

Editorial: Ruination as metaphor and process: ideals, damage, and the passing of time

We invited submissions from a range of fields, in particular, architecture, art history, geography, landscape architecture, media studies, urban design, and the visual arts on the theme of ruination. This theme was considered meaningful because experiences and conceptions of art and architecture through ruination have shaped social and cultural realities throughout time. Realities captured, transformed, or erased through ruination intrigue us since the artifact communicates realities in which our role as agents are always in question. The temporal horizon of reality is the stage of human memory where we, at times, feel a sharp sense of loss. Underpinned by gradual entropy and sudden catastrophes in nature, the fragility is due, in particular, to the transience of cultural constructions or to the traumatic disasters of human actions. Ruination as an expression of time-specific mental constructs on the one hand, and unfolding experiences on the other, emerges as a metaphor and method for understanding the paradoxical nature of how humans in and throughout time relate to their environments.

Notwithstanding the rather general guidelines, the submission of articles accepted for publication are thematically focussed. Their great variety of themes collected in this issue attest to the fact that creativity also generates the shadow of destruction with the passing of time.

The editors wish to thank all the contributors for contributing to this special issue.

Estelle Alma Maré (editor)
Rudolf Bitzer (guest editor)