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Interiors Between Privacy and Togetherness

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EDITORIAL

Uta Pottgiesser & Wido Quist

Editors-in-Chief

INTERIORS BETWEEN PRIVACY AND TOGETHERNESS

Docomomo International is proud to present the second issue of the Docomomo Journal co-edited with the International Specialist Committee on Interior Design (ISC/ID), represented by guest editors Zsuzsanna Böröcz and Deniz Hasirci. Established at the Council Meeting during the 16th International Docomomo Conference in Lisbon in 2016, the ISC/ID has since grown and evolved, as evidenced by significant activities, including seminars, discussions, and publications. Already before the establishment of the ISC/ID, interior design and modern living have been explicit themes in two Docomomo Journal issues: no. 46 *Designing for Modern Life* and no. 47 *Global Design*, both published in 2012, extended beyond the architectural scale to encompass the qualities of interior space and the constituent elements and materialities of daily life.¹

Several Docomomo Journal issues have focused on public and larger housing estates, a recurring and relevant topic of the Modern Movement and modern living: no. 39 *Postwar Mass Housing* (2009), no. 51 *Modern Housing. Patrimonio Vivo* (2014), no. 54 *Housing Reloaded* (2016), no. 65 *Housing for all* (2021), and finally, no. 68 *Middle Class Mass Housing* (2023) reference the great achievements of inter- and postwar housing programs, experimenting with and celebrating light, air, and openness in combination with minimal floor plans.² Initially designed as a response to the poor housing and disastrous living conditions in the industrial area, post-WWII housing estates evolved into more urban and densified neighborhoods, offering space to refugees and migrants from other countries and from the countryside. Most of these cases promoted the separation of functions: housing and homes were separated from work and therefore defined the private sphere of families—or, in fewer cases—of individuals.

In contrast, the modern individual house evolved as a statement and place of modernity. “Addressing the act of living as a cultural fact, the house reflects the time and manner of its production”, Tostões (2014) states, and of different lifestyles.³ While many individual houses were presented under different thematic scopes, only Docomomo Journal no. 64 *Houses* (2021)—published during the COVID-19 pandemic—highlighted the single-family house to discuss how the way of living may evolve in the future.⁴

The current issue on *Modern Interiors in Times of Crisis* continues and expands this discussion, focusing on particular highly relevant and central aspects of the Modern Movement: health and hygiene, transitional spaces between private and public or between interior and exterior, and the relationship between

- 1 COUTINHO, B. (guest editor), TOSTÕES, A and BLASI, I (eds) (2012). *Docomomo Journal* 46, <https://doi.org/10.52200/46.I.09N7XIUH>.
COUTINHO, B. (guest editor), TOSTÕES, A and BLASI, I (eds) (2012). *Docomomo Journal* 47, <https://doi.org/10.52200/47.I.S3ZTUXE3>.
- 2 GLENDINNING, M. (guest editor), CASCIATO, M. and d'ORGEIX, E. (eds) (2008). *Docomomo Journal* 39, <https://doi.org/10.52200/docomomo.39>.
MONTANER, J.M. and MUXI MARTINEZ, Z. (guest editors), TOSTÕES, A. and FERREIRA, Z. (eds) (2014). *Docomomo Journal* 51, <https://doi.org/10.52200/51.I.AU4F715B>.
GRAF, F. And MARINO, G. (guest editors), TOSTÕES, A. and FERREIRA, Z. (eds) (2016). *Docomomo Journal* 54, <https://doi.org/10.52200/54.I.ZCG-BQ0C2>.
FERREIRA, Z. (guest editor), TOSTÕES, A. (ed) (2021). *Docomomo Journal* 65, <https://doi.org/10.52200/65.I.Q2EAJJ1>.
VAZ MILHEIRO, A. SHACH-PINSKY, D., DE VOS, E., CARMILLINO, G., LIMA RODRIQUES, I., TSIMBAOS, K., AKKAR ERCAN, M., FUJALKOW, Y. (guest editors), POTTGIESSER, U. and QUIST, W.J. (eds) (2023). *Docomomo Journal* 68, <https://doi.org/10.52200/docomomo.68>.
- 3 TOSTÕES, A. (2014). The House, the Home and the Housing Question. *Docomomo Journal* 51, 2–3. <https://doi.org/10.52200/51.A.OI8X2TB1>.
- 4 NOELLE, L. and TORRENT, H. (guest editors), TOSTÕES, A (ed), *Docomomo Journal* 64 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.52200/64.I.5QBIMR6V>.
- 5 MOVILLA VEGA, D. (2020). Housing and Revolution: From the Dom-Kommuna to the Transitional Type of Experimental House (1926–30). *Architectural Histories*, 8(1), p.2. <https://journal.eahn.org/article/id/7593/>. *urbanNext* (June 1, 2025). The Precursor of 'Co-housing': Soviet 'Komuna' Houses. Retrieved from <https://urbannext.net/the-precursor-of-co-housing/>.
- 6 MELON, A. (2014). Robin Hood Gardens and the Rehabilitation of Post-War Mass Housing in London. *Docomomo Journal*, (51), 16–21. <https://doi.org/10.52200/51.A.XXHURCAO>.

humans, nature, and culture. Nearly 100 years after the 2nd CIAM (Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne) in 1929 in Frankfurt, affordable housing, minimal spaces, and adaptable interiors remain central societal themes at the core of political and architectural discussions. The COVID-19 pandemic has again heightened our awareness of the importance of health within the home environment, influencing design choices that promote physical and mental well-being. With the widespread adoption of remote work, homes have evolved into multifunctional environments that have to accommodate work, education, fitness, and leisure activities. It reminds us of the early built utopias of Russian Constructivism, which already featured communal housing that integrated work, education and leisure into their housing concepts and realized some radical examples that inspired modern architects for decades.⁵ The importance of outdoor areas and urban gardening has been amplified: backyards, balconies, and patios are being transformed into functional extensions of the home, serving as areas for relaxation, exercise, and social gathering. This underlines the importance and urgency of even small extensions, highlighting their role as transitional spaces: between the private and public spheres or between the built and natural environments, and as an expression of different cultural practices and traditions.

This pandemic shift has prompted a reevaluation of traditional housing and home layouts to allow for easy reconfiguration of spaces, thereby adequately accommodating changing functions and family dynamics. It is particularly needed for small-scale homes and layouts, and it promotes the redesign and adaptation of existing houses and housing estates.⁶ In summary, the pandemic has catalyzed a transformation in residential design, emphasizing flexibility, health, technology integration, and a deeper connection to nature. These changes are shaping homes and residential spaces that are better equipped to meet the diverse and evolving needs of their occupants.

We are grateful to our guest editors Zsuzsanna Böröcz and Deniz Hasirci for their efforts and passion to document the outcomes of the online initiative Modernism Is Frozen – Urbanism and Architecture under/after COVID-19 held in 2021 during the Tokyo 2020+1 Docomomo International conference, and to extend the scope with a call for papers in 2023 in shaping this issue of the Docomomo Journal, published both in print and online via www.docomomojournal.com.