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Recovering

The theme section of this issue embraces a topic that has been of concern to the *Places* editorial advisory board for several years: recovery in the wake of natural and manmade disasters. Whether local, regional, or national, these moments of social and psychological rupture call for a special kind of awareness. Planners and designers may be called on to provide healing and commemorative visions, but they also may face profound opportunities, in rebuilding, to reevaluate past forms and practices.

The present collection of articles derives from two streams of thought: research into the potential of design after disaster directed by Dana Cuff of UCLA, and a reworking and formalization of several of the presentations to a 2005 “Memory and Architecture” conference at Georgia Institute of Technology organized by Harris Dimitropoulos. Authors from both groups were asked to consider the following question. How do you “recover” place after patterns of inhabitation have been destroyed through acts of war or by natural calamities? This involves both practical new visions and a need for symbolic memorialization and reconsecration of the ground. What are the characteristics of these processes? And how can designers and planners engage more honestly, creatively, and effectively with them?

On the Covers

Front Cover: The INFO BOX provided a “scab” with which to begin the recovery of Potsdamer Platz following years of war and division by the Berlin Wall. Visitors could climb from its exhibition spaces to its roof to view the surrounding reconstruction. Photo by Jorg Hempel, Aachen.

Inside Front Cover: Portion of sketch for the World Trade Center Memorial by Michael Arad.

Back cover: On Willets Point Boulevard, an auto shop is fashioned from shipping containers. Photo by Ian Baldwin.