectuReproduction* (she herself had worked for *Oppositions*, first as an intern in 1976 and later, in the early 1980s, as an associate editor).[11] Then, in a 1995 *Casabella* article, Ockman wrote about the intellectual confrontation between Eisenman and Tafuri (whose book *The Sphere and the Labyrinth* she supervised as an executive editor at Oppositions Books), while stressing the differences between the IAUS and the IUAV in terms of institutional

10 Peter Eisenman (in conversation with Alvin Boyarsky), "The Institute in Theory and Practice," (January 20, 1976) in *Supercritical: Peter Eisenman & Rem Koolhaas*, Brett Steele (London: AA Publications, 2007), 83–87; on the AA, see Irene Sunwoo, "Pedagogy's Progress: Alvin Boyarsky's International Institute of Design," *Grey Room*, no. 34 (Winter 2009), 28–57, and "From the 'Well-Laid Table' to the 'Market Place:' The Architectural Association Unit System," *Journal of Architectural Education* 65, no. 2 (March 2012), 24–41; on the IUAV, see Andrew Leach, "Choosing History. Manfredo Tafuri, Criticality and the Limits of Architecture," *The Journal of Architecture* 10, no. 3 (2005), 235–244, and "Imagining Critique, or the Problematic Legacy of the Venice School," in *The Missed Encounter of Radical Philosophy with Architecture*, ed. Nadir Lahiji (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 95–112.

11 Ockman, 1988.

structures, missions, and cultures.[12] This was followed by Frederieke Taylor (director of development at the Institute from 1976 to 1980), who wrote a term paper on the Institute's "Exhibition Program", for the first time historicizing not just solo or group shows, for a course at Columbia University, but instead formulating a fairly comprehensive history.[13] In 2010, Suzanne Frank (the Institute's official librarian from 1976), penned a self-published combined historical account and personal memoir of her time at the Institute, including twenty-seven interviews held over a number of years with other Fellows and friends.[14] Julia Bloomfield (managing editor of *Oppositions* from 1974) produced an insider's account of the Institute's editorial work for a commemorative book on Kurt Forster published in 2010.[15] And finally, in 2012, Diana Agrest (who was head of the design studio in the undergraduate program from 1975, long before becoming an editor of *Oppositions* herself in 1984), released a documentary film with the support of the Graham Foundation. The film was about the Institute's avant-garde, if not political, ambitions, and consisted partly of her own Super 8 footage from her time at the Institute and partly of contemporary interviews with Fellows, contributors, and eyewitnesses (albeit with a strong focus on those individuals who have since made a successful career for themselves in architecture).[16] For a long time, historical knowledge of the Institute has been shaped by first-hand personal accounts and various attempts at documenting an oral history, rather than archival work.

More than any other project, program, or production, it is the Institute's publications—most notably *Oppositions*—that have secured it a firm footing within architecture history. Considerable credit for this can certainly be attributed to K. Michael Hays's *Oppositions Reader* from 1999, which reprinted a selection of essays from the twenty-six issues of the journal of ideas and criticism and thus allowed *Oppositions* to be reread and assigned to students of

12 Joan Ockman, "Venice and New York," *Casabella* 59, no. 619/20, (1995), 56–73.

13 Frederieke Taylor, "Appendix C: Frederieke Taylor on Exhibitions," in *IAUS. An Insider's Memoir (with 27 Other Insider's Accounts)*, Suzanne Frank (New York: self-published, 2010), 315–322.

14 Suzanne Frank, *IAUS. An Insider's Memoir (with 27 Other Insider's Accounts)* (New York: self-published, 2010); see Cesare Birignani, "Feature: Talking Heads. Team Vitruvius," *The Architects' Newspaper* (April 6, 2011), https://www.archpaper.com/2011/04/talking-heads/ (last accessed: May 31, 2023).

15 Julia Bloomfield, "A Tale of Two Institutes: Thoughts on Publication Worlds," in *Art History on the Move: Festschrift für Kurt W. Forster*, eds. Nanni Baltzer, Jacqueline Burckhardt, Marie Stauffer, and Philip Ursprung (Zurich: Diaphanes, 2010), 66–83.

16 *The Making of an Avant-garde* (2013, dir. Diana Agrest).The interviews are with Peter Eisenman, Diana Agrest [interviewing herself], Kenneth Frampton, Mario Gandelsonas, Emilio Ambasz, Anthony Vidler, Richard Meier, Charles Gwathmey, Rem Koolhaas, Frank Gehry, Mark Wigley, Robert Stern, Barbara Jakobson, Deborah Berke, Bernard Tschumi, Joan Ockman, Julia Bloomfield, Peter Wolf, Frederieke Taylor, Stan Allen, Suzanne Stephens, Paul Lewis, Lucia Allais, etc. see Belmont Freeman, "The Moment for Something to Happen," *Places* (January 13, 2014), https://placesjournal.org/article/the-moment-for-something-to-happen/ (last accessed: May 31, 2023).

architecture.[17] Hays's introduction to the anthology, however, ensured that the fundamental distinction between "history" and "theory" propagated by the journal, a distinction also drawn in the conception and development of new master's and doctoral programs, went largely unquestioned. The same can be said of the various reviews and essays that followed the publication of the *Reader* which served to consolidate this position. (Apparently, the social function of criticism, to which *Oppositions*, as its title implies, was committed, did not play a major role in the journal.)[18] After studies of the actual editorial work involved in the making of *Oppositions*, the historicization of which formed the basis for further research, the research focus remained on the journal:[19] in 2008, Louis Martin published an account of the prehistory of journal-making at the Institute and in 2010, Lucia Allais followed with genealogical research and a critique of the production of theory at the Institute, with a focus on *Oppositions*.[20] Despite this increased interest, the editorial activities and labor involved in making the other publications that were conceived and produced at the Institute—for example, *October*, the quarterly art theory journal, *Skyline*, a monthly architecture newspaper with a cultural calendar, the IAUS Exhibition Catalogues, a series comprising original archival material and essays, and Oppositions Books, an ambitious and luxuriously designed book series—have, with few exceptions, received little historiographical attention, despite the fact that these publications played an important and trendsetting role for the Institute and, more broadly, for the discourses of architecture and art history.

When it comes to the institutional significance and other activities of the Institute's Fellows, however, the current state of knowledge remains cursory.

17 K. Michael Hays, ed., *Oppositions Reader* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998).

18 K. Michael Hays, "The Oppositions of Autonomy and History," in Hays, 1998, IX–XV.; see also Mitchell Schwartzer, "History and Theory in Architectural Periodicals. Assembling Oppositions," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 3 (September 1999), 342–348; Daniel Sherer, "Architecture in the Labyrinth. Theory and Criticism in the Unites States: 'Oppositions,' 'Assemblage,' 'Any' (1973–1999)," *Zodiac*, no. 20 (1999), 36–63; Ralph Stern, "Oppositions Revisited—The Oppositions Reader," *Kritische Berichte*, no. 3 (1999), 65–72. At the same time, in the early 1980s, there had been some reflection on critical historiography against the background of the reception of Marxist and poststructuralist approaches in *Oppositions* (especially by authors of the IUAV) and at the Institute itself (initiated by the younger generation formed in the *ReVisions* group).

19 Joan Ockman, ed., *Architecture Criticism Ideology* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1985).

20 Louis Martin, "Notes on the Origins of Oppositions," in *Architectural Periodicals in the 1960s and 1970s. Towards a Factual, Intellectual and Material History*, eds. Alexis Sornin, Hélène Jannière, and France Vanlaethem (Montréal: IRHA Institut de recherche en histoire de l'architecture, 2008), 147–169; Lucia Allais, "The Real and the Theoretical, 1968," *Perspecta*, no. 42 (2010): "The Real," 27–41. Here, Allais presented a narrative that addressed, among other things, the unlikelihood of early unrealized projects in order to call Eisenman's motivation and interest into question, and then analyzed the beginnings and conditions of theory production at the Institute,

Major research projects at leading American schools of architecture have yielded insights into the indirect contexts, premises, and overall conditions governing architecture discourse in the 1960s and 1970s. Such studies have dealt explicitly with the architecture journal as an essential medium, one capable of being produced quickly and independently, as well as with the availability of utopian, modernist concepts in the early postmodern era, and with conceptual approaches to the relationship between writing and architecture.[21] But even though the Institute is typically mentioned in this context—and characterized as being one of the dominant actors shaping American architecture history and most notably the emergence of postmodernism—these research projects only managed to overcome the prevailing myth of the Institute as a "think tank" within the field of architecture—a new avant-garde, a new school, or a movement—to a limited extent. In most cases, the Institute's own institutionalism, or the very institutionality to which it was exposed, is not even broached.[22] It is also worth mentioning that in the various historiographies of American urban renewal and housing after 1968, the Institute plays only a minor role, despite the prototype for low-rise housing that was researched and designed there.[23] Meanwhile, in the historiography of architecture education in America, and even worldwide, the Institute's role in transforming postmodern architecture pedagogy has been

21 The 2000s saw innovative research conducted as part of doctoral programs at Princeton (directed by Beatriz Colomina), Columbia University (Reinhold Martin), and the UCLA (Sylvia Lavin), partnering with the CCA in Montréal as an archive and museum. The projects "Clip Stamp Fold," "Utopia's Ghost," and "Take Note" each resulted in exhibitions and/or books—all of which are important resources. The exhibition "Clip Stamp Fold" opened at the Storefront for Art and Architecture in New York (November 14, 2006, to January 31, 2007), before going on display at the CCA (April 12 to September 9, 2007), as part of Documenta 12 in Kassel that same year, and then traveling around the globe; see Beatriz Colomina and Craig Buckley, eds., *Clip Stamp Fold. The Radical Architecture of Little Magazines. 196X to 197X* (Barcelona: Actar, 2010). Public events on publishing were organized at Storefront as part of "Clip Stamp Fold," e.g., former editors of *Oppositions*, *October*, and *Skyline* were invited to three of the panel discussions; see https://vimeo.com/user1360843 (last accessed: May 31, 2023). The exhibition "Utopia's Ghost. Postmodernism Reconsidered" was on only display at the CCA (February 28 to May 25, 2008); see Martin, 2010. The exhibition "Take Note" was also on display at the CCA (February 4 to May 30, 2010); see Sylvia Lavin, "IAUS. Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies" *Log*, no. 13/14 (Fall 2008), 53–66.

22 Yannik Porsché, Ronny Scholz, and Jaspal Naveel Singh, "Introducing Institutionality," in *Institutionality. Postdisciplinary Studies in Discourse*, eds. Porsché, Scholz, and Singh (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022), 1–28. If institutionality refers to the omnipresence of institutions in modern society, the Institute was accordingly confronted with institutional enactments, characterizations, transformations, and resistances. However, we should not make the mistake of equating the Institute, or even architecture, with institutions such as the church, the monarchy, the caste system, the patriarchy, the nation-state, the judiciary, the prison, or the police.

23 To date, the relationship between architecture, planning, and society in the United States of the 1960s and 1970s has been historicized. On the quasi-welfare state urban development policies of New York under Mayor John Lindsay (1966–73), see Mariana Mogilevich, "Designing the Urban: Space and Politics in Lindsay's New York," PhD diss., Harvard University, 2012; on the U.S. government's biopolitical research under Presidents Lyndon B. Johnson and Richard M. Nixon, see Joy Knoblauch, "Going Soft: Architecture and the Human Sciences in Search of New Institutional Forms (1963–1974)," PhD diss., Princeton University, 2012.

subject to little study, even though teaching was the Institute's central field of activity—and its financial foundation—for many years. When it has been studied at all, the focus has been on the content of the Institute's teaching activities, rather than its didactics, methods, or goals.[24] And similarly, the Institute's cultural production has yet to be thoroughly examined. As probably the least tangible and thus the most ephemeral of the Fellows' contributions and the most difficult to chronicle, the Institute's cultural production contributed significantly to the transformation of New York's architecture and art scenes and their symbolic economies and helped to raise the market value of not only the key figures who exhibited, facilitated, and lectured at the Institute, but also of the Institute itself. The hypothesis propounded by Tafuri in 1976, in an essay that was more a piece of architecture criticism than architecture history, that the Institute was one of those "well-defined cultural spaces" of the New York architecture scene "entrusted with the task of pleasurably entertaining a highly select audience" has not been further analyzed—neither by Tafuri himself, nor in architecture historiography.[25]

Main Argument

The main concern and ultimate goal of this institutional and cultural history of the Institute—if the Institute can be understood at different levels as a group, an organization, or also as an institution, following the tenets of French institutional

24 See Joan Ockman, ed., *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012). This publication includes a chapter on post-1968 architecture education by Mary McLeod, see Mary McLeod, "The End of Innocence. From Political Activism to Postmodernism," in *Architecture School: Three Centuries of Educating Architects in North America*, ed. Joan Ockman (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012), 160–201. A more recent academic research project at Princeton University, "Radical Pedagogies: Action-Reaction-Interaction" (directed by Beatriz Colomina), was exhibited at the Venice Architecture Biennale in 2014 and at the 7th Warsaw "Under Construction" Festival in 2015. The Institute is listed in the timeline and on the world map as one of the case studies, but was not further discussed; cf. Beatriz Colomina, with Esther Choi, Ignacio Gonzalez Galán, and Anna-Maria Meister, "Radical Pedagogies in Architectural Education," *Architectural Review* (September 28, 2012), http://www.architectural-review.com/essays/radical-pedagogies-in-architectural-education/8636066.article (last accessed: May 31, 2023); Beatriz Colomina and Evangolos Kotsioris, with Ignacio Gonzalez Galán, and Anna-Maria Meister, "The Radical Pedagogies Project," *Volume* 45 (2015): "Learning, Insert," 2–5; see also Beatriz Colomina, Ignacio G. Galán, Evangelos Kotsioris, and Anna-Maria Meister, eds., *Radical Pedagogies* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2022).

25 Manfredo Tafuri, "The Ashes of Jefferson," in *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, trans. Pellegrino d'Arcierno and Robert Connolly (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1987), 291–303. Tafuri first published this text in French with an emphasis on cultural production in the original, see Manfredo Tafuri, "Les cendres de Jefferson," *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*, no. 186 (August/September 1976): "New York in White and Gray," 53–72. Nor have researchers yet adopted the broader notion of reading the Institute's activities in terms of Max Horkheimer's and Theodor W. Adorno's arguments concerning the culture industry, i.e., the commercial marketing of culture as entertainment with the triumph of television and advertising in the United States in the post-war period; see Sandro Marpillero, quoted in George Baird, "A Reflection on the End of Assemblage," *Assemblage*, no. 41 (April 2001), 11; see also Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer, "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment or Mass Deception," in *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York: Herder and Herder, [1944] 1972), 120–176.

analysis—is to comprehensively, exemplarily, and yet systematically explore its day-to-day activities, organizational structure, and broader context, drawing on perspectives from architecture studies and the humanities and incorporating critical geography and historiography, institutional and cultural sociology, and literary and cultural studies.[26] A carefully crafted, precisely formulated historiographical study of the Institute qua *institution*, the first of its kind, focuses not only on its most tangible product, its publications, but also considers all the incredibly multifaceted projects, programs, and products, both material and immaterial, that the Institute launched between 1967 and 1985, when it closed its doors forever due to a lack of financial and political support. This approach deviates from classical art history and architecture history approaches, which center on prominent individuals or objects of material culture and argue on the basis of styles, epochs, ideas, and protagonists. Manfredo Tafuri has intimated that a cultural critique of the Institute might be read as a cultural space—this book seeks to answer the question of how. Beyond this, the task of writing a genealogical-archaeological narrative of cultural production using the example of the Institute involves excavating the specific aspects, conditions, elements, and limitations that have shaped the Institute's history. If we apply Pierre Bourdieu's theory of cultural production—which he developed in the 1970s and 1980s in relation to nineteenth-century French bourgeois art and literature—to American, or even globalized architecture and thus update it, then the major break from a society-oriented architectural practice toward a postmodern one driven by the principles of a symbolic economy resulted in the establishment of new architectural knowledge, derived from artistic and literary references, and of a new power structure.[27] This book demonstrates that this architecture culture was interspersed with fragments of theory and positioned in relation to architectural modernism, bringing with it a new vocabulary and metaphors that functioned as a new system of reference for contemporary architectural practice. If the Institute distinguished itself by refashioning cultural production in architecture and by strengthening architecture culture (rather than just architecture) as an autonomous practice while making it economically viable, this means that we must establish a new narrative about the Institute and support that narrative with ample evidence from the institutional archives. This is the only way we can achieve an understanding of the Institute's influence on North American architectural discourse, on architecture education in light of the transformation, economization, and corporatization of higher education in the United States, and on

26 Lapassade, [1967] 1972. The Institute's work and structure changed over the course of its existence and displayed characteristics of all three types. The debate about institutions has taken on new forms with the curatorial turn; see Paul O'Neill, Lucy Steeds, and Mick Wilson, *How Institutions Think: Between Contemporary Art and Curatorial Discourse* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017); see also Paul O'Neill, "The Curatorial Turn: From Practice to Discourse," in *The Biennial Reader*, eds. Jelena Filipovic, et al. (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2010), 240–259.

27 Bourdieu, [1971] 1983; see also Franck, 1998 and 2000.

the architecture culture of the neoliberal age on a global scale.[28] In conjunction with the emergence of a post-Fordist accumulation regime, the Institute, as argued in this book, heralded a change in architecture and architecture culture, in what would in epistemological terms be called a paradigm shift, away from post-war or late modernism to postmodernism, and it did so quite powerfully, by actuating and enforcing an autopoietic and yet commercial system. After the collapse of the great utopias, briefly reanimated once again in the United States under President Lyndon B. Johnson in the mid-1960s with the Great Society, the Institute's pedagogical, cultural, and discursive practice was marked by an economic pragmatism, characterized by a project-based organization, and asserted by particular interests. The capitalizing on culture, in turn, must be viewed in the context of the dramatic developments of the 1970s: the commercialization of the national and global education market, the blossoming of federal cultural policy and cultural patronage, the expansion of the publishing landscape for both academic and popular books, journals, and magazines, and the emergence of an art market for architectural projects, drawings, and models.

The Institute's History

There are a number of parallel, competing myths about the founding of the Institute, including the 1964 Conference of Architects for the Study of the Environment (CASE) and the 1967 MoMA exhibition "The New City: Architecture and Urban Renewal," which heralded the end of Peter Eisenman's working relationship with Princeton University. For the purposes of this historiographical study, it is important to contextualize these myths in both the history of architecture and the history of urban studies as expressions of a paradigm shift in late capitalism. The novelty of an approach to architecture history that is grounded in institutional analysis and critique, however, is that the Institute's founding narratives encompass not only socio-cultural dimensions but also and above all, as the first chapter of *Building Institution* will show, legal, political, and economic ones. In this regard, the name that was chosen, "The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies," was significant in that it was both a positioning and a provocation, implying that the grouping's skills and aspirations lay in two fields of knowledge and work: first, the Institute was obviously seeking to redefine the role of "Architecture" (with a capital "A") in society, after a decade marked by professional differentiation and interdisciplinary work; and second, the Institute was also seeking to capitalize on the fundability and popularity of the brand new discipline of "Urban Studies" and stake a central claim for architecture practice. For in the early years, the Institute was able to carry out research and planning, and ultimately design large-scale projects, some of which were highly remunerated, on behalf of public authorities. In this

28 In this context, architecture culture is not confined to the traditional understanding of building culture, but instead refers to all activities, objects, phenomena, and structures related to architecture.

context, the Institute's history underscores that, contrary to how it was institutionalized at the time, how it portrayed itself, and how it was perceived by others, it was anything but autonomous and radical. What it did instead was present itself in a communicative context that was self-legitimizing and self-referential, constantly oscillating between tradition and innovation. The Institute's leadership offered its services to various planning offices and organizations at different levels of scale and was met with initial success, benefiting from the fact that urban policy under Mayor John V. Lindsay (a liberal Republican) operated along welfare-state principles, and that Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller was using housing policy to moderate a tense social situation. The Institute collaborated with the revitalized New York City Planning Commission (CPC), the Urban Design Group (UDG)—which like the Institute was founded in 1967—the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—which was responsible for large-scale urban renewal based on the Model Cities Program—and the New York State Urban Development Corporation (UDC)—founded in 1968 with Edward J. Logue at the helm and tasked with improving the urban situation on a large scale as part of an effort to prevent further racial unrest. With its Fellows, Visiting Fellows, postgraduate Research Associates, as well as students and interns, the Institute had a cheap labor force that it could use for these projects. Ultimately, the Institute was commissioned to actually build new housing that was originally intended for the inner city and suburbs across New York State, and also became involved in the design, but this was never implemented on a mass scale.

As part of a history of knowledge, of the discipline, its concepts, and its methodology, the journal *Oppositions*, first launched in 1973, provided the Institute's Fellows with the opportunity to establish themselves as critics, historians, and theorists, in the role of editors and authors. The journal signaled the Institute's claim to interpretive authority when it came to renegotiating the role of the architect in the theoretical and historiographical discourse on architecture. As the second, third, and especially fourth chapters of *Building Institution* show, the changes at the Institute meant that these architects no longer wished to be perceived as "mediators" but instead as intellectuals and artists—a demand that was to have far-reaching consequences, both discursively and socio-culturally, for the relationship between architecture and society. The education, as well as the culture provided by the Institute at the time, were instrumental in cultivating the next generation. The events, lecture series, and exhibitions hosted by the Institute soon established it as an arena for clashes between the figures grouped around such labels as the "Whites" and the "Grays," and the symbolic economy that accompanied them.[29] That is to say, the

29 The symbolic economy of New York's architecture scene was legendarily reinstituted in the early 1970s by a polemical debate between two camps, Peter Eisenman's "Whites" and Robert Stern's "Grays," each working from different historical references: the classicist formal language on the one hand and the modernist idiom on the other. See Manfredo Tafuri, "American Graffiti. Five x Five = Twenty-five," trans. Victor Caliandro, *Oppositions* 5 (Summer 1976), 35–72; see also

Institute's premises became a physical site of confrontation in the fierce conflict between formalist and historicist positions at the time. The good-natured feud and undeterred collaboration between Peter Eisenman and his adversary Robert Stern, then president of the Architectural League in New York, enabled the Institute to thrive as a venue where a pluralism of different approaches was possible—from the realist, pragmatist, modernist, neo-rationalist, and populist to the idealist—a place where varying perspectives and stylistic orientations could be debated. However, these debates staged by the Institute largely ignored other topics that had fundamental ramifications for architecture and urban environments: topics with arguably more sociopolitical relevance, such as the conservative turn in American politics and society under the administration of President Richard M. Nixon, the diverse range of global crises that marked the 1970s in particular, the emerging environmental crisis and especially the oil and energy crisis that culminated in 1973, and the New York financial and fiscal crisis of 1974–75, along with the urban crisis that accompanied it. In this regard, the Institute, which took the offensive in setting itself apart from other figures and institutions by proclaiming to be the last stronghold of architectural modernism in North America, if not the world, was ultimately, as argued within the pages of this book, one of the trailblazers of architectural postmodernism in the United States and beyond—conceived in this sense not merely as a discursive phenomenon, but also as a cultural formation with all the receptivities, uncertainties, and ambiguities that this entails.

This, even more than 1968 with its impact on architecture education within universities, is the moment when, at the beginning of the 1974–75 academic year, the Institute, having understood that its special niche of both architecture production and theory production was not financially viable—especially after the government's moratorium on public housing in 1973—decided to turn its perceived weakness into a strength and reinvent itself. Architecture history has largely overlooked the fact that, faced with the major political, economic, and social changes of the mid-1970s, the Institute's leadership decided to increase its focus on education, culture, and publishing in order to disseminate new architectural knowledge. This act of repositioning and restructuring through what was only later theorized as cultural production allowed the Institute, thanks to its tax-exempt status, to develop a more complex business model based on a sophisticated "Educational Program" with multiple offerings, a "Public Program," including an extensive "Evening Program" with a wide range of lecture series every night of the week and a professional "Exhibition Program" of externally curated and in-house produced exhibitions, as well as a diversified "Publication Program." While the Institute, having

Nadia Watson, "The Whites vs. the Grays: Re-Examining the 1970s Avant-Garde," *Fabrications* (July 2005), 55–69 and Reinhold Martin, "Language, c. 1973," in *Utopia's Ghost. Architecture and Postmodernism, Again* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 43–67. Camps were formed at the CASE conferences, with CASE 8 of the New York subdivision being the first to bring together the "Five Architects" who formed the inner circle of the "Whites".

built up strong networks with its "Development Program," media outreach, and public relations, had a graphic identity from the outset, it was the printed materials created for these programs by New York graphic designer Massimo Vignelli that represented its new institutional identity—an approach that was developed at the very moment that "urban branding" was first being implemented in New York with Milton Glaser's "I ♥ NY" campaign and announced that the political economy of the city was about to change decisively.[30] This move, archival records show, was accompanied by the comprehensive branding of all of the Institute's educational and cultural projects, programs, and products, with the promise of generating further income. Whether intentionally or not, this fetishization and reification of culture meant that the Institute also contributed significantly to the constantly increasing, more broadly conceived medialization and commercialization of postmodern architecture, otherwise critiqued by literary and cultural studies, as works of art—and thus to the emergence of a "celebrity culture" in architecture, a development that would later be referred to as "starchitecture."

After navigating phases of near-bankruptcy, the deciding factor in ensuring the Institute's success in the second half of the 1970s, culminating in its tenth anniversary in 1977, and indeed in its continued existence, was that—despite criticism of its withdrawal into an ivory tower, its isolation, and its detachment—it continued to receive significant assistance from liberal arts colleges and universities, endorsement from government foundations within the framework of the American Bicentennial, and support from academic and commercial publishers. A socio-analysis and discourse analysis will focus on the fact that the Institute favored a negative definition of itself, especially vis-à-vis official schools of architecture, longstanding cultural institutions such as MoMA, and newer ones such as P.S.1, and publishing houses. In doing so, the Institute's leadership refused to fully institutionalize it, not least because of its limited resources: at no point did the Institute ever offer an accredited degree program, only once did it ever fully open up to the general public, and it always tended to seek the backing of the publishing industry. From an archaeological-genealogical perspective, the Institute can thus be more aptly described as a pedagogical, curatorial, and editorial practice within the nexus of postmodern architecture, as an educational offer, as a stage event, and as a communication medium—especially if one follows Manfredo Tafuri's line of reasoning about the formation of "well-defined cultural spaces" for the New York architecture scene to celebrate its own existence.[31] By specializing in cultural production aimed at both professional and metropolitan audiences, what the Institute promoted was, in Tafuri's words, the

30 See Miriam Greenberg, "The Battle to Brand New York: 1975–1985," in *Branding New York* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 131–260; see also McLain Clutter, *Imaginary Apparatus. New York City and Its Mediated Representation* (Zurich: Park Books, 2015).

31 See Tafuri, 1987, 293; see also Ullrich Schwarz, "Another look-anOther gaze. Zur Architekturtheorie von Peter Eisenman," in *Aura und Exzess. Zur Überwindung der Metaphysik der Architektur*, ed. Schwarz (Vienna: Passagen Verlag), 1995, 11–34.

formation of "new circuits of production and use."[32] This development in architecture under the changing societal conditions linked to post-Fordism was not entirely dissimilar to what later came to be characterized as "immaterial labor," albeit politically different.[33] The Institute nevertheless provided a basis for conveying, integrating, and testing new ways of working and new role models for architects and academics, always seeking profit-making opportunities while cutting costs. What the Institute amounted to, subsequent to the CASE conference of 1964, and in parallel with the "New York Five" of 1972—other formations initiated by Eisenman, the latter being more of a media event—was a grouping that, thanks to its innovative admixture of social and discursive practices, was able to foster certain positions and anticipate new positionings in the world of art and architecture and in the public sphere.[34] However, this would facilitate the emergence, production, and valorization of the "neo-avant-garde," a phenomenon that drew inspiration in form, but not in content, from the movements and icons of architectural and artistic modernism.[35]

Methods and Methodology

This book offers a novel take on the historiography of architecture culture through the lens of the Institute. It draws on architecture history, literary and cultural studies, and institutional and cultural sociology while providing a solid footing for the paradigm shift of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s in terms of institutionalizing and institutionalized tendencies. *Building Institution* is based on the research I conducted as part of my doctoral dissertation project at the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta) at ETH Zurich (2007–11):[36] com-

32 Ibid.

33 Cf. Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labor," in *Radical Thought in Italy. A Potential Politics*, eds. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 133–147. For Lazzarato, however, immaterial labor focused on subversion, that is, altering social structures rather than consolidating them.

34 After the publication of *Five Architects*, the term "New York Five" was disseminated by the press, see Paul Goldberger, "Architecture's '5' Make Their Ideas Felt," *The New York Times* (November 26, 1973), 33.

35 See Manfredo Tafuri, "L'Architecture dans le Boudoir. The Language of Criticism and the Criticism of Language," trans. Victor Caliandro, *Oppositions* 3 (May 1974), 37–62; see also Esra Akcan, "Manfredo Tafuri's Theory of the Architectural Avant-garde," *The Journal of Architecture* 7 (Summer 2002), 135–167.

36 The situation of the Institute archives is not entirely clear. In the course of my oral history research, I came across various accounts according to which the original archives were handed over to the bailiff and auctioned off in the course of the difficult closure of the Institute in May 1985 as part of foreclosure proceedings, thus becoming the property of one or more of the parties involved. As part of my archival research, I worked primarily at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, where documents relating to the Institute have been located since 1998, first in the Peter Eisenman Collection (fonds 143), and second in the IAUS Collection (fonds 57). In addition, in the early 2000s, the CCA began to create an oral history of the Institute, which already includes some interviews with protagonists and contemporaries that have already been conducted, although the concept for this and the interest behind it were ultimately directed

prehensive archival research undertaken during a several-month residency as a doctoral researcher at the CCA (2009), and in holdings of numerous other institutions on the East Coast of the United States; an extensive body of oral history totaling over one hundred interviews with more than eighty people involved in the Institute, including former Fellows, Visiting Fellows, staff, students, and interns, with board members, collaborators, and other contemporaries, conducted during a year-long stay as a visiting scholar at Columbia University in New York (2009–10) financed by a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), which offer insights into individual motivations and contributions; and a close reading of the Institute's numerous publications, almost all of which can be accessed in North American archives, museums, and universities, and other relevant literature.[37] The focus of the analysis is on the available text corpus of the Institute, which includes a large number of original (or photocopied) circulated institutional documents (charters, by-laws, agendas, meeting minutes, official correspondence, internal memos, handwritten notes, working papers, concept papers, position papers, proposals, reports, leaflets, brochures, budget plans, financial reports, press releases, press reviews, etc.), and on visual representations (architectural, graphical, photographic) and institutional imaginaries connected to its projects, programs, and products. To avoid reproducing oft-repeated narratives and to de-mythologize the Institute's history with the aim of opening up meaningful insights into the broader institutional, even postmodern

mainly at Eisenman, not the Institute (fonds archives institutionelles / archives orales AO 04 – Louis Martin: Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, 1998–2003). As of 2016, other documents relating to the Institute are also in the Kenneth Frampton Collection (fonds AP 197) at the CCA, particularly those relating to the Institute's only building project, which Frampton was in charge of. Other collections and records from archives and museums (MoMA, Walker Art Center), universities (primarily Sarah Lawrence College, but also Columbia University, Princeton University, and Yale University, such as the documents relating to a variety of public events in the Robert A.M. Stern Collection and the photographs of events by Dorothy Alexander in the Beinecke Library), research centers (Getty Research Institute and the graphic designs of Massimo Vignelli in the Vignelli Center for Design Studies at Rensselaer Institute of Technology), and other institutions in the United States, government agencies (Internal Revenue Service), foundations (New York Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities), associations (American Institute of Architects), etc. In addition, there were numerous private archives of individuals (Deborah Berke, David Buege, Peter Eisenman, Suzanne Frank, Deborah Gans, Peter Greenberg, Jessica Helfand, Margot Jacqz, Jonathan Kirschenfeld, Lawrence Kutnicki, Andrew MacNair, Patrick Pinnell, Stephen Potters, Massimo Scolari, Robert Silman, Suzanne Stephens, Mimi Shanley Taft, Frederieke Taylor). Although there is no single archive of the Institute, the archived materials together with documents provided by individuals are comprehensive. Many of the protagonists had not opened their private archives for my research, similar to some institutions (Graham Foundation) and publishers (MIT Press), etc.

37 As associate director of research at CCA from 2016 to 2018, I again had direct access to the archival holdings. In this capacity, I assisted PhD students and postdoctoral fellows working on the holdings in their research and activated Kenneth Frampton's then newly acquired private archive of research by curating an event with Frampton, an oral history interview, and the exhibition "Educating Architects" (May 31 to September 24, 2017) about four of the courses taught by Frampton at Columbia in the 1970s and 1980s, https://www.cca.qc.ca/en/events/49514/educating-architects-four-courses-by-kenneth-frampton (last accessed: May 31, 2023). I also conducted further research in the United States at that time.

culture and its flexible, entirely precarious modes of production, the individual chapters will focus on the Institute's history of cultural production alongside the history of its reception: the Institute conceptualized, realized, and staged as an architectural project of institution-building. A comprehensive institutional analysis in terms of research and design, education, culture, and publishing is necessary because the Institute's history cannot necessarily be broken down into its component parts and easily incorporated into architecture history with a conventional monographic study or master narrative—the sheer number of people involved and their widely divergent values, ideas, and motivations are evidence of this.[38] Additionally, the story of the Institute, seen from an epistemological perspective, encompasses strategies of a very different kind—strategies that would come to influence not only architecture but many other fields as well, ranging from urban politics and culture to architecture education and publishing, to the art market and criticism. This incompatibility, or even incomprehensibility, of the Institute's activities, is already evident when one defines the overarching themes, a process that was accomplished with the immediate history of its reception. As these smaller counter-narratives—both the subject of research in terms of the circulating legends and the state of research—show, the Institute managed to attract the attention, admiration, and regard—part appreciation, part criticism—of European architecture historians and critics with international standing, such as Reyner Banham and Manfredo Tafuri, almost immediately after its founding. Meanwhile, architecture journalists—including Ada Louise Huxtable and Paul Goldberger of *The New York Times*, and later Brian Brace Taylor and Michael Sorkin—who were based in New York and had broader insight into local politics and economics, commented on the Institute's activities with more regularity.[39] Even after the Institute's ultimate demise in 1985, North American architects and academics continued to engage with its legacy—both artistic and intellectual—its cadres, and its intrigues. Opponents of Peter Eisenman and his circle of friends repeatedly made themselves heard in North America's architecture press and in the mid-1990s cast themselves once again in the role of the opposition in *Progressive Architecture*, with the Institute's place in history at stake.[40] And thus, perhaps more than anything else, this is what the Institute bore witness

38 Some quite promising attempts were made, failed, and were finally reduced to a narrative revolving around a few characters that oscillated between a theatrical monologue and a chamber play; see Louis Martin, "The Search for a Theory in Architecture. Anglo-American Debates, 1957–1976," PhD diss., Princeton University, 2002; see Colin Brent Epp, "The Education of Rosalind Krauss, Peter Eisenman and Other Americans: Why the Fantasy of Postmodernism Still Remains," PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2007.

39 Reyner Banham, "Vitruvius over Manhattan," *New Society* (December 7, 1967), 827–828; Tafuri, 1976.

40 Richard Plunz and Kenneth Kaplan, "On 'Style'," *Precis* (Fall 1984), 33–43; Diane Ghirardo, "Eisenman's Bogus Avantgarde," *Progressive Architecture* (November 1994), 70–73; Peter Eisenman et al., "Eisenman (and Company) Respond," *Progressive Architecture* (February 1995), 88–91; Vincent Pecora, "Eisenman and Friends," *Progressive Architecture* (May 1995), 13–15, 26.

to over the nearly two decades of its existence: the extent to which architecture, knowledge, and power are interwoven, illustrated by the example of New York.[41]

This book's method and methodology is to outline and discuss, on the basis of the various roles played by the Institute throughout its existence from 1967 to 1985, the changing relationships between architecture and culture, knowledge, politics, and economics in their respective contexts, i.e., their local conditions and conventions, and to document and highlight the significance and implications of these changes for a globalizing world. To this end, this institutional analysis will examine the Institute's microhistory against the backdrop of the broader socio-cultural contexts at the time. One key finding is that cultural production at the Institute enabled structures for material and, to an even greater extent, immaterial labor to be tested and established in the architecture-specific marketplace of culture, academia, and art, that not only incorporated but promoted broader developments. This needs to be seen, according to the core argument of this study, in relation to the changes in education and culture that were associated with architecture in general—a dynamic that continues to resonate to this day. Grounding this historical and at the same time critical perspective on cultural production in the social sciences and the humanities in order to inform contemporary architecture studies also allows this work to interrogate the sociocultural phenomena prevalent at the time, i.e., the postmodern order of collective interpretation and knowledge formation. This book, as far as the institution of architecture is concerned, ideally depicts the degree to which the Institute, by virtue of its postmodern plurality, heterogeneity, and diversity, helped redefine, alongside the neoliberal political and economic shifts in the mid-1970s, not only the "economy" of production and reception but also the "politics" of mediatization and interpretation in architecture. The form taken by this historiography, proceeding on the basis of an analysis of the everyday institutional practices at the Institute, their social and contextual contingency, and a critique of the discursive and material culture, while employing collective biography as its primary method, differs from a narrative grounded in biography, from a purely psychoanalytic method that would focus exclusively on Eisenman.[42] In such a narrative, there is a danger that Eisenman would simply be foregrounded as a self-promoter and puppet master, standing atop the stage provided by the Institute.[43] Yet this would miss the chance to offer a more nuanced and complex history of the Institute's design and function, work and significance, as a group, an organization, and even an institution,

41 Michel Foucault commented on postmodernism in one of his rare interviews about architecture, which was actually published in *Skyline*, i.e., from within the Institute; see Michel Foucault, "Space, Knowledge, and Power," *Skyline* (March 1982), 16–20.

42 Wilhelm Heinz Schröder, "Kollektive Biographien in der historischen Sozialforschung: Eine Einführung," in *Lebenslauf und Gesellschaft. Zum Einsatz von kollektiven Biographien in der historischen Sozialforschung*, ed. Schröder (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1985), 7–17.

43 Alex Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, "The Narcissist Phase in Architecture," *The Harvard Architecture Review*, no. 1 (Spring 1978), 53–63; republished in German, see "Die narzisstische Phase der Architektur," *Arch+*, no. 42 (December 1978), 51–57.

not just for those who were directly involved, and even a critical assessment and appraisal of its impact and lasting influence on the development of the discipline and the profession.

Book Structure

This book about the life and career of the Institute, how it was enacted, characterized, transformed, and also resisted, is divided into four chapters that cover in detail the four main roles and activities of the Institute as a group of Fellows, as a non-profit organization, and as an architecture institution, with its shifting focus.[44] This four-part structure, which portrays the various developments in sequence and in parallel, allows the Institute to be understood as a "cultural space" rather than an architecture firm, distinct from other educational and cultural institutions in New York and on the East Coast of the United States—museums and universities, but also counter-institutional practices such as alternative art spaces—as well as from academic and commercial publishers. The first chapter examines the Institute's deliberate design and skillful networking as a "project office," in addition to the founding acts, and indeed institutionalization processes, and the research and design work it performed for various agencies (municipal, state, and federal) with student labor. This includes in particular the "Streets Project" for HUD (1970–72) and the "Low-Rise Housing" for the UDC (1972–73), neither of which would have been possible without the Institute's association with MoMA. The second chapter then looks at the Institute's first reinvention of itself as an "architecture school" and its fundamental restructuring. This starts with the 1974–75 academic year, when an "Undergraduate Program in Architecture," taught and supervised by Fellows, was offered for students from liberal arts colleges on the East Coast, followed by a series of alternative educational offerings for different audiences, an "Internship Program," an "Undergraduate Program in Planning," a "High School Program," "Design-and-Study Options," and finally, as a commercial alternative competing with established schools of architecture, the "Advanced Design Workshop." The third chapter focuses on the Institute's emergence as a "cultural space," again in the 1974–75 academic year, and the expansion of existing activities into fully fledged programs with funding available for culture. On the one hand, these included a comprehensive "Evening Program" with a range of lecture series, simply titled "Architecture" and comparable to those offered by larger institutions in the context of lifelong learning, with a focus on architecture history and theory, urban planning, art, and design. This was relaunched in 1977–78 as an "Open Plan" program in the humanities. On the other hand, the Institute also offered an "Exhibition Program" with group and solo exhibitions that made contemporary drawings and models their subject while integrating them into the art market, as well as historiographical exhibitions that emphasized

44 See Porsché, Scholz, and Singh, 2022, 2.

European and American modernist positions—both formats that served the attention economy even more than publications and were marketed and advertised nationwide. The fourth chapter covers the Institute's activities as a "publishing imprint," and the writing, editorial, and publishing work of the intellectually ambitious Fellows—not just *Oppositions*, but the whole portfolio of formats developed in the second half of the 1970s and published in collaboration with MIT Press, some of them later on with Rizzoli International: *October* (1976), *Skyline* (1978), IAUS Exhibitions Catalogues (1979), and Oppositions Books (1982).

As a contribution to architecture history that foregrounds socio-analysis and discourse analysis, *Building Institute* takes a dual approach to the manifold practices: institutional structure and organization, project, program and product conception, and the productions themselves, in addition to research and design, education, culture, and publishing.[45] From an epistemological perspective, this book—conceived as a collective biography of institutional services rather than an intellectual biography of individual positions—is equally concerned with the development of the Institute's strategic direction and organization structure; with the interplay of fields of activity and the day-to-day work of its Fellows, Visiting Fellows, staff, students, and interns; and with the networks established at various stages of the Institute's history. From a historiographical perspective, this work triangulates central developments in North American and globalized architecture culture—above all as they relate to the emergence, restriction, and concretization of particular ideas, concepts, and forms of knowledge that shape the conception, planning, and implementation of major projects, programs, and products—with an eye toward the Institute's contribution as a mediator in the regeneration of the inner city as a residential and recreational space or workplace; toward the Institute's interventions in the technocratic organization and regulation of housing; toward the Institute's particular social function and role in the North American educational system and its humanistic ideal of education; toward the Institute's specific method of finding solutions to problems, always undertaken in interaction with the discipline or profession of architecture as an autonomous, sometimes critical practice *vis-à-vis* the problems of a "public environment;" and toward the development of an intellectual and artistic position at the Institute, an architectonic approach that was both sculptural and iconographic, accompanied by theoretical reflection and a historical justification of its own foundations and conditions.[46]

45 The institutional analysis approach was originally developed in sociology, inspired by and in distinction from the discourse analysis approach; see Michael Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books [1969], 1972).

46 The work of Eisenman, as well as that of the other longtime Fellows, notably Frampton, Gandelsonas, Agrest, and Vidler—whether built or written—is therefore not explicitly the subject of this study but is cited whenever it comes to the interactions between institutional structures and individual careers.

Building Institute depicts the changing context and limitations of the Institute's impact on the institution of architecture, if not society as a whole, conditioned by socio-economic and political transformations of the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, and constrained by notions of class, race, ethnicity, and gender prevalent in North American society at the time. From the initial hopes and promises of conducting research and design that was socially relevant, especially for disadvantaged populations, until budget cuts for public housing under the Nixon administration put an end to this, to the reinvention of the contribution of education and culture as two important areas of the information and service society, both subject to commodification,[47] to its increasing prominence and establishment as a "postmodern salon" for a globalizing architecture culture that was self-referential and yet highly influential on a national and international scale.[48] While each of the four chapters highlights both the internal synergies and the network synergies that were created and exploited, they can also be read as stand-alone (his)stories that offer new insights into moments of change, opportunities, and failures. But only when read as a whole do the four chapters provide a full picture of the Institute as a major player in a shifting architecture culture that has become differentiated, commodified, and globalized by its actions: a picture of its—despite or perhaps because of its constant reinvention and repositioning—constantly asserted impact and significance, not only in North America but also beyond in terms of its transatlantic aesthetics, discourse, education, and culture. This is especially true of the Institute's involvement in postmodernism, which in turn encompasses far more than just the Institute's course offerings, lecture series and exhibitions, and publications. This institutional and cultural history of the Institute as an architectural project—more of an institution than a building—in analytical and critical terms serves as a lens through which we can understand the processes of institutionalization, professionalization, and differentiation inherent in architecture since the 1970s, and how they persist in their updated permutations and the revival of postmodernism to this day.

Ultimately, though, *Building Institution* will have to come to terms not only with the Institute's agency and achievements, the buildings that were erected, the students and interns that were trained, the cultural, social, and economic

47 Eisenman advertised this complexity and the contradictions of the Institute early on; see Eisenman, 2007. In his 2010 monograph *Utopia's Ghosts*, architecture historian Reinhold Martin, drawing on Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of the machine, referred to the Institute only once, stating that Eisenman had created a "discourse machine" with *Oppositions* and a "teaching machine" with the Institute; see Martin, 2010, 66. The Institute's cultural production and publications, however, were equally groundbreaking.

48 For the transcripts of a two-day symposium which Eisenman organized in Charlottesville at the University of Pennsylvania on 12 and 13 November 1982, following his directorship at the Institute, see Jacquelin Robertson, *The Charlottesville Tapes* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1985); republished in German, see Jacquelin Robertson and Stanley Tigerman, *Der postmoderne Salon. Architekten über Architekten* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 1991).

capital that was accumulated, and the titles that were published, but also the discontinuities, transformations, reinventions, and endings, etc. For the gradual demise of the Institute is no less relevant to architecture history, nor is the 1981 effort to transform it into what was to become the Philip Johnson Center for Architecture, a new institution that was to be founded and named after New York architecture's patron and the Institute's main sponsor, whose fascist past was by then already common knowledge. These plans ultimately fell through due to a lack of financial and political support. Ultimately, the Institute was a complex network that helped to cultivate a new academic and architecture elite in the United States. While this development was already viewed quite critically by outsiders and the local architecture press in its day, a reassessment from a feminist, if not intersectional perspective would be necessary today, especially in the wake of the #MeToo-movement, despite the fact that a generation of women rose to prominence there in administrative, editorial, curatorial, and teaching positions.[49] Within the framework of such a historiography of the Institute, not only the founding narratives and major breaks and ruptures will be given new significance, but so too will the institutional power relations between the inner and outer circle of Fellows, Visiting Fellows, staff, students, friends, and enemies; various neglected, inglorious impasses, events that shed light on the Institute's rise and fall, its successes and failures.

49 Apparently, some names of male architects involved in the Institute in 2018 have appeared on the "Shitty Men in Architecture" spreadsheet, see https://archinect.com/forum/thread/150054690/shitty-men-in-architecture-spreadsheet and https://www.archpaper.com/2018/03/shitty-architecture-men-list-address-abuse-in-architecture/ (last accessed: May 31, 2023).