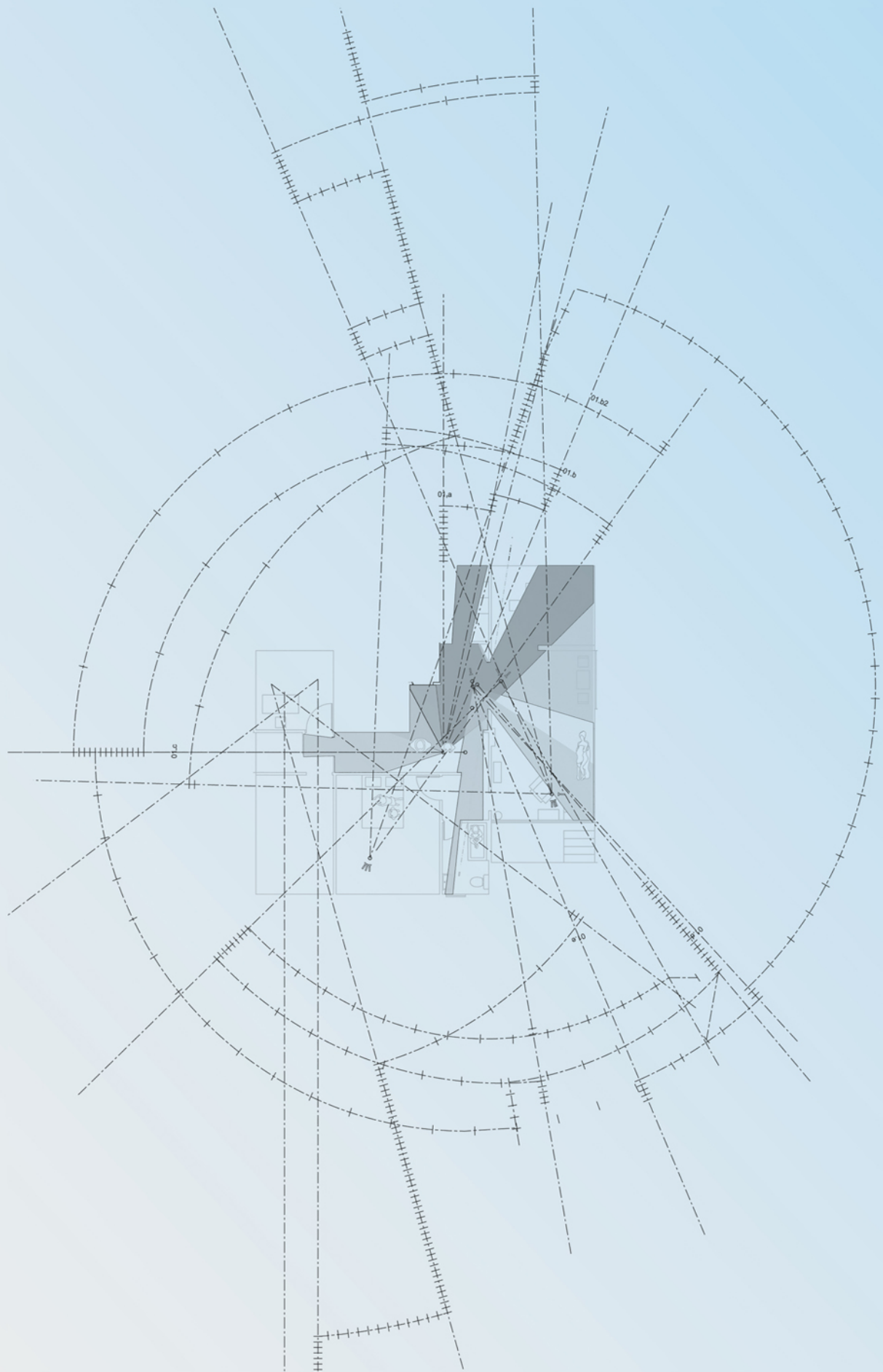


Guest-Edited by KAREN A FRANCK

ARCHITECTURE TIMED

DESIGNING WITH TIME IN MIND

01 | VOL 86 | 2016





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KAREN A FRANCK

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ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN
January/February 2016

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No 239

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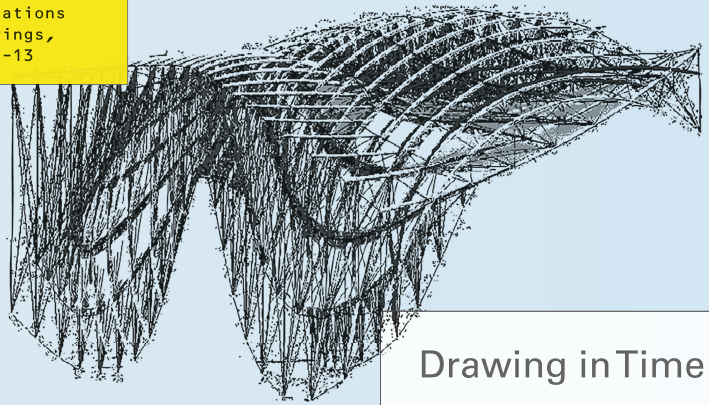
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mapping a short scene
from Jean-Luc Godard's
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© Brian McGrath

Erratum

In the May/June 2015
issue, the cover image of
the New Orquideorama
for the Botanical Garden,
Medellín was credited
to Plan B Arquitectos. In
fact the Orquideorama
is a competition-winning
design by the team of
J Paul Restrepo, Plan B
Arquitectos and Agenda
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EDITORIAL

HELEN CASTLE

Guest-Editor Karen A Franck has a nose for sniffing out topical subjects ahead of the pack – long before they can be regarded as in any way fashionable. Her issues of *Δ* on *Architecture + Food* (no 5, 2002) and *Food and the City* (no 4, 2005) anticipated the trend for everything food; the latter edition, for instance, preceding Carolyn Steel's *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (Vintage, 2013) by eight years.

Time may not be an entirely new subject for discussion. Admittedly for at least the last two decades, there has been a shift in the approach to architecture away from the notion of it as a timeless practice – the architectural ideal being the perfect, completed building captured at handover in all its shiny brilliance by photography entirely vacant of people. The work of Enric Miralles in the early 1990s, for instance, as described by Philip Speranza (pp 60–65), challenged existing conventions as he sought, through his buildings, to provide people with the experience of the passage of time. There has also been much recent interest in the construction of event-driven, temporary structures in architecture – with *Δ* dedicating its March/April issue to *Pavilions, Pop-Ups and Parasols* (guest-edited by Leon van Schaik and Fleur Watson).

It is the heightened sense of speed that has accompanied the recent shifts in design and construction processes, enabled by the introduction of new technologies, that makes time such a prescient theme now. In 'Drawing Time' (pp 88–97), Brian McGrath reflects upon 30 years of drawing in architecture in which media has irrevocably changed, taking in hand drawing, CAD, animation and modelling techniques. This is a situation that has only intensified with the new hegemony of building information modelling (BIM). Controversially, Henry Grosman (pp 98–107) calls into doubt the fact that modelling has the same capacity as drawing as a temporal practice to connect design and fabrication. In contrast, Jonathan Mallie (pp 114–19) embraces the new speed that has become an expectation and prerequisite from clients, positively advocating how new BIM technologies, which enable the assimilation of data on space, time and cost in the same building model, also aid a more integrated approach in which design and construction processes are able to overlap. In 'No More Stopping' (pp 120–27), Richard Garber brings attention to the dissolution of the formal breaking points that previously existed between design and construction, identifying this as an opportunity for architects to expand their role in projects beyond the end of the design phase and a building's completion.

Ultimately, speed or the sense of speed often engendered by the adoption of new technologies remains open for negotiation and interpretation. Tim Makower counters this issue on a pertinent note with 'Finding Time' (pp 136–41), reminding architects that they need to foil this perception of heightened acceleration with the age-old skills of 'thoughtful design and measured observation'. Franck concludes the main section by bringing our attention to a significant alternative route, eschewing the obvious or fashionable. In her closing interview with philosopher Karsten Harries (pp 128–35), she cites Toyo Ito as an example of an architect who engages with new technologies while also using them to seek 'a closer relationship between nature and architecture (and thereby people)' through a lightness of touch that embraces shifts in time and seasons. *Δ*

Rem Koolhaas/OMA

Seattle Central Library

Seattle

Washington

2004

With the client, the architects explored what a library for the 21st century might be, in the end incorporating key aspects of a traditional library such as reading rooms and accessible stacks, but with plentiful access to online sources, as in this Mixing Room. While past types are sometimes considered to be a constraint on design, they can also be a means of innovation and transformation, the past becoming a lens for viewing the present and the future.



Käthe Kollwitz

Mother with her Dead Son

Neue Wache

Berlin

1937

An enlarged copy of Kollwitz's statue is placed directly on the floor of the redesigned Neue Wache (designed by Heinrich Tessenow in 1931, and rededicated as the Central Memorial of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Victims of War and Dictatorship in 1991). This illustrates a change in the design of memorials towards more spatial and engaging ones, as described in *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement* (Routledge, 2015), which Karen Franck wrote with Quentin Stevens. Changes in the direction and quality of light from the oculus indicate the passage of time over the day and the seasons. Flowers left by visitors are temporary commemorative markings of the space.



Karen A Franck and Quentin Stevens (eds)

Loose Space: Possibility and Diversity in Public Life

Routledge

2007

The book's essays, by contributors from different countries, examine various kinds of temporary uses of urban public space as they pertain to the themes of appropriation, tension, risk and discovery. Such activities may occur just once, intermittently or on a regular schedule; in all ways enlivening public space.



ABOUT THE
GUEST-EDITOR

KAREN A FRANCK



Karen A Franck, PhD, is a professor in the College of Architecture and Design at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) in Newark, where she also serves as Director of the Joint PhD Program in Urban Systems. This is the third issue of Δ that she has guest-edited.

Over the years, books on the topic of time have accumulated on Karen's shelves. These include ones that focus on the environment, like Kevin Lynch's *What Time is this Place?* (1972) and David Lowenthal's *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985), as well as others that address time as a social and cultural construction, like Edward Hall's *The Dance of Life* (1984) and Eviatar Zerubavel's *Hidden Rhythms* (1985). However, it was only when Karen proposed this issue of Δ that she identified time as a discrete topic of interest. She realised then that she had been drawing upon notions of time all along in pursuing her interest in types and temporary uses of public space. For many years, without being aware of it, she had been thinking and writing 'with time in mind'.

Changes in Types over Time

During Karen's earliest participation on design juries as a young design educator, she recognised the significance of building and other place types in shaping design decisions. Types became her preferred lens for studying how the design and use of buildings and public spaces change over time. Identifiable changes in type serve as an excellent means of seeing the present anew, rather than taking current iterations of a given type for granted. After adopting this perspective in *New Households, New Housing* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989), co-edited with Sherry Ahrentzen, she and her co-editor Lynda Schneekloth invited others to explain their understandings of type in *Ordering Space* (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1994).

Examining how architects consider the briefs and designs of past types in making design choices in the present became a theme in *Design through Dialogue* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010), co-authored with Teresa Howard. And scrutinising changes in the design of public memorials, from the figurative and representational types to the spatial and abstract ones, provided a framework for *Memorials as Spaces of Engagement* (Routledge, 2015), written with Quentin Stevens.

The Temporary in Public Space

When many researchers and theorists were bemoaning the increasing control and regulation of public space, Karen noticed its continuing vitality and people's creativity and determination in appropriating it for unexpected activities. What is temporary, although often occurring regularly, in urban landscapes became the topic of *Loose Space* (Routledge, 2007), co-edited with Quentin Stevens, and continues to be an interest of Karen's and was a motive for commissioning essays about temporary architecture for this issue of Δ .

Time as Experienced

The importance of considering embodied, sensual experiences of architecture was a prime motivation for writing, with Bianca Lepori, *Architecture from the Inside Out* (John Wiley & Sons, 2007) and became a prominent theme in that book. While materiality receives attention in the work, neither the ageing of materials nor other experiences of time and its passing are sufficiently addressed. Looking back, this seems surprising since *In Praise of Shadows* by Junichiro Tanazaki (Leete's Island Books, 1977; first published in 1933) was another one of Karen's favoured books about time. Fortunately, a chance to consider time as experienced arrived with the opportunity to invite contributions to this issue of Δ . The time was right. Δ

opposite: These Victorian houses would not be praised for being 'timeless' either with respect to beauty or durability. But the grid that encloses them graphically captures the desire in architecture to anchor a building to a single moment in time, to prevent it from ever changing either by intention or through use or ageing – indeed to imprison it.

...no
physical
structure
can ever be
everlasting
or immune
to the
passage
of time.

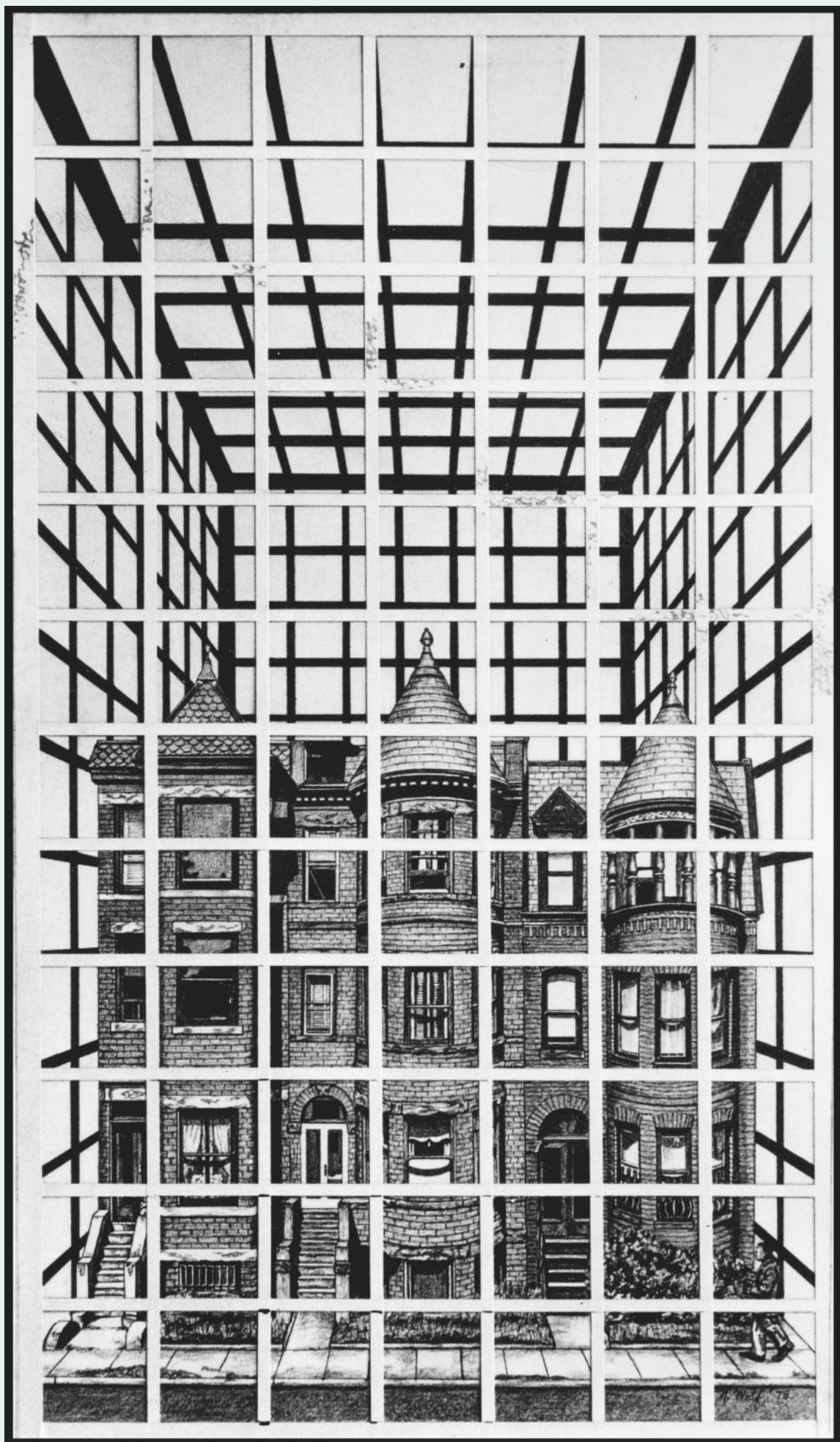
INTRODUCTION

KAREN A FRANCK

Designing with Time in Mind

Calling a work of architecture 'timeless' is, traditionally, a form of high praise, but what does the compliment mean? Certainly it suggests a state of being that is independent of time. This could mean that the work does not follow the style of a particular time period, or that the physical structure is eternal, everlasting, permanent, or that it will not be affected by the passage of time. Practically speaking, all of these conditions are impossible to meet: all architecture necessarily follows some kind of style, although not necessarily one associated with the present moment; and no physical structure can be either everlasting or immune to the passing of time. What the compliment seems to refer to is the appearance of these conditions: that the work looks as if it is timeless and, possibly, aspires to be and is viewed as such by society.

The illogic of the praise – that being outside of time is possible – is evident, as is the related assumption that architecture being outside of time, or appearing to be so, is preferable to being in or of time and appearing to be that. It was in the 15th century that Leon Battista Alberti introduced what became the highly influential Western idealisation of great buildings as being perfect at the moment of their original inception in the final drawings and models that depicted them and in the subsequent construction that conformed in every detail to the original design. In addition, he successfully promoted the equally influential idea that a building's perfection is intertwined with its immutability, and that any subsequent change to the original design would mar that beauty.¹ While these assumptions still hold great sway, there is growing awareness that the aspiration to design and build independently of time is problematic and that, in fact, in many different ways precisely the opposite is desirable. So, instead of thinking, designing and building either in resistance to time or ignoring it altogether, many designers are now pursuing these activities with time in mind.



Valuing Architecture's Mutability

In large part, embracing time in architecture means embracing change. That is, acknowledging that buildings are not fixed, static objects rooted to a single moment and impervious to change, but mutable subjects much affected by every day use, intentional intervention and unavoidable material decay. In this issue of Δ , the privileging of stasis and permanence is not only questioned, but alternative views and practices are proposed to widen the scope of appropriate treatments of historic buildings, to value temporary architecture and to recognise material decay.

Many buildings have more than one beginning and not necessarily a single or even a definitive end. In these various ways what is static – permanent and unchanging – or assumed to be so is no longer privileged and time is not viewed as a series of single, select moments, but as a continuous and ongoing process of change. In their articles, both Jill Stoner (pp 18–23) and Federica Goffi (pp 24–33) address the possibility of multiple beginnings and no definitive end for a building. Each chooses terms that capture the idea of mutability. The ‘nine lives’ that Stoner identifies include what might be considered a true death (demolition). But even then the building may be rebuilt or it may live on physically in remnants or virtually in photographs and films, becoming a collective memory. One of the 14 stone eagles salvaged from the original Pennsylvania Station (1910) in New York sits on the green roof of Cooper Union’s 2009 building designed by Thom Mayne. The demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St Louis, Missouri between 1972 and 1975 is forever repeated in a now iconic series of photographs. Or what was intended to be temporary and was therefore deconstructed years before (but memorialised in photographs) may be reinstalled with an expectation of permanence. One example is Mies van der Rohe’s German Pavilion in Barcelona, which was installed at the city’s International Exposition for less than a year (1929–1930) and then re-created in 1986.

For Goffi, the key term is not lives, but ‘fabric’. She documents the multiple interventions in the fabric of St Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, using them to propose an alternative to the dominant approach to historic preservation as the return to and restoration of a single selected moment in a building’s past. Her alternative is more interventionist, more imaginative and can extend into the future as well as the past. Time is not stopped. Nor is the building treated as a precious, inviolable object or the work of a single author but rather as a work that, at any given time, is ‘complete’ but not necessarily ‘finished’.

Fortuitously, the two architectural projects that Eric Parry presents (see pp 34–41) are additional examples of such an approach: while key aspects of highly revered, historic buildings are restored, thoughtful interventions change them to support contemporary uses. The new is, indeed, paired with the old and the building is allowed to evolve with the changing needs and sensibilities of society. The projects are, indeed, both ancient and iconic. Thoughtful interventions are also made in more recently completed buildings where the existing structure is, again, not treated as a perfect and inviolable object, nor as the object of complete demolition, but as a platform, possibly even an inspiration, for change, as in Diller, Scofidio + Renfro’s renovation and expansion of Alice Tully Hall and the Julliard School in New York (2009).





McKim, Mead & White

Pennsylvania Station

New York

1910

The main waiting room, at the time the largest interior space in the city (shown here in 1955), was modelled on the 3rd-century Baths of Caracalla in Rome. The building's demolition in 1963, intensely and widely contested, inspired the establishment of New York City's Landmarks Preservation Commission, which was able to preserve Grand Central Terminal, but only after a decision by the US Supreme Court. Today, if one looks carefully, one can see historical photographs of the former, glorious station in the far more pedestrian one that replaced it.

Diller, Scofidio + Renfro

Renovation and expansion of Alice Tully Hall and the Julliard School

New York

2009

below right: Pietro Belluschi's original rectangular building (1969), of concrete with travertine veneer, was aligned with the Lincoln Center campus across 65th Street, rejecting the diagonal orientation of Broadway. The concert hall, adjacent to Broadway, lacked a visible entrance or an inviting outdoor space. In the expansion, the architects extended the original building, its materials and the pattern of its fenestration (on the left), and then cantilevered it over a sunken plaza with bleacher-style seating.

below left: The glass box, housing a dance studio, extends out over the plaza, above a 12-metre (38-foot) high glazed lobby and cafe. This extension of the original building is oriented towards Broadway, giving Alice Tully Hall a public presence. The building surfaces facing Broadway are all glazed, making the interior (and the dancers in the studio) visible from the street and the plaza.



Arata Isozaki and Anish Kapoor

Ark Nova inflatable mobile concert hall

2013

opposite: This inflatable, mobile structure holds 500 people for orchestra, chamber music and jazz concerts, as well as performing arts events and exhibitions. It has toured areas of Japan devastated by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The elastic membrane that encloses the space can be quickly erected and deflated, and transported by truck along with benches, stage and equipment.

Central to the idea of timeless architecture is the actual, or perceived, condition of permanence fulfilled both by the extended duration of an apparently unchanging building and by its appearance of solidity and weightiness.² In contrast are those works whose intended lifespan is limited to just a few months or less, and whose appearance is one of lightness and mobility. Over the past 20 or so years, the number of such projects, often highly esteemed commissions won by architects through competitions, has increased. The Serpentine Pavilion competition in London is in its fifteenth year, and the MoMA PS1 competition in New York in its sixteenth, and they have inspired a similar programme in Melbourne: the MPavilion. The online magazine *Dezeen* displays 24 pages of pavilions built in different countries between 2007 and 2015.³

The open-ended briefs for these and other temporary projects, and the absence of the many requirements that more long-lasting buildings must meet, offer invaluable opportunities for invention and innovation. The articles in this issue by Mark Taylor (pp 42–9), Babak Bryan and Henry Grosman of BanG studio (pp 98–107) and Tobias Armbrorst, Daniel D'Oca and Georgeen Theodore of Interboro Partners (pp 108–13) present a rich array of possibilities that impermanent installations offer. Sometimes the brief is well defined, as for mini-libraries in New York City or a mobile concert hall, but the installation is still either of short duration or mobile, or both. The proliferation of short-term works of architecture as well as the more widespread popularity of all kinds of temporary installations in urban public spaces suggest a new valuing of the impermanent and ephemeral,⁴ which at least in the West has traditionally been of lesser value than the permanent, as Mark Taylor points out in his essay.



What is built and revered for being long lasting, if not everlasting, nonetheless requires maintenance, repair and often restoration in order to continue to remain the 'same'. Indeed, in the West the desire for permanence and unbroken continuity is so strong (and blind) that the necessity for maintenance or intervention is overlooked in order to sustain the myth of permanence. One example is viewing the Parthenon as the 'same' building the Greeks completed more than 2,440 years ago, despite the long ago disappearance of the many colours that once adorned it, the countless adaptations to serve as church, mosque and warehouse and the many other subtractions, additions and interventions.⁵ More recent buildings that appear to be the most solid and durable may require restoration not long after they are completed. And extensive use of stone to create a truly massive structure does not ensure longevity: the original Pennsylvania Station lived only 53 years.

This inflatable, mobile structure has toured areas of Japan devastated by the 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The elastic membrane that encloses the space can be quickly erected and deflated, and transported by truck along with benches, stage and equipment.

