



Rice**Design**Alliance

The Rice Design Alliance, formed within Rice Architecture in 1972, facilitates an actionable understanding of how design influences the built and natural environments.

The Rice Design Alliance empowers academia, architecture, engineering, and construction practitioners, and the broader Houston community to transform our city into a better place to live and a model for twenty-first-century design.

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## This is Cite Harvey. This is urgent.

For the past 100 issues *Cite* has relentlessly covered all things architecture and design in the Houston region. It is noteworthy that this issue, a special addendum to *Cite* 100, makes us look anew not at a novel topic, but at an age-old Houston challenge. Water and how this city deals with it is also part of *Cite's* DNA. Rice Design Alliance, through this publication and its programs, has researched, advocated, and pushed boundaries on Houston's flooding problems for decades. Yet this time, it's different.

As you read through the pages of this special edition of *Cite* devoted to Hurricane Harvey, you will find pieces that look back at lessons learned from the past to provide frameworks; others that analyze specifically what happened with Harvey this past summer; and lastly, some that look forward with recommendations for the future. All are woven with a common thread of collaborative optimism combined with a collective hunger for rapid yet thoughtful change. All call for political will, intelligence, kind heartedness, and taking a stance.

The interdependency of our urban systems is undeniable, as is their vulnerability to extreme weather events that are bound to happen again. If our collaborators' insightful articles show something, it's that there isn't just one single answer. Responses are manifold and multidisciplinary thinking—a cornerstone of the Rice Design Alliance—is compulsory right from the start.

What happened in Houston in the late summer of 2017 was, to many watching from afar, a paralyzing event. Not to Houstonians. To this community and to the writers who have contributed to this number, the urgency of action that is clearly transmitted through the pieces of this special edition should be listened to and acted upon.

For this special issue we have gathered some of the most relevant and fresh voices in town to touch on just some of the myriad points that make up this story. Climate change, buyouts, insurance, accurate mapping, zoning, emotional stress, environmental equity, regulations, displacement, resilience. Everything around us is design and design can indeed save—and improve—your life, so listen up, we've got some ideas.



Maria Nicanor  
**Executive Director**  
Rice Design Alliance

Maria Nicanor is Executive Director of Rice Design Alliance. She is an architectural historian and a curator of architecture, design, and urbanism. She was Director of the Norman Foster Foundation in Madrid and a curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and Guggenheim Museum, New York.

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