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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESKTOP

The story of the Los Angeles Aqueduct is a central chapter in the founding myth not just of modern Los Angeles, but also of modern California, the modern American West, and modern hydraulic civilizations around the world. It is original sin and signal achievement. Without it, a great city would not exist. California and the world would be very different.

On the one hundredth anniversary of the Los Angeles Aqueduct's first delivery of water to the city from Owens Valley, this special issue of *Boom* explores the ways in which the story of the aqueduct has permeated the history, identity, and culture of Los Angeles. The aqueduct shaped the city's relationship with Owens Valley and the rest of California and the West; it also, but more surprisingly, shaped photography and art, politics, the environment, and the ways in which we think and plan for the future in the Golden State.

That we are still worrying around, atoning for, and working to understand and repair the legacies of the aqueduct are sure signs that the final chapter in this story has yet to be written. It may never be written, for the aqueduct ties a protean metropolis to ever-changing ecosystems, and a broader complex water system that links Los Angeles to Northern California, on the one hand, and the entire Colorado River basin, on the other.

We hope that this special issue serves as a kind of intellectual program, an intelligent guide, and inspiring catalog to the events, observances, exhibitions, new archives, and media that are being created around the aqueduct's one hundredth anniversary.

We also hope that this special issue opens up Los Angeles in new ways to readers around California and beyond. This issue reveals ways in which Angelenos are rethinking their own history, their relationship with the rest of the state, the environment of the city and beyond, and the future of a vibrant metropolis utterly dependent on forces of nature and politics far beyond city boundaries. This is our bid not only to understand the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the city itself, but to put an increasingly self-reflective, knowing, and critical Los Angeles into a constructive conversation with the rest of California and the world.

That's our mission here at *Boom*: to start, inspire, and sustain crucial conversations in California. We do that here in the journal, online at boomcalifornia.com, in collaboration with other media, newspapers, radio, television, on the Web and in social media, and at events around the state. We don't do anything alone. We hope you'll join us and help us create the conversations that California needs to have and deserves. Keep in touch. We've got an exciting issue coming up on visions of California's future in the world, and we'd love to hear your thoughts.

We're grateful to Louis Warren and Carolyn de la Peña, the journal's founding editors at UC Davis, for launching the journal in such an inspiring fashion. Thanks also to assistant editor Ami Sommariva for making the transition from Davis to LA so smooth. UC Press has provided unwavering support and a clear vision for the journal's special role as a scholarly magazine breaking out of the ivory tower to bring scholars and researchers into conversation with writers, photographers, artists, policymakers, advocates, and citizens in the public square of ideas.

Thanks to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for supporting this new model of scholarly communications.

We're also grateful to the University of California, Los Angeles, for providing a congenial home for *Boom*'s new editorial team, Annie Powers, Sara Torres, Eve Bachrach, Robert Smith, and me. Here at UCLA, the Departments of English and History provide vital support for graduate students to work with the journal as assistant editors, and the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability provides administrative support for the journal.

This special issue is made possible by a grant from the Metabolic Studio.

From our new perch here on the slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains, looking out across the city to the Pacific, we have our eyes set on new horizons for this quarterly journal of California in the world.

Thanks for joining us on this journey.

Yours truly,
Jon Christensen, Editor