Australian National University

Mapping German Architecture in an Era of Crisis, 1914-24: Digital Methods for Art Historical Work

Tuesday 8 May, 5pm-6.30pm

Speaker

Prof Paul Jaskot
Duke University

Location

Theatrette
Sir Roland Wilson Building,
Building #120, McCoy Circuit,
ANU

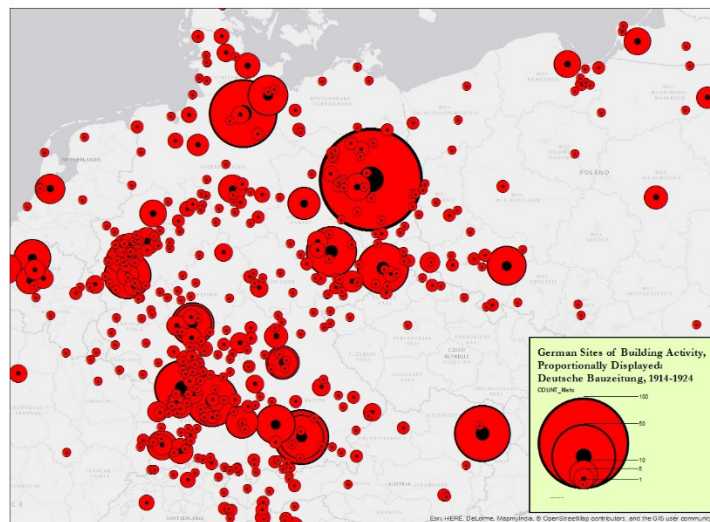Lecture followed by light refreshments

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This lecture is free and open to the public

Presented by

Centre for Digital Humanities Research

Research School of Humanities and the Arts
ANU College of
Arts and Social Sciences

Much has been written on the architecture of early Weimar Germany after World War I. And yet, however sophisticated and well researched, the art historical approach to German architecture from 1914-1924 has focused on only a few isolated built structures like Erich Mendelsohn's Einstein Tower (1921) and contrasted them with the many projects and designs that existed on paper for the period such as Bruno Taut's *Stadtkrone* (1919). What happens, though, when we look at not a few dozen buildings or architects but literally the thousands of structures—from vernacular to industrial to avant-garde "high design"—that were actually built in that period? These buildings form the "dark matter" that sustained and conditioned the few architectural stars, both real and on paper, on whom we have focused so much of our attention. This talk addresses a broader analysis of architectural production by looking at the role of the construction industry in wartime and postwar Germany. It argues for an architectural history from below, as it were, an account of history that by necessity involves, for example, more a discussion of labor and materials than it does design. In the process, this talk also raises significant problems involving art historical sources as well as how, and even whether, to visualize evidence in a digital mapping environment.

Paul Jaskot is Professor of Art, Art History & Visual Studies at Duke University.