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Abstract:	<p>This dissertation examines the work of a number of architects who sought to rethink the physical, visual, and historiographic problems of assembly at a moment when the discipline was being destabilized by changing cultural politics and the proliferation of new electronic media. Through a series of case studies, it analyzes buildings, images, publications, prototypes, and films made from the late 1950s to the early 1970s by architects in London (Theo Crosby and Edward Wright), Vienna (Hans Hollein, Gunther Feuerstein, Walter Pichler), Paris (the Utopie group), and Florence (the Superstudio group). I argue that during these years the making of composite images was intensely identified with imagining new forms of construction, a dynamic informed by concepts of montage pioneered by the historical avant-gardes. Rather than compare postwar experiments to those of the 1920s, the dissertation considers how emerging media practices responded to the absorption of montage into postwar mass culture. The rethinking of montage paralleled a changing attitude toward machines, in which an earlier twentieth-century ambition to master mechanization through design and prefabrication gave way to an attitude emphasizing a more flexible combination and rearrangement of parts, materials, and concepts drawn from a wide range of sources. Assembling an image out of disparate photomechanical elements graphically enacted the manner in which architects imagined appropriating technologies and materials from outside the domain of architecture in a bid to transform the discipline. During these years architects engaged montage as a mode of working both within and against the space of architectural publicity; one that was less illustrative than it was performative. If efforts to reinvent problems of assembly aimed to shift discourse within the discipline, they were also shaped by changes in the technological apparatuses of mechanical reproduction, notably the displacement of industrial letterpress by photo-offset lithography. In retrospect, grasping changing ideas of assembly helps to comprehend how during these years the status of building shifted within architectural culture, while also prefiguring how habits of "cut and paste,"--the continual combination and alteration of ready-made visual material--would become central to the operational culture of digital tools in our own time.</p>
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