Editorial view

Overview
The 25th anniversary of the Berlin Wall coming down; memorial mania; Focus E15; gentrification of Johannesburg; Lina Bo Bardi's legacy; David Mackay of MBM remembered

View from
Rome

Viewpoints
Lesley Lokko

Your views

AR Awards for Emerging Architecture

Winner: Boundary Window, Tokyo, Japan
Shingo Masuda + Katsuhisa Otsubo Architects

Joint runner up: CHROFI
Lune de Sang Sheds, Queensland, Australia

Joint runner up: CC Arquitectos
Equestrian complex, Valle de Bravo, Mexico

Joint runner up: Atelier Deshaus
Long Museum, Shanghai, China

Highly Commended
Void Temple, Jalisco, Mexico; Farming Kindergarten, Dongnai, Vietnam; Fish Market Redevelopment, Buenos Aires, Argentina; Wind Tower, Lincolnshire, England; Wintergarden Facade, Brisbane, Australia; Nursery, Tōhoku, Japan; School Floating in the Sky, Kanchanaburi, Thailand

Reviews
The Way Inn; current Japanese architecture; Nick Hedges' photographs; Extrastatecraft; Frank Gehry

History
British architecture after the First World War

Reputations
Louis Kahn

Folio
German Bestelmeyer

'Perhaps the greatest act of remembrance we could perform this year would be to obliterate the Haig memorial − and refrain from building any new ones'
Tom Wilkinson, p18

'With the Gehry story everyone knows the ending, and once the climax of Bilbao has been reached, all that follows seems like the crashing and banging of an extended brassy finale'
Andrew Ayers, p91

'Silence becomes a form of rhetoric, above all in Edwin Lutyens' Cenotaph of 1919, which a character in John Galsworthy's Forsyte Saga described as a "monument to the dread of swank"
Alan Powers, p98

'Even Stanislaus von Moos found Kahn irritating, and Rem Koolhaas crawled out of a lecture on his knees'
Paul Davies, p102
1. (Left) the lushly forested mountain range of Jalisco provides the setting for this final waypoint in a 117km pilgrimage route
2. (Overleaf) the virginal white concrete ring represents a never-ending cycle, emblematic of faith

The historic notion of religious pilgrimage is reconceptualised in Mexico’s Ruta del Peregrino, a project that furnishes an array of nine contemporary structures, shelters, chapels and lookout points along the 117-kilometre route from the town of Ameica to the church in Talpa de Allende. Participants in the programme include Ai Weiwei, Tatiana Bilbao, Christ & Gürtzbein and Mexican architect Rozana Montiel whose project the Void Temple is shown here.

Since it first played host to an apparition of the Virgin in the 17th century, the church at Talpa—a small silver-mining town—has been an object of sustained and enthusiastic pilgrimage.

Around two million people participate each year in this penitential test of faith, coming from all over Mexico to trek through the mountain range of Jalisco. The route can be navigated in three days and conditions are harsh but such austerity is seen as an essential part of the pilgrimage ritual.

Exploring a language of simplicity and sobriety, the new structures are a conscious antidote to the wilder excesses of Mexican Catholicism. The Void Temple marks the route’s final waypoint. A white concrete wall encloses a circular swath of forest 40m in diameter. At times touching the ground, at times supported on pilotis, the wall tactfully threads its way through trees, leaving the landscape undisturbed. A 3m-high gap under one side lets visitors in and out of the circle. ‘As a universal symbol of unity, the circle transcends cultures, borders and languages,’ says Montiel.

It appears time and time again within religious rituals and depictions, from the halo of holy figures to the shape of the Holy Spirit during communion.’ It also represents a cycle, a never-ending journey emblematic of the pilgrims’ faith. The Void Temple creates a place for introspection, for pilgrims to reflect on their physical and spiritual journey before carrying on to their ultimate destination.

HIGHLY COMMENDED
ROZANA MONTIEL ARCHITECTS
VOID TEMPLE

Architect
Rozana Montiel Architects
Photographs
Iwan Baan

sections