Editorial

Julienne Hanson: A production of many dimensions

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Introduction

In Edwin A. Abbott’s *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions* (1884) - a literary treatise on the mathematical dimensions of human perception and a satire of the Victorian class system - the main character recognises the limitations of his own universe, which is bound to two dimensions, in his attempt to communicate with the inhabitants of a world whose knowledge is conditioned by the existence of the third dimension. After his mind is opened to the three-dimensional world, he deduces the theoretical possibility of the fourth, fifth and sixth dimensions. Dedicated to Julienne Hanson’s work, this Issue borrows from Abbott’s title, for the ability we see in art and literature to say one thing in terms of another, but also to say several things at once. The first thing to note came to light by chance, as while recently ‘unpacking my library’, I retrieved from a pile of books Abbott’s book, which gave this Issue its title. Hence it is with pleasure and affection to Julienne, who recommended I read this novella (at the time I was Affiliate Researcher at the Bartlett in 2003), that I welcome our readers to this Issue of JOSS. The purpose is to ‘curate’ the ‘library’ of her articles and ideas with the view to stimulate new ways of elucidation.

The second thing to mention is that traversing multiple grounds, synthesising perspectives from different fields, and offering remarkable insights into what structures relationships, be they in architecture, cities, policy, history, iconography, ideology, art, myth, and works of literature, is what constitutes the hallmark of Hanson’s work: a production of many dimensions. Despite its magnitude, an opus can often be described by the predominance of one word. In Abbott’s *Flatland* and in Hanson’s work, that word is ‘inquisitive’. Extending beyond the limitations imposed by analytical methods and language, Hanson unravels manifold worlds. Inquisitively, intelligently and rigorously, she questions the ‘flatness’ of ideas and maps, to offer many levels of explanation. The third thing to explain is that the implicit analogy between the novella’s Flatland and the two-dimensional representations of space syntax was an accidental coincidence, albeit a useful one in reminding us of the limitations of our own ‘world’.

“I CALL our world Flatland, not because we call it so, but to make its nature clearer to you, my happy readers, who are privileged to live in Space.”


“Space syntax is not a method for extracting social information from space: this is too crude and exploitative an approach to any phenomena that may be under investigation. It is a “way of seeing” (Berger, 1972) that helps to phrase questions and may offer interpretations, but it rarely if ever provides definitive answers.”

Presented here are six papers, produced as a response to five articles from Hanson’s record of nearly 100 publications, selected for the purposes of this Issue. The original papers form the axis around which the six authors’ inputs developed as the outcome of a wide reaching discussion of how best to define the contributions of her work. The second purpose was to identify potential new directions for the ongoing project of space syntax research that might stem from Hanson’s scholarship. In our early discussions regarding how to approach this Issue, Julienne identified two additional tasks to be undertaken by herself personally: firstly, to write a foreword to each of her articles so as to orientate the reader through the reciprocity between the analytical explorations in her original work and her current reflections on the same topics. Secondly, to write a new paper on Charles Dickens and Peter Ackroyd’s London, thus - in an unexpected act of symmetry - reuniting readers of her oeuvre with her earliest piece: ‘Time and space in two nineteenth century novels’ (Hanson, 1976).

The papers presented here are responses to four articles and a chapter from Hanson’s book, *Decoding Homes and Houses* (1998). Hanson’s articles are listed below in the order of publication: ‘Time and space in two nineteenth century novels’ was published in the *Architectural Association Quarterly* in 1976, and is one of her earliest publications. ‘Order and structure in urban design: The plans for the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire of 1666’ was featured in *Ekistics* in 1989, and gave Hanson the title for her PhD dissertation (Order and Structure in Urban Space: A morphological history of the City of London, 1989b). ‘The architecture of justice: Iconography and space configuration in the English law court building’ was published in the *Architectural Research Quarterly* (arq) in 1996. ‘The anatomy of privacy in architects’ London houses’ is one of the chapters in her book, *Decoding Homes and Houses*, published in 1998. Finally, ‘Urban transformations: A history of design ideas’ was featured in *Urban Design International* in 2000.

Six authors-researchers from within the space syntax community or closely associated with it offer the following reflections: Lars Marcus (KTH), and Sophia Psarra (UCL-JOSS editor) on ‘Urban transformations’; Sam Griffiths (UCL) on ‘Time and space in two nineteenth century novels’; Kayvan Karimi (UCL) on ‘Order and structure in urban design’; Jianfei Zhu (The University of Melbourne) on ‘The architecture of justice’; and Sonit Bafna (GTech) on ‘The anatomy of privacy in architects’ London houses’.

The early plan for this Issue was to present the authors’ responses according to the chronological sequence in which Hanson’s articles were published. However, ordering knowledge according to chronology is simultaneously a useful and pointless task. Hanson begun crafting ‘Urban transformations’ during the period of 1976-8 as a research assistant in the Unit of Architectural Studies at the Bartlett, working with Bill Hillier on the foundations of space syntax analysis, and she continued working on it sporadically throughout the following 20 years. Spanning over two decades, this article documents the history of ideas that have influenced urban society and its spatial manifestations for nearly one hundred years, including the genealogy of space syntax knowledge itself. Similarly, ‘The anatomy of architects’ houses’ is a chapter in her book *Decoding Homes and Houses*, which presents studies that span 20 years, while also holding a special ‘place’ in the evolution of space syntax theory. Laying out the foundational and longitudinal aspects of her research, ‘Urban transformations’ and her book form the main ‘tapestry’ of her work, into which her other papers are woven through a number of variations.

The visual order of a tapestry cannot be easily translated into the linear order through which ideas and knowledge unfold in language. The closer approximation is to use two kinds of order: one
based on the time spanned by the two aforementioned studies; the other based on chronological sequence. Therefore, two responses to ‘Urban transformations’ appear first in this issue, followed by four papers, each of which was prepared as a single response to one of the four other works by Hanson. ‘The anatomy of privacy’ comes fifth, according to chronological order, but mirrors ‘Urban transformations’ in its position in the sequence. Finally, ‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity’, her paper on Dickens and Ackroyd’s London, stands alone, completing the series of Hanson’s writings presented in this Issue.

I will discuss each author’s paper by first summarising Hanson’s original article, then moving onto the author’s response. I will also refer to Hanson’s forewords so as to connect the work of the six authors with her current reflections on her articles. Finally, I will present Hanson’s recently produced paper on Dickens and Ackroyd, as a way to discuss the authors’ contributions and the main thrust of her work.


In ‘Urban transformations’, Hanson explores the morphological changes that have taken place in the design of housing in a small Inner London neighbourhood, Somers Town, approximately over the period of a hundred years. What follows from the analysis of this small area, however, is the larger story of ‘the changing nature of urban society, its government and institutions, including three major attempts by the state to reshape housing policy for ordinary working people’ that took place over the second part of the twentieth century (Hanson, 2012b). The morphological patterns show a shift of ‘urban physiognomy’ from street to estate layout. The primary street grid has become ‘coarser, shallower and more integrated over time’ (Hanson, 2000, p.106). However, the morphologies of the housing estates in the interior of the blocks are all ‘small-scale, integrated, outward facing, unconstituted and hierarchical’ (ibid., p.112). Hanson associates these changes with three shifts in design ideology in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She thus offers one of the few studies in space syntax research that present an intersection of morphological analysis of urban areas as they evolve over time, with the history of design ideas related to housing.

The intellectual and social significance of Hanson’s paper demands a cross-over of responses in order to address the nature of her subject and her method of work. From urban morphology to urban history, from quantitative analysis to social accounts of urban life, and from the ideas that shape housing to the politics of architecture and urbanism, ‘Urban transformations’ explores the multiple factors that affect urban societies and their spatial manifestations. It provides material and invites discussion that can be debated through an extensive programme of seminars, conferences, academic courses, publications and books. In this Issue we offer only a small fraction of this debate, hosting responses by Lars Marcus (KTH) and the JOSS editor. Each of the two authors takes a different approach to Hanson’s article. Marcus draws attention to the synthesis of empirical evidence and deep ‘social concern’ in her research, and urges us to address a growing divide between two kinds of studies: on the one hand, quantitative analysis, in which the process of analysing data results in graphic form without social interpretation; on the other hand, qualitative research that lacks in empirical evidence and substitutes spatial practices for verbal descriptions. My account discusses the intersections between morphology, history and design paradigms in ‘Urban transformations’.

Approaching the subject of design and housing ideas from different angles, the two contributions recognise the risks involved in uncritical examina-
tions of social performance, and the underlying assumptions that quantitative analysis of space is the only engine for improving the lives of people (even when supported by empirical evidence of how life in cities is lived). This proposition comes as a natural extension from ‘Urban transformations’; the origins are Hanson’s own. What the two authors offer instead is a centering of this contribution within the context of contemporary models and assumptions in design and research. The underlying message is that if architecture has nothing to offer to society today, then we can do away with architecture as a social and aesthetic practice and leave cities to policy and the forces of private investment. Conversely, if architecture has any social significance at all, we cannot afford its isolation from syntactic research, splitting it into quantitative and qualitative studies, top-down notions of representational form and bottom-up principles of self-organisation, the design of buildings and urban planning.

2. ‘Time and space in two twentieth century novels’, Hanson (1976)
‘Is it possible to trace major structural changes in the form of the novel?’, so begins Hanson’s essay ‘Time and Space in Two Nineteenth Century Novels’. Written in 1976, this article was based on a study she carried out as a student of Bill Hillier and Adrian Leaman in the Advanced Architectural Studies (AAS) MSc at UCL. Austen’s Pride and Prejudice, Hanson argues, is mechanically solid, while Hardy’s Jude the Obscure is organically solid - both terms being used in the Durkheimian sense. The former suppresses time and space, producing a ‘normative prescription for action’ (Hanson, 1976, p.34) that reinforces the existing social order (ibid., p.37) and is closer to myth. The latter exploits these notions to provide a ‘substantial description of action’ that is closer to art, carrying ‘the possibility for the future creation of social uncertainty’ (ibid.). Hanson concludes that both art and myth are systems of representation. ‘Once more a binary opposition is created which demonstrates the ultimate paradox that whilst representations may either reinforce or alleviate the existing social order, they cannot discover realities’ (ibid.).

In his response to ‘Time and space’ (‘Networks, narratives and literary representation: Reflections on Julienne Hanson’s “Time and space in two nineteenth century novels”’ (1976), 2012), Sam Griffiths observes that Hanson provided an interdisciplinary connection between architecture and literature at a time when such studies were unusual in space syntax research. But instead of approaching Durkheims’ binary opposition as a theoretical model through which to interpret the two novels as social artefacts, Griffiths proposes a reading of the fictions both as social and literary products. This reading is based on the idea of ‘embodied movement’ of Elizabeth Bennett and Jude Fauley - the main characters in each fiction - as a narrative and symbolic device. Elizabeth’s movements enable her to reason in a way that is ‘transgressive’ of social norms; Jude’s lack of control of his own movements on the other hand, ‘lead to no movement at all’ (ibid., p.27), and hence failure to overcome his social situation. These observations lead Griffiths to question the opposition between the mechanical and organic in Hanson’s article, and replace it with an ambiguous interpenetration of the two terms. If Hanson was to write a similar article today, he argues, she might have been assisted by social network analysis of literary plots. Pioneered by Moretti at the Stanford Literary Lab (Moretti, 2011), this analysis involves linking characters in a network in those cases in which dialogue involves characters occupying the same space. Dense social networks indicate spatial relationships, as opposed to sparse networks capturing relations that are predominantly transpatial. Griffiths deduces that Elizabeth Bennett is at the centre of a dense local network, that over
the course of the narrative extends to the larger one associated with Darcy. In contrast to this, the social network of *Jude the Obscure* is essentially ‘de-centred’ as ‘all these characters recur in some or all of the successive places in which the narrative unfolds’ (Griffiths, 2012, p.31). He concludes that there are research gains in considering parallels between movement as social potential in spatial networks, and movement as narrative potential in social network relations in a novel.

For Griffiths, Hanson pioneered an interdisciplinary study in space syntax and literature, as a handful of explorations on this subject have only recently emerged in space syntax publications (Peponis, 1997, 2005; Kanecar, 2001, 2005; Psarra, 2003, 2005, 2009a, 2009b; Lykourioti, 2011). However, these studies explore space and time mainly in relation to the cognitive and aesthetic structuring of poems and fictions. Hanson’s achievement, on the other hand, is in those aspects of literature that reinforce social norms, or revolutionaryise them, so challenging social order. Hence, her article still remains highly original. Griffiths also takes the social as his particular charge, offering a reading of the two novels based on embodied movement and social networks. His argument seems to imply that novels represent a number of systems of reality. His discussion of *Pride and Prejudice* and *Jude the Obscure* implies that the systems captured by the movement of characters and the social network of their interactions can coincide with or differ from the world image captured by the referential system of space and time in the novels. This defines an innovative direction for the analysis of social relationships in literature and its connection with spatial practice. We may think of his proposition as being equivalent to the correspondence/non-correspondence model between social interactions occurring in space, and social systems that are symbolically expressed through space, as identified by space syntax theory (Hillier, 1989). However, it is interesting to consider whether social network analysis could explain non-realist works that dispense with the unities of space and time, such as Ackroyd’s fiction (Hanson, 2012a), Calvino’s fantastic literature, or Samuel Beckett’s plays which focus on the essentials of the human condition. Griffiths’ interpretation though, challenges us to think of extensions to Hanson’s article, so as to account for space-time social relations through interdisciplinary translation.

Inspired by her analysis of nineteenth century novels, Hanson explored interdisciplinary translation in her undergraduate course at the Bartlett in the 1980s, focusing on the visual and plastic arts as systems that ‘represent, reproduce, distort, challenge, heighten or otherwise transform our everyday experience of space-time’ (Hanson, 2012c, p.20). Architects, she explains, ‘have the ideal excuse to indulge in all the creative media, which is that by so doing they will better-understand their own’ (ibid.). To this we may add another observation that links with ‘Time and space’. In this article, Hanson draws a distinction between preserving (Austen) and destabilising (Hardy) social order. However, ideology as a symbolic confirmation of past experience and ruptures of social order that open towards the future are indispensable to each other. As Richard Kearny observes, ‘once cut off each other, they fall into extreme forms of political pathology: the one incarcerating us in the past, the other sacrificing us to the future’ (Kearny, 1991, p.159). Architects have not only the ideal excuse, but also the social responsibility to engage the ‘productive social imagination’ (ibid.), mediating between the realms of ‘experience’ and ‘expectancy’, or the past and the future.

3. ‘Order and structure: The plans for the rebuilding of London after the Great Fire of 1666’, Hanson (1989a)

In ‘Order and structure’ Hanson analyses five design proposals (by Hooke, Knight, Evelyn, Wren and
Newcourt) for the rebuilding of the City of London, and compares them to the organic street layout that emerged after the Great Fire. Her article starts with a distinction between two forms of knowledge in urban complexes. Cities can often be grasped all at once, based on a rational order of geometric relationships that are clear in plan (‘order’). The second form of knowledge develops by living in cities and experiencing the ways in which parts come together to form wholes (‘structure’). We may appreciate order when criticising designs on the drawing board, ‘but well-structured realities seem to be what matter most on the ground’ (Hanson, 1989a, p.22). Hanson describes the five schemes shifting between their patterns of order and those of structure, in order to explore whether compositional principles enhance or reduce the capacity of the designs to function successfully. She subsequently links the five proposals with contemporary examples of town planning practice. With the exception of Wren’s design, which is both well-ordered and well-structured, the rest of the projects use order in ways that do not give added clarity to the spatial structure. If built, most of the schemes would have altered the logic of the old street pattern. In contrast, very little change occurred in the street layout that emerged after the post-fire reconstruction in comparison to the Medieval City. Hanson concludes that the discussion of ‘natural’ cities (organic) and ‘artificial’ cities (planned) in urban discourse does not survive inspection, as both order and structure are present to some degree in urban configurations. ‘The problem is not to classify them in terms of “either/or” but to capture the degree to which either or both are necessary to make a working pleasing town’ (ibid., p.40).

In his response to this article, Kayvan Karimi (‘A reflection on “Order and structure in urban design”’, 2012) refers to a number of examples of twentieth century planning in the New Towns in England, and organic towns in Iran. New Towns were produced using a repetition of neighbourhood units to create formal order in plan, and deforming the grid to create an illusion of organic structure. However, these units are not successfully connected with the larger road network (Karimi, 2009). Moving to six historic cities in Iran, Karimi shows that the historic grid differentiates between highly permeable and the less accessible residential areas. Superimposing public spaces and buildings of economic, cultural and institutional significance (‘urban elements’) onto the historical configurational structure of Shiraz, Karimi shows that these cluster on the most integrated streets. The transformations of the Iranian cities and their significant buildings after modernisation affected the interdependence between the road network and the historic elements which had developed over many years. For Karimi, this is one of the reasons behind the decline of historic centres, and the difficulties these cities have encountered with regard to regeneration. He argues that ‘Order and structure’ makes two significant contributions: firstly, it provides an understanding of how configuration interplays with a city’s ordering principles in bridging between the quantifiable analysis of space syntax and the intuitive methods used in design (2012, p.38); secondly, it coherently synthesises the generic functionalities that are expected from design with the distinct features that give different designs their own identity, and are specific to their particular context.

The notions of order and structure affect cities in ways that go beyond the transformations of London in the seventeenth century, extending into contemporary challenges facing urban societies; and therefore warrant further significant discussion. Hanson primarily uses the concept of order to denote the regularities that render a design intelligible in plan. Yet a second definition of this term is implied in her article; that is, as an arrangement responding to the pragmatics of function. She explains that the City of London gained in terms
of order at the global level, by road widening and a certain degree of geometrisation. We know that this gain was based on the functional requirements of reducing fire risk, and improving ventilation and circulation, similar to the requirements found in Hooke, Knight and Newcourt’s schemes, which for Hanson were designs ‘assigned to the domain of planning’ (Hanson, 1989a, p. 25). So order relates to geometry and pattern on one hand, functionality and control on the other. Following problems in the medieval City, problems that arose with the Industrial Revolution in Britain, and the political revolution in France, order in cities has been used to cleanse, drain, ventilate, control sounds, eliminate vandalism, reduce the overlapping of elements, police, discipline, and edify society. Order links with geometry in relation to the cognitive and aesthetic dimensions of buildings and plans, but with regard to function, it has been the instrument of flows, water, air, light, drainage, traffic diagrams, and ideas about social organisation.

The origin of modern planning is in ordering and removing the ‘pathologies’ of the city (Vidler, 2011) so as to put into practice the healthy virtues of respiration and circulation (Sennett, 1994). In this way, order found its place not only in geometrical designs and functional diagrams, but also in regulatory systems and codes. Order in its three forms - geometry, functionality and regulation - became the means to remove insanitary conditions, overcrowded dwellings, social disease, the crime-ridden alleys and courts from towns and cities. As a concept and a tool, it unfolds the history of the state of working-class housing, health, convenience, welfare, morality, utopian socialism and social reform. Order found expression in the city of the Enlightenment ideas, the surgical transformations of Haussman in Paris, Charles Fourier’s phalanstery, Bentham’s panopticon, Owen’s monastic cloister in New Lanark, Ledoux’s Saline Royale d’Arc et Senans, and Jean-Baptiste André Godin’s Familistère, among others. Order was aided by the technological inventions of instruments of mapping and aerial photography showing that ideas that influence cities have complex origins related to many disciplines and mechanisms of representation, contrary to the prevailing belief that order is solely one of architects’ fascinations. In The Scenes of the Street (reviewed in this Issue by Murray Fraser), Vidler writes: ‘It was Diderot who imagined that the building of this great Encyclopédie resembled the construction of a large city; for many of the architects and planners of the last two centuries the building of the city resembled the construction of social knowledge in space’ (Vidler, 2011, p. 9). With the revival of classicism, planning and architecture were interlaced through the geometrical notion of order. The continuous idea of social unity that resonates in most theories of utopian socialism was thus married to the classical idea of architectural unity in architectural form (ibid.).

In ‘Order and structure’ Hanson explains that the simplification of cities into notions of geometrical order has occurred because the mind is incapable of conceptualising complex socio-spatial realities. However, it is important to acknowledge that the effects of simplified models for cognition were engendered by both the urban transformations and the complex discourse developed by planners, architects, scientists, politicians, reformers and revolutionaries over the past couple of centuries. This discourse was based on metaphors that were manifested in urban form and literary texts (some of these metaphors are encountered in Hanson’s discussion of Dickens’ London published in this Issue). ‘Cities were seen as landscapes, and later as gardens or parks […] they were envisaged as machine engines, and factories that functioned according to laws of economics or inertia; they were traced as bodies, healthy or sick, with characteristic symptoms of disease or fitness; they were imagined as sentient beings, however monstrous or deformed, with humours and psychologies that
varied with the circumstances of their environment’ (ibid., p.17).

History shows that metaphors framing urban ideas and the patterns of self-organising growth of cities have an interlocking development affecting urban environments and people living in them. Today, following the challenges posed by cities that are declining or those whose populations are rising, we are confronted with environmental problems, the decrease of biodiversity, new epidemics, and the externalities of industrial production and consumerist life-styles (Borasi and Giardini, 2012).

If the history of urban planning is rooted in removing the pathologies of the city and ordering it, new challenges arise as contemporary architecture, planning and policy turn their attention once more to ideas of well being, sustainability and the provision of healthy urban environments. The ‘medicalisation’ and naturalisation of cities that started in the eighteenth century continues today, this time aiming to combat carbon emissions, obesity, illness and stress (ibid.). Space syntax offers methods and tools that assess cities as orderly complexities, similar to the ways in which Jane Jacobs had thought them to be (Jacobs, 1961), through the notion of ‘spatial sustainability’ seeing the social, economical and environmental city as one thing (Hillier and Vaughan, 2007). However, today it is even more pressing to understand the structure of cities together with the notions of order that have historically regulated urban forms and perceptions, and continue to regulate them. These include the ways in which architects respond to these notions with constantly re-elaborated ideal designs and plans. Regardless of the degrees of geometrical order used in contemporary design, design thinking descends from the ideal Renaissance tradition with its emphasis on composition and the internalised aesthetics of buildings and cities as objects of an illusionary formal and spatial integrity detached from the complex social processes that produce the built environment. A renewed understanding of order and structure should extend from metaphors and systems of thought to the ways in which planners, developers, client bodies, politicians and organisations consider institutional programmes, the allocation of resources, and the assumptions behind regulation and policy, together with the use patterns and aspirations of people who live in cities themselves. If order notions are not studied intensively in their own right, as well as in conjunction with the factors that structure urban complexity, we face the risk of resorting to social and environmental engineering once more, and causing irreversible damage by repeating mistakes of the past.

Within our own field, order and the history of metaphors and institutions are often mistaken as matters concerning architectural historians, or simply as architects’ ‘obsessions’, and are therefore often ignored. In addition to the explanations mentioned above, there is one more reason for which we should understand order and be vigilant. As Hanson reminds us in her foreword to ‘Order and structure’, order might creep into space syntax analysis itself. Technological advancements for mapmaking substitute rapidly produced visualisations for the meticulous attention to the fine details of maps that hand-drawn analysis required, at the time her study of London was developed. She explains that by hand-drafting the axial map, one could take a mental tour through the city immersed in the urban environment depicted in the map and thus understand intuitively ‘what each line contributed to the whole configuration. […] [R]apid and accurate but undeniably hands-off approach may loosen the researcher’s grip on understanding spatial structure and strengthen an appreciation of, predominantly visual, order’ (Hanson, 2012d, p.36). To this we may add the contemporary ease of access to large sources of data, mining information in order to produce powerful visualisations that nevertheless are not as well informed by social knowledge of life.

With Hanson’s article ‘The architecture of justice’ we move from urban systems to the spatial configuration of buildings and, more particularly, the law court building. The purpose of her article is to investigate whether the loose and informal semantics of the court building introduced to communicate a shift from a more autocratic to a more democratic governance is actually substantiated by its ‘syntax’. Hanson suggests that in spite of changes in visual design, the way in which the courthouse works presents ‘a continuous and stable judicial structure which has changed very little over the years’ (Hanson, 1996, p.57). Although the courtroom seems to bring actors together, these are actually segregated from one another; while the backstage corridors - the place of legal negotiations - are the areas that integrate the law court building. Justified graphs show three separate spatial domains, ‘preventing contamination between the criminal, citizen and those officiating at the ritual process’ (ibid., p.58). Against this separation, the courtroom visually synchronises the three ‘societies’, or social states which characterise the judicial rite of passage – the ‘pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal phases of the rite which are enacted in the court of law’ (ibid.). However, an arrangement of barriers breaks this room into separate spatial and social territories. Hanson concludes that the judicial system needs well-designed court buildings in which the embodied generative function served by the backstage helps to resolve the conflicts involved in the interests of a wider social justice.

In his response to this article, Jianfei Zhu (‘Seeing versus moving: A review of Julienne Hanson’s “The architecture of justice” (1996)’, 2012) explains that by exposing a persistent pattern of compartmentalisation in the law court building, Hanson demystifies the semantic reading of the courtroom design. He argues that, in addition to this discovery, Hanson makes a contribution to interdisciplinary knowledge, combining historical accounts with morphological analysis, qualitative descriptions with quantitative work, and the non-discursive properties of space with rich discursive descriptions of the courtroom as a setting. He also explains that ‘The architecture of justice’ consists of a series of oppositions, such as: ‘local and global’; ‘semantics and syntax’; ‘rhetoric and essence’; ‘form and space’; ‘continuity and change’; and ‘local iconography and global spatial configuration’. For Zhu, Hanson primarily concentrates on the second side of these dualities, that is, those that concern how the court building works as a complex set of spatial relationships. However, a discourse that addresses both sides can enrich the interpretation of the complex relations among architecture, society and cultural meaning. So, although rhetoric and semantics disguise truths, they might have their ‘own truth in the historical formation of ideology, built with forms, signs and emblems’ (Zhu, 2012, p.58). Although the integrated backstage is where the legal conflicts are resolved, the courtroom has its own visual properties in spite of being isolated from the other three areas of the building. Although the backstage sustains embodied encounters of politics and negotiation, the social history of the split between seeing and moving requires a focused historical reading. This history is associated with the emergence of the disciplinary society in the nineteenth century, leading to an increased intensification of the difference between what the eye can see and the body can reach in many institutional buildings. Zhu concludes that the relationship between visibility and permeability should be at the heart of analytical efforts aiming to extend Hanson’s analysis from court buildings and architects’ houses (‘Deconstructing architects’ houses’, 1994) to a whole range of building types.

Hanson’s article has special significance, demonstrating that the appearance and semantic properties of buildings essential to the institutions that regulate societies do not always coincide with the ways in which these institutions function as spatial
and social practices. However, Zhu stresses that a combined analysis of both syntax and semantics is essential in order to address what makes successful buildings. Space syntax research primarily focuses on spatial properties, as evidence shows that the relationship of space to society passes through spatial configuration rather than the rhetoric of visual appearance. Yet semantic and formal relations in architecture have communicative and aesthetic functions. They can clarify the functional, social and cognitive performance of buildings and cities, or use their layered potential to create abstract complexity moving towards the aesthetic (Hillier, 2011). They might also construct the illusion of culturally held values, such as safe communities, healthy environments, efficiency, stability, nostalgia about a fictional past, and social justice, as we are often reminded by Hanson’s work. They are political tools that can legitimise social and economic strategies of inclusion or exclusion. It is precisely the illusionary potential of the semantics of style, space and form that strengthens rather than lessens the need to understand them. It is only by decoding the mechanisms of both space and semantic illusions that we can bring our theories and tools into the service of a better human environment.

This proposition is closely related to Zhu’s discussion of the evolution of institutions and the ways in which they organise visual and spatial relations. Using Foucault’s study of disciplinary society founded on Jeremy Bentham’s panopticon (Foucault, 1977), Zhu explains that moving and viewing relations follow the history of buildings as sites of the policing powers of surveillance and control. Phillip Steadman clearly illustrates the failures of Bentham’s panopticon in terms of security and surveillance, and by implication the problems of reading social order in the geometrical order of plan (Steadman, 2007), an observation also made by Hanson in her article on order and structure. In addition to Steadman’s analysis, studies using space syntax demonstrate cases of clear impact from society to spatial organisation, such as health environments, or those associated with security and justice (‘strong programme’ buildings). On the other hand, there are institutions where space has effects on society, facilitating co-presence and patterns of social interaction over and above explicit or tacit rules, scheduled activities and itineraries (‘weak programme’ buildings) (Hillier, Hanson and Peponis, 1984; Hillier and Penn, 1991; Hillier, 1996). Buildings can be either strongly or weakly programmed, or consist of sub-complexes governed by different principles, as the analysis of court buildings reveals, segregating the three categories of actors from one another, while using the integrated backstage to generate social encounters.

A detailed account of how buildings work as spatial configurations is therefore essential to understand how power structures work, and how spatial configuration may overcome institutional control by reversing the effects from society to space. However, Zhu challenges us to consider the history of buildings in addition to their morphology. This is essential in order to understand how the evolution of social thinking conditions thinking in design. One of the reasons for this need is that social economical and technological transformations have often removed conceptual and physical boundaries that previously separated people and social groups, (such as the open plan in domestic space, the work place, and in the design of many organisations); equally, structural shifts have added new barriers that keep individuals and communities apart, while they were previously integrated (for example, the decentralisation strategies in many American cities that created a strong division between affluent suburbs and low-income urban populations). In spite of such changes, the residues of inherited notions often remain, reducing not only the configurational options available to designers, but also the capacity of buildings and neighbourhoods to adapt. It is
often because these strategies are not properly understood that buildings and neighbourhoods follow irreversible pathways to segregation, disuse, decline and social exclusion.


We now shift our attention to Hanson’s research on the residential dwelling, which also has a central place in her work as well as in the evolution of space syntax theory. This research was published (as a ‘tip of the iceberg’ in an extensive corpus of case studies) in her book Decoding Homes and Houses (1998), which examines the evolution of domestic space organisation and family structure in Britain through many accounts of historic houses, examples of speculative homes, and innovative, contemporary domestic architecture (Hanson, 1998, p.2-3).

‘The anatomy of privacy’ examines a small sample of post-war family homes designed by architects living in London for their own occupation. Hanson asks the question whether these houses are similar or different from suburban speculative examples in terms of their layout and spatial configuration. Her analysis shows that the 18 houses studied are very much individual cases, as no genotypical signature capable of revealing the imprint of a particular culture exists. However, certain consistencies suggest that the houses are part of cultural values held by a large sector of society. The architects designed their homes so as to construct rich ‘privacy gradients’. A set of articulated transition spaces and buffer zones create ‘a fine balance between delineating individual territories and acknowledging co-presence within the domestic interior’ (Hanson, 2012e, p.66).

If architectural education encourages students to engage with design in ways that challenge social norms, Hanson’s analysis reveals that architects are part of society at large rather than forming a separate sub-culture (ibid.).

Starting from the challenges found in the lack of genotypical consistency in Hanson’s sample of houses, Sonit Bafna discusses significant contributions to the theoretical and analytical definitions of genotype in space syntax literature (‘Rethinking genotype: Comments on the sources of type in architecture’, 2012). These lead him to re-examine the biological metaphor of the genotype-phenotype distinction. He suggests that in biology the two terms refer to two causally distinct pathways: one being hereditary and the other developmental. However, the distinction between phenotype and genotype in space syntax theory was taken to be a ‘type/token’ distinction, disregarding the fact that the phenotype is also a type, which according to Lewontin (2011) manifests the physiology, morphology and behaviour of an organism. Recognising that no analogues of genetic and developmental pathways in the shaping of artefacts exist, Bafna proposes that in architecture there might be generative processes that might follow different causal routes. In order to explain the distinctive spatial qualities that architects bring to their designs, studies in architecture should take into account the concepts of ‘sociotype’ and ‘stylotype’. The former is defined ‘as a class of common relational structures’ (Bafna, 2012, p.76) originating in social function. The latter concern designed-governed traits or criteria of stylistic origin. Examples of typical structural traits in Hanson’s sample are ‘islands’ inserted into the houses in order to create circulation spaces around staircases and voids, or misalignments of interior partitions that absorb oddly shaped areas into transition zones. These observations lead Bafna to suggest that geometrical constraints condition the discrete typology of spatial configuration. Architects share consistent procedural strategies in design, demonstrating that the stylotype acts as a generative constraint on the sociotype, the nature of which is regulative. He concludes that the stylotype may
be shown ‘to cater to the generic imaginative function’ of buildings (ibid., p.60).

Bafna’s discussion of the genotype/phenotype proposes that we should consider three aspects: firstly, that by approaching phenotypes as types we may provide typological definitions of style in architecture; secondly, that shared repertoires of generative moves in design give cultural values typical architectural forms of expression; thirdly, that geometrical languages are pathways through which architects interrogate generic social function. The role of form and geometry in space syntax analysis has preoccupied Peponis (1997a; 1997b; 2005), Bafna (1999; 2001; 2012b) and their colleagues in their studies of spatial partitioning capturing characteristics of built shape. A small group of studies has also focused on the analysis of formal/geometrical and spatial properties, with the view to understanding how designers relate geometry to spatial configuration (Psarra, 1997, 2003, 2009a; Psarra and Grajewski, 2001; Sakellaridou, 2011). Sakellaridou’s analysis of Botta’s houses captured synchronic and diachronic patterns in his work, identifying his design canons or compositional idiom (Sakellaridou, 2011). She argues that architects should challenge their established canons of design moves if they want to remain creative in their medium. Therefore, Bafna’s notion of stylotypes might help to explore not only how formal languages become types, but also to what extent they depart from stable descriptions aiming at innovation. More importantly, and a subject that has not been studied so far, is in which ways they can help address how stylotypes and cultural sociotypes are not static but dynamic notions that influence each other in the evolution of architects’ work, and the houses produced by the larger sectors of society.

For Bafna, amongst Hanson’s contributions to space syntax, the most distinctive is her attempt to describe what is ‘architectural’ within the general body of domestic building organisation. This study was possible due to an extensive programme of research from all divisions of the UK’s housing stock (vernacular, speculative and architect-designed houses), which she later expanded to housing designed for ageing populations. Reflecting on her work on domestic organisation in her foreword, Hanson writes:

‘I hope that my work has shown that it is important to study both ordinary domestic environments and architect-designed houses as these are not necessarily poles apart, and to establish multiple lines of inquiry through a rich and variegated approach that draws on a wide variety of sources, where space syntax is not an end in itself but a means to understand the variety of domestic environments societies and individuals collectively construct, together with their influences, modes of production and associated behaviours’, (Hanson, 2012e, p.67).

Hanson shows that the realm of cultural norms and the domain of conscious architectural thought are not diametrically opposed but layered and flexible, informing each other. This argument has wider implications for the theoretical discussion of the commonly held distinction between building and architecture (with its implicit class divisions into ordinary environments and elevated status of art). If architects are encouraged by training to question generic normative rules such as the speculative home, or banal aspirations of social power and glamour, the question that remains open is how in the face of a changing society we can define stable configurations, how normative design responses can be assessed, and how the creative departure from these norms can be evaluated. Hanson’s study and Bafna’s response should be seen as opening questions for research that are concerned less with helping architects to design imaginative buildings and plans, and more with exploring the evolution and reciprocities of domestic architecture and architectural intelligence. Architecture addresses questions posed by society not as fixed and well-
defined problems, but as a way to understand how social problems and life patterns evolve, and how to open the potential for thinking about these differently.

6. ‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity in fictional space: The London novels of Charles Dickens and Peter Ackroyd’, Hanson (2012a)

‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity’ explores the representation of space and time in the novels of Charles Dickens and Peter Ackroyd. It approaches this subject not as a work of literary criticism, but as an inquiry by an ‘informed and inquiring architect’ (Hanson, 2012a, p.82), who is interested in the ways in which depictions of fictional space can illuminate historical and contemporary spatial practices, and help to develop an enriched architectural understanding that takes into account both context and content. Hanson examines six representative novels by each author, using a research methodology of ‘thick spatial description’ combined with evidence from direct quotations from the novels, and cartographic records of London. Her purpose is to account for the ways in which the literary works are situated in a historical, cultural and intellectual milieu, how the two authors have portrayed the city, and the extent to which the fictional spatial descriptions are grounded in the representations of reality afforded by maps. Shifting between the twelve novels and cartographic material, Hanson explores the relationship between ‘fiction and faction’ (ibid., p.83). This relationship captures the ways in which the two authors use strategies that invite the reader to embrace the ‘willing suspension of disbelief’ (Coleridge). She explains that the use of ‘real places and realistic journeys versus imprecise locations and improbable journeys’ (ibid., p.92) connect the novels with the world outside of the novel, thus constructing perceptually possible worlds. She then moves on to explore ten key spatial themes shared by the two writers: the opposition between the country and the city; ‘how journeys from the edge of London to the centre are depicted, the idea of London as a labyrinth, the movement potential in the city, the significance of walking at night in the city’; the contrast between the east end and the west end of London; what it means to live at the outskirts of London or to inhabit marginal waterfront locations; the role of rookeries and slums; and finally the phenomenal environmental qualities of ‘light and darkness, mud and dust’ (ibid., p.102). This exploration leads to the suggestion that Dickens constructs a ‘geography of presentiment and a meteorology of foreboding’, heightening experience and advancing the narrative by foreshadowing rather than determining events. Ackroyd’s use of space and time, on the other hand, is ambiguous, mixing fiction and reality, layering spatial experience and manipulating atmosphere to construct the ‘spirit of place’ and convey ‘feelings of menace’ (ibid., p.121). Referring to Solnit’s notion of humans as ‘practitioners of the city’ (Solnit, 2006), Hanson explains that both authors are urban choreographers, walking its streets, observing, experiencing, intuiting the patterns that create its life, as evidenced by their novels which are replete with journeys and movement. In addition, both use literary devices that are ‘romanticist’, based on tensions. Dickens’ approach to space and time is close to Wordsworth, while Ackroyd’s use of these notions shares a common thread with Coleridge. The paper concludes that the aspiration to describe the world as it is, ‘whether in literature, ethnography, architecture or even science’, is an unrealistic enterprise. The concept of ‘thick spatial description’ accepts that different spatial descriptions are all valid representations of reality, capable of enriching architectural research and the architectural imagination for the benefit of the wider society. Novels are social documents in their own right, while also being capable of inspiring architects and urban designers to consider novel approaches to place making.
As thick spatial description, Hanson’s paper provides multiple readings and authorships, such as those associated with the two novelists, their biographies, the context and major events that influenced their work, their novels, and the depiction of London in their fiction. The second reading unravels the representation of time and space in the twelve novels through the spatial themes shared by the two writers. The third reading refers to her observations on how the novels resonate with ideas about space, society and movement that are syntactic in nature. This interdisciplinary examination of space, time, place and identity enables Hanson to offer observations about the role that space syntax plays in interpreting the built environment.

‘Space syntax is not a method for extracting social information from space: this is too crude and exploitative an approach to any phenomena that may be under investigation. It is a “way of seeing” (Berger, 1972) that helps to phrase questions and may offer interpretations, but it rarely if ever provides definitive answers.’ (Hanson, 2012a, p.91)

Exploring the relationship between narratives and maps, Hanson points out that while mapmaking is an invaluable tool for space syntax researchers, it can also distort versions of reality. Maps are also ‘a kind of fiction’ (ibid.). Equally, written records can distort a place. As Laura Vaughan observes, the East End of London has been often portrayed as a labyrinthine area. With reference to this observation, Hanson suggests that Dickens and Ackroyd use the idea of the labyrinth to denote the city as a maze offering route choices, rather than as a single tortuous unfolding route (the technical definition of the labyrinth). Hanson uses Vaughan’s ‘subtle’ description of the urban grid of London as a modulation of integration and segregation (Vaughan, 2008) to suggest that Dickens and Ackroyd intuitively capture a similar type of combination, portraying London as an urban maze of bifurcations combined with the dead-end spaces of alleys and courts. In contrast, those that use space syntax uncritically and a-historically may fall into the trap of seeing architecture and the city in an ‘ideal’ way, similar to Tschumi’s concept of ‘the pyramid’, that is ‘a thing of the mind, as a dematerialised or conceptual discipline’ (Tschumi, 1974, p.28).

‘As a method for spatial analysis, and even as a theory about the social production of space, the unreflexive, ahistorical and uncritical use of space syntax to analyse and re-engineer urban space could be charged with contributing to the ‘pyramid’ that stands for all that is ‘ideal’ in architecture, whilst neglecting the ‘labyrinth’ of architectural experience, even as it sets out to provide a rigorous way of reading, navigating, imagining and intervening in the design of the urban fabric. To the extent that this is a just accusation, it is important that, without losing rigour, designers and researchers also situate their investigations not only in terms of the cultural climate in which they operate (a Dickensian approach to the city) but also by extending their understanding to how urban consciousness is shaped by arts, the media and cultural production (an Ackroydian approach to the city).’ (Hanson, 2012a, p.107)

In these observations we recognise the idea of thick spatial description encouraging scholars of space syntax to ‘diversify the means by which the relationship between space and society can be usefully explored’ (ibid., p.91). Hanson explains that thick spatial description or ‘spatial ethnography’ describes her method not only in this paper, but also in ‘Time and space’ (1976) and in ‘Seven societies as spatial systems’ (Hillier, Hanson and Stansall, 1978). Regarding the rest of her papers presented here, it is not possible to summarise the diverse body of Hanson’s production without risking simplification. In addition, readers should be free to form their own interpretations in line with the spirit of this Issue. However, it is perhaps possible to uncover consistent lines in the papers by the six authors: a balancing act between quantitative analysis and social concern (Marcus, 2012, p.5);
provocative interdisciplinary innovation (Griffiths, 2012, p.22); linking design intuition with analysis (Karimi, 2012); interfacing generic descriptions with the specificities that make cities the kind of cities they are (Karimi, 2012); combining iconography, historical analysis and spatial morphology (Zhu, 2012); linking speculative housing with the design of architects (Bafna, 2012); and critically tracing spatio-temporal structures and the design assumptions of urban society (Psarra, 2012).

Underlying these consistent lines of observation, we may discern the notion of thick spatial description that links the spatial with the social dimensions of places and the lives of people; synthesises knowledge from diverse fields; and explores the history of ideas and types so as to deconstruct common assumptions and discover inconsistencies that can help formulate questions. Thick spatial description is not only a method, but also an intellectual disposition to research. It reveals that research is an art that, if practised long and well, helps one to arrive to the fundamental precondition of knowledge: ‘how to go about finding that thing the nature of which is totally unknown to you’. Solnit suggests that Plato denotes that this question ‘is not about whether you can know the unknown, or arrive in it, but how to go about looking for it’ (Solnit, 2006, p. 24). Thick spatial description is a kind of ‘compass’ for navigating a world that consists of thick, complex and ambiguous realities.

This brings us to the recognition that there is more to the Dickens and Ackroyd paper than capturing how the authors engage in place making, or even how literature can stimulate the architectural imagination. The central contribution of ‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity’ is Hanson’s liberation by way of literature, thick spatial description and cartography, of simultaneous realities. Replete with cartographic, historical, fictional, social and spatial information, ‘Presentiment contrast and ambiguity’ advances many types of knowledge. Maps are distorted versions of reality; fictions are possible words constructed by distortion or partial coincidence between the actual physical world and the world in the fiction; ethnography, history and science are full of ellipses; and space syntax is ‘a way of seeing’ rather than a definitive description of the world as it is. This reading of the environment combines the order of the factual (spatial practice as lived) with the order of the descriptive (thick description) and the possible (the imagination). The paper renders all its descriptions and interpretations as real as the possibilities that exist in spatial practice, and those that are imagined in the novels themselves.

‘The realist agenda, describing the world as it is, is probably an unrealistic enterprise, whether in literature, ethnography, architecture or even science, but it is a feasible project to combine the theoretical insight of Hillier with the political awareness of Dickens and the cultural sensibility of Ackroyd.’ (Hanson, 2012a, p.122)

With her paper on Dickens and Ackroyd, Hanson returns in an unexpected act of symmetry to literature, the subject of ‘Time and space’, one of her earliest publications. ‘Time and space’ ends with the recognition that ‘once more a binary opposition is created which demonstrates the ultimate paradox that whilst representations may either reinforce or alleviate the existing social order, they cannot discover realities’ (Hanson, 1976, p.37). ‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity’ instead ends with the recognition of multiple intersecting realities. Hanson recognises that while ‘Time and space’ was ‘modern’ and ‘relatively unselfconscious’, this new paper ‘is more self-aware, in keeping with postmodern feeling and thought’ (Hanson, 2012a, p.91). Like Flatland turning a Cartesian world where mind, logic and imagination are placed in opposition, to one in which contradictory concepts are kept in our mind without uneasiness, the Dickens and Ackroyd paper renders space syntax and literature as complementary intellectual practices. Both are
ways of ‘seeing’. And in the manner of Dickens’ novels telling the story of his ‘coming of age’ (ibid., p.92), Hanson’s return to literature tells the story of her own transformation: losing ‘innocence whilst gaining in experience and wisdom’ (ibid.).

Having devoted her work to the properties and qualities that turn spaces to places, this return implies an acknowledgement that literature can be all places, or offer a place that holds everyone (Fuentes, 1998). For architects and urban designers, ‘Presentiment, contrast and ambiguity’ dissolves a-priori artificial distinctions between real and possible worlds, objective accounts and subjective descriptions, science and art, to pronounce the right to the imagination which, for its part, is able to distinguish the difference between the two sides, as well as their reciprocities, and combine them in order to re-imagine better places to live in, and make them available to us all.

7. Invisible Colleges
At the end of this discussion, I return to the earlier analogy that I drew between this special Issue and the idea of curation. The overall aim behind this collective effort stemmed from a desire to ‘curate’ space syntax knowledge and its future potential around the work of one of its key intellectual figures. The idea of this Issue as a ‘museum’ or ‘library’ that presents its holdings so as to encourage immersion, unexpected interconnections, and future possibilities for new ways of categorisation of its assorted materials, ideas, and things underpins this collective project, and was inspired by Abby Warburg (Stafford, 2011). Warburg advocated a rich, variegated, interdependent fabric of knowledge. As Stafford explains, his task was one of ‘historical retrieval that gathers those enduring remains persisting in the face of challenging mentalities and to collect the primal types of cognitive order that have survived despite their gradual evolution…If the articles and their ideas get dispersed, these myriad shapes of order will be lost exactly at the moment when we most need their guidance, their models, their templates’ (ibid., p.185). Ordering the books and objects he collected by associative arrangement describes Warburg’s project as an early work of ‘neural-network model’ of interconnectivity (ibid.).

Stafford links this model with the combinatorial relations inside the museum of John Soane. Assembled in one Issue, Hanson’s work, the responses by the six authors, the Forum pieces and book reviews are ‘spatialised’ so as to facilitate interconnections. The intention is to create ‘invisible colleges’ (Hillier, 1996; Hillier and Penn, 1991), generative systems (Hillier, 2005), and a repository of ideas that help understanding of the way we learned, continue to learn and discover by remembering. Unearthing the evolution of knowledge while also stimulating possibilities for future work is at the centre of creative discovery. Knowledge must be understood not simply as the transmission of some inert material, but as the living transmission of an innovation that is always capable of being activated by the most creative moments of the past so as to imagine possible directions, combinatorial prospects and alternative futures.

My final remark should remind our readers that no work that discusses other work can ever say more than the original work under discussion. Hanson’s articles, her forewords to these articles, and the authors’ responses should be now left to speak for themselves.

Sophia Psarra
Editor
Notes from the Editor

This Issue hosts two Forum pieces, one by David Seamon on Jane Jacobs (“A jumping, joyous urban jumble’; Jane Jacobs’ *Death and Life of Great American Cities* as a phenomenology of urban place”), and another by Sam Griffiths – a response to Frederico de Holanda’s Forum piece in the Autumn/Winter Issue 2011. We also provide our readers with Murray Fraser’s review of Anthony Vidler’s *The Scenes of the Street and Other Essays* (2011), Beatriz Camps’ review of two Jan Gehl’s books, *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space* (1987/2011) and *Cities for People* (2010), and Laura Vaughan’s review of Mimi Levy Lipis’s *Symbolic Houses in Judaism: How Objects and Metaphors Construct Hybrid Places of Belonging* (2011). A new *Books Received* section is also introduced in this Issue, presenting short reviews of Juval Portugali’s *Complexity, Cognition and the City* (2011) and of Sam Bass Warner’s and Andrew Whittemore’s *American Urban Form: A Representative History* (2012). Finally, the hosts of the *Eighth International Space Syntax Symposium* (held in January 2012 in Santiago de Chile) Margarita Greene, José Reyes and Rodrigo Mora have contributed in this JOSS Issue with their comments and reflections upon the event, whilst also announcing the *Ninth Space Syntax Symposium* that will take place in Seoul in October 2013.

News and acknowledgements

With this Issue we launch a new webpage design with improved functionality and graphic identity, both in terms of the webpages and the format of papers. Special thanks are given to Tasos Varoudis, Research Associate at UCL and Garyfalia Palaiologou, Manager of JOSS and PhD student (UCL), who worked together to develop an improved technical and visual platform for JOSS. Tasos worked with Yusah Hamut (UCL) and Stefan Kueppers (proboscis.org.uk) to update our old system, whilst Garyfalia with support from Tasos, developed a new visual signature for the website, our publications, and the Journal. As Bill Hillier suggests, space syntax links with design intuition, producing powerful visualisations of spatial relations (2005). Space syntax might avoid seeing buildings and cities as if they were paintings or photographs, but it sees itself in the service of art and design. Through the new visual design for JOSS, we wish to reinforce this message, and acknowledge the power of the image in the information-age in terms of all things, including cities, architecture and communication. We hope our readers find the website and papers easy to use, and visually inspirational.

We are also pleased to announce the launch of a new blog directly related to the context and interests of JOSS. The idea was generated as an effort to create a virtual hub to follow and discuss progress made in both research and practice related to the Journal’s themes of interest. This academic and research blog will inform – and, in turn, be informed by - the space syntax and wider research community. It aims to discuss aspects related to architecture, urbanism, cities, landscape, society and culture, networks, ecology, computation, housing futures, cities and economies, spatial practice, embodied space, spatial cognition, morphologies of safety and wellbeing, virtual community and co-presence, narrative spaces, topographies and territories, design histories and architectural practice, architectural education, and visual culture. The blog welcomes contributions from those interested in the aforementioned topics, and will be maintained and managed by the students of the Bartlett School of Graduate Studies (UCL).

JOSS is an on-line open access Journal where papers are freely accessible. In line with this spirit, this Issue also offers free access to Hanson’s original articles through links to the original journals and UCL Eprints. In addition to this, in order to facilitate
the flow of ideas between the original articles and the authors’ responses, we have reproduced the abstracts of Hanson’s publications - through which the original articles can be accessed through the relevant links. When work started on this Issue the impression was that the administrative effort related to copyrights of illustrations would be kept to a minimum, as most authors’ papers contained no images. This proved far from the case. After extensive communication with the publishers we obtained copyrights to reproduce three articles, the chapter from *Decoding Homes and Houses* and a handful of images. We wish to thank AA Publications and the current Editor of *AA Files*, Thomas Weaver, for allowing us to reproduce ‘Time and space in two nineteenth century novels’ (Hanson, 1976); also, Marilyn Sparrow (AA Publications) and Ed Bottoms (AA Archive) for their kind co-operation. Furthermore, JOSS wishes to thank the *Ekistics Journal* and Mr Psomopoulos (President of the Athens Center of Ekistics and current Editor of *Ekistics*) for their immediate and enthusiastic support, and for granting us permission for ‘Order and structure in urban design’ (Hanson, 1989a). Our gratitude also extends to Cambridge University Press (CUP) for giving us permission to reproduce two Julienne Hanson publications: ‘The architecture of justice’ (Hanson, 1996) and ‘The anatomy of privacy in architects’ London houses’ (Hanson, 1998). Regarding the former, we would also like to thank *Architectural Research Quarterly*, its current Editors Professors Adam Sharr and Richard Weston, as well as Professor Peter Carolin (Editor of ‘The architecture of justice’) for their immediate and kind responses to our request. Many thanks to Linda Nicol (Permissions Manager, CUP) and Svetlana Shadrina (Assistant Permissions Controller, CUP) for facilitating the permission request process. Finally, JOSS would like to thank Palgrave and *URBAN DESIGN International*, Liz Holwell (Publishing Editor, Palgrave Macmillan Journals), and as Lauren Russell (Rights Co-ordinator, Palgrave Macmillan) for their efforts to facilitate our copyrights requests for ‘Urban transformations’ (Hanson, 2000). Access for Julienne Hanson’s ‘Time and space’ (1976) and ‘Order and structure’ (1989a) has been kindly provided by UCL Discovery through UCL Eprints; we are thankful to Erica McLaren for her co-operation. Special thanks also go to Garyfalia Palaiologou for pursuing the copyrights for those original articles and illustrations, as well as to Suzanne Tonkin and Caroline Fletcher (the Bartlett Library, UCL) for their help and guidance throughout the copyrights pursuit.

Finally, we would like to thank all our authors for their enthusiastic response to this thematic Issue, and our readers for sending us feedback on numerous occasions and inquiring about submissions to JOSS. We are also grateful to our editorial board and reviewers for their consistent support throughout.
References


