



# Making the Geologic Now: Responses to Material Conditions of Contemporary Life

*Elizabeth Ellsworth*

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Making the Geologic Now announces shifts in cultural sensibilities and practices. It offers early sightings of an increasingly widespread turn toward the geologic as source of explanation, motivation, and inspiration for creative responses to conditions of the present moment. In the spirit of a broadside, this edited collection circulates images and short essays from over 40 artists, designers, architects, scholars, and journalists who are actively exploring and creatively responding to the geologic depth of “now.” Contributors’ ideas and works are drawn from architecture, design, contemporary philosophy and art. They are offered as test sites for what might become thinkable or possible if humans were to collectively take up the geologic as our instructive co-designer—as a partner in designing thoughts, objects, systems, and experiences. Recent natural and human-made events triggered by or triggering the geologic have made volatile earth forces sense-able and relevant with new levels of intensity. As a condition of contemporary life in 2012, the geologic “now” is lived as a cascade of events. Humans and what we build participate in their unfolding. Today, and unlike the environmental movements of the 1970s, the geologic counts as “the environment” and invites us to extend our active awareness of inhabitation out to the cosmos and down to the Earth’s iron core. A new cultural sensibility is emerging. As we struggle to understand and meet new material realities of earth and life on earth, it becomes increasingly obvious that the geologic is not just about rocks. We now cohabit with the geologic in unprecedented ways, in teeming assemblages of exchange and interaction among geologic materials and forces and the bio, cosmo, socio, political, legal, economic, strategic, and imaginary. As a reading and viewing experience, Making the Geologic Now is designed to move through culture, sounding an alert from the unfolding edge of the “geologic turn” that is now propagating through contemporary ideas and practices. Contributors include: Matt Baker, Jarrod Beck, Stephen Becker, Brooke Belisle, Jane Bennett, David Benque, Canary Project (Susannah Sayler, Edward Morris), Center for Land Use Interpretation, Brian Davis, Seth Denizen, Anthony Easton, Elizabeth Ellsworth, Valeria Federighi, William L. Fox, David Gersten, Bill Gilbert, Oliver Goodhall, John Gordon, Ilana Halperin, Lisa Hirmer, Rob Holmes, Katie Holten, Jane Hutton, Julia Kagan, Wade Kavanaugh, Oliver Kellhammer, Elizabeth Kolbert, Janike Kampevoid Larsen, Jamie Kruse, William Lamson, Tim Maly, Geoff Manaugh, Don McKay, Rachel McRae, Brett Milligan, Christian MilNeil, Laura Moriarity, Stephen Nguyen, Erika Osborne, Trevor Paglen, Anne Reeve, Chris Rose, Victoria Sambunaris, Paul Lloyd Sargent, Antonio Stoppani, Rachel Sussman, Shimpei Takeda, Chris Taylor, Ryan Thompson, Etienne Turpin, Nicola Twilley, Bryan M. Wilson.

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