

The guardians of houses

In the opening article of this **arq**, Andrew Carr writes about the ethos of care frequently required in making and maintaining architecture and cities. The theme emerges from Carr's study of 'the temporal structures of the novels of Virginia Woolf, and the momentary architecture that forms around their inhabitants' (pp. 4–23). Against this backdrop, Carr reflects on 'the unrelenting toil required to keep entropy at bay' in the built environment. He notes that architect Álvaro Siza proposes an *Order of the Guardians of Houses*, to be given each year in recognition of the 'heroism' involved in the care and maintenance of architecture and urbanism.

Elsewhere in this issue, Silvia Micheli and Johanna Brugman investigate competing priorities in the guardianship of the city, with reference to Singapore's Changi Airport-Marina Bay Corridor project (pp. 61–71). They explore rhetorics intended to attract foreign investment and tourism, landscape 'interventions which have overwritten native vegetation and morphology', and a split that the project generates 'between the city's southern residential areas and foreshore'. The Corridor, they argue, has become both 'connector and divider', reflecting global ambitions set against local realities. Paolo Tombesi, Paolo Stracchi, and Luciano Cardelicchio explore the guardianship of famous buildings through associated stories (pp. 49–60). They examine 'a relatively small glitch in the celebratory narrative of the roof of the Sydney Opera House': 'four columns that do not appear in the descriptions of the building'. The presence of these columns, they argue, opens up significant questions about the project's authorised 'biographies'. Shuaizhong Wang also addresses building structure, linking bodily experience and structural design to ideas from neuroscience, envisaging a kind of guardianship of structure and body (pp. 37–48). Paul Emmons and Berrin Terim, meanwhile, reflect on aluminium as 'an industrially produced modern material that is conceptually malleable' (pp. 25–36). Aluminium has been seen as somehow both unnatural and natural, they suggest: a substance and an idea that both resists and accepts the entropy of decay.

Chris Abel's concluding 'insight' (pp. 79–84) reflects on the inadequacy of human behaviour to address the urgent threats of climate change. Rejecting standard explanations, he examines reasons why the majority of humankind seems either unable or unwilling to comprehend the depth of the problems involved, or the scale of behavioural change required. We are all guardians of this (planetary) house, Abel reminds us. We must absorb that reality, he affirms, and act appropriately.

THE EDITORS