

PART I A

Theme 1 Introduction: Political-Economical

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Nowadays, the field of Architecture is increasingly exposed to an array of never-seen-before challenges. These challenges act as the operational background which Architecture must navigate and sort through towards achieving a level of performance no longer considered innovative but barely meeting expectations. These expectations have been established by the forces of private capital in collaboration with all levels of government, which, in most instances, tie the hands of architecture professionals leading projects towards what is commonly referred to as average architecture. In such an environment, where such standards may work to the detriment of the field, architects are tasked with creative ways of turning the tables, establishing new opportunities to design significant urban landscapes. Present-day politics, at all levels of government, and unpredictable market forces can be an architect's biggest obstacles or its greatest collaborators. Nevertheless, architecture must demonstrate drive and willingness to collaborate with these forces to the benefit of citizens and cities alike.

In this section, the authors focus on perspectives highlighting the Economical and Political environments architecture navigates through, showcasing the potential of collaboration in the field. Through their work, we believe these authors express optimism in the outcome of cooperative architectural frameworks, rooted in healthy relationships with economical and political forces, that dominate distinct environments all around the world. Furthermore, our panelists favor the introduced architectural frameworks as case studies performing as multidisciplinary pedagogical platforms.

IN BETWEEN: POLITICAL - ECONOMICAL FRAMEWORK

Mother and daughter strolling in front of the Shedd Aquarium with Chicago's skyline in the background. Photo courtesy of Alejandro Saldaña Perales.