

## Linking practice and research

Introducing the first issue of **arq**, its founding editor, Peter Carolin, wrote that ‘much that is described as research is nothing of the kind, many academics are becoming specialists in research remote from teaching, and design is discounted as a form of research. The link between research and practice is, once more, endangered’.

Nine years later much has changed, but **arq**'s vision – to link, on a global scale, the worlds of architectural practice and research – remains just as urgent. In the UK, as Schools of Architecture gear up for the next national Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) in 2008, the importance of research in institutional and financial terms has never been greater, as Alan Penn makes clear in his letter (pp5–6). But many still question its relevance to both practice and education, and argue that the analytical mode of thought that research requires is inimical to the integrative demands of creative design. Strengthening the links between research and practice, not promoting an autonomous academic discipline of architecture, remains our central challenge.

Like any refereed journal, the contents of **arq** depend significantly on the papers submitted, and the overriding criteria for inclusion, beyond originality and rigour, remain clarity and accessibility to the broad spectrum of the readership. But we will also remain pro-active in seeking out material and encouraging contributions, and are determined to broaden the range of contributors. We would welcome, for example, more papers on the ‘big issues’ called for by Peter Stewart and Sunand Prasad (**arq** 7/3+4, p197), and whilst the letter by Colin Stansfield Smith in this issue (pp 7–8), on the operations of the Public Finance Initiative, raises far-reaching questions that deserve precisely such attention.

We are also eager to receive more contributions from practitioners, writing alone or perhaps in combination with an academic. These pages offer the opportunity to explore in depth the intentions, ideas and knowledge that underpin innovative design in ways that have been largely eliminated from monthly and weekly magazines. Establishing design, and reflections on it, as a primary form of architectural research is one way to ensure that the RAE does not distort the discipline. And it can be undertaken at any scale of project, as Roger Stonehouse's paper confirms (pp 14–25).

Although remaining committed to publishing the broad spectrum of papers that is the hallmark of **arq**, we are planning to devote one issue per annum substantially to contributions on a chosen theme. A forthcoming double issue will contain several papers about materials, and a ‘call for papers’ for issue 3/2005 appears on page 13 of this issue.

Finally, we would like to thank Peter Carolin for the selfless work that he has put into **arq** over the last nine years. His skills as an editor are formidable and it is only on attempting to put together an issue of the journal that we realized just how monumental a labour of love it has been. The profession of architecture owes Peter an enormous debt of gratitude, and we are determined to ensure that his legacy flourishes.

### Future issues

We now have sufficient papers to complete Volume 8 (2004), and are aiming to publish a single and double issue in rapid succession.

THE EDITORS