

## Presentation

# Responsibility and the Meaning of Design in the Anthropocene

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To inhabit the Anthropocene implies recognizing that every human action leaves a trace on territory, matter, and perception. The anthropic era places us before a paradox: we are agents with the capacity to transform the world, yet we are also responsible for repairing the balance we have altered. In this context, design emerges as a strategic field of sustainability that mediates between technique and ethics, between innovation and conservation, between wellbeing and responsibility.

The contributions gathered in this issue of *Artificio* engage with this condition of our present: how design and the sciences of the anthropic realms can contribute to the regeneration of the physical, social, and symbolic environment. It is not only a question of designing aspirational objects, spaces, or systems out of vested interest, but of prospecting and enacting a design that redesigns the relationship between human beings, the planet, and others. As Fry (2020) notes, design must assume a “defutural” stance—one focused, above all, on repairing the futures that our own actions place at risk.

The paper by **Maya Rivero**, on the *perception of industrial design students regarding older adults*, reveals the weight of ageism as a cultural bias. In the Anthropocene—where longevity reconfigures social and labor structures—we must reflect on a design practice that confronts the challenge of reconstructing imaginaries that are not only more inclusive, but also more equitable. Designing for longevity therefore means designing for an ethics of care: a vision that values diversity, interdependence, and the continuity of life. As Tonkinwise (2023) argues, design should understand interdependence as a structural principle of collective wellbeing.

In the geotechnical and territorial realm, the research by **Luna-Villavicencio, Reyes-Cedeño, Padilla-Ceniceros, López-Escobar, and Herrera-León**, on the *hazard zoning for land subsidence using conditional analysis in the Aguascalientes Valley*, demonstrates how the extractive dynamics of groundwater are a tangible expression of the anthropic crisis. Their study offers a scientific tool for sustainable planning and emphasizes that territorial problems are not exclusively technical; they are also consequences of cultural systems. The ground we inhabit often mirrors our collective decisions. Following Escobar (2018), territory conceived from the perspective of design should be recognized as a space of sustainable cohabitation.

Meanwhile, **Mondragón Ruiz** examines *topology as an empathic tool in architecture*, returning to the debate the essential question of dwelling: how to create spaces that promote empathy and emotional balance. In times when built environments trend toward standardization, reclaiming the symbolic and phenomenological dimension of space becomes an act of dissent, a form of resistance. Her reading through Norberg-Schulz's theory reminds us that place is always an encounter among matter, memory, and emotion. Her proposal emphasizes that human wellbeing depends on the quality of spaces, where body, mind, and environment engage in an intelligent and ethical dialogue—an idea further explored by Mallgrave (2021).

Finally, the review by **De la Barrera Medina**, devoted to the book *Diseño gráfico y fábrica visual*, highlights the role of design in contemporary productive processes, where the so-called “fábrica visual” functions as an infrastructure: design organizes information but also the conscience of labor. In this sense, we reflect on a process of visual literacy that humanizes technological environments, articulating communicative clarity with the social responsibility of production.

Thus, the contributions in this issue demonstrate that design—across its disciplinary facets—can be a practice of repair and sustainable action. To repair does not mean nostalgically reverting to a former state, but restoring connections between systems we have severed: the human and the natural, the technical and the symbolic, the local and the global. As Manzini (2020) suggests, design should be conceived as a form of “cosmopolitics of care,” where creativity is oriented toward convivial and sustainable coexistence.

In the Anthropocene, wellbeing ceases to be an individual goal and becomes a shared responsibility. Design, as the quintessential anthropic discipline, is obliged to imagine habitable futures—an imagination that requires critical thinking, ethical sensitivity, and a biomimetic vision of technique.

Each article in this issue—from the scale of body, house, city, to industry—reminds us that design not only shapes objects but schematizes the very possibilities of existence. Hence, the act of designing is ultimately an exercise of conscience: a way of responding, from knowledge, to the traces we leave on the world.

## References

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