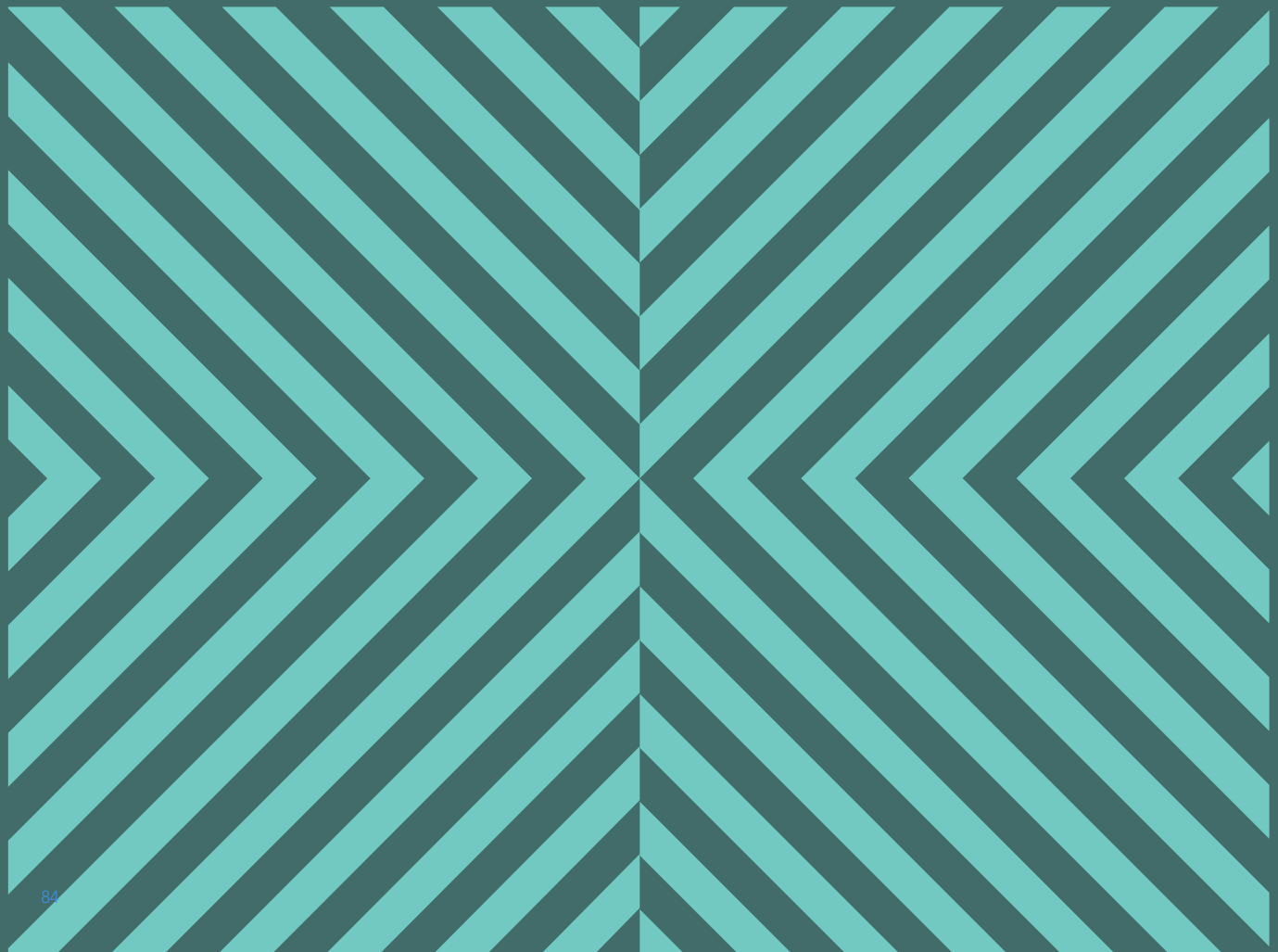


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## DOSSIER TRANSLATIONS

### City, architectures in conflict

Guest editor: Juan Pablo Urrutia



## Introduction

Juan Pablo Urrutia

Our built environment is constantly modified and transformed, usually not quite evident to the human being given its time scale. In spite of this, the city is a scene permanently in movement. From a classical point of view, these urban transformations could be part of a choreography that coordinates each movement; however, reality teaches us that they might be rather compulsive responses to diverse types of conflicts, such as those of a social, political, natural, cultural or economic nature, to name a few. Each of them makes an impact without warning and contributes to the city configuration with its complexity, controversy and forces in dispute, in such a way that it could be argued that we inhabit a landscape fundamentally determined by conflict.

From this point of view, it is understood that architectural design must not manipulate only conventional elements such as the environment, material, form, space, light and so on, but also conflict as raw material. The process of architectural production is capable of decoding, deciphering and catalysing those conflicts because of its power of synthesis, a catalysation process that materialises by means of architectural discourse, proposals and manifestations. From there, it is possible to take three dimensions that need to be analysed in a critical way: a political, a technical and a civic dimension.

The political perspective diagnoses, emphasises and balances the forces around conflicts, giving rise to discourses on how architecture and urbanism should shape the city; while the technical view suggests lineaments, programmes, proposals and projects, and an eminently practical position. Finally, the third aspect is constituted by the civic view, one intimately related with spontaneous expression, material and domestic manifestation distant from any traditional planning.

Thus, this issue deals with how the city results from struggles and accidents in the social as well as in the material dimension, complex situations where architecture plays a critical role as a catalyser capable of transforming conflicts into architectural discourse, proposals and manifestations that as a whole define the material identity of our cities.

Accordingly, the editorial proposal consists in presenting this issue of *Revista Materia Arquitectura* as a space of encounter in which outstanding professionals, related to the production of the city, express their points of view about conflict as raw material architecture needs to take charge of, as well as its view of the challenges to the built environment and how we, as a society, can face them. With this view, three kinds of articles have been considered to be included: those related with the political world, those linked to the technical field and, finally, those expressing citizens' opinions.

Regarding the political world, J. Phillip Thompson contributes with the perspective of the city as a space of social and power conflict that politics must deal with from democracy; Juan Pablo Astorga, in turn, refers to the city as a political patchwork using the case of Toma de Peñalolén<sup>(1)</sup>.

In the technical perspective, Camillo Boano shows how city development is constantly confronting conflict situations, reflecting on the tensions between architecture and politics and the relationship between space and violence. Pablo Fuentes, who shares this view, writes about exemplary cases of State intervention to deal with small urban conflicts in the city of Santiago with innovative proposals.

Finally, the third part acknowledges the action of citizens, the human scale and the anonymous exercise that makes the city. This is how Ethel Baraona's participation is considered; she deals with how public space has become the essential element to demand the right to the city again. To conclude, Paola Jirón talks to us about understanding the ways of inhabiting the city, a piece of work that discusses the problems of participative urban processes and proposes a look from collaboration and co-creation.

With this set of articles we hope to widen the knowledge about conflict as an essential element to understand our cities and the constant crisis of their architectures. **m**

(1) Place in Peñalolén (Santiago, Chile) that was created by an occupation by force.