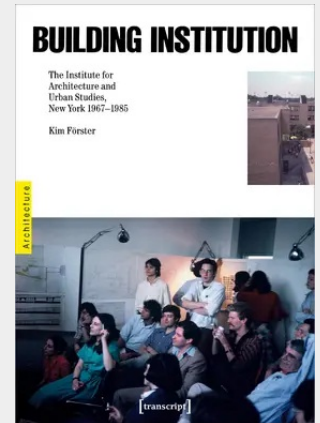


Building Institution

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

'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.

1. Why did you choose this topic? Talking the example of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, which was active in New York for 17 years in the 1970s, allows complex insights into the cultural transformation and fundamental understanding of architecture, which as a discipline and profession has extended beyond schools and offices to encompass various forms of cultural production and mediation, curating, exhibiting, talking, and publishing about the built and unbuilt. 2. What new perspectives does your book offer? Building Institution offers a collective biography that combines architectural and institutional history, through the lens of cultural studies and criticism. It is less concerned with individual architects and those who became stars than with rather precarious practices, the reinvention of groups, organizations and institutions in a particular socio-economic climate, and the contextualization of architecture and culture in the institutional, academic and publishing landscape of North America. 3. What makes your topic relevant for current research debates? From a historical perspective, the Institute's protagonists and publications have shaped the architectural scene on the East Coast and the English-speaking debate of the last 50 years. Furthermore, the organizational and functional role of cultural institutions in contemporary architecture and, more generally, cultural production alongside architectural production, on a both large and small scale, can be analyzed and explained by developments at the Institute. 4. Choose one person you would like to discuss your book with! Good question: First of all, of course, I would like to read and discuss the book with the current generation of architecture students. In addition to the architectural historians who have studied this period in New York, I would be interested in a conversation with the academics I cited: the philosopher Georg Franck, who has presented a Marxist critique of the attention economy in architecture, or the sociologist Andreas Reckwitz, who has written about urban culture and culturalization. 5. Your book summary in one sentence: New York architecture circles, for which the Institute stands, have had a decisive influence on what we in the western world understand by architecture and building culture today.



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