

What's an architectural journal for?

As well as being sent to our regular subscribers, this issue of **arq** has also been sent to practices, libraries and individuals worldwide whom we want to encourage to subscribe. So this 'leader' seems a good moment to reflect on what an architectural journal is for.

In the UK, in the 1960s and 1970s, *The Architects' Journal* was recast in the scientific mode of the time. Every issue contained lengthy building studies which were, in effect, documented as research experiments for the advancement of the discipline. The journal also contained the latest in materials, environmental design and education. The *AJ*'s sibling at London's Architectural Press, the *Architectural Review*, regularly interspersed its building studies with debates around history and theory. These journals were focussed on presenting the latest work clearly, demonstrating and debating the 'state of the art'. Today's popular architectural media rarely have comparable ambitions. They often prefer to be providers of news and comment. In many, the length of the building studies has reduced, the drawings are printed at a scale too small to read and there is little serious detail on the latest research which informs architectural production and debate. There are, of course, notable exceptions but weekly and monthly production schedules rarely encourage the long view.

This is where **arq** comes in. Run by a team of academics who aim to publish the latest serious work in design, criticism, urbanism, history, theory, environmental design, materials, education and more, **arq** is intended to bridge practice and academia, documenting the best outcomes of research – in the broadest sense – from designers, writers and scientists wherever they are based. Our quarterly schedule and academic review process means that the contents are rigorously tested.

In this issue, Stephen Walker evaluates the body of work produced to date by the young office of Mole Architects, exploring themes which arise from their projects. Laura Hourston Hanks reviews Reiach and Hall Architects' Pier Arts Centre in Stromness, completed in 2007, exploring how its 'memoryscapes' operate on local and global scales. Turning to recent history, Harry Charrington – once an employee of the Aalto atelier – documents conversations with architects who worked on some of the office's most significant projects. A different sort of knowledge from a different time is investigated by Alexander Wragge-Morley, who examines Robert Hooke and Christopher Wren's interest in ancient buildings. Robert Atkinson, meanwhile, describes an innovative pre-University architecture programme that he has developed at Richmond-upon-Thames College in London.

If you're not already persuaded of the merits of **arq**, we hope the contents of this issue might tempt you to subscribe (a subscription form is printed on the following page). As well as issues like this which present a range of work, we are also planning thematic issues in association with members of our international editorial board and in conjunction with conferences and events. Forthcoming issues will address architecture and landscape, and architecture and site.

Architectural ideas – be they in design or in other areas of research – are rarely formed by drawing on just one source or another; they stem from a rich mix of ideas and inputs and a developed appreciation of architectural culture. We are confident that **arq** will help you to deepen and broaden that mix and welcome suggestions about how we can make the journal more relevant to your interests and needs.

THE EDITORS

architectural research quarterly

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arq

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