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In 2021, amid the uncertainty of continued lockdowns and their drastic alterations to our personal and academic lives, the new EAR editorial team sought intellectual responses to the question of how we might move onward in a world reshaped by its focus on the process of research and acknowledgement of the setbacks and incongruencies of doing fieldwork, collecting data, and the subsequent analysis. We believe that embracing the untidiness of research contributes to the validity of the research itself by meeting a complex world with creative and adaptive methods. The editorial team would like to thank our Academic Advisory Board for their assistance in the peer-review process for this issue of the EAR Journal.

This issue of EAR builds on the work of the previous editorial team which raised questions of matter and form, seeking to embrace new technologies and communication formats to respond to the changing world of publication. EAR 37 is the second issue of the journal to be distributed digitally, making the content more accessible, and the first issue to be a direct product of the COVID-19 pandemic. Authors responded to our call for papers with a variety of innovative methodologies: oral history interviews, photo interviews, autoethnography, performance fictioning, artisanal forms of construction, creative use of digital tools, speculative design methods, inferential statistics, examining evaluation in co-design and archival work of different types. As Andrew Marks mentions regarding his use of methods there is a *scavenging* quality to the way all authors move through the vast repertoire of available methods and combine them to respond to their research questions. In today's world where global pandemics and climate change are a pressing reality, the reuse and combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to respond to current research and design challenges is only appropriate.

For most of our contributors, moving onwards involved learning from the past to explore and respond to present global challenges – most immediately the isolation and confinement brought about by the pandemic – and a need to find sustainable ways of designing to respond to growing environmental crises. In “Contextualising Appraisal and the Destruction of the Soviet Design Institute’s Archives: A Field Note,” Ksenia Litvinenko questions how the political and institutional context in former or present-day state socialist countries has determined the configuration of architectural archives and reviews critically the archival research method. Alex Plent, in his paper “Neomedieval *Peregrinatio in Stabilitate*: On the Use of Fourfold Allegory in Performance Fictioning,” retrieves a medieval method of monastic pilgrimage and discusses its use to perform world-creating fictions that have the possibility of generating new modes of subjectivity and political agency. The articles “Digital Imperfection: Earth Brick Construction Supported by Mixed-Reality Technologies,” by Federico Garrido, Joy Samuel, Rodrigo Brum and Christian Schmitt and “Designing Futures with Pasts: Rediscovering and transforming abandoned paths of food preservation under today’s paradigm of sustainability,” by Christoph Tochtrop and Dustin Jessen take from the past to propose sustainable design solutions for the future. While Garrido, Samuel, Brum and Schmitt enquire into the traditional craft of brick construction and its materials to explore its combination with digital tools by introducing the use of sustainable materials in combination with parametric design as resource-

saving method, Tochtrop and Jessen look into historical examples of food preservation to discuss speculative design ideas for sustainable design. Finally, in “Commoning landscapes from home: building queer ecological commons online at a time of COVID-19,” Andrew Marks turns to oral history interviews to understand how landscapes have been shaped and transformed by particular groups and how such knowledge can inform a sustainable management of resources as part of an action research project.

Some contributions in this issue addressed the COVID-19 pandemic directly by responding to the challenges of confinement and isolation with the search for methods capable of foreseeing better futures. Interestingly, while Andrew Marks, Shawn Bodden and Jenny Elliott entertain the idea of working together and forming a community to deal with the problems raised by prolonged confinement, Alex Plent argues for an introspective, individual path centred on reflection and imagination. The advantages and significance of integrating new technologies and digital tools into our research methodologies are discussed by Andrew Marks, Federico Garrido, Joy Samuel, Rodrigo Brum and Christian Schmitt. Such digital forms of building physical and social spaces bring forward new arenas of knowledge formation that can contribute towards a less uneven future if considered carefully. Our authors also show a shared concern for understanding how the political, social and educational context influences the aesthetics of the built space. Whereas “Evaluation Of Aesthetic Perceptions Of Public Buildings’ Facades By Design Professionals” by Reuben Peters Omale highlights how the educational background of architects, artists and engineers in Nigeria influences the perceptions of building’s facades, Shawn Bodden and Jenny Elliott problematise how a lack of integral participation in projects of co-design impacts negatively on the look and feel of the project. Finally, Ksenia Litvinenko highlights how practices of archiving architecture under a particular political regime affect the aesthetic criteria of the architectural material “worth” archiving.

These times of crisis and uncertainty bring out the transitional quality in both built and digital social spaces. In such a fast-changing context, with challenging social, political and economic scenarios around each corner, new methodological possibilities have arisen in the ways that our contributors have proposed to move onward from the pandemic and seek less catastrophic futures. The past is not approached here as fixed or indisputable, and is therefore neither archaic nor obsolete. To the contrary, the transitory quality of space generated by these unprecedented times has seemed to alter our sense of time, leading us either to search for answers in the past or to question it. The papers presented in this issue show that, through the exploration and combination of methods, we can make sense of an imperfect and sometimes catastrophic reality. We hope the discussion and reflections presented in this issue inspire researchers of the built environment and beyond at all levels creatively to adjust their methodologies in response to an increasingly challenging global setting.