Documenting History, Charting Progress, and Exploring the World: Architecture in Nineteenth-Century Photographs

Snite Museum of Art, University of Notre Dame
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Heavily represented in collections of nineteenth-century photographs, architectural photography provides inroads into major themes of the period: industry and technology, exploration and exoticism, documentation and preservation, history and nationalism, etc. However, most histories of photography use the progressive development of the medium as the organizing structure for the presentation of the material. Architecture lent itself to the long exposure times required by the early photographic processes and was used extensively as subject by the first generation of photographers. A genuine understanding of the first decades of architectural photography needs to account for the relevant technical parameters of production, but it also demands that each photographic image of architecture be studied as a primary visual document and, as well, as an aesthetic object.

The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography at the University of Notre Dame offers an opportunity for this multi-faceted exploration. Approaching 10,000 photographs, the Scholz collection includes representative examples of most significant categories of nineteenth-century photography. This exhibition of photographs from the Snite Museum collection highlights the breadth and depth of the Museum’s holdings in the area of images of nineteenth-century architecture. Although most of the material originates from France and England, the two countries where photography was invented, the collection includes material from the rest of the world.

The photographs selected for this exhibition reflect the main categories of architectural photography practiced during the first decades of the medium—from documentation of historic buildings to exploration, progress, tourism, view of cities, urban renewal and vernacular structures. Driven more by the curiosity of a social historian than by the eye of a connoisseur, this exhibition reveals the wealth of information captured by nineteenth-century photographers as they turned their lenses toward architecture.

The Snite Museum of Art would like to thank the guest curator of this exhibition and author of this brochure, Micheline Celestine Nilsen, assistant professor of art history, Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts, Indiana University South Bend. Nilsen is writing a book and organizing an October 3-4, 2010 international symposium on topics related to nineteenth-century architectural photography.
A Roman temple built around 20 BCE, the Maison Carrée stirred Thomas Jefferson to write that he coveted it like a mistress. Edouard Baldus made several photographs of this monument in 1851 and 1853. This print by an unidentified photographer emulates Baldus’s approach to a monument, creating a single, iconic view akin to an architectural elevation.

**Maison Carrée, Nîmes, France, ca. 1851**  
Unidentified photographer  
albumen silver print  
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography  
1994.030.032
Henri Le Secq and Charles Nègre both photographed at Chartres between 1851 and 1855, as restoration work was in progress. This print by an unidentified photographer adopts the same motif as Nègre’s view of 1854, converted to photogravure in 1857. The taller trees, the vendors in the doorway, and the absence of construction debris suggest a later date.

Chartres Cathedral, South Transept Porch, 1860s
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1987.015.027.A

Little is known about E. Nicolas, whose work surfaced in the 1930s. He appears to have been active in northern France between 1850 and 1855 and a handwritten note among his photographs suggests that his home base was the town of Senlis, 40 kilometers north of Paris. This print reveals a sense of composition and keen eye for light and texture effects.

Senlis, Cathedral And Ruins Of Chateau, ca. 1852-55
E. Nicolas
French, active 1850-55
salt print from a waxed paper negative
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1987.015.023
Photographs of Roman monuments continued a tradition of "vedute" or views such as the engravings of Piranesi, made for the Grand Tour visitors to Rome. As early as the 1850s, photographers adopted iconic views of Roman monuments made available to the increasing number of tourists brought by the steamships, railways and organized tours.
Photographic albums were commonly used to organize and present photographs. Frequently without captions, they raise questions of agency, intention, and legibility for us today. The country house photograph was a genre common in England, and this compilation includes the name of the estate, its owner and the county where it is located. When known, the date of construction and/or name of the architect are also included.

**Album: English Manor Houses**, undated
Unidentified photographer,
albumen silver prints
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1981.031.488.I
(on view in long, flat, display case)
These two views of the Boulevard des Italiens and its westward continuation, the Boulevard des Capucines, both located near the Paris Opera, illustrate the difference between the Parisian boulevards before and after Haussmann's reconfiguration. The street façades on Boulevard des Italiens are irregular, those of the Boulevard des Capucines exhibit the regular alignment characteristic of Second Empire Paris.
Although not directly related to the large urban renewal projects that would be carried out by Haussmann in Paris during the Second Empire, this photograph shows the quai on the Île la Cité prior to the reconfiguration of the Palais de Justice complex. Construction materials are already visible on the quai (landing or wharf).

**Paris, Quai De L’horloge**, ca. 1852  
François-Auguste Renard  
French, active 1850s  
albumen print from albumen on glass negative  
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography  
1987.015.017
The Roman temple of Antoninus and Faustina, located on the north side of the Roman Forum, was converted into the Church of S. Lorenzo in Miranda before the 12th century, with a baroque façade added in 1602. By the 19th century, the Roman Forum was used to graze cattle, hence its nickname of Campo Vaccino (cow field). With laundry drying on the railing of the church, this photograph reveals the vernacular use of the Forum structures, prior to archaeological excavations undertaken by the Italian Republican government as of 1870.

**Rome, S. Lorenzo In Miranda, ca. 1870**
Pierre Petit
French, 1832-after 1885
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1987.015.024
These two photographs show a similar view of the Paris Hôtel de Ville before and after its demolition on 24 May 1871 during the bloody episode of the Paris Commune. According to the popular press at the time, the architects working on the reconstruction of the Hôtel de Ville met at the home of the photographer Pierre-Amboise Richebourg because he owned the most complete set of photographs of the building prior to its demolition.

Paris, Hotel De Ville Destroyed By The Commune In 1871, before 1871
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1984.048.008.H

Paris, The New Hotel De Ville, after 1871-72
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1980.104.002.M
The column on the Place Vendôme was built out of metal recycled from canons seized by the armies of Napoleon I. Its demolition on 16 May 1871 was a symbolic gesture against the Second Empire by the populist government of the Paris Commune. Rebuilding the column was equally symbolic of post-Commune efforts to bring about stability and order. Marville's photograph expresses formal control of a carefully monitored and contained work site.

Paris, Reconstruction Of The Column On The Place Vendôme, 1875
Charles Marville
French, 1816-1879
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1984.012.038
At the southwestern corner of the Louvre, the Pavilion de Flore was rebuilt between 1861 and 1866 as part of the Tuileries Palace, official residence of Napoleon III. After the damage sustained by the Tuileries during the Paris Commune, only two pavilions were reconstructed as the western extremities of the Louvre complex, the Pavilions de Flore and de Marsan. After standing in ruins for twelve years, the rest of the Tuileries Palace was eventually demolished in 1883. These two photographs show the southern Pavilion de Flore as reconstructed before 1871, and after it was damaged during the Commune.

Paris, New Tuileries Pavillon: Pavilion De Flore, 1866-1871
Achille Quinet
French, active 1851-71
Albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1987.015.006

Paris, Louvre: Pavilion De Flore, after May 1871
Goupil, et Cie.
French, active 1855-1870s
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1994.030.123
When the first railway stations were constructed, there was no precedent for such buildings. In order to reassure a wary public that the new mode of transport was safe, companies hired architects to design buildings that emulated traditional structures. The solution devised by François Duquesney for the Gare de Strasbourg (later Gare de l’Est), captured here in an early print by François-Auguste Renard, was by all accounts considered as one of the most elegant.

*Paris, Gare De Strasbourg*, ca. 1852
François-Auguste Renard
French, active 1850s
albumen print from albumen on glass negative
Initially assumed to depict damage done by the Paris Commune, this photograph was actually taken in the aftermath of an accidental fire at the J.F. Cail et Cie. factory on the Quai de Billy in Paris during the night of December 15 and 16, 1865. The Cail enterprises were one of the most significant industrial concerns of nineteenth-century France, with factories in Paris, Denain, Douai, Valenciennes, Brussels, Amsterdam, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Java, and Russia. Their main contributions included manufacturing of equipment for the processing of sugar, the production of railway locomotives and construction of public works such as bridges and viaducts. After this fire, the Paris Cail operations were transferred to the Quai de Grenelle, where they would occupy eight city blocks.

Paris: Ruins Of The Cail-Fives Factory (Trocadéro), 1865
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1985.010.008
The Forth Railway Bridge, over the Firth of Forth in the east of Scotland, nine miles west of Edinburgh was built between 1882 and 1889 according to the design of Sir Benjamin Baker. With two side spans, four towers and intermediate spans, the steel cantilevered bridge reaches a total length of 1.5 mile at 150 feet above high tide. Its double track provides a vital connection between the Scottish capital, Fife and the North East of Scotland. The Arts and Craft designer William Morris considered this engineering prowess as the ugliest among recent constructions.

Scotland, Forth Bridge From The North, ca. 1889
James Valentine
British, 1815-1880
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1985.011.015.A
These two photographs were among approximately a hundred taken by the French engineer George Poulet who was director of the French Santa Fé Railway Company between 1889 and 1895. They illustrate the process of clearing the land, and bridging rivers for two different portions of the line. The rail line would supersede the burro to provide an outlet for the wool, hides and meat of the *pampa* and would eventually become part of the densest rail network in South America. Akin to the blueprints in use by engineers and architects, the cyanotype medium may have been selected because it was easier to process in the tropical climate.

**Construction Of The Railway Line Between Santa Fe And San Cristobald, 1890**
George Poulet
French, 1848-1936
cyanotype
The Snite Museum, University of Notre Dame
2009.055.001
The Semmering railway was the first standard gauge rail line across the Alps. Designed and built by the engineer Carl von Ghega (1802–1860), the project for the line had been under consideration by the Austrian authorities since 1844. The impetus for the start of construction was the Revolution of 1848, as the line provided employment for a large number of potentially restless workers, away from the capital. Still in use today, the rail line has been classified as UNESCO World Heritage site. Oskar Kramer’s photographs highlight the beauty of the natural setting rather than the intrusion of engineering into the Alpine landscape.

Album: Erinnerung An Die Semmeringbahn (Souvenir Of The Semmering Railway), ca. 1880
Oskar Kramer
Austrian, active 1867-1890s
foldout album: 24 albumen silver prints
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1982.011.012.I
(on view in long, flat, display case)

This album records the construction of the rail line between Pretoria in the South African Republic and the Indian Ocean port of Lourenço Marques in Mozambique (known today as Maputo). The line was open to circulation in 1894 and its construction is intimately tied to the South African political context before the Boer War (1899-1902). The twenty photographs in the album document the line from the celebration of its opening in Pretoria to its ocean port destination, with views of the challenges in-between, such as a washed out bridge on the Crocodile River. It also contains two group portraits: one of white settlers, the other of indigenous black “kaffers”.

Album: Souvenir (Railway Line From Pretoria To Maputo), 1890s Unidentified photographer
20 albumen silver prints
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
(no accession number)
(on view in long, flat, display case)
In the first view, taken before 1876, the characteristic profile of the cathedral with its dome almost hides the unfinished façade on the left. The current façade, begun in 1876, was inaugurated in 1887. It is shown here with the scaffolding still in place. These three photographs of “unfinished business” in Cologne and Florence underline the nineteenth century preoccupation with the past and its historical structures.

Florence, Cathedral Façade, ca. 1872
J.B. Philpot
active Italy, 1850s-1860s
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography

Florence, Cathedral With The New Façade, after 1875
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1984.048.005.E
Construction of Cologne Cathedral was begun on 14 August 1248 but it was not completed until a final building campaign between 1842 and 1880. This view shows the completed cathedral and, in the background, the railway line. Today, the rail station and the cathedral are within close proximity of each other. This is an unusual urban configuration, as cathedrals were usually at the core of the older city and railway stations outside of the medieval walls.

Cologne Cathedral, 1890s
Unidentified photographer
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1978.081.144

In close proximity of the Flamboyant Gothic Cathedral of Milan, the Galleria combines traditional façades enclosed under the kind of iron and glass construction used for greenhouses and on the Crystal Palace built by Joseph Paxton for the 1851 Great Exhibition in London. These structures sheltered and shed light on the urban spectacles of modernity.

Milan, Galleria Vittorio Emanuele, after 1877
Giacomo Brogi
Italian, 1822-1881
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
AA.1978.089.001
Built for the General Italian Exposition of 1884 in Turin, the Borgo Medievale (medieval town) combined emulation of medieval forms with inconspicuous modern construction techniques. This use of an historical architectural idiom in a major exposition predated by almost ten years the Beaux-Art buildings of the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Unlike most of the Chicago Exposition’s buildings, the Borgo Medievale can still be visited in Turin today.

Combining metal framing and stone exterior facing, Charles Garnier’s Paris Opera was the most explicit and extravagant statement of Second Empire architecture. Designed to accommodate the parallel spectacles of the stage and the audience, with imperial trappings, it was, ironically, not completed until after Napoleon III had been replaced by the Third Republic and had died in exile.
The Philadelphia Masonic Temple was built on North Broad Street at Center Square across the street from the construction site of City Hall. Built between 1868 and 1873 in Norman style by James Windrim (1840–1919), its interiors were completed by George Herzog between 1887 and 1902. It was one of the first buildings in the city to be lit by electricity.
The figure drawing at the right of the Porch of the Caryatids inscribes this photograph in the tradition of measured drawings of Athenian monuments begun by James Stuart and Nicholas Revett in the 1750s. This allusion to an architectural tradition recalls the very drawings by Stuart and Revett that included figures drawing the ancient monuments. This photograph is one of ten by Constantinou in the Snite collection, most likely collected by Clarence Dinsmore, a relative of Janos Scholz, during his 1864 voyage to Greece.

**Athens: Acropolis, The South Side Of The Erechtheion And The Porch Of The Caryatids**, ca. 1865
Dimitrios Constantinou
Greek, active 1850s-1870s
albumen silver print
The Janos Scholz Collection of Nineteenth-Century European Photography
1994.030.177.H