Architecture and Fire presents us with a truly original engagement with issues of architecture and conservation through the lenses of psychoanalysis and philosophy. Here Zografos has created a stimulating proposition in the tradition of Bachelard and Bergson – at once intellectual, theoretical, provocative and poetic – while also being hugely relevant to our contemporary urban condition.’

Iain Borden, Professor of Architecture and Urban Culture, UCL Bartlett School of Architecture

‘Architecture and Fire is an extraordinary book that uses the shape-shifting figure of fire – it is the power of creation and destruction – to think through and also to link critical questions about the creative process, the disasters of fire, history, thermal comfort, and architectural conservation and building regulation. The work is experimental. ... This is the sort of extended critical inquiry that we are entitled to expect from the university, but which is becoming increasingly a rarity in contemporary academic research culture.’

Lorens Holm, Reader in Architecture, University of Dundee

Architecture and Fire develops a conceptual reassessment of architectural conservation through the study of the intimate relationship between architecture and fire. Stamatis Zografos expands on the general agreement among many theorists that the primitive hut was erected around fire – locating fire as the first memory of architecture, at the very beginning of architectural evolution.

Following the introduction, Zografos analyses the archive and the renewed interest in the study of archives through the psychoanalysis of Jacques Derrida. He moves on to explore the ambivalent nature of fire, employing the conflicting philosophies of Gaston Bachelard and Henri Bergson to do so, before discussing architectural conservation and the relationship between listed buildings, the function of archives, and the preservation of memories from the past. The following chapter investigates how architecture evolves by absorbing and accommodating fire, while the penultimate chapter examines the critical moment of architectural evolution: the destruction of buildings by fire, with a focus on the tragic disaster at London’s Grenfell Tower in 2017. Zografos concludes with thoughts on Freud’s drive theory.

Architecture and Fire is founded in new interdisciplinary research navigating across the boundaries of architecture, conservation, archival theory, classical mythology, evolutionary theory, thermodynamics, philosophy and psychoanalysis. It will be of interest to readers working in and around these disciplines.

STAMATIS ZOGRAFOS is a teaching fellow in Architectural History and Theory at UCL Bartlett School of Architecture. He is also a practising architect and the founder of Incandescent Square, an interdisciplinary platform for research and design with interests spanning from architecture and urbanism to critical heritage and curating. His research is interdisciplinary focusing on the fields of architecture/conservation, psychoanalysis, memory and fire.