



Working Paper

## Writing Automobile Histories

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*Fabrications: The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Australia and New Zealand invites papers for a special issue (volume 31, no.1) on Writing Automobile Histories edited by Marianna Charitonidou, ETH Zürich, National Technical University of Athens and Athens School of Fine Arts. Papers are due by 1 June 2020.

The point of departure for this special issue is the hypothesis that the view from the car has established a new epistemology of the urban landscape. Focusing on the views from the car produced by architects will help us better understand how this epistemological shift influenced architectural thinking and practice. The automobile reshaped our conceptions of space revolutionizing the way architects perceive the urban environment and contributing significantly to the transformation of the relationship between architecture and the city. Automobiles transformed the ways in which we access and move around in cities, but also the city's own relation to its territory. No other factor changed the city so drastically during the twentieth century. Many architects and architectural critics and theorists have been attracted to 'automobile vision'. But in the field of history and theory of urban design many questions concerning the impact of the automobile on our perception of the city and its territory have not been explored in depth.

This issue of *Fabrications* intends to explore the theories and methods most suitable for understanding how the automobile has transformed our perception of urban conditions. It will investigate which visual means and artefacts are most significant for the way we comprehend the snapshot aesthetics which is related to car travel. Journeys have always been a source of inspiration for architects, playing a significant role in shaping their design strategies. The issue aims to grasp the specificity of car travel as a new episteme. Using the writings of Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch, John Myer, Reyner Banham, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown as a key reference and also considering John Lautner, Alison and Peter Smithson, Denise Scott Brown and Aldo Rossi's practice of taking photographs from cars, the issue aims to establish a broader conceptual framework for tackling issues related to the impact of the automobile on architectural and urban thought. Papers that treat the different aspects of architects and urban designers' automobile vision as expressions of the emergence of a new episteme are especially encouraged. Papers might also address, for example, the different ways that photography and film capture the snapshot aesthetics related to the automobile. The issue seeks papers aiming to address issues related to the emergence of the new perceptual regimes that emerged thanks to the automobile, focusing on a wide range of geographical and cultural contexts. To this end the issue, encourages articles that address places and perspectives from beyond the Euro-American context, such as those concerning the feral auto-tectonics of 'Mad-Max', or the great road trips and peripatetic architectures of Australasian grey nomads, referring to the phenomenon of retired people who take long – sometimes permanent – road trips.

For further information on *Fabrications* and to review past issues, see the [Taylor and Francis website](#).

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