**Nomination for ARCC Board of Directors - At-large director (2019-2020 year)**

**Alexandra Staub, Ph.D.**

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**Bio:**

An associate professor of architecture and an affiliate faculty of Penn State's [Rock Ethics Institute](http://rockethics.psu.edu), my research focuses on the intersection of the built environment and culture. I examine design processes, urban systems, architectural ethics, and how social class or gender shapes our expectations for the use of space. My two recent books, *Conflicted Identities: Housing and the politics of cultural representation* and *The Routledge Companion to Modernity Space and Gender* explore some of these themes. I received my M.Arch. from the University of the Arts in Berlin, Germany, and my Ph.D. from the Brandenburg Technical University in Cottbus, Germany.

**Vision Statement:**

Architectural research, methodologically often presented as derived from engineering, philosophy, history, or the social sciences, is generally considered as an intellectual foundation for design and planning, as well as a tool for theory-building. Yet research remains marginalized in architectural practice, while professional programs, under pressure to produce graduates who can manage complex technologies and computer programs out of the box, increasingly see holistic research endeavors that incorporate both technical and humanities-based thinking as too demanding.

My own background is academically diverse. I grew up in an artist household, my first degree was in psychology and literature, my second degree was a professional architecture degree, and my Ph.D. explored the social processes of architectural production. Since 2001 I have been fortunate to be a faculty member at a university that consistently fosters broad approaches to research and teaching. I have maintained a strong research and publication record, regularly supervise master’s and Ph.D. students, and teach both in undergraduate design studios and in graduate seminars, among them our course in research methods. I collaborate with both faculty colleagues and students in many areas. The unifying factor of these engagements has been a heightened awareness of how activities in one area inform work in others: research informs design outcomes, design thinking informs research methods, content from one area sparks new ideas in another. Collaboration involves hearing fresh ideas and new voices.

My vision for the ARCC is one of process and content networking and – for the new generation of architectural researchers – mentorship. Annual meetings continue to provide a wonderful opportunity to meet other scholars and hear about the results of their work. Workshops at such meetings provide a basis for students and beginning researchers to network and receive mentorship. Yet I see the ARCC as a year-round organization. Work in the design studio has taught me the value of process: the concept model to explore the abstraction of an overarching idea, the expression of volumetric programming ideas through 3-D diagramming, the sketches to develop a technical aspect of the project to scale. To further the ARCC’s role as a research *consortium,* I envision augmenting existing venues such as the yearly conference and the journal *Enquiry* with further opportunities to highlight and advance research in progress: for example through collaborative publication ventures, online mini-symposia, and a moderated blog. I also see benefits in further exploring ties to partner organizations in other countries – the European organization EAAE is a logical starting point. Architecture is increasingly a global venture; architectural research should follow suit as part of a holistic means to further architectural production, create historical awareness, and advance architectural theory.