



Chandrika Metivier, *No War Know Peace*, 2022. Photo by Sean Fleming.

Letter from the Dean

Igor Marjanović

It is with a great sense of pride and honor that I introduce this newest issue of *Cite* magazine. Like the issues that preceded it, *Cite* 103 is a record of urban discourses presented by the Rice Design Alliance (RDA), the school's community engagement arm that has been building bridges in the larger Houston community since 1972 (and in the pages of *Cite* magazine since 1982). *Cite* 103 is no exception to this amazing legacy; its colorful pages present a clear dedication to design innovation and to our city and our planet. Because so many of the issues facing Houston also resonate worldwide, the narratives introduced here are telling both locally and globally.

One of my favorite activities as dean of Rice Architecture has been to meet many RDA enthusiasts, volunteers, and activists, all of whom have embraced me wholeheartedly, showing me around Houston and providing me with words of welcome and encouragement. Those who know me well can tell you that I really love books. I keep a full stack of past issues of *Cite* in my office and often find myself browsing through them, seeking insight and inspiration. Like the RDA itself, *Cite* is a record of civic leadership: one of RDA's first major events was the 1973 Civic Forum on Houston's bayous, which is now widely seen as an event that sparked new parks, such as Buffalo Bayou Park and Discovery Green. Similarly, RDA's 1992 Heart of the Park competition ultimately led to the transformation and renaissance of Hermann Park, making it the popular urban space it is today.

Through this newest issue of *Cite*, we reaffirm our commitment to act as anchors of civic life and design advocacy in our city. Like all other readers, I will watch closely for the enduring legacy of articles presented in this issue and the ways in which they might shape design thinking and urbanism in the region and beyond. In that sense, *Cite* 103 represents the persistent pursuit of the urban for which RDA is known—an open platform that is ever-evolving and reflective of the changing world we live in. Consequently, this volume reflects the shifts, disjunctions, and disruptions of our moment in time. In addition to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and social and racial injustices, we now face a major new conflict in Ukraine. The brutal war has already claimed many lives, and we stand in full solidarity with all the people affected by it, as well as those who are protesting it, both in Ukraine and beyond. Local artist Chandrika Metivier recently painted the following message on a bridge over I-45: “No War Know Peace.” These words clearly suggest that we Houstonians will always consider ourselves citizens of the world, constantly advocating for the importance of people and humanism in all that we do.

In closing, I would be remiss not to thank the people who have shaped this issue of *Cite*. I am indebted to our former colleagues Maria Nicanor and Jack Murphy (Rice MArch, 2020) for shepherding this publication amid their own transitions to new endeavors. Maria and Jack, thank you for all of your contributions to both RDA and the school. I look forward to new ways of collaboration in the future. I also thank the contributors to this issue, whose passion for the architecture, urbanism, and culture of Houston is so clearly evident in their work here. Their insights provide a clear sense of alignment between urban discourses at the school and in the larger Houston community—as well as our shared values of social justice and environmental care that shape all our actions as architects and citizens in a constantly changing world. I look forward to the continued evolution of *Cite* as it approaches its 40th anniversary and to the many more issues of our beloved magazine that are yet to come.