

# Domesticity, ecology, economy

This issue of **arq** bridges the intimate scale of domestic space with the expansive scales of ecology and economy.

Domestic space was a major preoccupation in the reconstruction of postwar Europe because of the vast construction of new housing required. Anthony Ossa-Richardson introduces a rediscovered archive document from that time: a travelogue written by German architect Julius Posener recounting his visit to England in March 1963 (pp. 222–235). Posener was a sympathetic observer of the scene, eager to compare and contrast what he saw in England with contemporary practice in Germany, and to understand projects in their professional, cultural, and economic contexts. Rich domestic design is underpinned by a close attunement to the sensibilities, habits, and values of domestic space. Graham Livesey develops ideas of the ‘infraordinary’ and extraordinary in the work of experimental writer Georges Perec, exploring ‘how we organise our residences into compartments of space, how we furnish the rooms, how stories create realities, and how the lives of people [...] intertwine’ (pp. 247–253). In a similar vein, Sebastián Aedo studies Ray and Charles Eames’s film *A House: After Five Years of Living*, which documents the Eames’s Case Study House #8, built in California’s Pacific Palisades, 1955. To Aedo, the film offers a way to understand how domesticity operates as a screen: ‘promoting and disguising’; ‘veiling some preoccupations and motivations while exhibiting an alternative reality’ (pp. 236–253). On-screen alternative realities, this time in Building Information Modelling (BIM), figure further in Kathrin Braun, Cordula Kropp, and Yana Boeva’s paper. Here, the authors powerfully examine the broad ‘political-economic and techno-economic conditions that shape the implementation of digital technologies’, warning about the power relations at work (pp. 267–278). Just as Aedo connects the particular domesticity of an Eames Case Study House to the wider ecologies and economies of the postwar era, Manuel Rodrigo de la O Cabrera similarly returns to twentieth-century precedents and ecological thinking (pp. 255–265). He outlines ‘exemplary representations committed to the ethical dimension of global change’ in two archetypal projects – Siegfried Ebeling’s *Wohnkubus*, 1926, and Cedric Price’s *Generator*, 1976–79.

Certain ideas discussed here resonate with the work of Charles Rattray – **arq**’s Editor for Reviews & Insight from 2000 to 2014 – who died in August this year. Architect, teacher, writer – and editor – Charles worked with William Nimmo & Partners and Leslie Martin on Glasgow’s Royal Scottish Conservatoire before a career teaching at the Scott Sutherland School in Aberdeen and the University of Dundee. In his writing, he celebrated rationalist architects working in Holland, Germany, and Switzerland such as Geurst & Schulze, Claes en Kaan, and Gigon Guyer. Charles was a sympathetic observer of this contemporary scene, eager to compare and contrast thoughtful work in Europe with practice closer to home. Through writing and teaching, he celebrated exemplary twentieth- and twenty-first-century projects, committed to the ethical values of the work. Meanwhile Charles’s later practice, largely in collaboration with Graeme Hutton, included house projects. His designs displayed a close attunement to the sensibilities, habits, and values of domestic space, how we furnish rooms, how we create realities, and the intertwined lives of people. Charles was a wise, knowledgeable, and good-humoured contributor to **arq**. This issue is dedicated to his memory.

THE EDITORS