



Collected Fiction (by Jeannette Pang, 2018) on Viipuri Library in Vyborg by Alvar Aalto, 1927-1935 | Included in *Collected Fictions: A Mess of Libraries*, 2018

Department of Architecture, Cornell University

## Photography and Architecture Collected Fictions

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Spring 2020, Arch 3308/4408/6308/6408 | Wednesdays, 10:10-12:15, 142 E Sibley

**Novels do lie –they cannot help doing so– but that is only a part of the story. The other is that, through the lying, they express a curious truth, which can only be expressed in a veiled and concealed fashion, masquerading as what it is not** (Mario Vargas Llosa)

Modern architecture cannot be comprehended without the study of the dissemination of its images. Photography and architecture proved to work particularly well together in creating the modern visual narrative. Architects became conscious of the full potential of photography beyond its documentary value, and photographers of architecture —architects themselves in many occasions—, shortly became active players and major broadcasters of emerging new ways of perceiving our environment. The theory about photography has become more and more elaborated, expanding its scope and surpassing every more traditional approach. Pictorial documentation gave in its way to new forms of exploring reality, opening a wide range of possibilities and raising photographic and media culture to a different level.

This theory course will present the evolution of photography and visual culture from its origins by the avant-garde up to contemporary formulations. In addition to the well known concepts that settle the foundations to understand visual modernity; the discussions will also embrace secondary characters and contemporary art works, directly related to architecture dissemination or engaged to defining its visual potential and theory limits.

Weekly lectures will be complemented with readings and student presentations. Additionally, students will develop new items for the Collected Fictions Project; an open adventure which explores some of the main principles involved in the visual narratives associated to architecture and the power of the photographic image. Previous work produced by the Collected Fictions project is edited in the publications “Collected Fictions: Some Masterpieces”, and “Collected Fictions: A Mess of Libraries”, both available at Cornell Library and online at [issuu.com](http://issuu.com)