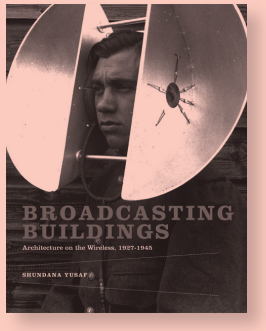
Shundana Yusaf
Broadcasting Buildings: Architecture on the Wireless, 1927–1945
Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014
352 pp. 77 b&w illus.
$30.95 hardcover ISBN 9780262026741
$21.95 eBook ISBN 9780262321624

Mitchell Akiyama

> Man looks at the creation of architecture with his eyes… One can only deal with aims which the eye can appreciate, and intentions which take into account architectural elements.
>
> —Le Corbusier, *Towards a New Architecture*

In the mid 1990s, architect and critic Juhanni Pallasmaa published a slim polemic that indicted architecture for its blind obsession with vision. *The Eyes of the Skin* scathingly equated the West's occularcentrism (and its attendant qualities of detachment and domination) with a cold functionalism endemic to its architecture. Influenced by the work of scholar and Jesuit priest Walter Ong, Pallasmaa located architecture's hostility to non-visual ways of sensing in the Western tradition's transition from orality to textuality.[1] And, like Ong, he held hope that the ubiquity and influence of sonic media might help to return architecture and society to more communal and connected ways of being. While Pallasmaa was primarily focused on the haptic and the tactile, he helped to open architectural discourse to previously omitted or marginalized forms of sensory experience. *The Eyes of the Skin* only touched, as it were, on the importance of aurality in architecture, but in the years since its publication a handful of works—Emily Thompson's *The Soundscape of Modernity* and Berry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter's *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?* are notable examples[2]—have more deeply probed the relationships between sound and the built environment.

Shundana Yusaf's *Broadcasting*



Buildings, an assiduous history of the curious prevalence of architecturally oriented programming in early British radio broadcasting, is an important addition to this small but growing body of literature addressing sound and the built environment. In the period from 1927 (the birth of the BBC as a public radio broadcasting service) to 1945 (the year of its amalgamation into a single, national service), British broadcasters figured and constructed radio as a "wireless university" tasked with delivering a social and moral education to a nation that was still coming into its own as a liberal democracy. While architecture-related programming made up only a small portion of the BBC's output, broadcasts about the built environment offered both an important reflection of and a significant intervention into critical social issues of the day. In a sense, this pedagogical function of radio continued and expanded the paternalistic Victorian imperative to improve the public body politic through cultural education. An important part of this mandate was the creation of a unifying narrative about the nation's heritage, a history putatively encapsulated in Britain's architectural patrimony. Given radio's reputation for disembodied, transitory representation, a public pedagogy concerned with the solid, material weight of architecture might seem a counterintuitive venture, but Yusaf argues that BBC broadcasts infused the built environment with new forms of symbolic, auratic importance: "Radio changed the manner in which buildings exerted force. If buildings had previously exerted power through the theatricality of their materials, they now asserted it through the theatricality of words" (81). In the age of mass media, architecture could no longer remain an esoteric sphere governed by elites whose primary criterion for excellence was, simply, beauty—a trait considered to be self-evident, at least to those with the authority to recognize it (39). What was significant about the BBC's broadcasts on architecture was that they trained the public to interpret the built environment with a critical eye. The methods for how one should indeed think about buildings were still determined by expert, patrician figures, but this is not to say that these terms were not publicly contested. For Yusaf, the key to this development lay in the power of speech, in early radio presenters' realization that to connect with audiences they would need to "formally employ casualness, artfully sound artless, and consciously take up spontaneity" (49).

There was no real consensus as to what sorts of aesthetic, political, or social positions the broadcaster should promote. The period Yusaf covers was tumultuous, and architecture became synechdocal of controversial political issues. One fascinating example she gives is the politicization of architectural preservation that threatened age-old notions of class and propriety. This was a time in which working class people were being encouraged to better themselves through education and exposure to the examples of taste and refinement set by the gentry, a time in which new policies effected a re-distribution of wealth that left many aristocrats unable to keep or maintain their estates. One of the results was that this newly mobile population, encouraged to become tourists and take in the splendour of the British countryside, occasionally ended up committing such indignities as picnicking without permission, littering, and picking the flowers. Critics such as Charles Robert Ashbee, who had once supported the redistribution program implemented by the New Liberals, now broadcast pleas for tourist codes of conduct and for the state to provide the means for former landowners to recover their properties and maintain them in a fashion that would preserve an architectural heritage that was being spoiled by populism (130–38).

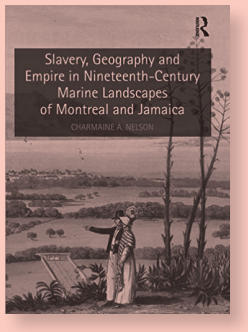
Yusaf's patient historiography is admirably generous to her subjects; she shows an uncommon willingness to attend to individual—and occasionally conflicting—prerogatives without contorting them to fit an overarching narrative. If there is a shortcoming to Yusaf's thorough and thoughtful method, it is in her apparent assumption that the special power of radio derived from its specifically sonic properties. This is a thorny, somewhat contradictory position in that, while she describes the content of these broadcasts as being "socially constituted," she also leans heavily on Walter Ong's notion that radio ushered in an age of "secondary orality" (80–81). Ong, manifesting his debt to Marshall McLuhan, believed that the emergence and potential dominance of sonic media (which also included television) would catalyze a reversal of the social atomization engendered by print and effect a return to a more connected state of sociality. What is problematic about Yusaf's account is that she figures radio as issuing, even determining, a homogenous reception of "wireless words," while arguing that the content of these words and the styles of presentation adopted by their speakers were highly constructed. This is not to say that radio and print are ontologically indistinguishable, but subsuming the message under the supposed immutable workings of the medium can abet the notion that the effects of listening, in all their forms, are somehow predictable. But, as Benedict Anderson famously noted, print does not necessarily or essentially fragment a population. Indeed, the printed word played an important role in fostering the imagined communities that constituted the modern nation state.[3] This is why the emergence of scholarship that deconstructs our assumptions about media along sensory lines is so important. When Yusaf writes, for example, "I explore how the unifying and harmonizing sense of hearing meddles with the clarifying and distinguishing sense of sight" (18), she perpetuates a problematic truism about the essential differences between the senses. Jonathan Sterne contests this cliché, one he calls the audio-visual litany, arguing that it problematically sets sensing and phenomenology outside of history.[4] While Yusaf shows herself to be a deft historian of institutions and cultural production, it is important to remember that the senses too, have a history. ¶

Working as a scholar, artist, and composer, Mitchell Akiyama is currently Assistant Professor in the Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design at the University of Toronto.
—m@mitchellakiyama.com

1. Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London, 2012), 40–41.
2. Emily Thompson, *The Soundscape of Modernity: Architectural Acoustics and the Culture of Listening in America, 1900–1933* (Cambridge, MA, 2002); Barry and Linda-Ruth Salter Blesser, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?: Experiencing Aural Architecture* (Cambridge, MA, 2007).
3. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Relfections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York, 2006).
4. Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction* (Durham, NC, 2003), 14.

Charmaine A. Nelson
Slavery, Geography and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal and Jamaica
London and New York: Routledge, 2016
416 pp. 16 colour plates, 26 b/w illus.
$149.95 cloth ISBN 9781409468912

Renée Ater



Slavery, Geography and Empire in Nineteenth-Century Marine Landscapes of Montreal and Jamaica is a deeply researched and complex book. As a comparative study of two island settlements that were part of the British Empire, Charmaine Nelson's work draws links between Canadian slavery and tropical plantation slavery of the Caribbean through a focus on nineteenth-century marine landscapes produced in oil paintings, watercolours, engravings, lithographs, and aquatints. One of her principal framing questions asks what these landscapes of Jamaica and Montreal can tell us about empire, geography, and the economy of slave labour. She writes, "What does the colonial appropriation, use, and exploitation of land and its material transformation and representation as landscape have to teach us about the process of imperialism?" (2).

Nelson argues for the displacement of the metropole-colony dichotomy that has dominated the field of slavery studies. Instead, she posits a new model based on the idea of colony-to-colony interconnections and pathways within the British Empire. Employing a postcolonial feminist reading, she intertwines art history, geography, and slavery studies in support of this colony-to-colony model and to propose "a second Middle Passage between the shores of the Caribbean and Canada" (7). Nelson reads geography as playing a central role in empire building and colonization. Her interpretation of Jamaican and Canadian (Montreal) landscape imagery is rooted in what she terms "the racialization of the land" (8), which, she argues is rooted in how "a

geographical location comes to be identified by and through specific populations, natural and human-made sites and landmarks, forms of social, cultural, and commercial interaction and exchange" (8). These colonial landscapes, she argues, become cultural representations steeped in race and empire.

Along with her use of the methods of postcolonial geography and art history, she is concerned with contesting the erasure of Blacks from Canadian history and from the study of Canadian slavery. She argues forcefully for Canada to be remembered as part of the African Diaspora. In support of this position, she deploys landscape art as a means to reevaluate Canada as a colonial power and its relationship to the Caribbean. She states explicitly, "this book then explores the selective erasure and emplacement of racialized subjects within the landscape of Montreal and Jamaica as they functioned to embed and police fragile and emergent alignments between landscape and belonging which shored up British imperial discourses of racialized possession and colonial entitlement" (11).

The book contains an introduction and eight interlocking chapters. In chapter One, Nelson considers geography as a representational practice implicated in ways of knowing place. Chapters Two through Four look closely at slavery in Montreal and its relationship to the production of landscape art. Chapter Two provides an overview of slavery in Montreal under French and then British rule. Chapter Three investigates two images, François Malepart de Beaucourt's *Portrait of a Haitian Woman* (1786) and George Heriot's *Minuets of the Canadians* (1807), providing in-depth analyses of the representation of the enslaved African in Montreal. Chapter Four considers how the British used maps and landscapes of Montreal to impose an imperial vision on their newly acquired settlement. Chapters Five through Eight focus on the colonial landscape and depictions of slavery in Jamaica. Similar to Chapter Four, Chapter Five explores the "landscaping" of Jamaica in order to understand the British imperial imaging and imagining of the island. Chapters Six through Eight engage and interpret images from William Clark's *Ten Views in the Island of Antigua…* (1823) and James Hakewill's *A Picturesque Tour of the Island of Jamaica…* (1825) to understand the ways in which Jamaica and its production of sugar were visualized. Nelson argues that Hakewill erased black bodies and slave labour from the tropical landscapes in his illustrations, creating a sanitized, pro-slavery discourse. To counter this erasure, she examines the "material, social, and cultural realities of slave life in Jamaica that his images denied" (27).

At the heart of Nelson's book is a critique of the disciplines of slavery studies and art history. She argues that slavery studies has not engaged with visual art in meaningful ways outside the human body, and that art history has failed to raise significant and consistent questions related to race, colonialism, and imperialism because of the "unsuitability of [its] dominant methodologies and practices" (2) to such discourses. Because of the focus on the human body in slavery studies and the resistance of art history to tough discussions related to slavery, land, and empire, Nelson deliberately and methodically excavates the meaning of slavery in these two colonial locations through landscape art. Chapter Six exemplifies her project: she offers a close reading of Hakewill's *A Picturesque Tour of the Island of Jamaica…* and his erasure of the enslaved body from the land. At the same time in this chapter, she writes poignantly about white male sexual exploitation of black women in Jamaica and the astoundingly brutal nature of Jamaican slavery. She does this in order to challenge Hakewill's vision of Jamaican sugar plantations as scenes of "picturesque tranquility" (235). Her comparative project signals her position as scholarly activist and practitioner of a hybrid art history that incorporates a close attending to the visuals, a concern for what is seen and not seen, and a self-reflexivity concerning how the author positions herself. Throughout the book, one senses her outrage and indictment of the slavery complex as well as her commitment to telling a new story about the visualization and imaginings of slavery, geography, and empire in the nineteenth-century colonial world of Montreal and Jamaica. ¶

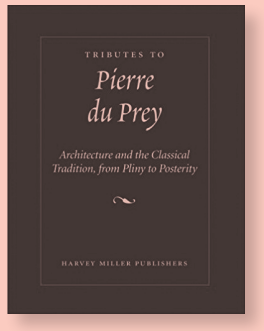
Renée Ater is a scholar of nineteenth- and twentieth-century art of the United States, whose research focuses on public monuments, race, space, and community engagement.
—rater@umd.edu

Matthew M. Reeve, ed.
Tributes to Pierre du Prey: Architecture and the Classical Tradition from Pliny to Posterity
London: Harvey Miller Publishers/ Brepols, 2014
288 pp. 129 b/w illus.
€100 cloth ISBN 9781909400122

C. Cody Barteet

This anthology, dedicated to architectural historian Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey, consists of sixteen essays that are bracketed by an introduction celebrating the career of du Prey and a postlude written by du Prey on the importance of mentors. The essays explore the significance of the language, morphology, and replication of classicism in Western building practices. The chapters, more or less arranged in a chronological order, centre on the evolution of the classical tradition in architecture from antiquity to mid-twentieth century while also considering the conceptual influences of classical ideals on cartography and on the nationalistic agendas of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The essays have a broad geographical focus and address not only Western European traditions, but also colonial South American and modern Canadian building programs. The scope of the text is reflected in the book's subtitle, *Architecture and the Classical Tradition from Pliny to Posterity*, which is derived from two of du Prey's important contributions to the study of architectural history: his online scholarly portal, *Architecture in the Classical Tradition*, and his book, *the Villas of Pliny, from Antiquity to Posterity*.

Before delving into this rich anthology, I will mention my lone criticism: the structure of the introduction, which centres on a lengthy tribute to du Prey. Although such a tribute is undoubtedly justified and could easily have been expanded, it



would have been better placed in a preface. As it is, it becomes the focus of the introduction, which leaves little room for a discussion of the organization of the book. The importance of the anthology's coverage and scholarly contributions, which include the first-time reproduction of four historical prints, is not made clear, and some of the truly significant findings of the chapters are not highlighted or contextualized, leaving readers to stumble upon them by chance. The anthology, nevertheless, is well rounded and will surely be enjoyed and used by generalists and specialists alike.

The book begins with a discussion of antiquity, moves on to the medieval and early modern eras, and ends with the modern period. The chapters in the sections on antiquity and the medieval period foreground issues of style. In his exploration of historical orders, Mark Wilson Jones demonstrates that the Greeks did not share our perceptions of the orders as being finite in form and function, but were rather multivalent in application and meaning. Eric Fernie provides a historiography of the Romanesque that brings out both the positive and pejorative connotations affixed to the term. Like Jones, Fernie indicates that stylistic terminology and codification are frequently driven by later ideological influences that may or may not align with "period" practices. Between these two surveys are more specialized essays. Guy Métraux examines literary discussions of the Roman villa, going beyond the famed works of Pliny. Judson Emerick analyzes the Tempietto in Rome and suggests a methodology that recognizes the limitations of periodization and its disregard for the implicit heterogeneity of all eras. This diversity within the anthology tells a broader and more nuanced story of the built environment, while at the same time demonstrating that facets of the design and semantic content of certain motifs resonate across historical eras.

The discussion of the early modern period begins John Beldon Scott's discussion of the many classical forms that are manifest in the visual rhetoric of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles v, particularly his court's revival of triumphal processions. Recognizing scholarly precedents that have meticulously documented the changes to Rome's urban fabric under Charles v,[1] Scott effectively "reintegrates" lived experience into the archaeological composition of the city, in which the new ideological narratives about the classical tradition that unfolded conveyed the political ambitions of Charles as well as those of his followers in the subsequent centuries.

From Rome in the time of Charles's transformations, readers are transported to Spain's colonies in the Americas. The importance of the classical tradition as filtered through ancient Roman practices is well known in Hispanic American studies, and as Gauvin Alexander Bailey demonstrates, classicism continued in eighteenth-century South America even as the Rococo was flourishing there under the influence of two architects: Giovanni Andrea Bianchi and Giovanni Battista Primoli. Bailey, like subsequent authors in the anthology, draws attention to the role of architects instead of focusing solely on patronage in the dissemination of the classical tradition.

With a global perspective in mind, Sally Hickson explores how the engraver Girolamo Porro, in his numerous engravings of antiquities and the ancient monuments of Rome, took account of the influx of topographic prints from the larger colonial world. Hickson makes an important contribution to classical studies as she transgresses the boundaries of our preconceived conceptions of classicism, which most often focus on architectural practises and not cartographic forms. Her chapter on Porro is the first in a sequence of five chapters that directly focus on early modern prints. In the following chapter, Una Roman D'Elia presents a meticulous study of the steps Claude Perrault took in his efforts to create a new classical order for the court of Louis xiv (Perrault designed an ostrich-feather capital, which despite winning a royal competition was never put into use). D'Elia carefully documents the significance of the architect's printmaking to the fostering and promoting of his intellectual ideas.

It is in this section that the anthology makes a particularly important contribution, with the first-time publication of prints, two associated with Giulio Romano and two with Giovanni Battista Montano. These four prints, all of which are in Canadian collections, will certainly be of interest to Renaissance scholars, and David McTavish's and Janina