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**THIS IS ARCHITECTURE, BEYOND
THE GLOSS**

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Defined by accelerating technological advancements, the aftermath of a global pandemic, widening wealth disparities, and urgent climate imperatives, the field of architecture finds itself at a crossroads of adaptation and innovation. This special issue of *Scope Art & Design 27: Our Built Environment* seeks to unravel the interplay of these transformative forces, examining how contemporary architectural practices respond to and shape our landscapes, structures, and theoretical frameworks. At the heart of this issue lies an examination of flux—a condition emblematic of our time. Within this dynamic context, architects, designers, and theorists are tasked not only with envisioning physical spaces but also with conceptualizing frameworks that respond sensitively to diverse cultural contexts and ecological imperatives.

This inaugural architecture edition comprises a range of contributions that challenge traditional disciplinary boundaries, fostering a dialogue that is broad and diverse in nature. By embracing this multi-disciplinary approach, we aim to highlight the interconnectedness of architectural practice with wider systems of knowledge production and societal change.

SYSTEMS: SPATIAL JUSTICE AND THE POLITICS OF ARCHITECTURE

This section delves into the role of architecture as a mediatory between politics, policy, and people. In particular, the authors focus on socio-economic disparities and the right to adequate housing, as aligned to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.¹ Angela Foster unpacks Aotearoa New Zealand's housing crisis as a reaction to changing policies over the last forty years, posing a challenge to our government to ensure future legislative and policy changes uphold their obligation to protect the right to housing for all citizens. From a ground-up perspective, Campbell McNeill identifies the complex negotiation of the everyday struggle to maintain a quality of 'sheltering', and the matrices of compound and tightly interwoven mechanisms that create restrictions on the ability of architects to *do better*.

ASSEMBLAGES: THE CRAFT, AND CRAFTING, OF SPACE

Technology: "science of craft", from Greek τέχνη, techne, "art, skill, cunning of hand"; and -λογία, -logia.²

Architecture, as praxis, facilitates the crafting of space. Articles in the assemblages section explore this notion from a diverse range of perspectives, evaluating the tectonics, craft/ing, and performance of architecture. Fronting this dialogue, Tobias Danielmeier traces the underpinning principles of tectonics as mechanisms of assemblage, with foci on both the science and the poetics of constructing space. Blair Isbister reflects on his teaching practice, discussing pedagogical approaches for teaching tectonics (technology) and how these mediate between workforce expectations and educational contexts. Transitioning from the craft, to the crafting of space, Nathalie Bäckström and Stella Lange consider the construct of domestic architecture, questioning inequalities in the programming of spaces for leisure which are heavily informed by gendered sensibilities. Expanding on the politics of gender, Gina Hochstein delves into the intersection of craft practices and the subjectivity of architecture, namely a theoretical lens linking body, architecture and object.

REFLECTIONS: ARCHITECTURE AS A REFLEXIVE PROCESS

This section is a collation of individual musings from a range of practitioners, makers, and thinkers at various stages in their careers. These personal narratives reflect the contributors' creative agility in our changing environment, and the ways in which this manifests through architecture as an active process. Themes explored range from concepts of identity; the role of facilitation as a two-way relationship; grappling with the uncertainties of how to marry a theoretical ideology with the realities of architectural practice; considering the linkages between place and architecture through a phenomenological lens; and an exploration of materiality as a visceral condition of architecture.

ENCOUNTERS: [DIS]LOCATED IDENTITIES

Architecture, as a (physical or theoretical) construct, responds to social, cultural, political and environmental conditions that define a particular time and place. Voices represented here are linked through personal investigations into what identity means for both self and the collective, and how this is manifested through relationships with architectural form. The dialogue between cousins Karyn and Heni Paringatai tease out nuances of assumed identity, obligation, dislocation and re-connection. The concept of home as an embodied experience is expressed through a comparative recording of two homes with vastly different haptic qualities, as Leana Scheffer questions the concept of transplanted identity and rootedness. Mark Baskett reflects on his 2021 artwork *The Neighbourhood* as an account of the cumulative traces of one specific location, acknowledging the multi-layered evidence of memory, contamination, territory and culture that are embedded in the landscape over time. This concept of time is picked up in Georgia Pope's article which considers the temporal nature of architecture as a living entity, through a theoretical review of the symbiotic connection between land, architecture and culture. Delving deeper into the context of collective identity, Meaghan Christensen examines what biculturalism means for Aotearoa New Zealand in a contemporary sense, and how it may be considered as a framework for 'togetherness' through our built environment.

INTERVENTIONS: DOING WITH A CAPITAL D

The final section provides four examples of the transformational potential of architecture to enact change. Alison Breese recounts, from a local perspective, the implied morality of concealed spaces and notions of safety, gender and inequality. These three themes are also interrogated through Lisa Pike's discussion on a recently developed toolbox for supporting architects in the design of safer public spaces. Devon Sanson and Natalie Allen identify the value of a participatory process in elevating engagement and action. They report on the Uptown Futures project, which engaged architecture students from across Auckland in the active 'visioning' of their community. Community visioning is also explored in Irene Boles' article on the contribution of grassroots movements in post-quake Ōtautahi Christchurch. These interventions range from gap-filler installations aimed at re-centralising the city, through to permanent urban artworks and community-driven policy development.

Reflecting on this first architecture-themed issue, we acknowledge and celebrate the diversity presented in these pages. We are proud to re-present such a broad and authentic range of voices that transcend the often-portrayed messaging that architecture is defined through exclusivity and status. We hope this issue serves as a catalyst for continued, transformative and real dialogue within the field of architecture and beyond.

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- 1 Habitat for Humanity, *Housing and the Sustainable Development Goals*, (Habitat for Humanity, 2021), <https://www.habitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/Housing-and-Sustainable-Development-Goals.pdf>.
- 2 Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1996).