

Perspecta 43: Taboo

Exploring the ill-defined realm of the architectural taboo, from the hidden spaces of American life to artistic practices in postrevolutionary Iran. We are beset by unspoken rules. As a result, we learn to find consensus in no's and to seek refuge in don'ts. A taboo is a restriction invented and agreed upon by a social group that maintains stability (disciplinary order) but also induces transgressions (the possibility of an avant-garde). Taboos structure our thinking and frame our discussions. In architecture, taboos create an operative way of thinking about and making architecture through unspoken agreement. This issue of Perspecta—the oldest and most distinguished student-edited architectural journal in America—tackles architectural unutterables. In articles and projects, historians, theorists, and practitioners investigate contemporary and historical instances of taboo, aiming to uncover its function in the pedagogy and praxis of architecture. The contributors, asked simply “What is Taboo?”, respond with a range of examples. These include an examination of the relatively unknown work of the Italian architect Rinaldo Semino; photographs documenting the unseen, peripheral spaces of American life; a series of marginalia illustrating certain typographic don'ts in all their absurdity; a study of memorials erected to Maoist insurgents killed by police and paramilitary forces in India; and a critique, by redaction and reconstruction, of Rem Koolhaas's essay “Typical Plan.” Contributors Pier Vittorio Aureli, Glen Cummings, Thomas de Monchaux, Arindam Dutta, Edward Eigen, Mario Gooden, Alicia Imperiale, Pamela Karimi, Keith Krumwiede, Erika Naginski, NaJa & DeOstos, Jorge Otero-Pailos, Neri Oxman, Michelangelo Sabatino, Taryn Simon, Marcel Vellinga, Loïc Wacquant Interviews Sunil Bald, Thomas Beeby, Peggy Deamer, Peter Eisenman, Greg Lynn, and Robert A. M. Stern

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