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The Center Won't Hold

Anatomy and Dirty Realism in Architecture

Florencia Rodriguez

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- An engaging and insightful essay about the emergence of a new regime of reality in architecture after postmodernism
- Explores how architecture can operate after the collapse of the frameworks that organised the 20th century
- Highlights why Latin America offers a privileged vantage point from which that transformation becomes visible

While global in scope, the argument is developed from Latin America. In ***The Center Won't Hold***, architect and writer Florencia Rodriguez proposes that Latin America should not be understood as a peripheral case requiring explanation, but as a position from which the contemporary world can be reinterpreted.

Long accustomed to operating amid instability, scarcity, incomplete modernisations, and overlapping realities, architectural practices across the region have developed forms of engagement that illuminate conditions increasingly experienced worldwide. Through a series of contemporary works and projects, Rodriguez argues that Latin America offers not an alternative to modernity, but a productive vantage point from which to understand what comes after it. In doing so, she positions the region not as an object of analysis, but as a source of concepts, sensibilities, and architectural intelligence capable of contributing to a broader rethinking of architecture after postmodernism.

Florencia Rodriguez is an Argentinian-born architect, editor, curator, writer, and educator. She is an associate professor at UIC's School of Architecture in Chicago. She is Editorial Director of Lots of Architecture Publishers and served as Artistic Director of the 2025 Chicago Architecture Biennial.

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