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# critic|all

III International Conference  
on Architectural Design & Criticism

DIGITAL PROCEEDINGS

# 04

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## 05 Papers

## Towards a (new) Architectural History for a Digital Age. Archdaily as a Dissemination Tool for Architectural Knowledge.

**Cimadomo, Guido<sup>1</sup>; García Rubio, Rubén<sup>2</sup>; Shahdadpuri Aswani, Vishal<sup>3</sup>**

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### Abstract

In our modern society people is more than ever a passive subject faced to a vast flow of information. Inspiration and problem solving can take the form of direct citation from the mass of examples disseminated by digital social media, websites and other sources. Focusing on the architectural field, the increasing development of Social Networks and of mono-thematic channels like archdaily, worldarchitecture, divisare, just to cite a few, offer every day a large amount of realised and unrealised projects which easily can serve as inspiration for the development of new designs. Among many other values ubiquity, immediateness and easiness are the most interesting effects which are of interest for this paper.

It could be argued that critical practice is substituting a more traditional theoretical body of thought related with the practice of architecture. Analysing the culture of instantaneity impulsed by digital social networks, we focus on the effects of immediacy, reliability, trend and democratisation for the dissemination of architecture. As any new project developed is based on a previous work or methodology, based on quotation or interpretation of earlier works, we could consider 'new knowledge' a combination of previous information and/or methodologies. One of the results shows how synchronicity between inspired and inspiring works leading to homogeneous bodies of work in very different latitudes make difficult to record a proper history of contemporary architecture in the digital era. The attempt to create a historiography of the digital age contemporary architecture should start to consider new methodologies, tools and strategies to apply. Apart from considering the effects of these technologies on architectural education and practice, suggestions are made to create a tool to show the evolving propagation of information, which should be used by contemporary historiography of architecture in order to adapt to the new digital environment permeating our society.

**Key words:** Digital publications, Architectural History, Historiography of Architecture, Archdaily.

### 1. Introduction.

At the beginning of the millennium, Charles Jencks (2003) looked at the new architectural paradigm raising when both the post-modern of the sixties and seventies and the theory of complexity of the eighties were fading. The domain of the computer in the definition of contemporary architectural design was the dominant strategy underlying new architectural processes, despite the pluralism of different parallel thoughts. The vicious cycle in which the architecture of these decades has been trapped by promoting public buildings increasingly more ambitious in their form to respond to the so-called *Bilbao effect*, has had an abrupt end with the outbreak of the crisis in 2008.

The crisis mentioned by Jencks at the beginning of his text as the only event which could bring a change in a society anachronistically anchored in the past, was also a key point in architectural practice. *Star-architectures* became over-popular at the end of the twentieth century, even if they had uncertain effects on the place where they arose. They were developed by few architects working on a global scale and generated objections from a wide spectrum of the society which could not understand the reasons for their expenses. The phenomena has anyway evolved and is still present in several regions of the world where the rise of cities over nations, and their competition to reach a leading role over competitors, encourage the commission of iconic global buildings realized by a reduced elite of architects. One of the outcomes of this period in the critic of architecture can be found in "Superdutch: new architecture in Netherlands" (Lootsma, 2000), which was rapidly criticized (Bouman, 2006). As described by Solá Morales (1995), architecture assumed to be part of the capitalist and neo-liberal society at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, being at the service of powers with hidden and manipulated interests. The role of critics has been, after supporting the ideals of the Modern Movement, to distance from the practice to raise awareness of the subtle interests hidden behind building processes. We have to recognize how the role of critics is nowadays fading, in all social activities, substituted in many occasions by the rates and comments given by the same users, also thanks to the introduction of web 2.0.

This technological shift impulsed by Information Technologies (IT) is a second key point to understand the evolution of architectural practice at the beginning of the millennium. They are producing important and fast transformations on the structure of society that are undoubtedly reflected in our profession as the physical limitations of the environment are becoming irrelevant. Architecture is governed by complex political, social and historical dynamics, and equally influenced by the same evolution of the architectural field and external constraints. Social networks and web 2.0 are the most relevant tools that are widely transforming our life and relationships. They make obsolete the traditional approaches based on chronological and geographical contexts, and establish a simplification based on the culture of the immediacy. If the aforementioned crisis brought a shrinking of the editorial market, the digital environment offers an interesting alternative for publishing with low budgets – although with unclear economical returns. While established journals delayed their digital conversion, new projects and dissemination tools have been multiplied taking advantage of the fast and unpredictable transformations related with the information society. This trend is currently being research by the *Master en Proyectos Arquitectónicos Avanzados*, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid (Juan Liñán, 2016), and at the online course "Escribir arquitectura: pautas y criterios" at the Universidad de Málaga, also if published outcomes are still limited. Mono-thematic web channels like Archdaily, Dezeen, Worldarchitecture or Divisare, just to cite the ones with the higher traffic, offer everyday a large amount of built and unbuilt projects which create a huge flow of information difficult to organize and classify. These platforms have become the first channel to inform about architecture events, new projects and material innovation. With them, small projects or lesser known firms can become viral, hence democratizing a field which only few decades ago was restricted to the few who were able to use effectively the communication media to reach a wide audience or influential clients (Colomina, 2010).

This new model rises questions and doubts about the trending topics in architecture. On the one hand, some architectures only last until they disappear from the screen when are replaced by new ones or, in some cases, just the life of a tweet. On the other hand, it also opens awareness over under-represented and marginal experiences, but with great interest, for a more inclusive understanding of the development of architecture. In fact, the huge amount of architecture designed worldwide, which wouldn't fit on magazines according to the criteria of the eighties or nineties, can offer great insights on the understanding of architectural histories as they represent the common relationship between design and society (Ballantine, 2006). This same global post-colonial approach is also being promoted in the academical world with the Global Architectural History Teaching Collaborative (GAHTC), fostered by professors Mark Jarzombek and Vikramaditya Prakash, as the first attempt to open the History of Architecture<sup>1</sup> to under-considered periods, regions and styles.

### 2. How to register and tell the history of architecture in the digital age.

The practice of architecture has evolved by adapting itself to the society and its new requirements. This change of model has been recently analysed by Zaera Polo (Zaera Polo, 2015; sa, 2018) with his proposal to create a compass of contemporary architecture and to start mapping its development on a

global scale. This is possibly the first attempt to understand the new trends in architecture at the beginning of the millennium and to categorize them. It also shows how difficult it is to follow the evolution on a global scale – more than 150 practices are mapped – on a compass which has been disseminated through the same social networks that make possible to know about their existence and theories.

This paper focuses on the importance of the culture of immediacy. This is originated by new technological applications and wider and faster dissemination of architectural projects, even before they are built, and focuses on the importance of the time to filter the architectural experiences. Once we recognize that the tools to record changes and mutual influences in the field have changed, we recognize how digital platforms or project repositories as the place where architectural knowledge is stored. These platforms are the counterpart of what encyclopedia represented during the Enlightenment, or printed volumes and magazines during the last decades of the twentieth century. We recognize how these repositories are no more only dissemination tools but more and more inspiration sources for new developments, making important the analysis of their influence nowadays. The disappearance of this difference, but also the values of ubiquity, immediateness and easiness are very interesting for the effects they have on the evolution of architecture, especially in the youngest digital native generations. These new trends place also the interest on the theory of a critical practice no more based on theoretical guidelines, but on “an intellectual basis for design on the basis of its own modes of operation, a kind of theoretical development that happens through, and from within, design practice and not by means of external descriptions or analyses of its practices and products” (Mazé and Redström, 2007).

According with Andrew Leach (2010:2) “there is little agreement on what architectural history is and how it should be done as on what architecture is and how it should be made.” If this discussion has been present during many decades when the practice of architecture was not really changing, this question is extremely relevant today, when we experience strong and fast transformations that are challenging the structure of our society. If the access to platforms related with architecture is an unquestionable way in today’s architectural habits, this paper aims to understand not only the qualitative aspects which can emerge - such the role of architectural images (Ferrando, 2017), or how the replication of these same images strengthens a simplification and homogenization of the architectural discussion (Juan Liñán, 2016) – but also the quantitative ones. Big data can offer significant insights on the practice of architecture worldwide, disclose trends and influences, and also can record the process and evolution that is experimenting. Until now, research in the field of architecture has not applied the quantitative approach based on big data.

The undergoing research wants to recompile data from the most diffused architectural web pages online, Archdaily, Divisare, WorldArchitecture and Dezeen, in order to understand the patterns underlined by the use of these repositories as a dissemination media which influence the practice of architecture. A very provocative statement we want to test is that today Architectural History could be narrated through online repositories, as it is the only way to store a huge number of projects localized worldwide, creating multiple asynchronous links between them. This idea seems to fit the requirements of architects and students who demand immediateness. This (new) Architectural History would be fitted to these needs, as the information provided by the aforementioned platforms is prominently visual and text and data are adapted for a reader who is looking for specific information. The possibility to link them to other news, related or not with the previous through hyperlinks which also use data related with users – but also with the interests of the provider - make the History of Contemporary Architecture flawless. Obviously, there are several objections to this proposal that will be discussed at the end of this paper.

We scrutinize Archdaily.com, unanimously considered as one of the most relevant repositories of architecture. It was born in the late 2008 as a Spanish web page called Plataformaarquitectura.cl. Nonetheless, it soon incorporated English as a second language to reach a wider audience creating the domain Archdaily.com which duplicated the contents of the former to address more specifically visitors, now also offering its contents in Portuguese and Chinese. As it is stated in the same information page, Archdaily was created as a tool to offer quality documentation about architecture and is currently visited by circa 13 million people every month. The stats offered by Alexa, a SEO tool developed by Amazon company, offer interesting data related with this repository: Archdaily is ranked 2.944 as global popular site -calculated from an algorithm which takes into account single users and number of pages visited- and has an audience prevailing from the USA (16,2%) and China (13,4%). Visitors engagement is 4,95 daily pages per visitor and a daily time on site of 5:44 minutes. While PlataformaArquitectura, its Spanish counterpart, has a lower global rank (#8.470) and its audience is mainly coming from Spain (29,4%) followed by Argentina (18,6%) and Chile (16,8%). Also, engagement is lower, only 3,30 daily page-views per visitor and 4:06 daily minutes on site. These results segregated for domain, shows the dominant role of this conglomerate in the architectural field, but also the habits of architects and students (the first target of Archdaily) looking for clear and concise information.

### 3. Analytical methodology of big data in a digital scenario.

A short note is needed to describe the process used to recollect the information, in order to make possible similar researches and to explain the strategies implemented. Scraping has been realized with python based “Portia”, a visual harvesting tool deployed online. The spider has been taught to scrape Archdaily full domain, annotating the projects published according with the following fields: architect; project name, typology, year of the project, year of publishing and surface. An additional field annotated has been the url of the designer, in order to be able to analyse projects also according to the country of realization. The odd structure of the domain, where all contents being them projects, news, contests or opinion articles, have the same logical url with a six-number prefix, required to harvest the whole domain with a brute force strategy. Only products and material catalogues are organized under a specific folder, making possible to avoid the spider to access them and reducing the overall time of crawling. It means that a total of 3.184.203 requests have been issued and 126.174 items to be further filtered returned. The spider has been tested and tuned to cover the whole database of projects offered by Archdaily which corresponds to 34.177 items subdivided into seven main categories (on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018). Due to the brute force attack strategy, the spider stopped several times, due to the low number of results found. Also if slowing down the few items\_scraped variable, we had to deploy the spider twenty times, for a total running time, with a single spider, of 612h50m41s. The outcomes of the scraping had to be cleaned, removing some specific type of pages (as news, opinion, articles, etc) and duplicated projects due to the use of different domain pages by the provider possibly to address different hardware accessing data (42% of items were repeated). Finally, the set of valid projects scraped by the spider, and used for the analysis was of 26.790 projects. The accuracy of the sampling reaches 78,38% of the projects published on Archdaily which are considered enough for the expected results. Thanks to the *deltafetch* addon requests to pages containing items seen in previous crawls can be skipped, making possible to complete the harvesting of data, especially considering that every day around 60 new projects are uploaded to the platform.

### 4. Analysis of Archdaily's projects database.

The first task realized with the database obtained was to verify its coherence with the whole set of projects published on Archdaily. Thanks to the stats offered by the platform we visually compared the consistency of projects for category, year and country, which returned a coherent proportional volume of data. No significant differences were observed, making reliable the results of the following analysis. The first interesting outcome is related with the location of the projects published on Archdaily (Fig. 1). The 25% of the whole set is concentrated in only three countries: United States (11,5%), Spain (7,76%) and Japan (6,10%), followed by France, Australia and China. If we look at the countries of origin of the users of the platform, the reasons can be clearly understood. The repository highly depends on the projects presented by its visitors, hence it is possible that the same firms publishing on Archdaily are regular user of the platform. We can also imagine the existence of a greater interest in local works, making the editorial team to prioritize the publication of works from these countries. Looking at this data in an aggregate way, results for continents are quite homogeneous. Also if with great differences, we can see how rather all countries in the world are represented – even if there are countries with only one project published like Madagascar, Syria or Sierra Leone, among more than other 20 countries - being possible to have a great understanding of architectural trends worldwide.

The second point of interest is related with the date. A clarification is needed related with data analysed, as it has been possible to extract the year when the project was realized and the year of its publication, being the second one more consistent. It is obvious that the project database increase with time, but not only with new projects as older ones can also be uploaded, strengthening the profile of a professional office. Thus, Archdaily offers also projects realized before 2008, the year the web site was established, also if they are not, as we will see, the majority. Something more difficult to clarify is the consistency of the construction year, because it depends on the criteria used by the designer and/or the editing team whether they relate it with the year of the design or with the year the construction was completed. We found also a significant number of projects (more than 9%) which lack this information. Many of them belong to the AD Classics, a category created by the editorial team to cover masterpieces of the last Century. The rest are projects realized in the last decade, when we consolidated that data with the year of publication.

AD Classics category is worth to be emphasized, as it offers the opportunity to access masterpieces of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, together with the Parthenon and the Acropolis of Athens, at the moment the only works of the ancient past. Its aim is to have in only one platform the whole architectural production somebody could be interested to access, becoming closer and closer to a History of Architecture volume, with works realized by Mies van der Rohe, Frank Lloyd Wright or Le Corbusier, among many others. Also if at the moment not so many projects of this type have been published, it is clear that Archdaily aims to become the reference platform when searching for a project, concentrating the information that is actually spread among many different web pages. These projects have long form articles, product of careful researches and completed with references and bibliography for further readings. It is interesting to remark how in this same category – which by the way is not directly



accessible through categories searches – is possible to find other iconic projects from the late twenties like Menara Mesiniaga by Hamzah & Yeang, the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art By Steven Holl, the Grand Louvre by I.M. Pei or the same Yokohama International Passenger Terminal by FOA, a project only completed in 1995. The rapid changes of our society, or the digital natives users of this platform, move to consider projects which are only twenty years old as classic.

The year when the projects have been published offers homogeneity in the results analysed (Fig. 2a). While it is possible to observe a sustained growth between 2008 and 2010, doubling every year the number of projects published, from 2011 onward there is an average of 3.300 new projects every year, being 2013 the year with the highest activity, with 4.033 items. The stabilization of contents, which could be also confirmed by the items published during the month of January 2018, can offer different insights. Firstly, it is possible that Archdaily reached its critical maturity, especially considering the existence of similar rival platforms, and possibly a stabilization facing new challenges. Secondly, we can imagine that the architectural circle interested in publishing their work has also reached a critical level, also related with the volume of works which are realized every year. It will be interesting to contrast these results with other platforms, to confirm this hypothesis or to consider other alternatives.

Looking at the year when the projects are realized, we can observe a sustained growth since 2004 - the first year considered relevant - with 122 projects, until 2013 with 2.974 projects published. In the following years, until 2016 we can observe a certain stabilization. The only reason we can find is the gap existing between the realization of a project and its publication, also shown in Fig. 2a. It is possible that during the first months of the year many more projects corresponding with the previous one will be published, as the only plausible explication we can raise at the moment.

The next field analysed is related with the categories published and its spatial distribution (Fig. 3). Archdaily offers a wide number of typologies to filter and find projects, also grouped into twelve major categories: Commercial & Offices; Healthcare; Hospitality & Interiors; Industrial & Infrastructures; Landscape & Urbanism; Mixed Use; Public; Religious; and Residential; Cultural; Refurbishment; Educational & Sports. Thus, the design process can be helped by simplifying the understanding of similar solutions applied to a specific use. The use of these data could be controversial, as they do not represent the whole production realized in each country. Nevertheless, they can give a clue on the attention given in each country to different aspects of construction, and also on the health of the building sector. As an example, more than half the projects realized in Spain during the years following the crisis (2010 onward), were single houses or renovations, while only few public and commercial buildings were published.

Lastly, we analysed the volume of projects published for each professional profile. Analysing the top ten offices for the number on projects published - which is at the moment the only criteria we are able to outline and which is a ranking not accessible to users through common search criteria - there are no meaningful differences among them. As it is possible to see in Fig. 4, the shortlist includes many of the most renowned and well-established offices on the architectural scene, followed by the rest of architects we could expect. It tells us that, despite the switch between publishing media where projects are shown, we have now the same possibilities to find the work of an established practice than other less popular ones.

Users have anyway other search criteria with the possibility to find different works according with their own personal criteria, thus democratizing the dissemination and influence of architecture. An interesting result is given by the Tokyo-based firm Apollo Architects & Associates led by architect Satoshi Kurosaki, which ranked the 6<sup>th</sup> with 42 projects. It is certainly an office which is not widely known outside Japan, although it has a certain reputation within its country. Its recognition is originated by the presence on the web, especially on Archdaily and Dezeen. Without the pretension to judge the quality of the works (mostly single houses), a careful mediatic presence allows to successfully position itself on a global scale, and also to obtain several prizes. The effect on the dissemination of architectural theories can in this way pick unexpected paths, sometimes anarchic, which also rise questions that will be commented in the following chapter.

##### 5. Towards a new paradigm. What new digital tools tell us about architecture.

From our point of view, today there is not only one history to be presented, but multiple, sometimes parallel, histories. While the History of Architecture was informed by few buildings realized by some heroic, brilliant or radical architects in the past - according with the criteria of few established historians or with the ability of some architects to spread their ideas or works in the media - today we have a vast volume of projects disseminated on an infinite number of web pages and traditional media. This new ecosystem makes the more difficult the writing of the new chapters of our History of Architecture, and consequently how it must be approached, because all the projects built, in one way or another, have valuable information to better understand the role of contemporary architecture in society.

Reviewing Panayotis Tournikiotis's "Historiography of modern architecture", Mark Jarzombek (2001) thought about the relevant role of historians to define and transform modern architecture. Could we translate this issue to our days? If History of Architecture has historically focused on the identification

of the most relevant architects, buildings and influences who shaped the past and the following generations, could we act similarly today? As Josep Maria Montaner already recognized, we face a situation of dispersion, where the multiple theoretical contributions have to be made compatible, looking at the best part of each one in no-exclusive ways (Montaner, 2003:98). The multiple trends emerging simultaneously should be considered according with their real effects on society and the built environment, not only according with their success on the media, also if this difference is hard to recognize, and is also fading.

The survey realized made clear that Archdaily, like other similar platforms we will analyse in the next future, are today the more democratic way to archive and disseminate what is happening in the world of architecture. Not only the buildings, which have been analysed in this paper, but also news and events. We have to be careful as anyway the projects published are finally approved by an editorial team, with economic interests, as Archdaily is like many other platforms, a commercial one which exist thanks to publicity originated by the high volume of hits. What is still not clear is how these media could be used to delineate a coherent, verified and real Architectural History. There are several academics, like Santiago de Molina or Luigi Prestinenza Puglisi who have embraced new media as a tool to reach their audience, designing strategies to adapt theoretical contents to the social networks where the audience is more receptive, but we still lack such a theoretical discussion. We cannot forget that these tools have also an important influence on the same practice of architecture. The same Norman Foster declared recently: 'In creation the blank page doesn't exist, we are all connected', meaning that quotation, intended as an early point that help to start a new creative process, is easily supported by all these new flows of data (Europa Press, 2017). Renzo Piano strengthened these same thoughts, declaring that creativity is only possible when it is shared (Hasan, 2018). The act of quotation also brings the focus on the work of philosopher Giorgio Agamben about the paradigm, which can be considered as an example, showing the rules and singularities which can be repeated or quoted in further experiments, but also as the common elements or rules shared by a community (Agamben, 2017). Agamben demonstrates how the logic of the example is independent from the universality of the law and discusses on how a singularity can create a new generality, a very interesting point related with the construction of a new historiography of contemporary architecture based on the diffusion of images of previous works to develop new designs. If Architectural History is being transformed by the new tools and opportunities we mentioned, the historiography that necessary will have to define the approach to take is still to be defined.

We believe that a wide qualitative and quantitative analysis of the new media transmitting architecture is the first step in this direction also if we are of course aware that data alone cannot be taken for true, and the complex relations which underline architectural production are much harder to be found on these platforms. Like the issues and pull requests tabs on a Github project, there are many aspects still to investigate, and more data, some not freely accessible, could help to better understand trends. Like the open access and collaborative community approaches fostered by Information Technologies, we believe that this first step can impulse a wider research in the field, where more thinkers can improve the overall results. For example, knowing the projects with more hits on the repository would help to really understand the interests of web surfers. It would also help to understand the real life and impact of a project, once it disappears from our screens substituted by newest ones. We are also interested in comparing the projects realized in a single country with the origin of the architectural studio. For example, the only project published in Guinea Bissau is by a Portuguese firm, or the only one accessible in Algeria, is realized by a French firm. Unluckily we have not still been able to automatically link the name of the practice with its country of origin, something necessary to analyse countries with a higher number of projects.

Democratization accessing knowledge is one of the greatest outcomes of the digital era, and we have seen how access to new design projects is practically instantaneous, anybody being able to disseminate his work with ease. The most relevant counterpart is the difficulty to control the quality of what is published, being necessary to learn to discern between the various sources offering contents. Due to the reduction of time and attention which is dedicated to any single digital document, arguing the real quality of the source becomes ever harder, and any note about images published could be missed. Because this information gets quoted, "looped" and repeated very easily, with the possibility to be distorted at each iteration, it becomes very difficult to determine the original source of certain information to prove its veracity. In fact, creating a history of present architecture exclusively from digital sources become a hard and risky task, as proper identification, catalogation and hierarchization of trends and theories is especially difficult. The attempt to create an historiography of the digital age contemporary architecture should start to consider new methodologies, tools and strategies to apply. The approach applied is a first step which needs to be developed further, looking at IT enhancement – could Artificial Intelligence be such a tool? - as a support for recording the changes architecture is experimenting.

### 7. Figures, tables and pictures.

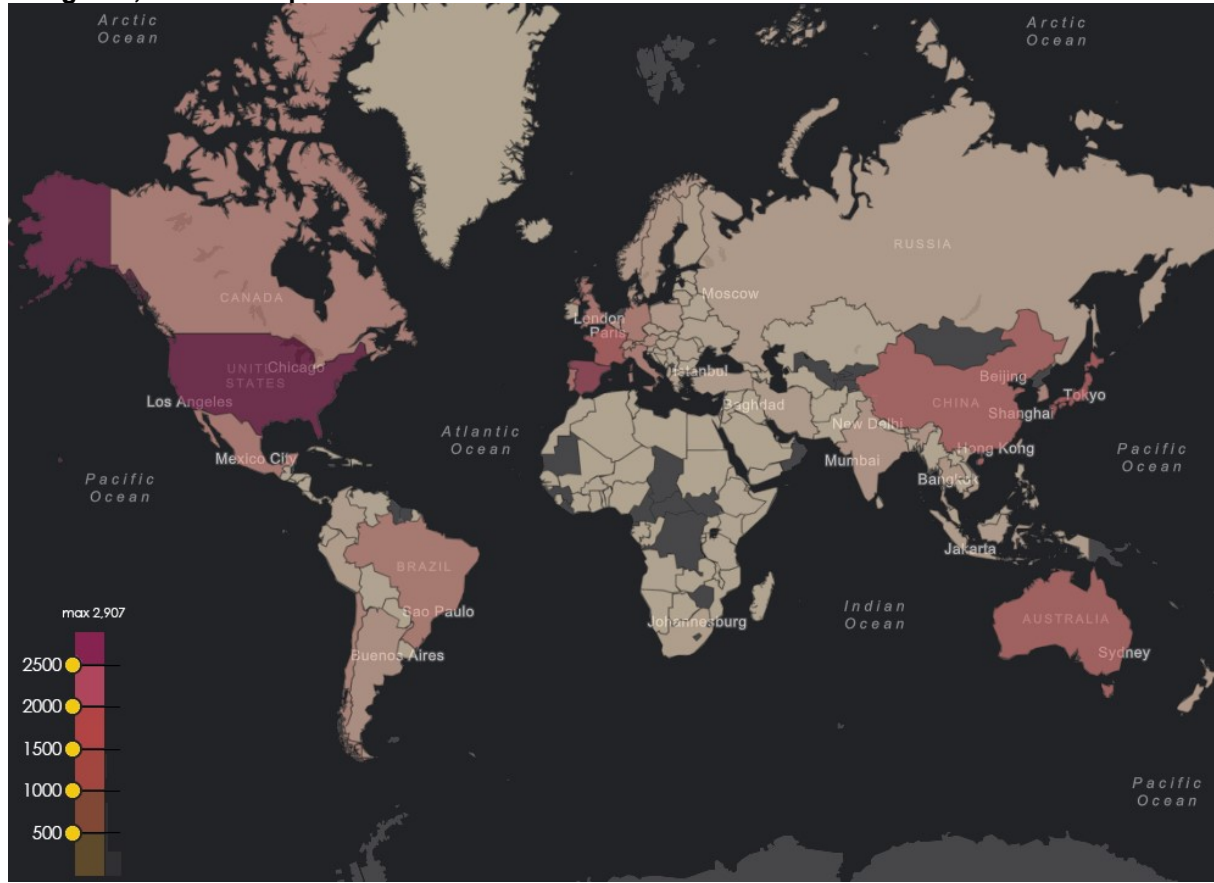


Fig. 1

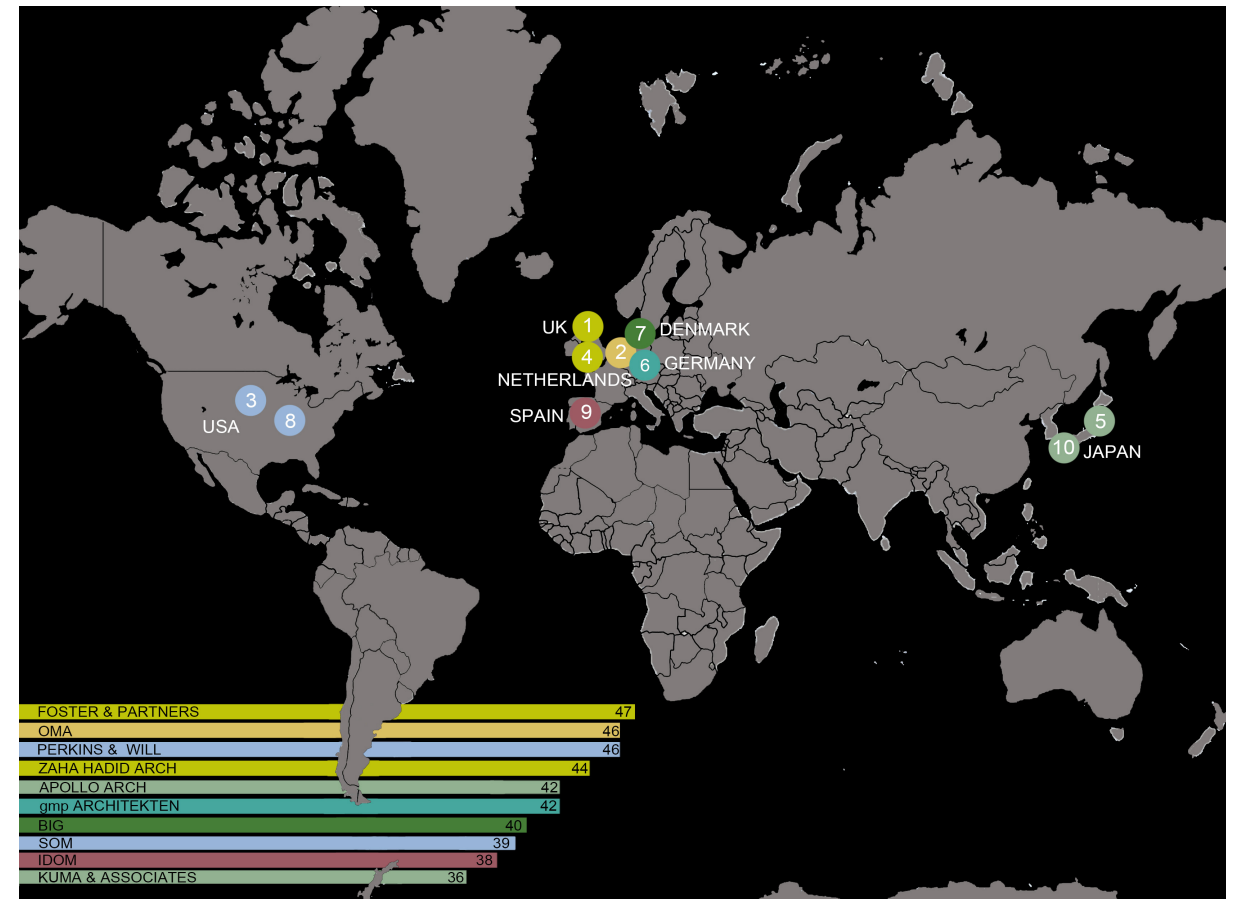


Fig. 4

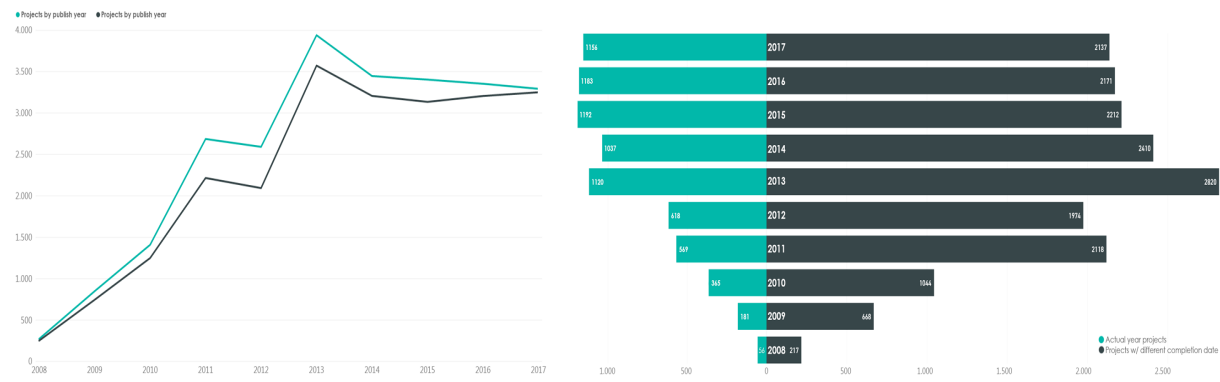


Fig. 2

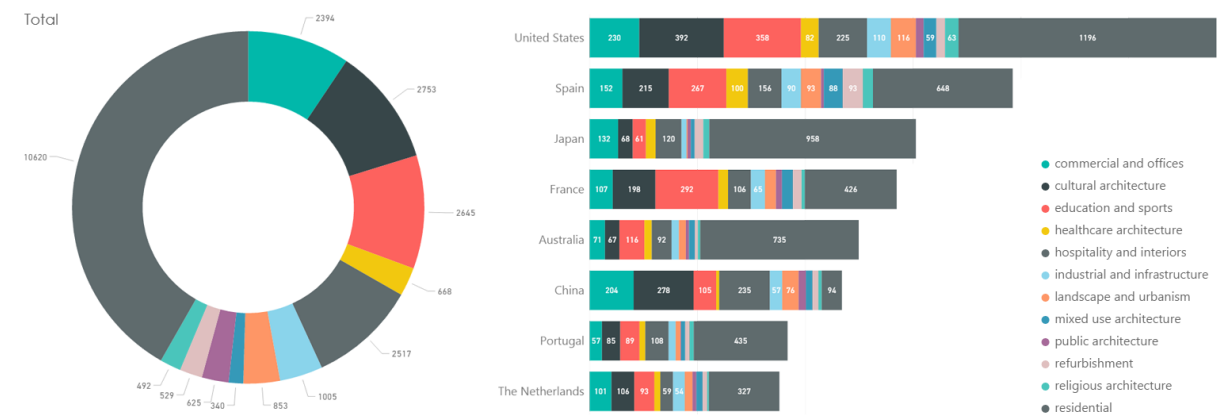


Fig. 3



## Notes

1. We don't use indifferently the terms History of Architecture or Architectural History. For a theoretical discussion on the differences, a good starting point is Güven, Suna. «Frontiers of fear. Architectural history, the anchor and the sail» in Dana Arnold, Elvan Altan Ergut, and Belgin Turan Özkaya. *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*. New York: Routledge, 2006: 74–81.

## Image Captions

Fig. 1. (Map of) Countries with larger number of projects in the website.

Fig. 2. (a) Relation of projects built and published the same year vs. others. (b) Comparison of built projects and published projects by year.

Fig. 3. [DONUT] Distribution of projects among categories. Contribution by categories for countries with larger number of projects published.

Fig. 4. Ranking of the offices with the highest number of projects published on Archdaily.

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## Biography

**Guido Cimadomo**, Lecturer at the Department of Art and Architecture and Coordinator for International Mobility at the School of Architecture, University of Malaga (Spain) since 2010. Architect (Italy, 1998), PhD (Spain, 2014). Guido is Expert member of the ICOMOS' scientific committee CIPA for the Documentation of Architectonic Heritage and of UNESCO's Forum «University and Heritage». He shares the practice of architecture working on the design of cultural and sport facilities and on documentation, rehabilitation and dissemination of cultural heritage. Coordinator of the online course "Writing architecture: Pathlines and criteria" from 2010 to 2017, focuses his researches on the ways to disseminate architecture and on the tools to empower citizens in the transformation of urban environments. He has recently published the book "Cesare Brandi. El lenguaje clásico de la arquitectura" and curated "Breve curso de escritura crítica", both for Asimétrica Editorial.

**Rubén García Rubio**, Ph.D. in Architecture from the University of Valladolid (2016); and Ph.D. in Architecture from the University of Roma Tre (2016). He has been "Visiting Scholar" in the American Academy in Rome in 2012. He has been Professor in several Schools of Architecture in Europe and has also been Guest Professor in many international institutions. As a professional, his work has been awarded with architectural prizes and thoroughly published in national and international architectural magazines. At the present, he is teacher at the Al Ghurair University (Dubai, UAE) and combines it with a research activity in several university projects and his works in his architectural office RRa. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of the architectural weblog [CajondeArquitecto.com](http://CajondeArquitecto.com).

**Vishal Shahdadpuri Aswani**. Vishal is a young researcher with a strong interest in algorithmic design processes, robotic manufacturing techniques and predictive modelling for urban development. In 2014, his passion for learning made him pause his career as an architect to train in the field of programming and thus expand his knowledge in a field that he considered fundamental. After this, the same passion led him to develop his studies in the United States and Australia, before returning to Spain in 2017. During his stay in Australia, Vishal joined the robotic fabrication laboratory of the University of Technology Sydney as a specialist and technical teacher, working on various research projects involving advanced computational design, generation of complex forms, programming for digital manufacturing of construction elements and development of robotic manufacturing processes.