



## Editorial

Memory is born a living entity into a spatial and temporal context. As that context changes, it remains imprinted in the mind and over time fades away. Memory lives and dies, and in the process of dying can give us further meaning: like the weathering of materials, which immediately reveals the history of an object.

### How do we construct memory?

One way to answer this question is to look at how we construct our built world and our lives within it - to look at the contexts within which memories of place are formed today. We live in a global market economy, which is based on an exchange of *commodities*. Thus, for something to have a place in this system, it must be stripped of everything except its exchange value - it must be transformed into a product. As the object becomes a means for profit alone, its intrinsic use-value and connection to life is forgotten and we rely on marketing to 'remind' us of its purpose. The commodity transforms everything into neatly packaged, consumable bits: food, shelter, and culture; objects, space, and time; we even speak of ourselves as labour capital. The commodity 'kills' the object, moving it from a natural context to an artificial construction: transforming the unit and fragmenting the whole.

This process of commodification has transformed our physical world. The architect, farmer, or any other person providing basic needs like food and shelter, sees how the reductive logic behind the commodity has led to an unsustainable, oversimplified world. One manifestation is *monoculture*, be it of crops, suburbs or culture, in which a vast uniformity requires incredible energy and product inputs to sustain it. Another is the inversion of the master-servant relationship between structure and *infrastructure*. Infrastructure, 'the mover of commodities,' is now king, and it is the infrastructure - not the structures - that now organizes our cities and our experiences of them. Decisions on where to build, how to build, even what to built are no longer dependent on site, but on infrastructure. All our needs are brought to us by a network of roads, tracks, pipes, wires, and electromagnetic waves. The extent of our infrastructure defines the limit of our built environment, which is ever expanding. All locations becoming *equally accessible* has made it possible to separate and disperse spaces of interconnected activities across a large area.

Has the computer chip become our cosmological symbol? Electronic chips require out of physical necessity the rigid surface of the circuit board on which to locate, but in themselves and in their functioning have nothing to do with the board. They respond to a flow of impulses that originate elsewhere within a closed system. So too our buildings find themselves disassociated from the ground and from their immediate physical environment. Buildings have become *containers*, isolated from their surroundings - containers to house commodities.

By a process of *distancing*, whole building types and their associated activities are removed from our daily experience. Places of agriculture, manufacturing, and production - industries on which society depends - are absent. They have moved to countries where cheap labour can be exploited or to industrial areas; in either case, they have become invisible. We have lost our connection to the source of things, and the sources of life. Our spatial memory of society must be satisfied by a reduced palette of experiences, converging on distribution, display, and consumption.



Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as objects.

-Martin Heidegger,  
*The Question Concerning Technology.*

## Bead: EVERETT

Ceci est architecture, autant que mémoire, et clin d'oeil à une vieille maison. Le titre, Bead: Everett, fait référence aux perles sur une ficelle, où cette dernière est la vie et les perles, les endroits où nous avons vécu. Bead: Everett est un extrait d'une oeuvre de plus grande envergure au lequel l'auteur travaille présentement.

An ebony telephone sits on a low oak table seemingly designed to bear the heavy organically formed Bakelite device. Polished from countless hands gripped in conversation, it occupies a central place within the house. A tiny alcove, three walls are doors, the fourth,