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Past Issues
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One of the critical aspects of sheltering after a disaster is the divergence between providing for short-term needs (emergency or temporary shelter) and long-term needs (permanent housing). However, more often than not, short-term housing solutions are based on universal prototypes, and are not related to the local culture and climate; they are focused on providing immediate relief rather than engaging with the lengthier process of physical and emotional post-disaster reconstruction. Because the shelters provided are often standardised and ill-fitting for families’ needs, families will modify their shelters in order to make them more appropriate for their physical and cultural needs. Cases of transitional accommodation provided after earthquakes in Peru (2007) and Chile (2010) by TECHO NGO and the Government of Chile are no exception. The following photographs are one component of a research project that sought to understand the process of recovery after a disaster, based on the study of 27 shelters modified by their inhabitants.

The transitional houses studied in Peru were built on plots owned by families. The families stayed in their plots after the earthquake, and used the transitional houses initially as starter homes and subsequently as extensions to their permanent houses. In Chile, by contrast, the transitional houses analysed were situated in temporary settlements. Families were displaced due to the total destruction of their houses and neighbourhoods caused by the tsunami. The government coordinated the provision of transitional settlements, and most families applied for social housing, which was also provided by the government.

Figure 1 (facing page): Temporary modified shelter in Cañapay, Peru, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.
The comparison of cases from the two countries showed similarities and differences in the process of transition from a temporary situation to a durable house. The differences were understood to be due in part to the cultural, political, and geographic contexts of the two countries, and in part to the different degrees of destruction resulting from the respective disasters. The initial hypothesis was that families in both Chile and Peru would modify their houses in order to attain a sense of normality, to make the shelter more comfortable, and to make the shelter more suitable to their particular needs.

One aspect that applied to both countries was that the climate influenced the modifications to and the uses of the spaces. In Chile, all families that were studied had added insulation and waterproofing to the house, which showed that both thermal comfort and protection from the rain were fundamental considerations for the families’ individual adaptations. In Peru, protection from the sun was the main concern, and most families had added a shaded porch to their shelters. In both cases, interstitial spaces, such as porches and other outdoor areas, were identified as important elements to mediate between public and private spaces.

The sub-hypothesis was that displaced families would modify their houses in a less extensive way, due to the temporary situation. Nevertheless, cases analysed showed that, even when families knew they would move from their shelters at a certain date, they would invest resources and time to improve the quality of the temporary house, enlarging the structure and engaging in extensive customisation. Ultimately, this showed that creating ‘homes’ in these temporary situations was crucial for enduring the post-disaster recovery process. Although the shelters were primitive and temporary, they had a significance for the families that transcended the physicality of the buildings. The shelters could represent security, stability, certainty, and familiar environments that were crucial for overcoming the disruption that the disasters had created.
Making the Temporary Shelter a ‘Home’

Figure 2 (top): Temporary modified shelter in Cañapay, Peru, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.

Figure 3 (bottom): Temporary modified shelter in Santa Rosa, Peru, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.
Figure 4: Temporary modified shelter in Dichato, Chile, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.
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Figure 5: Temporary modified shelter in Dichato, Chile, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.
Figure 6: Temporary modified shelter in Pelluhue, Chile, 2012. Image courtesy of the author.
Contributors

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Maria Costantino
Maria was born in Chicago, Illinois and has written a number of books on art, design, and contemporary culture including books on fashion, food, and drink. She now lives in London and teaches Historical, Critical, and Theoretical Studies at Kingston University and the University for the Creative Arts.

Stavros Gargaretas
Stavros was born and raised in Athens, and subsequently moved to the UK and to the Netherlands to pursue his architectural education. He graduated from TU Delft and The Why Factory in 2014 with a high commendation for his research *Inhabiting Zero Wasted Space* under the supervision of Prof. Winy Maas. He currently works for the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA) in Rotterdam.
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Richard is an architect and architectural historian, educated at Columbia and Yale Universities. His previous publications include *The Yale Building Project: The First 40 Years* (Yale University Press, 2007), a comprehensive history of an influential educational programme. He has also published extensively on the Aesthetic Movement, including a chapter in *E.W. Godwin: Aesthetic Movement Architect and Designer*, edited by Susan Weber Soros (Yale University Press, 1999). The book received numerous awards and was selected as ‘one of the most notable books of the year’ by the New York Times. Richard has received grants and awards from the American Institute of Architects, the American Architectural Foundation, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, the European Architectural History Network, the MacDowell Colony, and Yaddo. He was a visiting fellow at the University of Cambridge in 2009 and 2013.

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Deborah is Professor Emerita of Architectural History and Director of Research in the Faculty of Architecture and History of Art, and a Fellow of St. John’s College, Cambridge. She was Head of Department of History of Art from 2002-2009 (with a sabbatical break in the middle). A graduate of Cambridge and of the Courtauld Institute of Art, she taught at University College London, Edinburgh University, and the Courtauld Institute, before returning to Cambridge in 1992. With Dr Mary Laven (History) and Dr Abigail Brundin (Italian) she is coordinating a major ERC Synergy Grant entitled ‘Domestic Devotions: The Place of Piety in the Italian Home’ (2013-2017).
Contributors

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Helene is a multidisciplinary artist and researcher. Her practice focuses on the analysis of risk, in particular on how the domestic space—the home or the house—as the site where a complex range of values converge, operates as a platform that registers and articulates multiple perceptions of risk. Such as expert perceptions of risk, observed for example in the financing and insuring of houses within the real estate market, and risk felt as a tangible, bodily threat, experienced within the home. Helene is presently a PhD candidate at the Centre of Research Architecture at Goldsmiths University of London.

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Ishraq has a BArch from BRAC University in Bangladesh and an MA in History & Critical Thinking from the AA School of Architecture in London. She has worked as an architect in Dhaka and has written and presented research at various institutions including RWTH Aachen and the University of Lincoln. She taught at the AA school between 2009-2010 and has been a lecturer at North South University since 2011.

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Andrew is an Assistant Professor in the Division of Landscape Architecture at the University of Hong Kong. He holds degrees in architecture, law, and economics. He is also currently undertaking a PhD in Architecture at the University of Technology, Sydney. His writing has been published in *Cabinet* and *Architecture Australia* magazines.

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Elizabeth is currently conducting doctoral research on housing in extreme situations using prefabricated and modular designs. Before starting her studies at the University of Cambridge, she worked at the Catholic University of Chile as an instructor and coordinator of the masters programmes. Prior to this, she graduated from the Catholic University of Chile with a Bachelor of Architecture (2001) and a Master in Architecture (2005), and received an MPhil in Architecture (2012) from the University of Cambridge.