

Introduction

DAWNE McCANCE

Tradition challenges innovation. It is composed of successive graftings.—de Llano and Castanheira, Álvaro Siza: Works and Projects

As if anticipating the Guggenheim Bilbao, Roland Barthes once ventured that a universally recognizable architectural signifier (he was referring to the Eiffel Tower) remains forever, ineluctably, open to meaning-making. And not only that, suggests Dina Smith in her essay in this issue: the “complicated structure of meanings” attached to an architectural project such as the Guggenheim museum “illustrates the aesthetic and economic interconnectedness of local and global spaces.” At times, Smith says in “The Narrative Limits of the Global Guggenheim,” this interconnectedness makes for a kind of “collision” that can “affect and alter that which seeks to displace or absorb it.” Matters of migration, and of interrelation, are anything but easy. Maybe that is what this issue is about.

Frank Gehry might make you think that it is easier for a building, than for a book, to transcend the limits of the right angle. (Gehry, says Richard Serra, “is the first to really break with the orthodoxy of the right angle” [qtd. in Bechtler 29]). With this special issue of *Mosaic*, however, we are also caught up in the process of transforming ingrained structures, spaces, and boundary lines. With this issue, we give you a new *Mosaic* format: a more elegant, simpler, and coherent design, open to greater diversity. (“Above all else, I value and pursue clarity in architecture. More and more, I value simpleness. It is a well-known fact that simpleness and simplicity are opposed, in a way that unity and diversity are not” [Siza 92]). And to celebrate the issue, we open it with a colour signature. Image and text: one leads to the other; you will be moving, in this issue, back and forth; you will be looking up and down.

The issue features an interview with one of the world’s foremost architects, as much a poet as a builder, Álvaro Siza; the issue also features the abbreviated version of a celebrated lecture by the renowned architect, and interdisciplinarian, Michael Benedikt. Between Siza and Benedikt, you will find eleven essays—eleven successive graftings—

that bring literature and architecture together in innovative ways.

WORKS CITED

Barthes, Roland. *The Eiffel Tower and Other Mythologies*. Trans. Richard Howard. New York: Hill & Wang, 1979.

Bechtler, Cristina, and Kunsthaus Bregenz. *Frank O. Gehry/Kurt W. Forster*. Trans. Melissa Thorson Hause. Ostfildern-Ruit: Cantz, 1999.

de Llano, Pedro, and Carlos Castanheira, eds. *Alvaro Siza: Works and Projects*. Centrao Galego de Arte Contemporanea, 1995.