

ACADIA '88

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Introduction

The title of the ACADIA '88 Workshop was *Computing in Design Education*. Pamela Bancroft of the School of Architecture at Montana State University was the Technical Program Chair (Bancroft 1988). The College of Architecture and Urban Planning of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor hosted the Workshop, October 28-30, 1988. The Workshop Coordinator was James Turner and the Associate Coordinators were Theodore Hall and Robert Johnson.

Digital Technology - Past

In the Preface to the Workshop Proceedings Professor Bancroft discusses the progress being made towards integrating computing into architectural design, and she notes the diversity in the approach and content of the papers submitted to the Workshop.

The first paper in the Proceedings by Marcos Novak, "Computational

Composition in Architecture" provides a sweeping overview of the state of computing in architecture and points to the discrepancy between architectural theory and the current state of computer-aided design:

This paper argues that the issues of architectural theory and composition must be addressed directly by the computer-aided design field, and that until this occurs computer-aided architectural design will necessarily be peripheral to architecture because it does not address the central problems of architecture as an expressive medium. (Novak 1988).

Half of the papers in the proceedings describe experiences in the design studio, while the remaining papers discuss a range of topics from representation to knowledge-based design.

Digital Technology - Present

Most of the papers recognized that

designing with computers was in an infant stage. Their explorations were apparently providing abundant insights into the problems of the computing tools they were using, and these problems seem to be more easily described than did potential cures. The widely perceived problem was that, while progress was being made, the central qualities of aid to design were elusive. Another common perception was that the processes were fragmented, and that adequate representation was still difficult to achieve. Many of the tools seemed more of a barrier than an aid to design. Both of these issues, integration, and fluidity of representation and manipulation have improved, and continue to do so in increasingly interesting and unexpected ways.

Apart from the formal paper sessions of the Workshop, one of the most helpful things that ACADIA undertook between 1978 and 1988 was a Delphi survey under the leadership of Robert Johnson, who was President-elect at the time of the 1988 Workshop. The survey reflected the state of mind of the ACADIA membership and was the basis for planning for the organization for a number of years. At the time it was undertaken it was invaluable in passing on the institutional "wisdom" from one set of elected officers to the next.

ACADIA – Research Practices Toward the Future

Many of the problems of using computers in design education have persisted from the beginnings of ACADIA. Including questions of integration, representation, and is this design (architecture)? Though improvements in software accessibility and user interface

are significant, these areas provide unimaginably interesting futures. The present transition beyond ubiquitous computing is one example.

Fortunately for ACADIA and designers, the momentum inherent in computing theory, hardware, and software will continue to provide new possibilities for architecture and design. There are more than sufficient research prospects to go around. The most significant undertaking that ACADIA can provide is a forum for discussion, an opportunity for publishing, and a support for a well rounded scholarship in architecture, design, and the human condition.

References

- Bancroft, Pamela, ed. (1988). *ACADIA '88 Workshop Proceedings: Computing in Design Education: The Association for Computer-Aided Design in Architecture*.
- Novak, Marcos. (1988). Computational Composition in Architecture. In *ACADIA '88 Workshop Proceedings: Computing in Design Education*, ed. P. Bancroft, 5-30. ACADIA: Association for Computer-Aided Design in Architecture.