Many physical spaces are inherently locales of joint access and participation. The built environment has long served as the platform upon which myriad sociological, cultural, and technological forces share legal parameters and broader audiences. Classical typologies of sharing include plazas, living rooms, libraries, waiting areas, museums, and cohousing schemes. Today, digitally-based platforms, supported by vast physical infrastructures, facilitate liberating possibilities to actualize transnational networks. Yet, for every emancipatory path an equally restrictive one exists. For as many words and phrases that describe shared space, even more describe today’s economic and labor zeitgeists: sharing economy, collaborative consumption, extractive logics, gig economy, platform capitalism, etc. How do contemporary economic paradigms and architecture interact and inform one another? By understanding the materiality, form, and processes of sharing, designers might assert agency in new economies and power relations. Sharing asks us to challenge long-standing dichotomies and see new techno-spatial practices as mechanisms which may—intentionally or not—overthrow the old.

We welcome writings and projects of all varieties that embrace, critique, and frame notions of sharing within the built environment today. Initial abstracts of approximately 250 words and web-sized images are due November 20th. Email submissions and questions to editor@platjournal.com and see platjournal.com for more details. We look forward to hearing from you.

PLAT 7.0

What does it mean to design for sharing today?