

# ARCHITECTURE WORDS 9

MARK RAKATANSKY

## TECTONIC ACTS<sup>^</sup> OF DESIRE AND DOUBT

### PREFACE

Mark Rakatansky's recent 'Fabricators' offers insight into architecture's story-telling instinct, noting that we as architects don't just 'make things', we just as routinely (perhaps even more naturally) 'make things up'. Across a wide range of examples and episodes he re-frames this undeniable architectural reality, this schism between what architects think they're up to and how they go about relaying their account to minds other than their own.

From Palladio's 'creative nervousness' (a wonderful jab at the imaginary mental state of an architectural giant obsessed with superimposing layer after layer onto thickened Renaissance facades) or a stylish, Philip Marlowesque-forensic account of Giulio Romano's sixteenth-century parametrics, to the joke-telling intonation of Louis Kahn's late-night arguments with bricks, the essays that follow are chock full of casual asides, scholarly details and the \* occasional bad joke (picture Kahn's bricks responding 'I want to be veneer').

Unexpected, even quirky traits emerge. First, Rakatansky has a faith in the lateral possibilities of knowledge transfer unmatched by any other architectural observer in this era of noisy, triba! culture. These essays mine everything from the mannerisms of John Coltrane to the animate impulses of Bugs Bunny's creator and the

# CONTENTS

## 5. FOREWORD

### TECTONIC

12. FABRICATORS ^~»

28. TECTONIC ACTS OF DESIRE  
AND DOUBT (1945-1980):  
WHAT KAHN WANTS TO BE

72. ENVELOPE PLEASE

### ACTS OF

78. SPATIAL NARRATIVES

125. ROBIN EVANS

UL KRZYSZTOF WODICZKO:  
WHY THE FIGURAL

161. MOTIVATIONS OF ANIMATION

195. GREG LYNN

212. SPEAKING IN SYLLABLES

216. JOHN COLTRANE'S SAMPLE  
AND SCRATCH

228. AS SETTING, AS SCENE