

# spynnynge

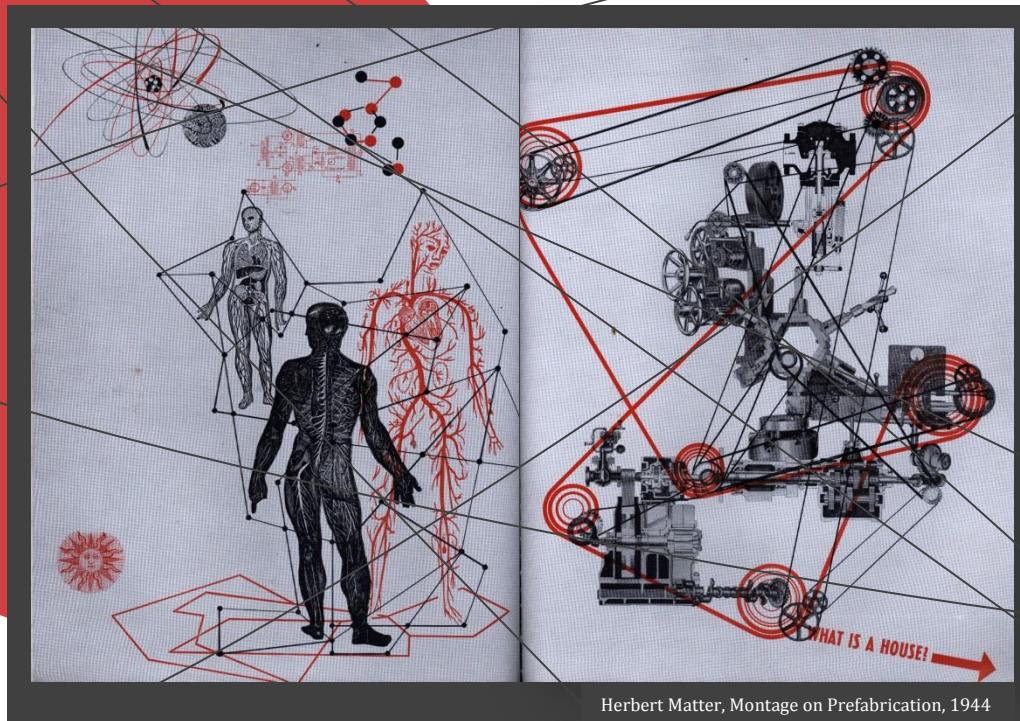
## 'Engineered Home' and the Manhattan Project, 1939-1946

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Humanities Center



Herbert Matter, Montage on Prefabrication, 1944

During the Second World War, the architectural firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill grew from a small design office into the quintessential firm in post-war American architecture. Central to SOM's rise was the design and construction of the town Oak Ridge, Tennessee (1943-46), built for the Manhattan Project. The confidential project allowed the firm to achieve mastery of advanced technology in prefabrication and fast-track economical construction with numerous building types as well as efficient organizational structure.

Central to this transition was SOM's collaboration with the John B. Pierce Foundation, which specialized in psychological and physiological research in the domestic environment as well as in the advancement and realization of a prefabricated house called the 'Engineered Home.' By discussing activities by the John B. Pierce Foundation, SOM, and the military, this SPYNNYNGE presentation demonstrates the evolution of modern American architecture in mid-twentieth century, the contribution of the architects to the Manhattan Project, and the beginning of the post-war corporate architecture.

*Spynnynge is the Humanities Center working-in-progress series, a space to talk about projects that are incomplete. In these informal workshops, both students and faculty will meditate on and act within these moments in the midst of creation where it becomes critical, either from despair or excitement to speak with others concerning where to go next, where to go back, and where to begin again for the first time.*