



View of the West Bay crossing of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge from Yerba Buena Island
COURTESY OF THE SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY CENTER, SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESKTOP

I've left pieces of my heart in San Francisco over the years.

I first came to the Bay Area as a student at Stanford. I remember the first time I crossed the Bay Bridge into the city when I was seventeen. Whenever anybody talks about the sublime, I think about that moment. I felt it every time I crossed that bridge in the many years between then and now, though I have to confess, the new span doesn't do the same thing for me. I'm pretty sure it's not the bridge's fault. I don't bring the same memories to it—and I feel the loss.

I lived in the Bay Area for twenty-one years, seven of those in The City, fourteen in Silicon Valley. Two years ago, I moved to Los Angeles—and, yes, I write these things to establish some bona fides. I know and love San Francisco. I grew up under its influence. We have deep connections to the city here at *Boom*.

But San Francisco, like California, belongs to the world. What's the matter with San Francisco matters to a lot of people in the city, the Bay Area, the state, the nation, and the world. No wonder interest and concern about what's happening in San Francisco has erupted at every scale in the past year. It's all too easy to dismiss these concerns as coming from outsiders who don't understand the city. We think it comes from love.

What's the matter with San Francisco is in many ways what's the matter with our increasingly urban world. The challenges of inequality, mobility, livable wages, and affordable housing are cosmopolitan challenges, as are tensions between technology and culture. The new Argonauts, who take the wealth, skills, and connections forged in this new California gold rush to burgeoning cities experiencing tech-fueled growing pains in India and China and other countries, will also take the lessons we learn in the coming years with them, for better or worse.

We've filled this issue with the voices of San Francisco insiders, among whom we count ourselves, though we don't discount the love that outsiders feel for The City. We know it too well ourselves to do that.

Our goal with this issue is to contribute to a productive conversation about what's the matter with San Francisco, with the hope that together we might move the conversation forward. We aim to do that with every issue of *Boom*. Sometimes we try to start conversations. Sometimes we try to help change conversations. In every case, we hope to inspire and sustain conversations. Our goal is never to finish conversations. We aim to keep them open.

This is the fourth issue of *Boom* that our editorial team at UCLA has produced. When our first issue came out, a colleague sent an email offering congratulations, while noting that he didn't agree with everything in the journal. I wrote back with thanks, noting that I don't agree with everything we publish either. We wouldn't have it any other way.

In the last couple of years, I've been struck by two things in San Francisco: a growing excitement about possibilities in the city and a growing anxiety about changes in the city. Those two things are obviously intimately related, though they often feel like polar opposites.

We wondered if we could find some way to connect them more intimately so that the anxieties could inform the kinds of very real possibilities we seek, and the possibilities could address the very real anxieties we have about the city right now and its future.

I hope that's what we've done in this special issue—because San Francisco matters.

Yours truly,
Jon Christensen, Editor