While its exact genealogy is unclear, the English language-idiom, “A picture is worth a thousand words,” is an unspoken mantra—if not a core belief—of the design disciplines. Every day, whether inside or outside of studios, workshops, ateliers, firms, offices, or any spaces that serve as the laboratory that catalyze the production of our visual language, us designers continuously forge new vocabularies to communicate increasingly creative, radical and inspiring work. The image and the model are the tools with which we construct the built (and unbuilt) environments. What we experience through sight and touch fires up neural connections that bring our thinking alive. It is within this context that this tome’s design and layout were engendered.

Composed of 848 images collected across all three of the UNLV School of Architecture disciplines (Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Interior Architecture and Design), this publication presents projects free of text. Instead, the indeterminacy of the narratives they tell, the insights they provide, and the inspiration they furnish, is left as a personal experience between the page and the eyes. Open for interpretation, this compendium does not prescribe a particular reading or elucidation of any one project. One can choose to marvel at projects’ craft, color, or composition. One can choose to analyze strategies of representation and visual argumentation. And—with enough mettle—one can delve deeply into the spatial implications of every single one of the projects contained herein. The one piece of text that is included within each spread is a 6- to 7-character code (e.g., AAI 373, AAE 790, LAND 486) that acts as an internal notational system delineating whether the work was produced in the Fall or Spring and at which point in the course sequence it belongs to.

Structurally, this primarily visual content was organized around five “fulcrums” upon which the UNLV School of Architecture has developed areas of specialization and expertise. Launched by Analog + Digital Design Foundation, and followed by Healthcare Interior Design, Landscape Architecture + Urbanism in Arid Environments, Hospitality Design + Entertainment Architecture, and Building Technologies + Sustainability + Design-Build, this book paints a narrative of incredible achievement and unwavering commitment to excellence in design scholarship and practice. However, no publication is complete without context, and therefore, each of these sections are introduced by different types of textual media—whether a conversation or a micro-essay, for instance—that help provide an additional window into the sort of thinking and doing that remains in constant evolution and flux. And of course, this publication would not have been possible without the visionary leadership of Interim Director Alfredo Fernández-González, and it would not have been as rich without the contributions of all the UNLV School of Architecture faculty and students. Vertex is, truly, a collective achievement we can all be proud of. As the school celebrates its 20th anniversary, this compendium is a datum of present work and augur for the incredible developments in our future.