

Editor's Note

Jack Murphy

What follows behind this message is the latest—and longest—issue of *Cite*. Assembled before and during our distanced year, these stories remain fresh and relevant.

Cite, as you can see, has a new look. Its handsome print format is the work of MG&Co., led by Noëmi Mollet and Reto Geiser. Informed by *Cite*'s visual history, they delivered a clear framework that will shape future issues.

Cite 102 asks, "What does it mean to be of one's own time?" The issue has two editorial centers. The first is "Being Contemporary," in which guest editors Ajay Manthripragada and Piergianna Mazzocca, both previous Wortham Fellows at Rice Architecture who have advanced to other academic positions, consider of whom and of what they are contemporaries. They gather a community of like-minded thinkers who help establish a critical distance with which we can understand our time. There are conversations with Jeannette Kuo, Giovanna Borasi, and Alysa Nahmias—an architect, a curator, and a filmmaker, respectively—alongside features that invite others to *Cite*'s intellectual table. Scholar Rebecca Siefert shares architect Laretta Vinciarelli's understanding of type and Celeste Olalquiaga reports on the political upheavals in Chile.

The second center is a series of articles that extend the notion of "the contemporary" to current events and efforts in Houston. Ana Tuazon profiles Lynn Randolph, a Houston artist who's always worked at a distance from popular trends; Zoe Middleton and Libby Viera-Bland chronicle spaces of protest and Black imagination in Houston; and Heather Rowell speaks with Wonne Ickx of PRODUCTORA about the upcoming headquarters for the Houston Endowment. Finally, the architecture of recent museum improvements is closely assessed.

The issue is full, but moments of visual immersion balance the texts. Images by Naho Kubota, Uta Barth, and Will Henry—a photographer and two artists—provide exhibits that pace one's journey. In a series by photographer Leonid Furmansky, we see downtown Houston in 2020, emptied out and deserted. Three crises—the pandemic, Winter Storm Uri, and the dismantling of white supremacy—inform the photographs on the front and inside covers.

Cite's editorial apparatus—nearly forty years young—continues its work in Houston in part through its steady presence on the RDA website. Articles about current events, reviews, interviews, histories and photo essays are all regular features that will coexist with *Cite*'s annual print issue moving forward. The power of the written word remains important in a city with so much construction and demolition and so few outlets for critical engagement. Criticism absorbed through the immediacy of the screen is just as valid as when it is consumed through the permanence of paper. *Cite* 103 already beckons.

As a new editor of this publication, I benefit from Raj Mankad's prior leadership and dedication to *Cite*. He set an example for how *Cite* can be engaged with big conceptual ideas and actionable urban changes simultaneously—all in the service of design that stands to improve the lives of Houstonians.

I'm so pleased to deliver this issue of *Cite* for your attention. I look forward to what we can do together.