



Gottfried Semper (1803–1879) founded the Bauschule (architectural school) at the Eidgenössisches Polytechnikum (Confederate Polytechnical School) in Zurich. In the same year of his death, some of his Zurich students took the initiative to establish a Semper Museum. After a short period of independence (1880–1884), the museum holdings were incorporated in the Library of the Bauschule (later the Architekturbibliothek), which in 1950 the Department of Architecture handed over to the ETH Main Library. 1967 saw the establishment of the Institute for the History and Theory of Architecture (gta), and this received, as a basic stock, the Semper Archive first collected for and by the Semper Museum.

Apart from the Semper Archive, the gta Archives now also hold the estates of his successors Georg Lasius, Alfred Friedrich Bluntschli, Gustav Gull, Karl Moser and of a number of older and younger Swiss architects. The Institute's research work has always been accompanied by intensive collection activities. In particular building up the CIAM Archives produced more and more stocks. The Semper Archive held ever increasing numbers of estates and individual documents and finally became the Archive for Modern Swiss Architecture. Today it is called gta Archives and forms one of the pillars of the gta Institute, next to the exhibitions and publications departments.