



Preface by Chief Editor

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This is the first issue of the journal of Architectural Research in Finland. It grew out of the annual symposia organized by the three schools of architecture in Finland, The Department of Architecture in Aalto University, Tampere University of Technology School of Architecture and Oulu School of Architecture. These symposia have turned out to be very important for scholars in architectural research in Finland, as an overview of the work that is done in the three universities, but also as a forum for publishing the results of ongoing projects and doctoral dissertations. A selection of the papers presented at the symposia have been published in proceedings after each event, many of them after a double-blind peer review.

After the 7th symposium, the organizing universities decided to establish a new journal of Architectural Research in Finland (ARF) that will publish research of high quality with systematic editing and peer review. Most of the articles will still come out of the annual symposium, but the journal is also open to other contributions and thematic issues. The articles are mainly published in English, but national languages are also an option.

There are several reasons for this change. It is important to make sure that the papers published as articles in the journal are treated fairly and equally and with academic rigour, in order to provide a respectable forum for publishing new results of architectural research in Finland, as well as critical debate on the contemporary issues relevant to architecture. On the other hand, architectural research is becoming more and more international also in the national context. Very few of the issues discussed in architectural research have a national character, although it makes sense to address the role of local and national variations in architecture. We have invited international scholars as keynote lecturers in the symposia with contribution to the journal, but there are also many scholars working in the Finnish universities from various national backgrounds.

Architectural research as an academic discipline presents specific challenges to common symposia as well as publications. The field covers a variety of scales from technical details to global issues of urban and regional development. It is interdisciplinary by nature, covering technical sciences on construction and digital tools, social sciences on urbanism, environmental sciences on the impacts of

urbanization and on landscape, and humanities on the history and theory of architecture. In addition to this, architecture as an art and design practice is more and more used as a research method on its own, as arts-based research or research by design.

Thus, there is the danger of architectural research becoming a fragmented collection of small research groups with very little communication between them. In a way, this is natural, since different subjects in architectural research need to cooperate with neighbouring disciplines: history of architecture with history of art and archaeology, urban planning with urban studies, building design with art and technical sciences, etc. Architectural research is like an open hand, where the 'palm' as the core of the design and planning of the built environment easily leads to 'fingers', discourses that are farther from the profession of architecture. It is not easy to jump from one fingertip to another, even though they are all connected through the palm. This is why common fora are of such importance, not for integration but recreating connections.