Modern Problems: Myth and Reality in the Preservation of Modern Architecture and Urbanism

University of Pennsylvania – PennDesign Master Class: April 12-14, 2018

Bibliographic Notes

The following are references to a few of the many texts that exist on the subject of the conservation and renewal of modern heritage — and two document specifically on Kahn’s Richards Labs. These represent a broad but by no means comprehensive are only the surface of a deep well of information that is available on this topic.

John Allan: “From Sentiment to Science – Docomomo Comes of Age,” Transcript of Keynote Address to the 12th Docomomo International Conference, Espoo, Finland, August, 2012; published in Docomomo Journal #48 – 2013/1. This is an excellent insight into where value is perceived in the eyes of those entrusted with the care and renewal of modern buildings, and how to most effectively work heritage principles into rehabilitation plans.

APT Bulletin: Special Issue on Modern Heritage; Vol. XLI, No. 2-3, 2011 – This entire issue is devoted to a wide variety of topics on working with modern resources. Of particular general relevance are the Introductory title, “Modern Heritage: Progress, Priorities, Prognosis,” by Thomas Jester and David Fixler, and Michael McClelland’s Reassessing the Recent Past, Tower Neighborhood Renewal in Toronto.”

APT Bulletin: Special Issue on Modernism; Vol. XLVIII, No. 2-3, 2017 – This is a more recent Bulletin devoted to modern heritage. Of particular interest are the “Draft APT Principles for Renewing Modernism,” and Carl Elefante’s “Changing World, Evolving Value: A Historic Preservation Roadmap Toward 2050.”


David Fixler: “Repair of Modern Structures,” Change Over Time, Volume 1, #1, Spring 2011

Getty Conservation Institute: Colloquium to Advance the Practice of Conserving Modern Heritage; March 6-7, 2013 – Experts Meeting Proceedings, Susan Macdonald and Kyle Normandin, Editors: Summary of a workshop that was held to initiate the Getty’s Conserving Modern Architecture Initiative (CMAI) that brings together texts and commentary from many of the world’s leading practitioners on the subject.

Getty Conservation Institute: Conserving Twentieth-Century Built Heritage: A Bibliography, Second Edition, 2013, Susan Macdonald and Gail Ostergren, Editors. This is a hugely valuable resource for all published material relevant to the conservation of modern properties. It is updated regularly.


Journal of Architectural Conservation: Special Issue: Renewing Modernism, Vol. 23, Nos. 1-2, March-July 2017 – This is the first issue of the JAC dedicated exclusively to modern heritage. All of the essays in this volume have relevance to the Master Class. Of particular general interest are the articles by Theo Prudon, “Preservation, Design and Modern Architecture – the Challenges Ahead,” Deborah Slaton, “Challenges of Modern Materials – Assessment and Repair,” and Wessel de Jonge, “Sustainable Renewal of the Everyday Modern.”

Theodore H. M. Prudon: Preservation of Modern Architecture, New Jersey, John Wiley& Sons, 2008. Although now ten years old, this remains the most comprehensive standard work on the subject. Of particular relevance to the Master Class are the first four chapters.