



# Portfolio

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GSAPP M.S.AAD  
2020

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Purpose



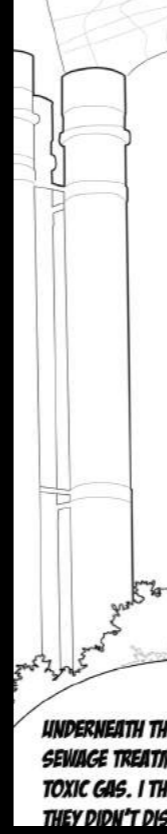
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# Statement of Purpose

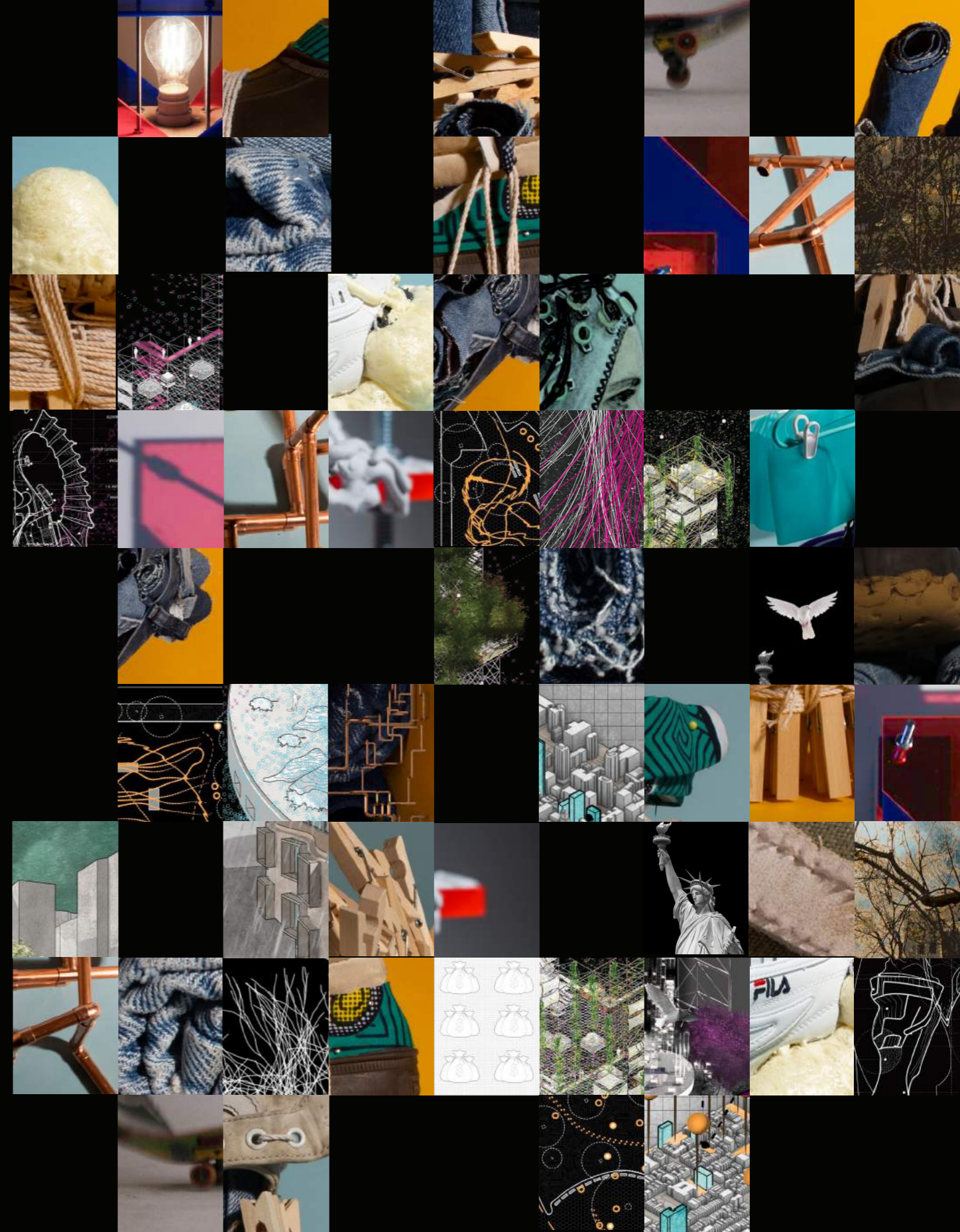
Broad-based economic uncertainty, Pandemic disease spreading across an increasingly connected international network. Extreme social inequality. Global ecological collapse. It is becoming increasingly apparent that in order to build a future worth living in, we will need widespread innovation and positive intention across industries. Architects, planners, and design thinkers have a responsibility now more than ever to utilize their training to respond to these issues. A year of study at GSAPP has illuminated what some of the future's challenges will be, who will be affected by those scenarios, and how to deploy responses that utilize the toolsets of an architect and space maker.

The first project in this portfolio examines climate change within the context of history. The proposal takes on a post-humanist stance: if designing for man has brought the planet to its current state, perhaps it is time to consider other agents as our primary constituents. Birds become the project's main clients, seeking to create a migratory sanctuary in a warming climate.

The next two projects in the portfolio examine who will be bearing the brunt of the damage wrought by economic collapse, inequality, and climate change. The first, a graphic history of the The North River Sewage Treatment plant, examines the history of environmental racism in New York City planning while noting successful grassroots practices which counter some of those policies.

The second studio project interrogates the delicate balance between boundaries, which form subculture, and common space, which allows these cultures to clash or coalesce—giving the opportunity for a transference of power from the few to the collective. Perhaps decision making by the collective, in a dialectic trending towards equity, may lead to repair of social and economic wounds that characterize the current urban condition.

The final two projects of this portfolio explore the tools by which architects and builders can make space. Understanding how to operate upon space forcefully, tectonically, structurally, and meaningfully is the path towards taking action to address the enormous challenges our society faces today.





Studio 1

## *Climate Wall*

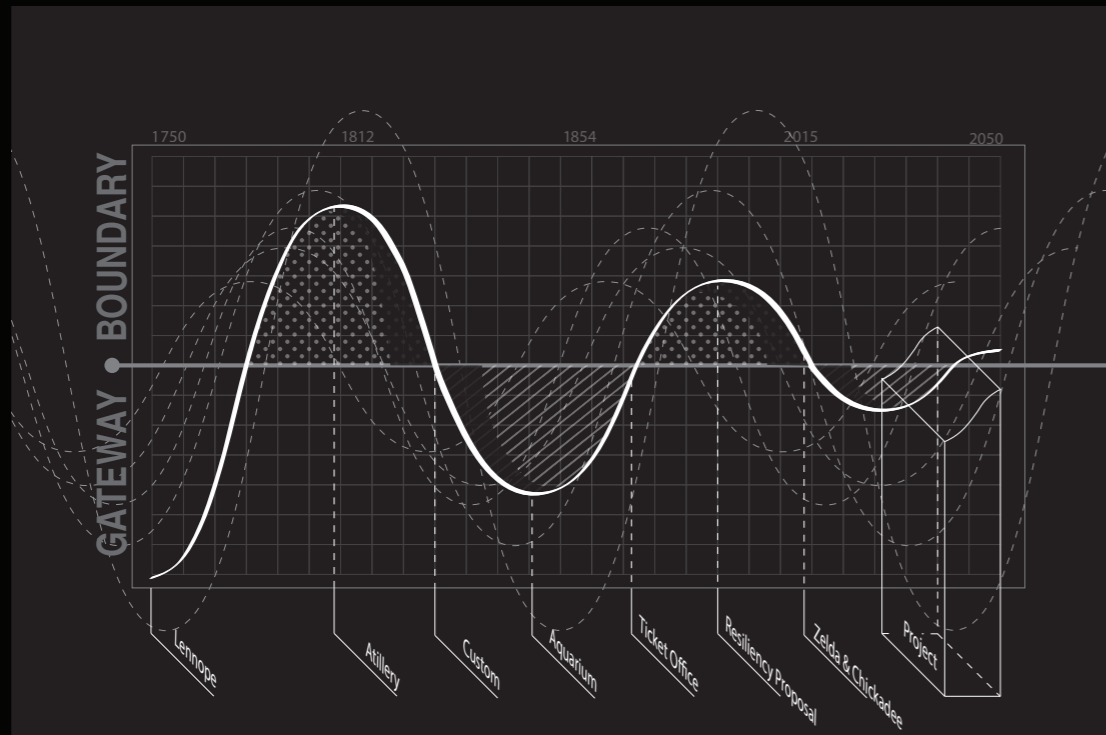
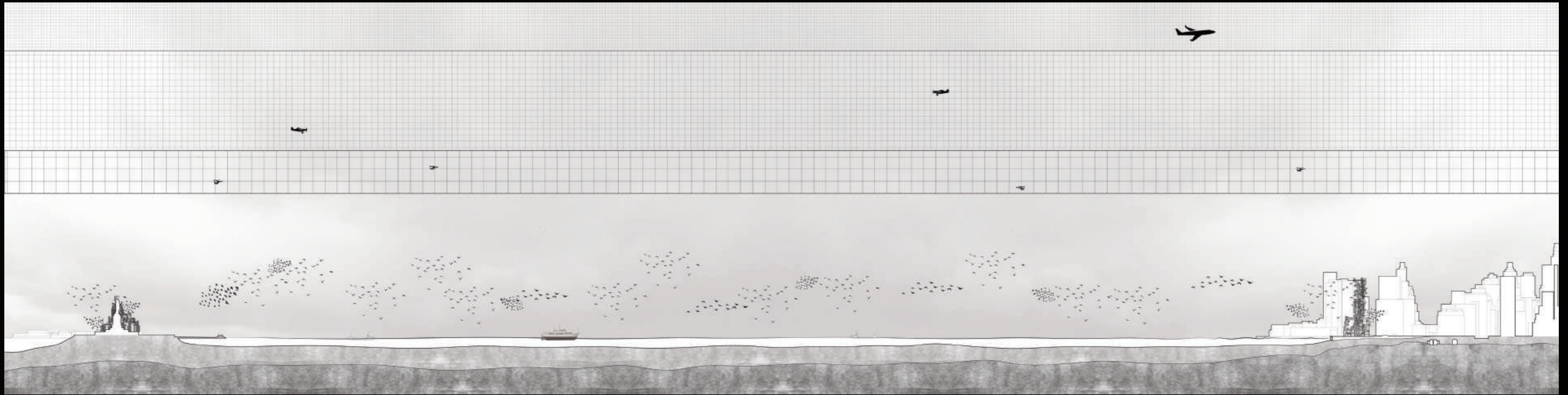
An atmospheric and horticultural intervention for birds

This project expands the capacity of the wall to house local and migrant birds through atmospheric and horticultural intervention in an examination of borders, boundaries, and migration. Birds are currently living within the walls of our site: Castle Clinton, a historic Artillery Battery and immigration detention center in Battery Park. However, climate change is pushing avian breeding grounds farther and farther north, throwing the timing of migration and food abundance of balance.

This project serves as a migratory step for at risk species. The intervention in Battery Park creates a 3D porous infrastructural wall which, will host the ecosystems that the birds need. The design includes a body suit that enables humans to enter the environment safely to interact with the birds.

Critic: Nerea Calvillo

Partner: Mingyang Aki Yu

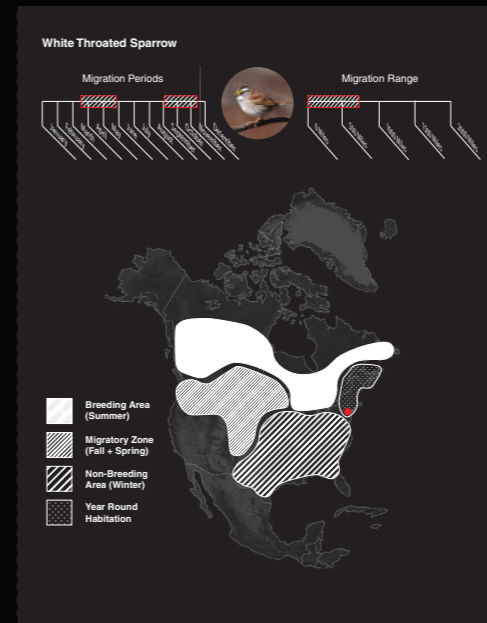
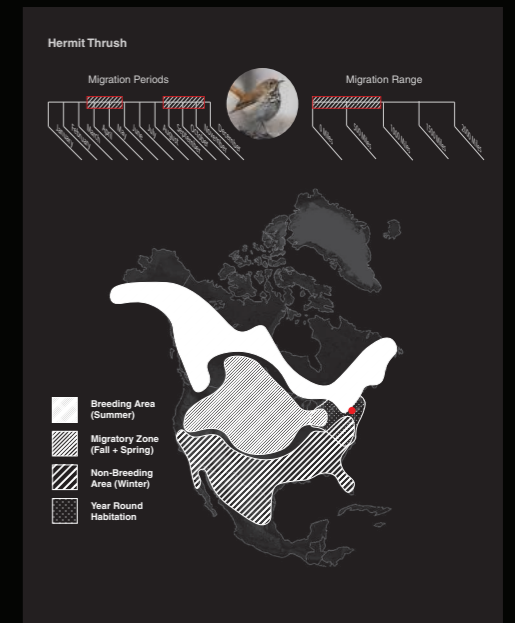
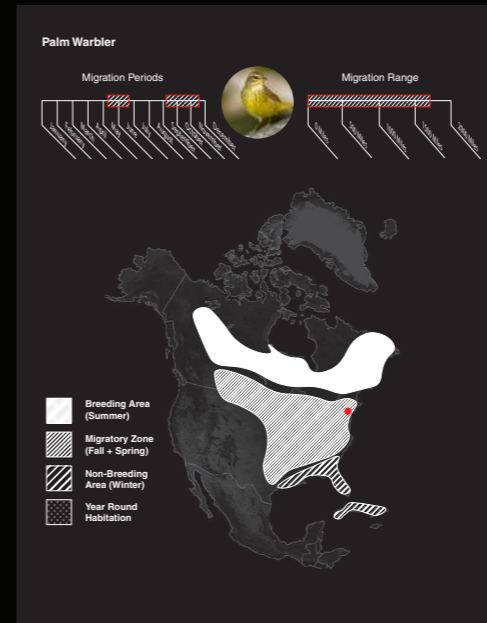
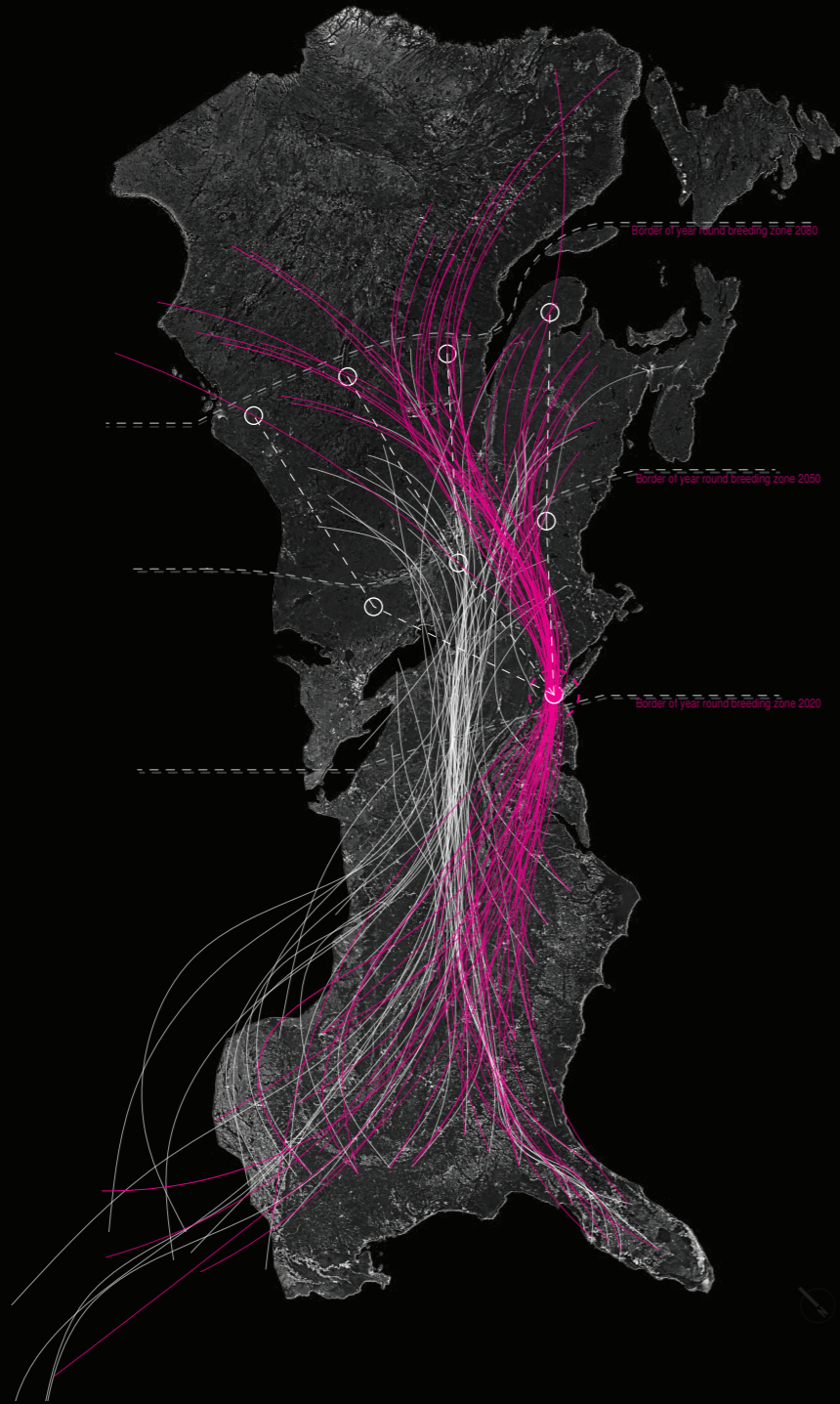


Castle Clinton was initially an Artillery Battery keeping out foreign invaders from colonial Manhattan. In the late nineteenth century, Castle Clinton became an immigration detention center where foreigners deemed unfit to enter the country were held in captivity. In 1946, Robert Moses turned the Castle into an aquarium for the city. Here, exotic species of sea creatures were brought to this country, only to be detained in tanks at the border for spectacle. Castle Clinton currently serves as the ticket office for the Statue of Liberty Ferry where foreign tourists can come gaze at the great symbol of America as a magnanimous welcoming nation for immigrants.

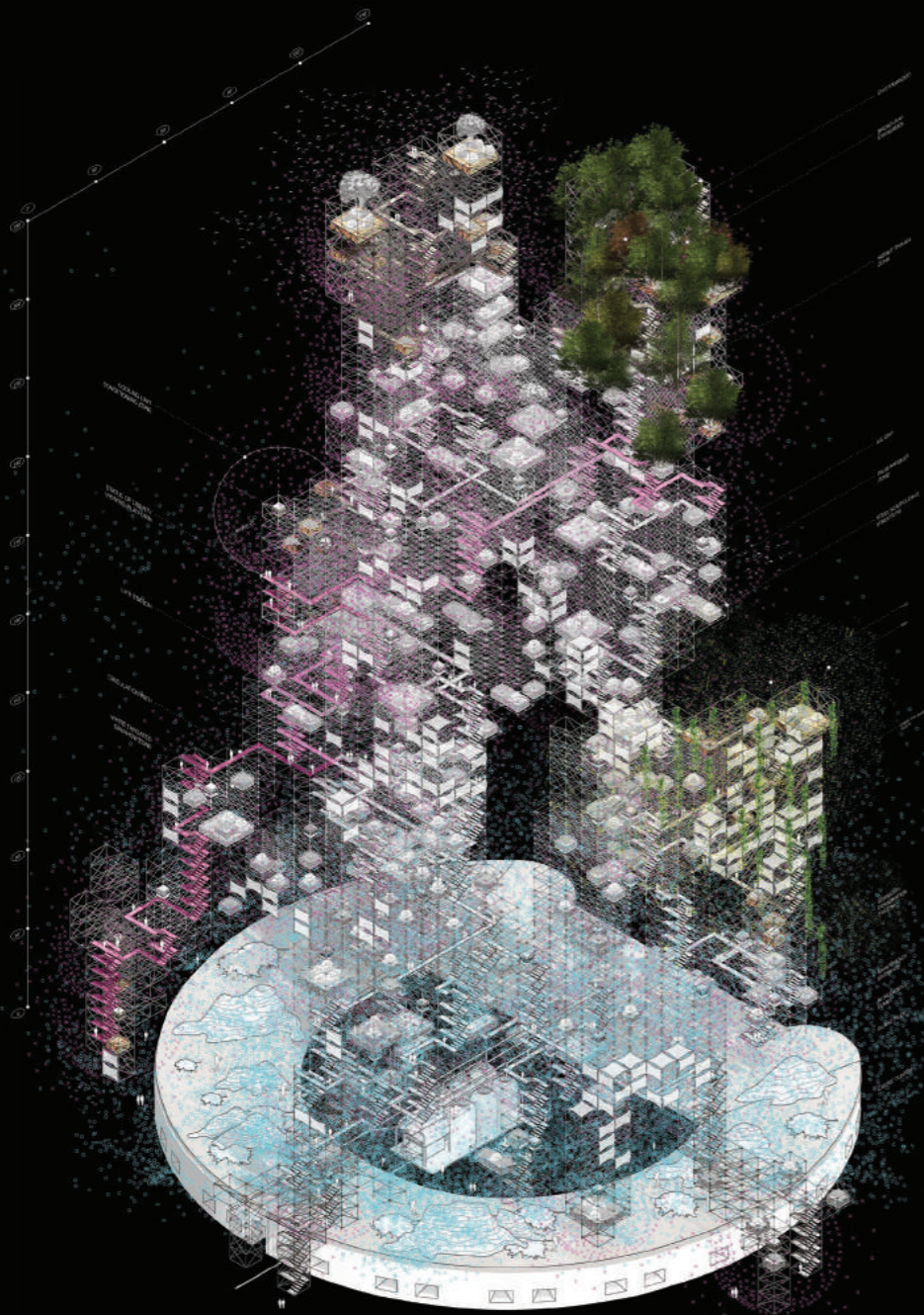
So what do these walls, or walls in general for that matter, really mean for migration. Is it possible to conceive of walls as symbols, forces, borders, boundaries, and homes simultaneously?

During the 1800s, Immigration to New York happened on ships through the New York bay. The space between Battery Park and what would become Liberty Island was the final moment after a long journey.

Today, this same corridor serves continues to service migrants, but of another species: birds.

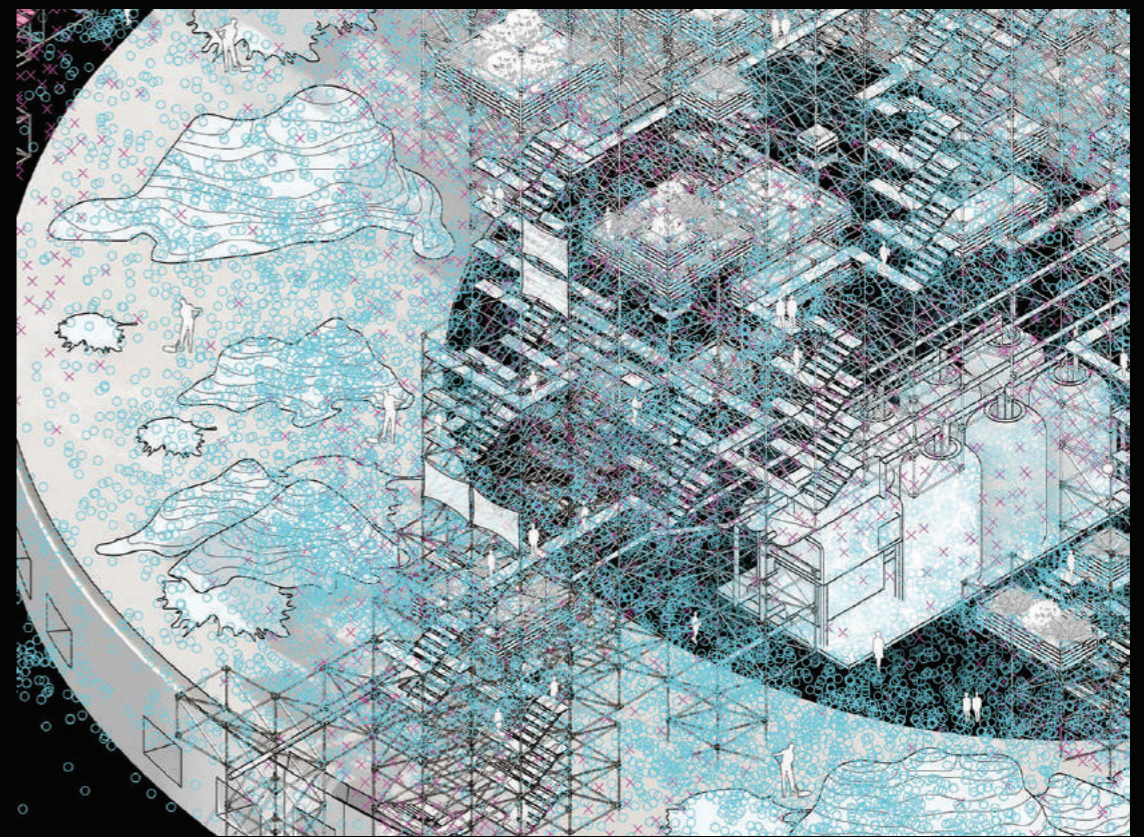


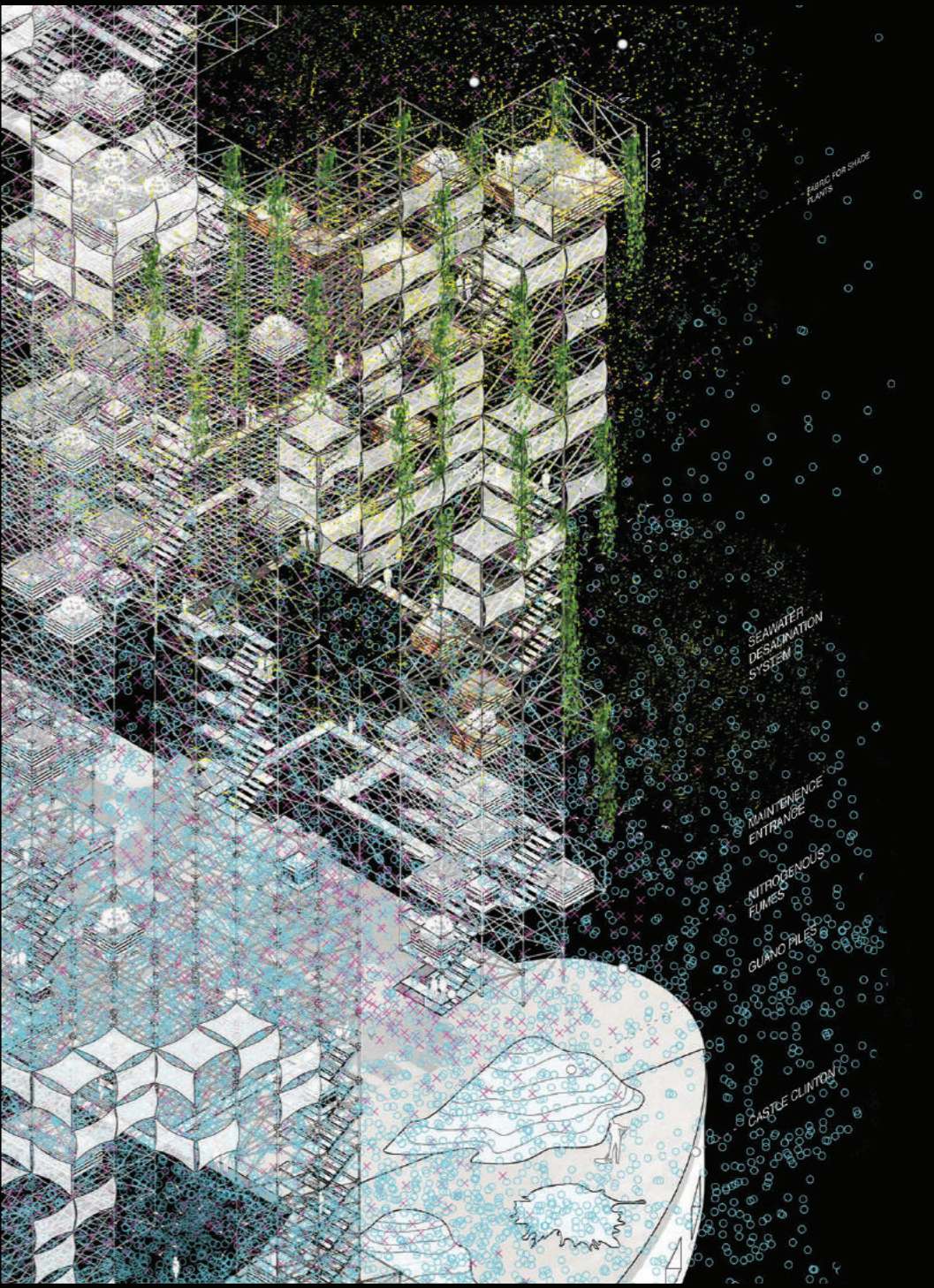
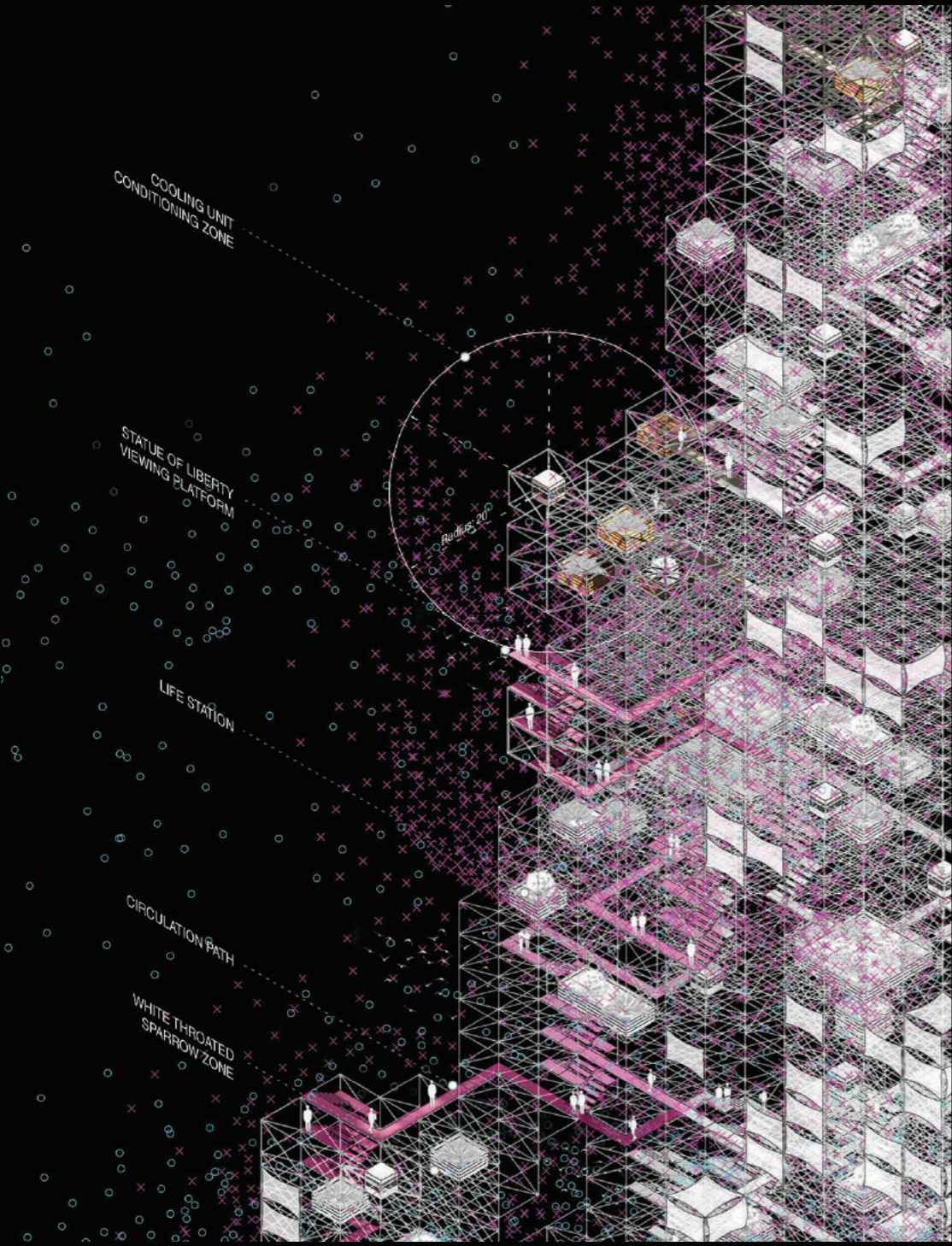
Birds are inhabiting the walls of Castle Clinton. As the Stones in the castle crack and breakdown, small birds make nests. We examined the migration patterns of Hermit Thrushes, White Throated Sparrows, and Palm Warblers. By the year 2080, due to increased temperatures changing the seasons in which plants bloom, 73% of the White Throated Sparrow's breeding season habitats will be gone. Similar dark predictions surround the Hermit Thrush, Palm Warbler, and many other North American birds. This project serves as a migratory step for species at risk of becoming endangered through climate change. It begins as an intervention in Battery Park, but expands northward to multiple sites as more and more breeding grounds become unfit for these species.



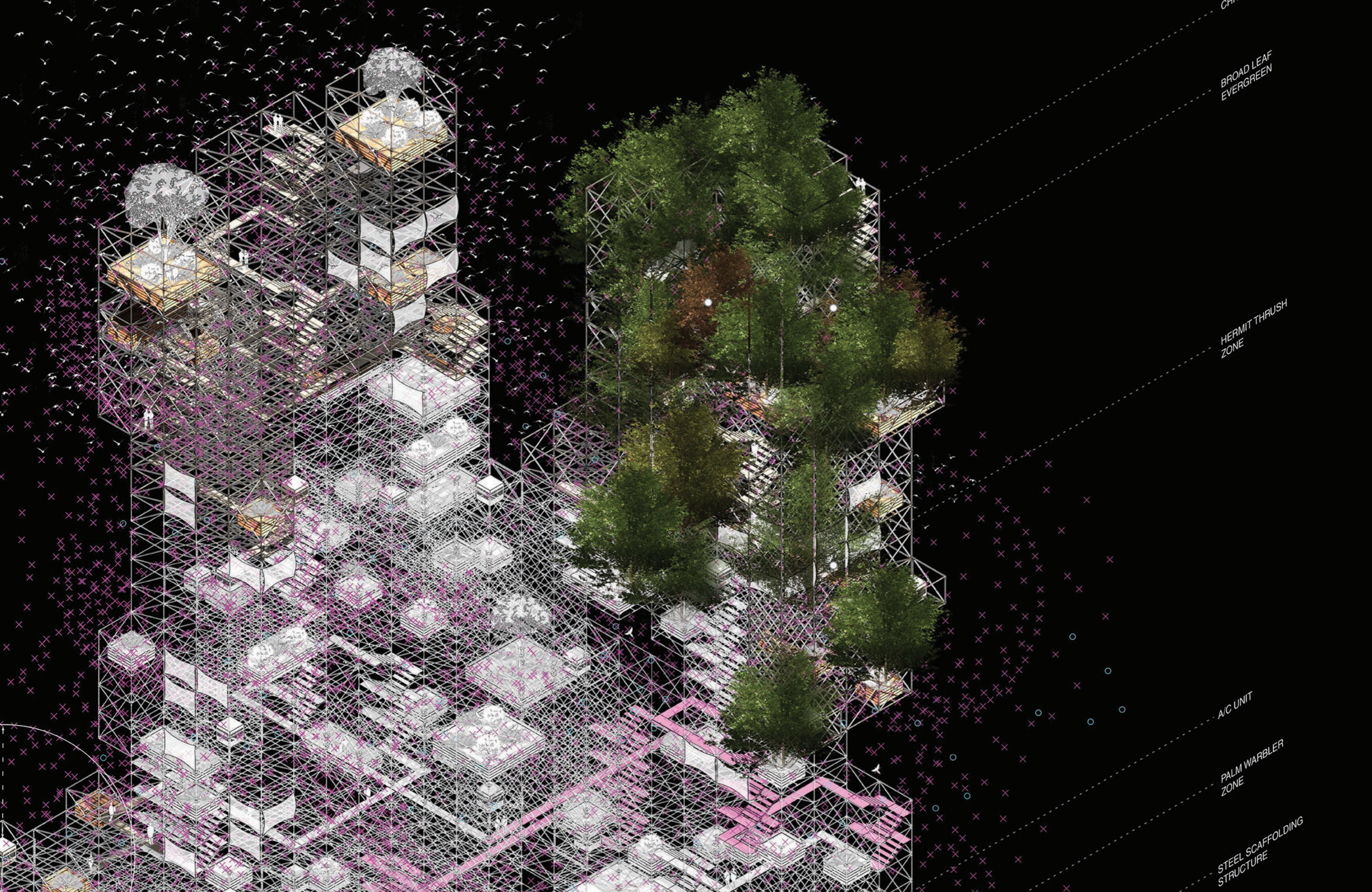
The intervention in Battery Park creates a 3D porous infrastructural wall that, through humidification and evaporative coolings hosts the ecosystems that the birds need to breed. These atmospheres grow plants in different areas which can either be eaten by, or attract the food for, Palm Warblers, Hermit Thrushes, and White Throated Sparrows. The resultant structure attracts birds, flies, and bees, while growing plants, and giving access to humans that need to service the infrastructure.

With the influx of birds in the park, comes an expected shower of guano, or bird poop. This guano can be collected and used as fertilizer to facilitate the continued growth of these ecosystems. In order to collect the guano and service the facilities, humans entering this space with massive numbers of birds will need to wear a protective suit. The suit provides protection from swarming and droppings, but also includes features such as bird calling speakers to facilitate human bird interaction.









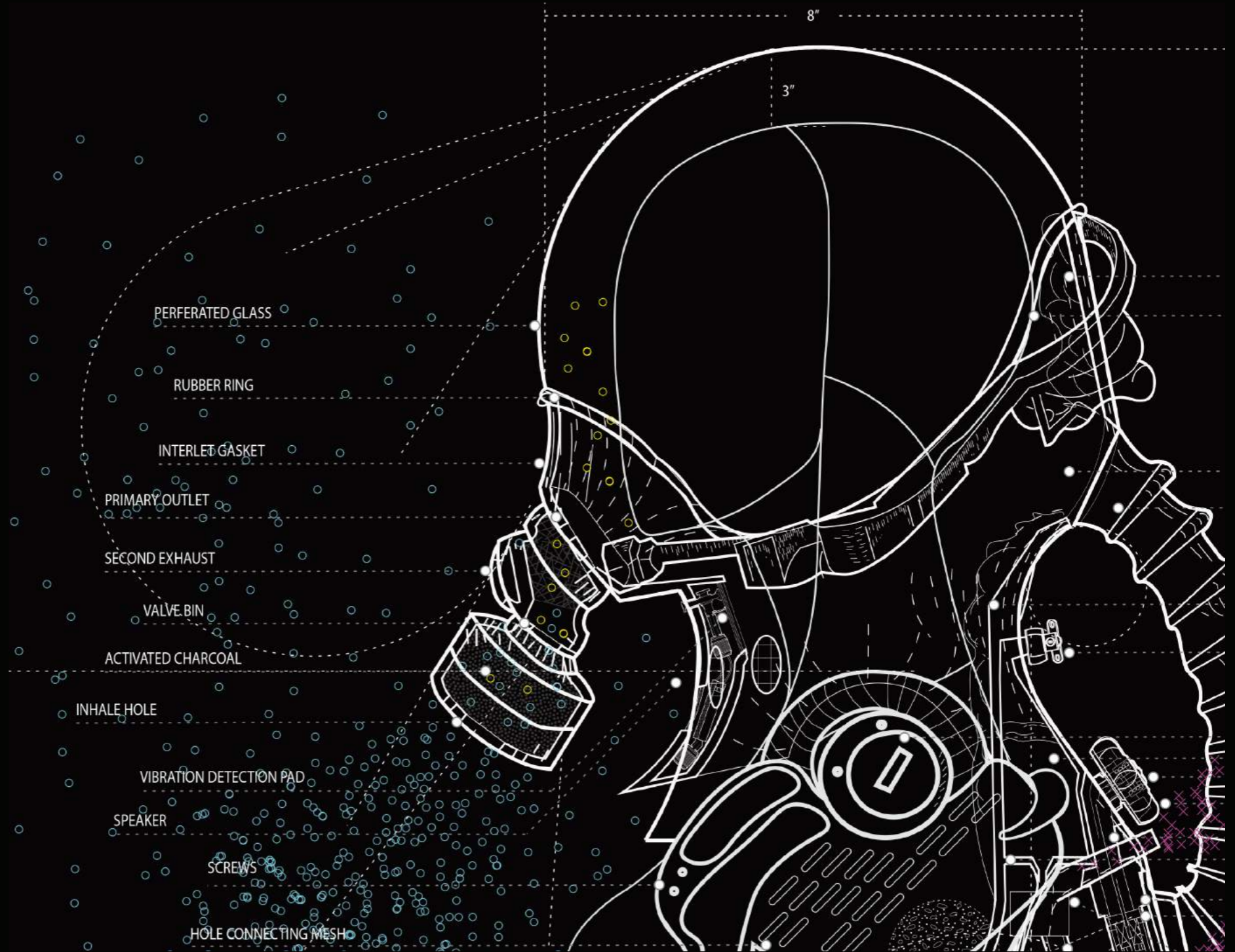
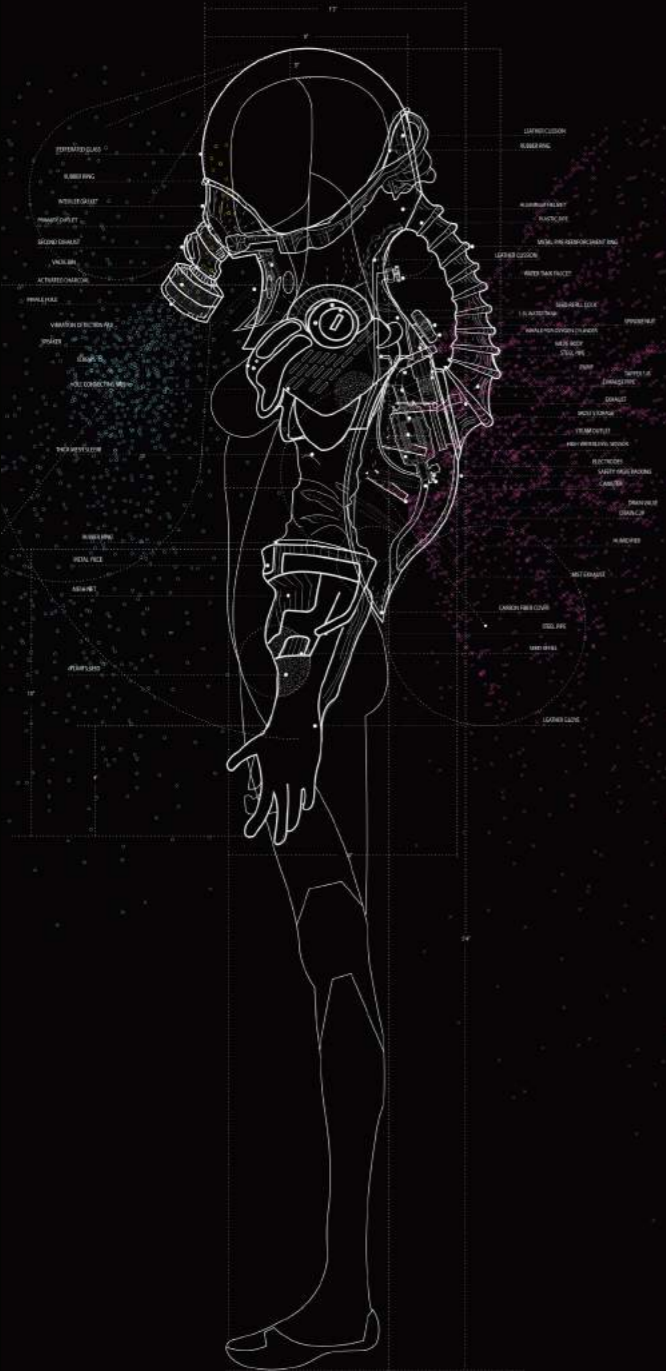
BROAD LEAF  
EVERGREEN

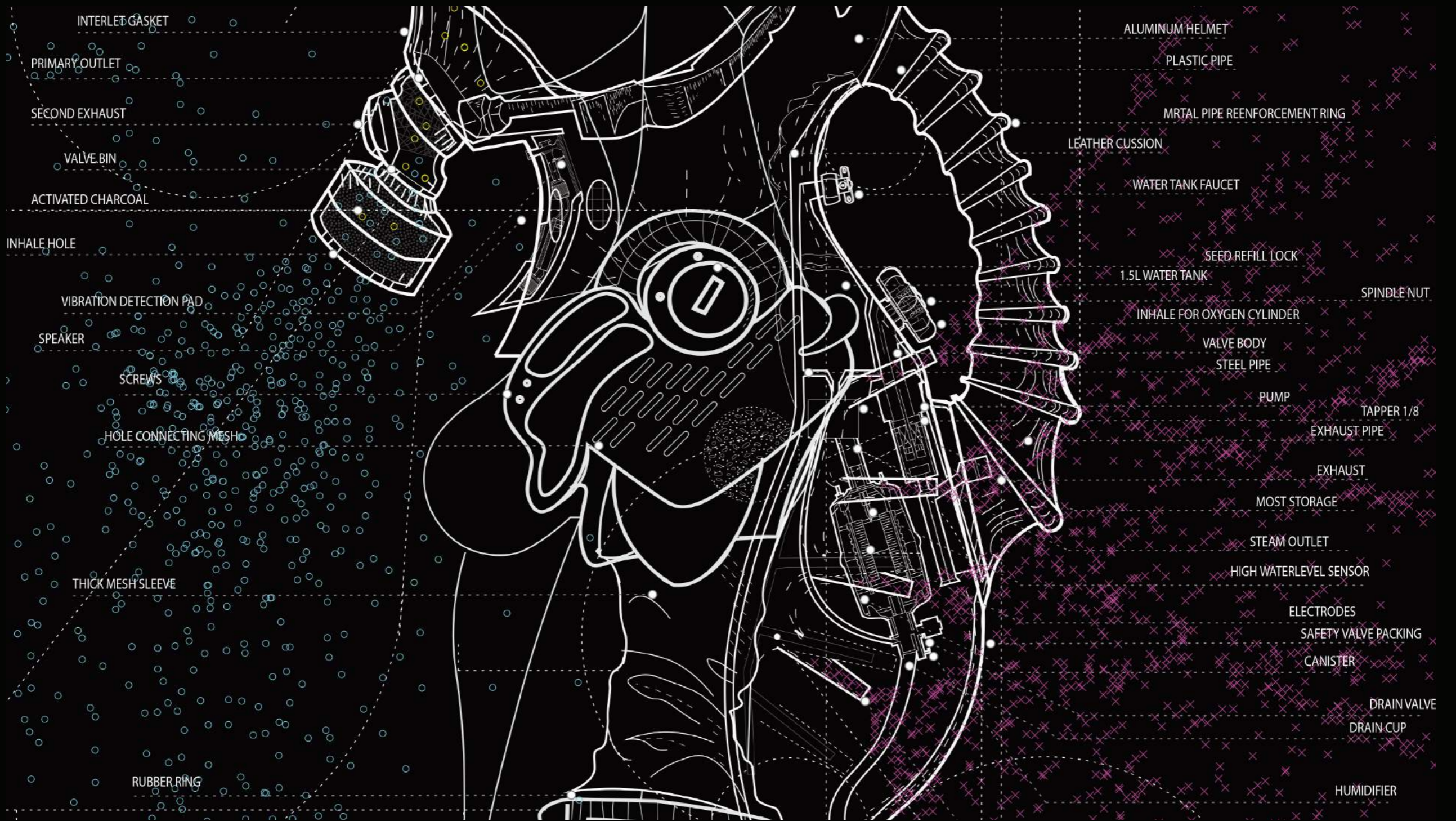
HERMIT THRUSH  
ZONE

A/C UNIT

PALM WARBLER  
ZONE

STEEL SCAFFOLDING  
STRUCTURE

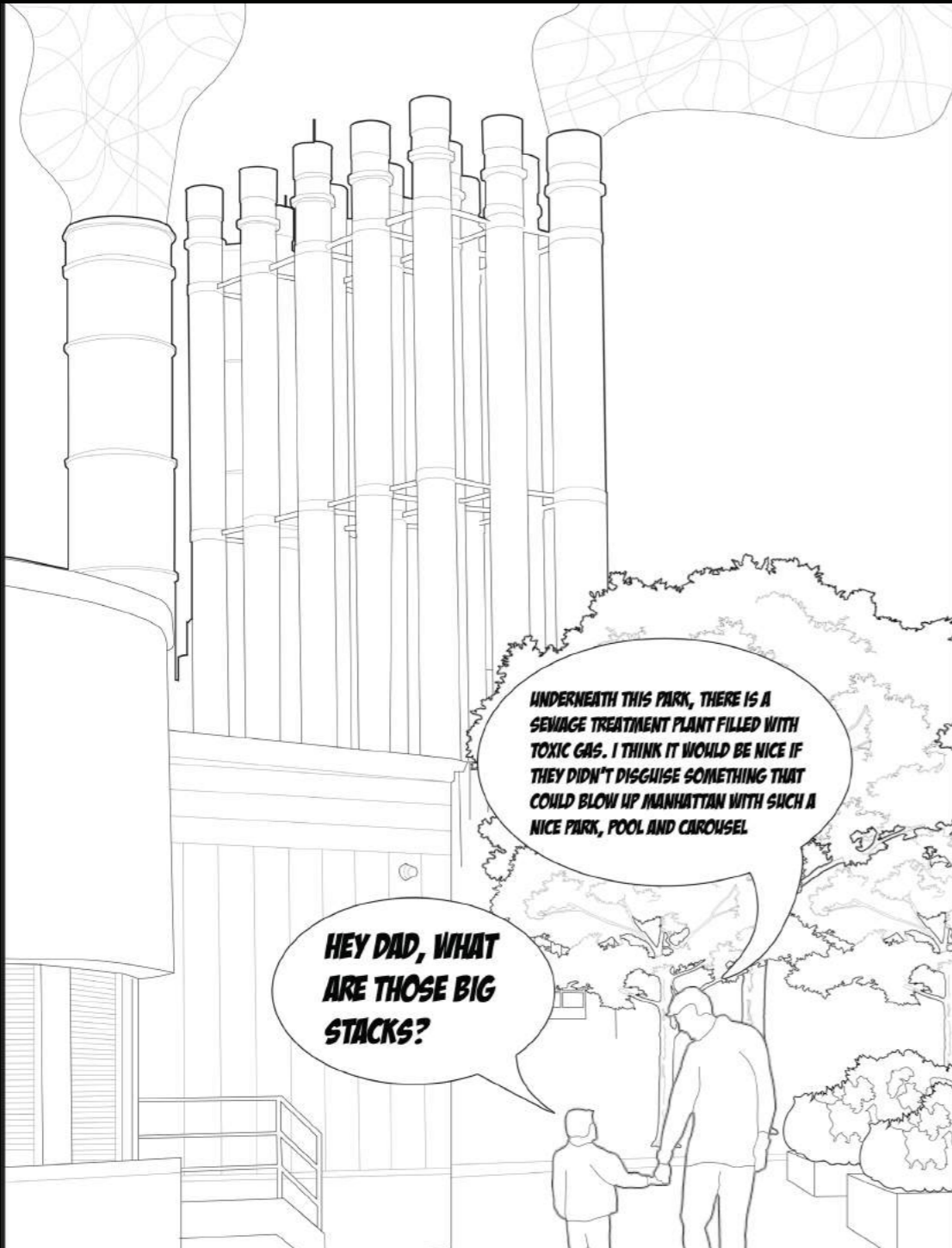












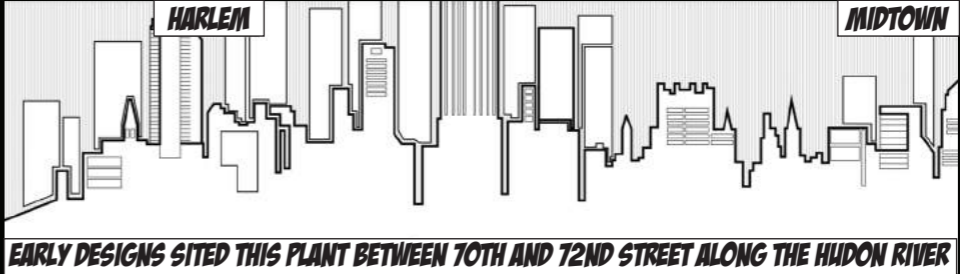
Elective 1

# **PUT A PARK ON IT**

## **A GRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE NORTH RIVER SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT**

Environmental racism and grassroots community activism are two forces that have constantly dueled in shaping the built environment of New York City. This short comic illustrates a duel between these two forces in the placement and beautification of Manhattan's largest sewage treatment plant.

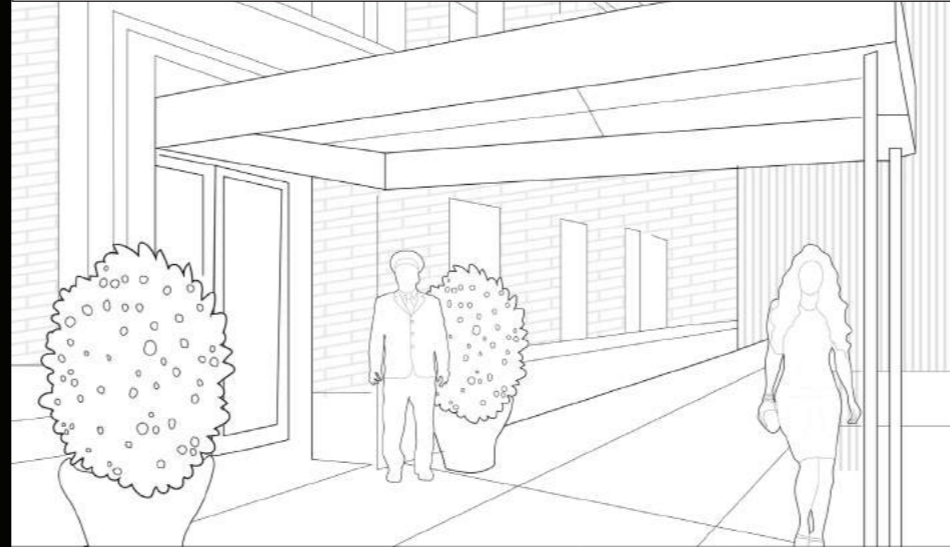
Partners: Frederico Castello Branco, Uthra Vargheese, Chang Pan



**ON MARCH 28, 1952, THE SITE MYSTERIOUSLY CHANGED AFTER THE NYC PLANNING COMMISSION HELD A CLOSED DOOR MEETING, WHICH MOVED THE PLANT NORTH, BETWEEN WEST 135TH AND 145TH STREETS.**

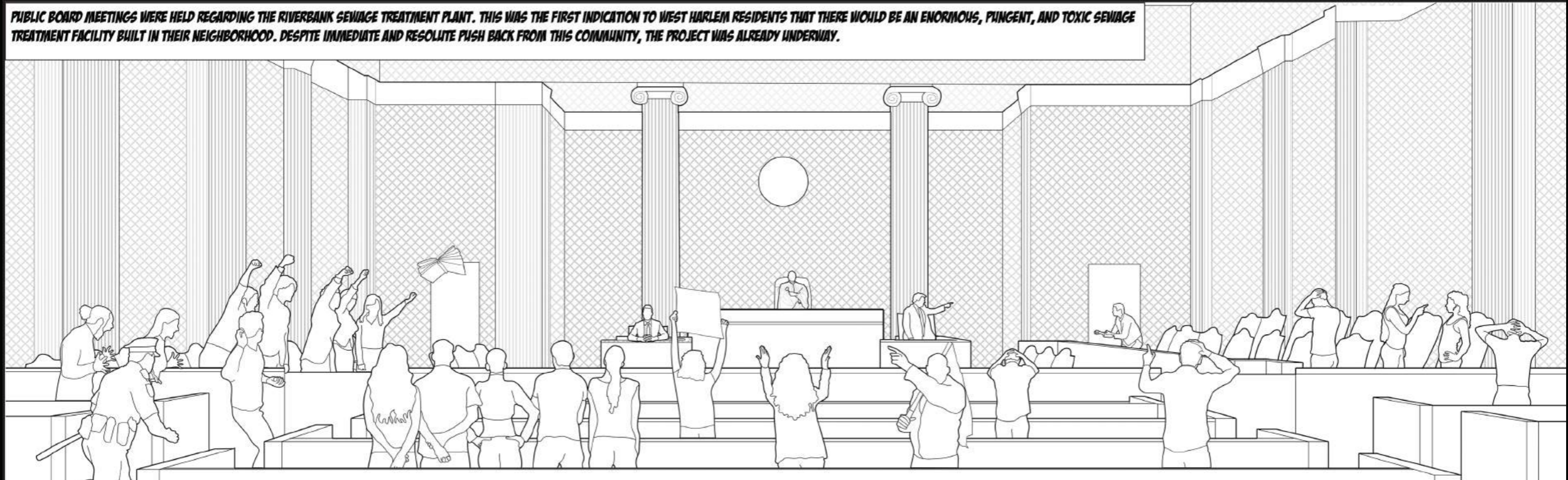


**THE EARLIER SITE WAS IN A WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD, AS OPPOSED TO THE WORKING CLASS AND PRIMARILY AFRICAN-AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOOD OF WEST HARLEM**



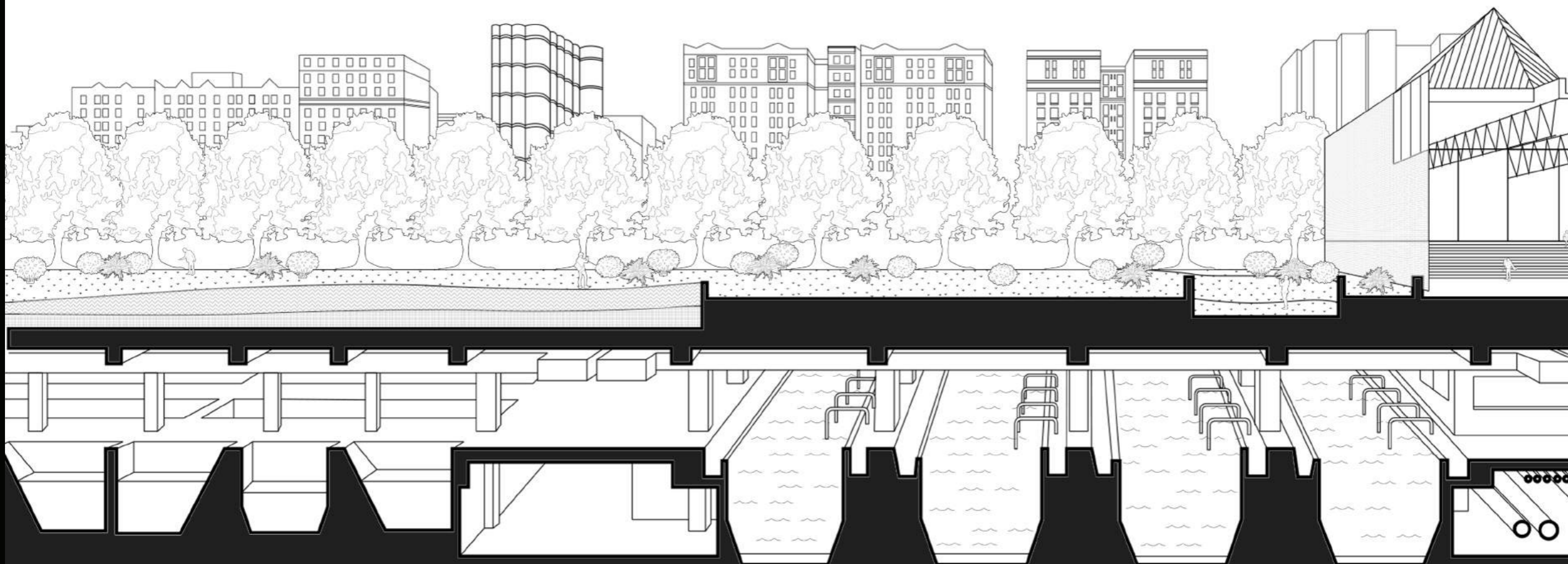
**IN 1968, NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR JOHN LINDSAY PASSED THE OPEN MEETINGS LAW, WHICH USHERED IN A NEW EAR OF TRANSPARENCY IN CITY GOVERNMENT**

**PUBLIC BOARD MEETINGS WERE HELD REGARDING THE RIVERBANK SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT. THIS WAS THE FIRST INDICATION TO WEST HARLEM RESIDENTS THAT THERE WOULD BE AN ENORMOUS, PUNGENT, AND TOXIC SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITY BUILT IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD. DESPITE IMMEDIATE AND RESOLUTE PUSH BACK FROM THIS COMMUNITY, THE PROJECT WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY.**





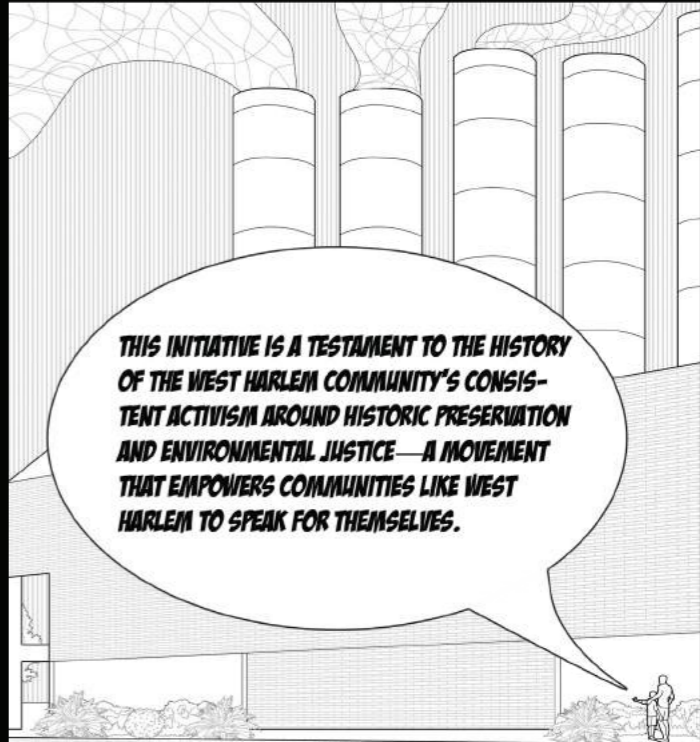
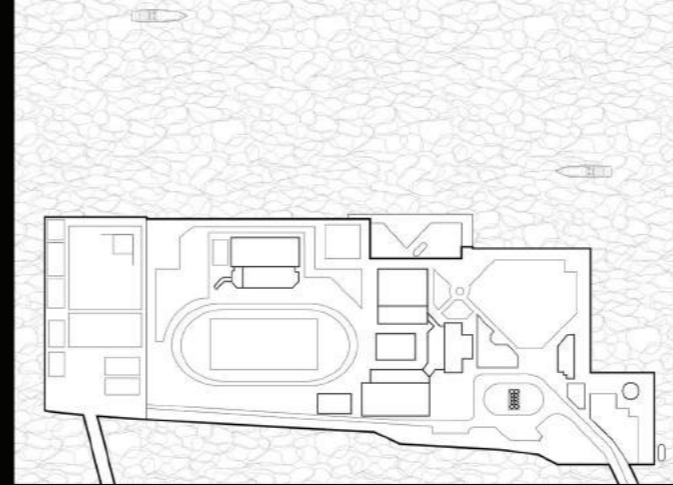
**MAYOR JOHN LINDSAY APPOINTED PHILIP JOHNSON TO WORK A SOLUTION FOR THE PROJECT. IT WAS JOHNSON WHO ORIGINALLY CAME UP WITH THE IDEA OF DESIGNING A PARK ON TOP OF THE SEWAGE PLANT. JOHNSON'S DETAILED DESIGN FOR THE PARKS AND FOUNTAINS WERE STILL NOT WELL RECEIVED BY THE COMMUNITY WHEN WORK ON THE FOUNDATIONS WAS COMPLETED IN 1978.**



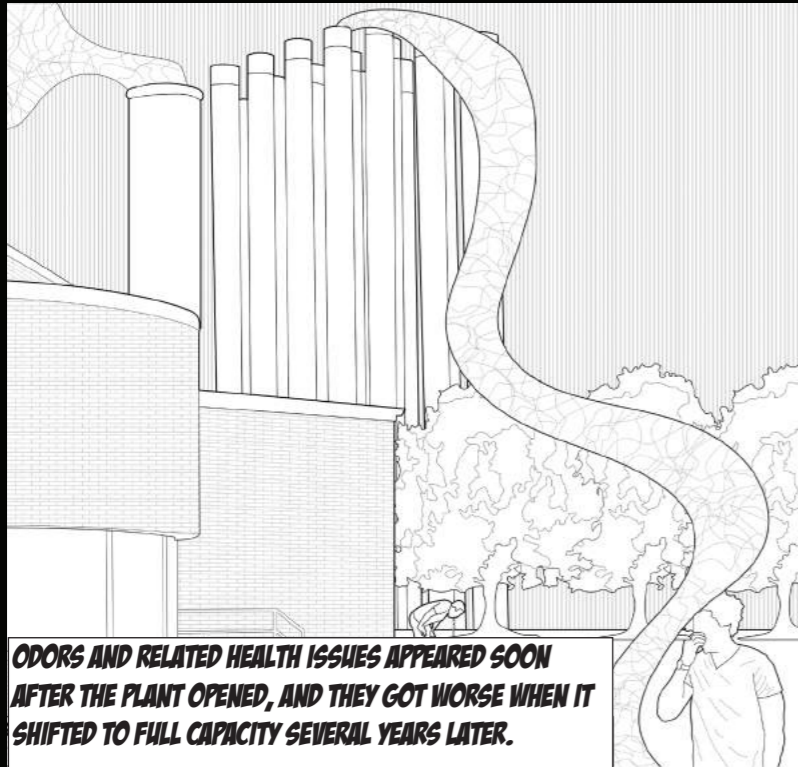
**THE PROJECT WAS HANDED OVER AND COMPLETED BY DATNER ARCHITECTS AND ABEL BAINNSON BLITZ LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS IN 1993.**



**THE PARK BUILT ON THE PLANT RENDERS THE SANITATION FACILITY COMPLETELY HIDDEN TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC, EXCEPT FOR THE SMOKE STACKS WHICH HOVER ABOVE THE PARK.**

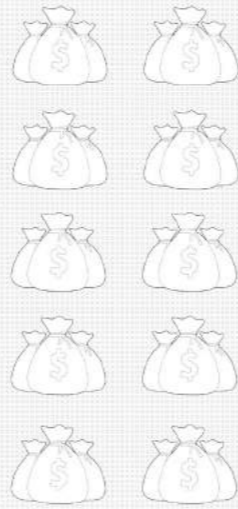


**THIS INITIATIVE IS A TESTAMENT TO THE HISTORY OF THE WEST HARLEM COMMUNITY'S CONSISTENT ACTIVISM AROUND HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE—A MOVEMENT THAT EMPOWERS COMMUNITIES LIKE WEST HARLEM TO SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.**

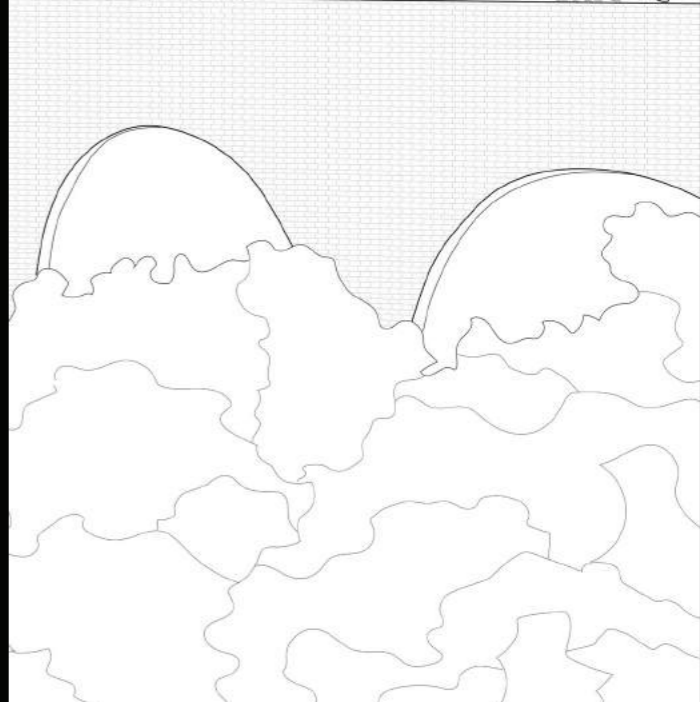
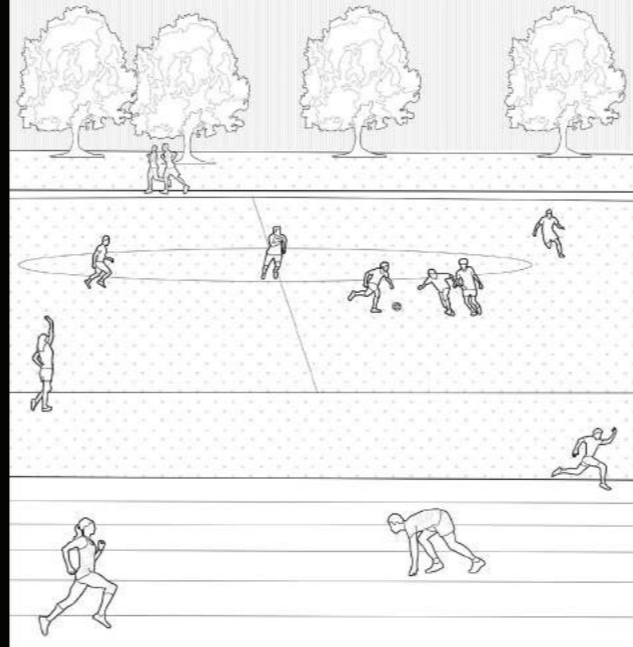


**ODORS AND RELATED HEALTH ISSUES APPEARED SOON AFTER THE PLANT OPENED, AND THEY GOT WORSE WHEN IT SHIFTED TO FULL CAPACITY SEVERAL YEARS LATER.**

**IN 2013, THE CITY COMPLETED A \$106,000,000 RENNOVATION TO QUELL THE STENCH**



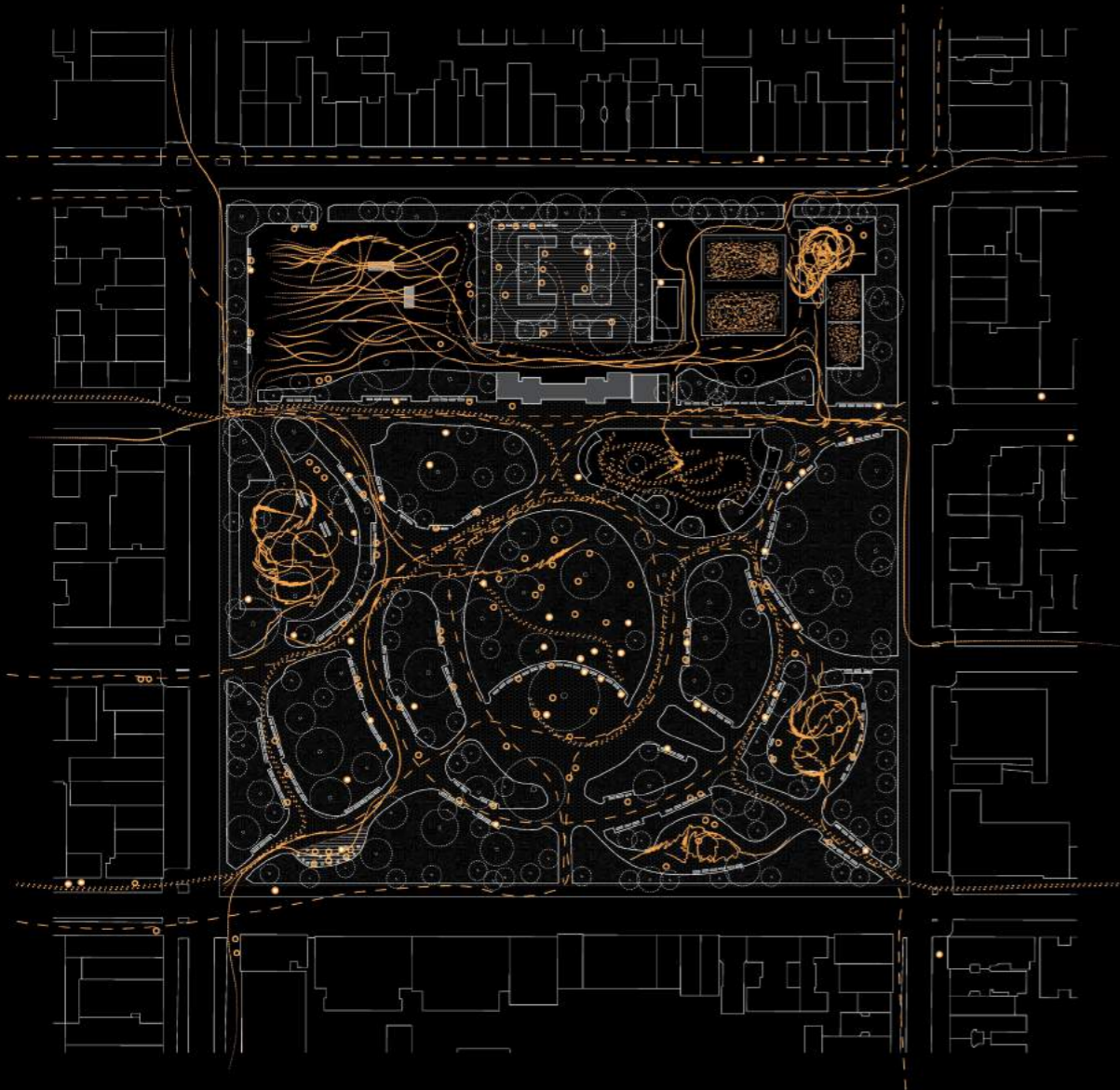
**TODAY, RIVERBANK STATE PARK IS THE SECOND MOST VISITED PARK IN NEW YORK. SPORTS FIELDS, AQUATIC CENTERS, AND PICNIC TABLES ARE PACKED WITH PEOPLE OF ALL AGES**



## Studio 2

# *Claimed Space*

## An exploration of boundary conditions and common space in Tompkins Square Park



In the early morning of August 6th, 1988, violence erupted between protestors and the New York Police at Tompkins Square Park in the Lower East Side. 150-200 protestors marched into the park bearing signs that read "GENTRIFICATION IS CLASS WARFARE". 100 police officers awaited the demonstrators in the park, some with their badges hidden or covered, expecting violence and the need for anonymity. Violence erupted in waves through the early morning until the curfew was lifted at 6:00 AM. The 1988 riot is as much about class warfare as it is about identity and sub-culture. Several groups of great difference banded together to enact political change.

This occurred despite other neighborhood groups calling for the protocols which the rioters protested against. If, historically, the park works well as a political agonist, I posit this is because of the nature of the park as a milieu of different subcultures that occupy the same space. This map represents the motion of the different sub cultures. Each group claims their own territory while also interacting with each other. This leads to instances of friction within the groups, like between the skaters and the organized sports player, but also moments of unification against a larger foe, like in the instance of the riot.

Critics: Mabel O. Wilson, Jordan Carver



# Objects of Radical Repair

This project studied sneakers in the park as a symbol of identity and sub-culture. Sneakers can represent between skaters, basketball players, or homeless residents, identity, sub-culture, and turf. The sneaker is the point of contact between the human body and the surfaces we occupy, and as such, sub-cultures claim space in the park directly through their sneakers.

These investigations led to an examination of sneakers as objects of repair. Two different sneakers are taken apart and then reassembled such that they both occupy the same space at the same time. In one iteration, the disparate pieces fit together as the manufacturer had intended, while in another, they are joined more awkwardly. The third piece is combined violently with the addition of an external element.







Working against the inherent agonism of the park is a system which disfavors these traditionally underrepresented groups.

So if the condition of heterogeneity and interaction between groups leads to increased ability to represent oneself and stand up against traditional powers, how can we break down the boundaries of the park and spread this condition to the rest of the city council district?

This is the voting district the East village sits within. Identified here the potential sites for development- vacant or underused lots - that could be used to hasten gentrification.

This proposal identifies two neighborhood associations that are working to grant the area a historic district designation to help preserve the urban fabric: Friends of the Lower East Side and the East Village Community Coalition. These two organizations are grouped under one institution, the Coalition for Legal Action in Manhattan, or CLAIM.

CLAIM proposes historic district legislation with two key components: 1st, to make it illegal to build new developments by knocking down traditional tenement housing built before 1975 and 2nd, that all new development projects in the district must pay an additional tax to CLAIM for community engagement and public works.

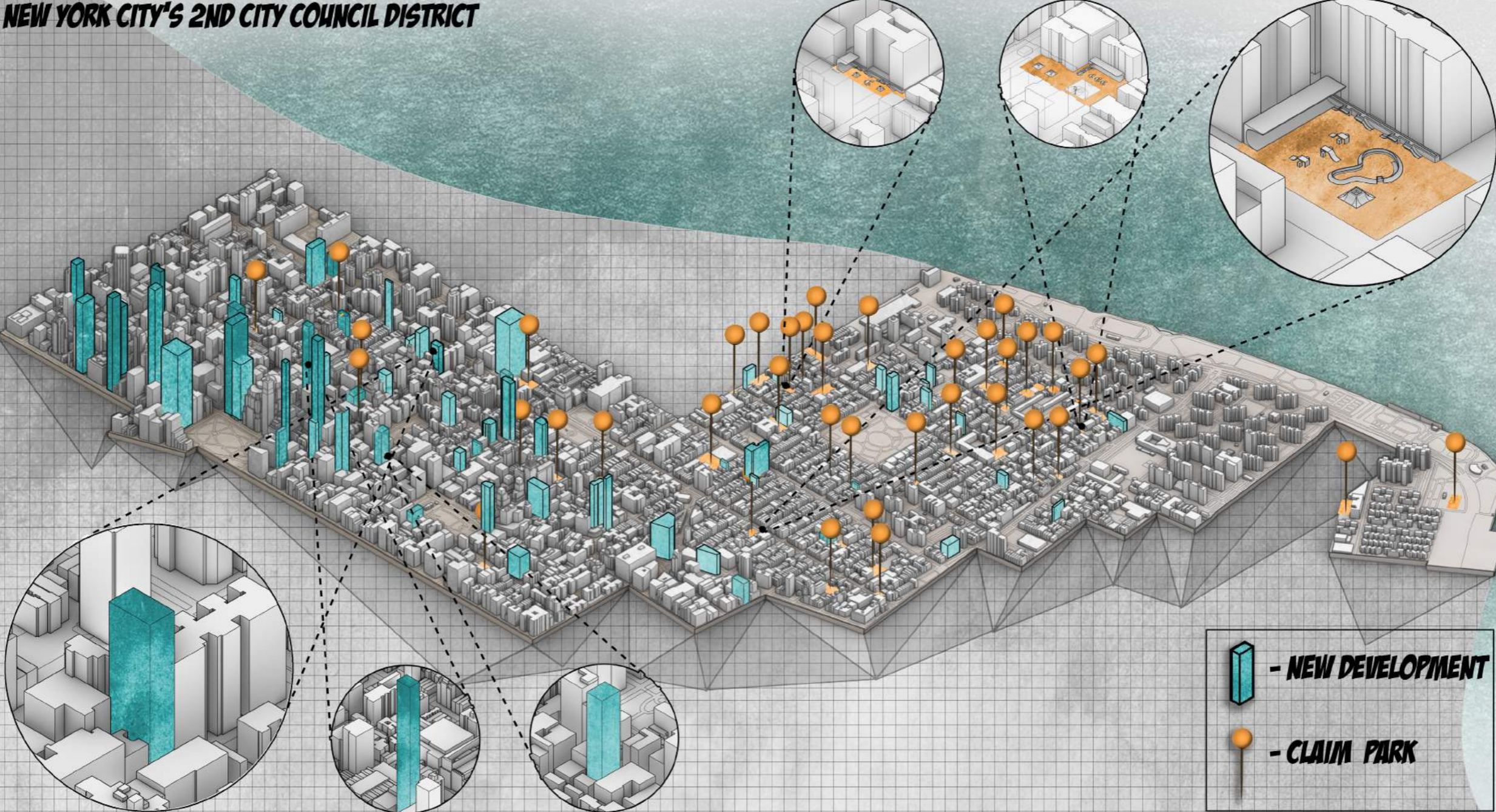
That legislation takes effect in the following protocol. As developers continue to build architecture that gentrifies the neighborhood, they are obligated to fund CLAIM.

CLAIM uses those resources to develop parks and facilities at the same rate as for profit projects.

These parks, along with the preservation of historic buildings, reduces the availability of unused lots to develop.



**NEW YORK CITY'S 2ND CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT**

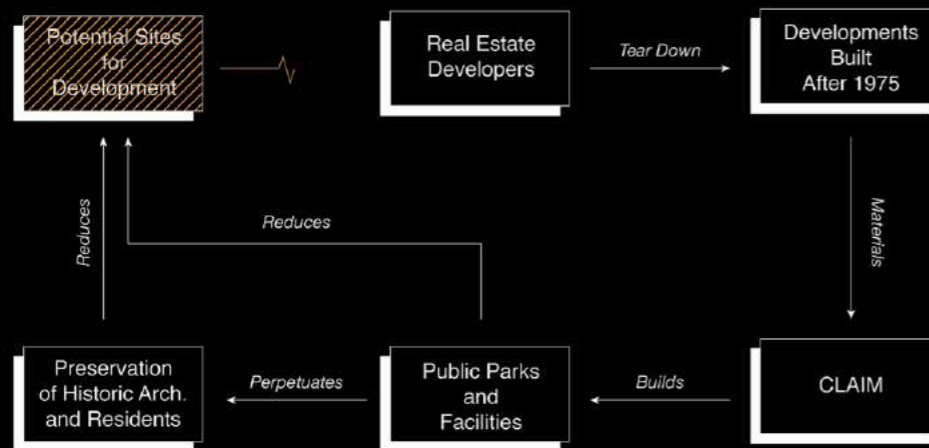
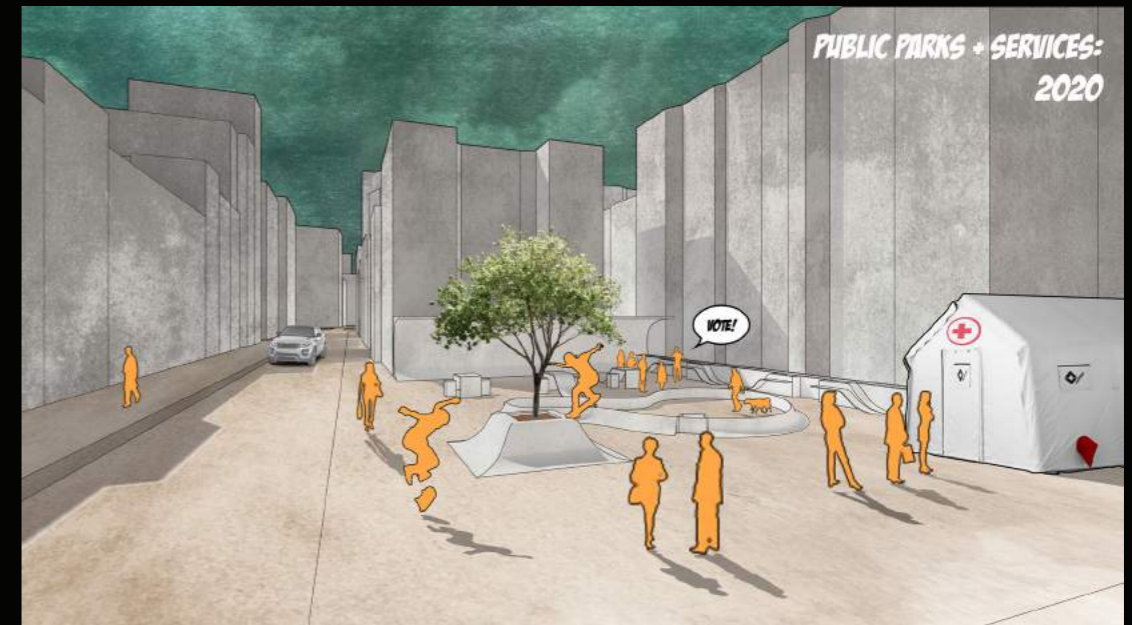




Eventually, all undeveloped lots will be claimed, and because the destruction of buildings from before 1975 is prohibited, the only way to continue to develop the East Village will be to tear down and replace what has been built after that date.

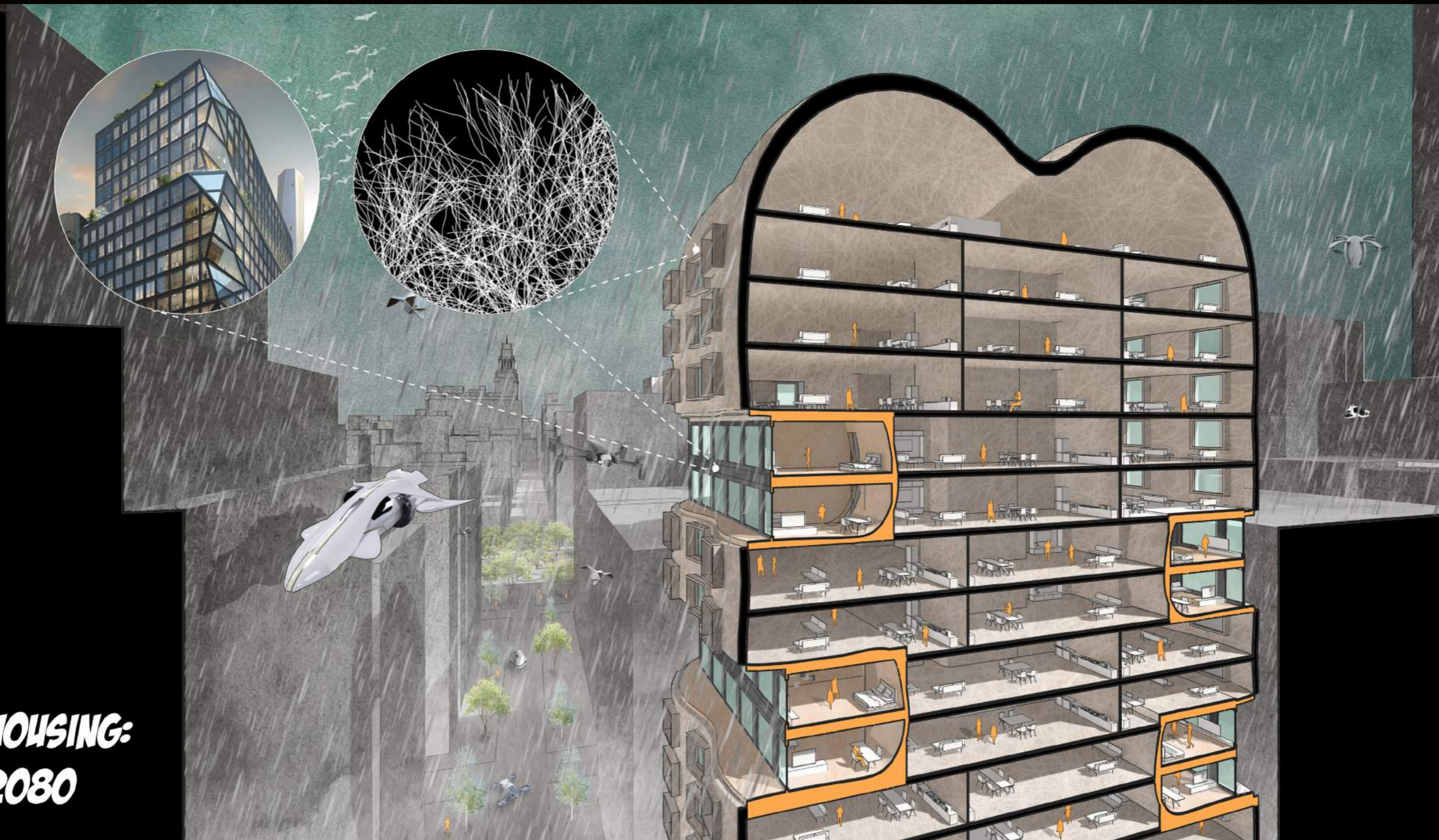
As these projects are torn down, CLAIM re-appropriates the building materials to turn the spaces it had initially claimed for the neighborhood as parks into a new form of public space that transcends the interior/ exterior boundary.

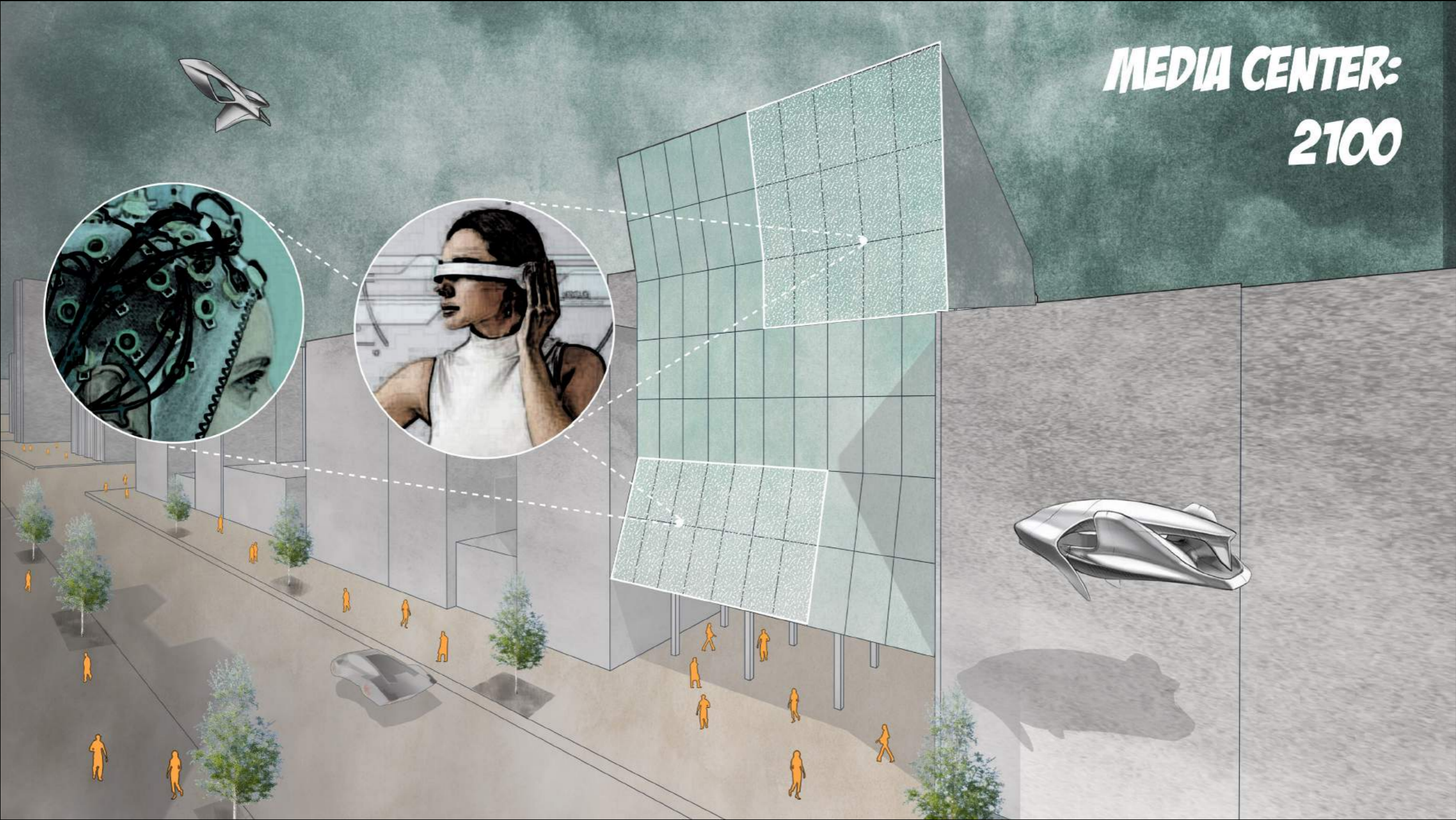
Essentially, by appropriating these building materials, the architecture that is currently the engine of gentrification in the neighborhood become facilities that make it possible for diverse, mixed income, long time residents to continue living in the East Village.



**PUBLIC GREENHOUSE AND KITCHEN  
2050**

**HOUSING:  
2080**





**MEDIA CENTER:  
2100**



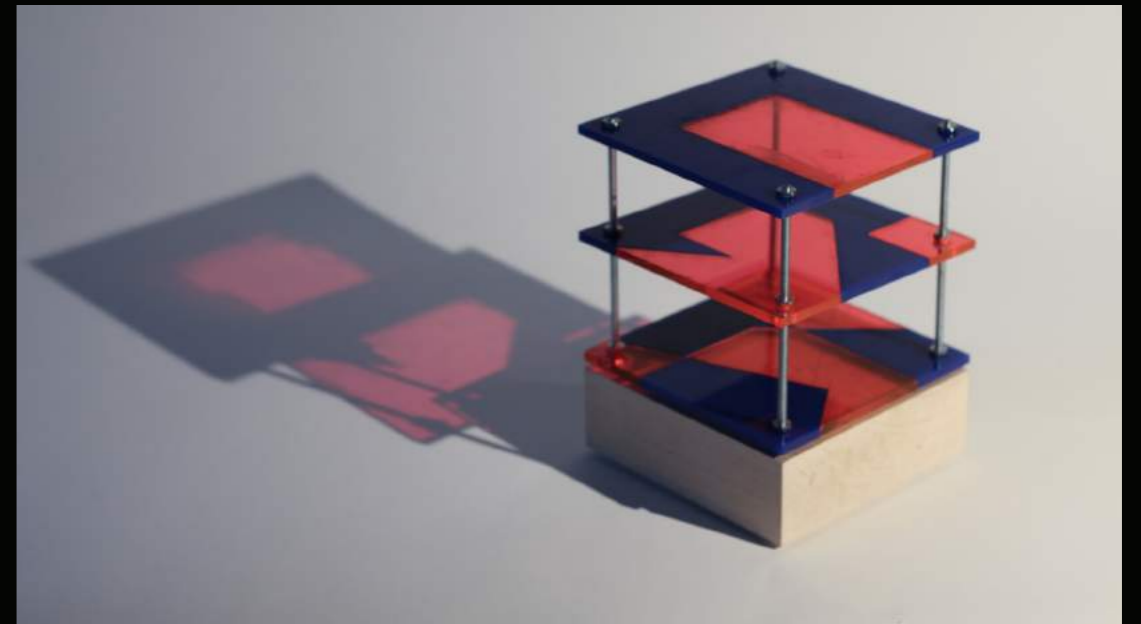
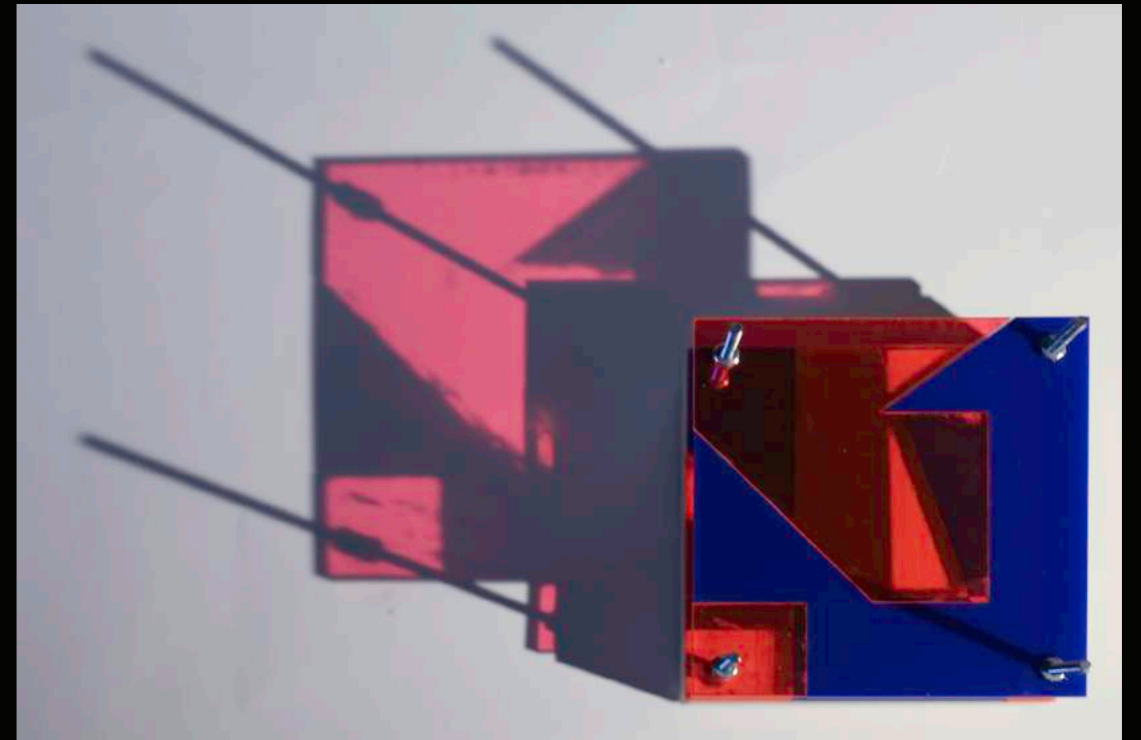
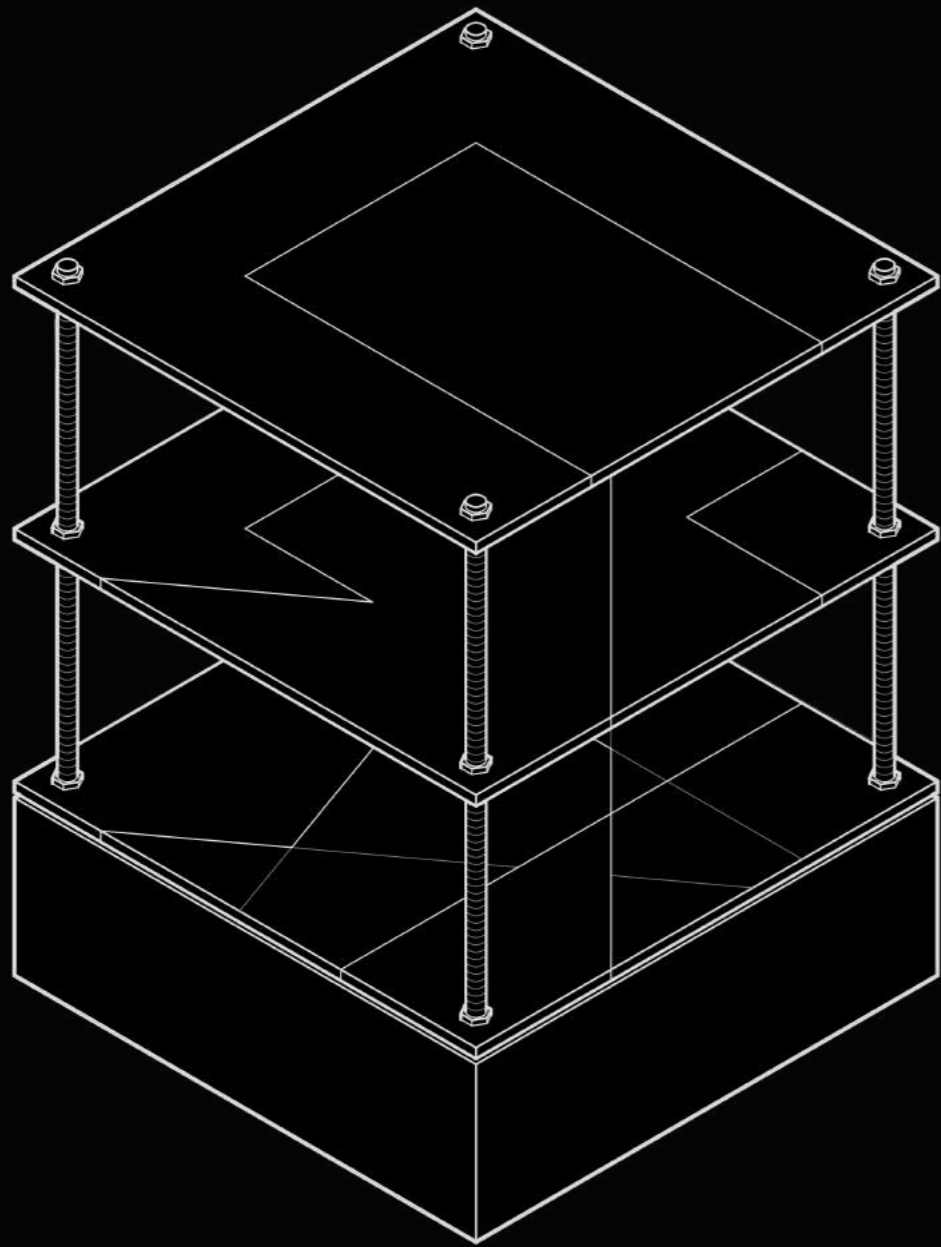
Elective 2

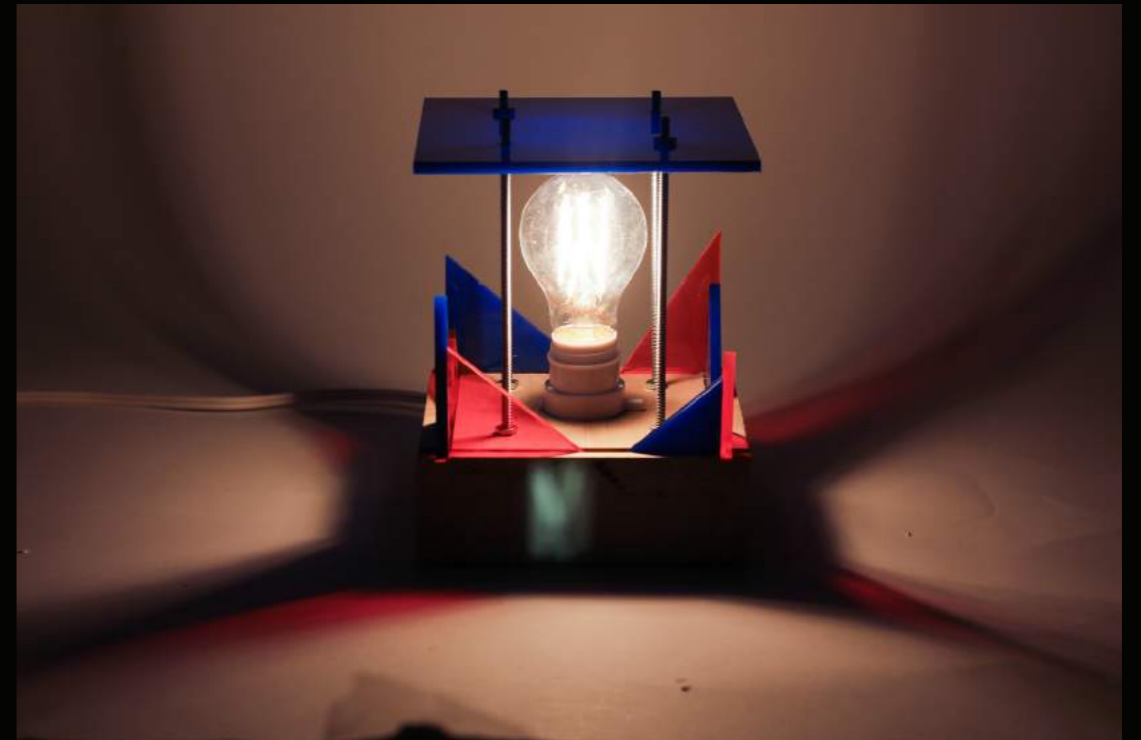
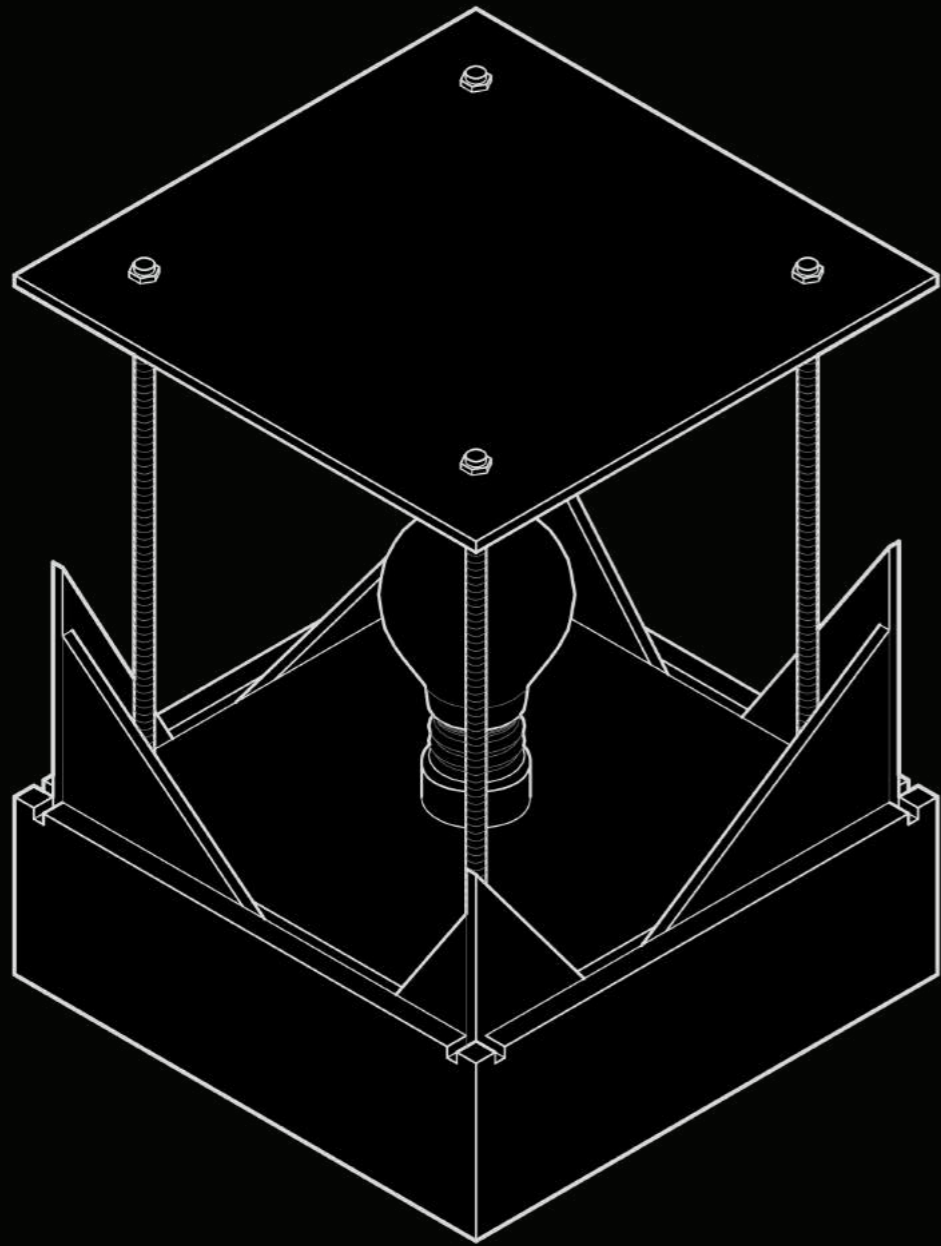
# *Composite Model Making*

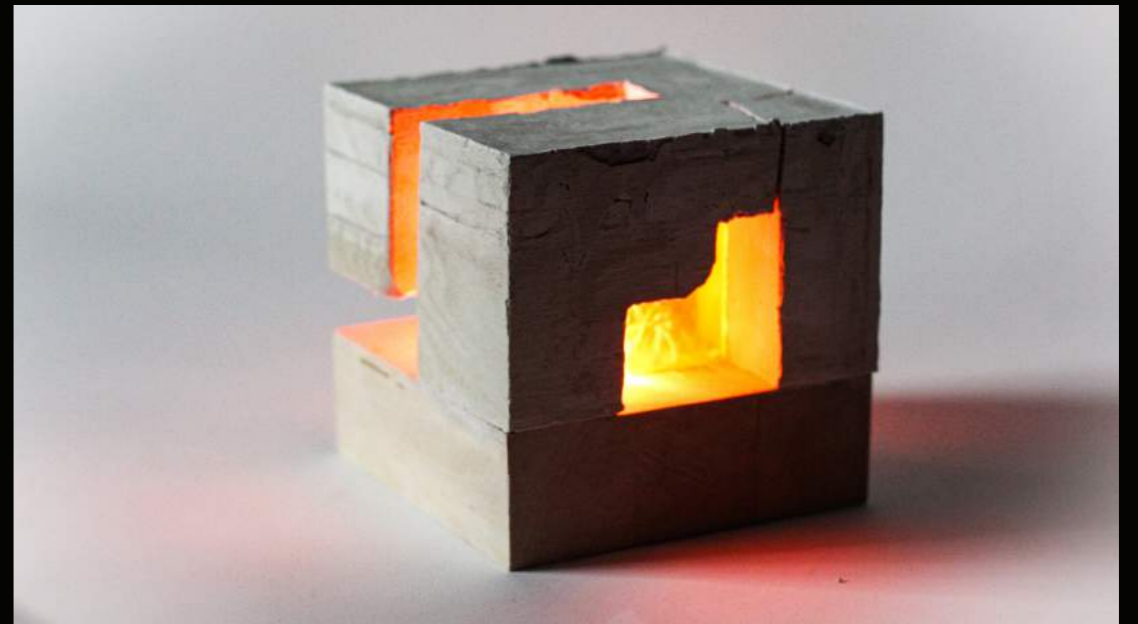
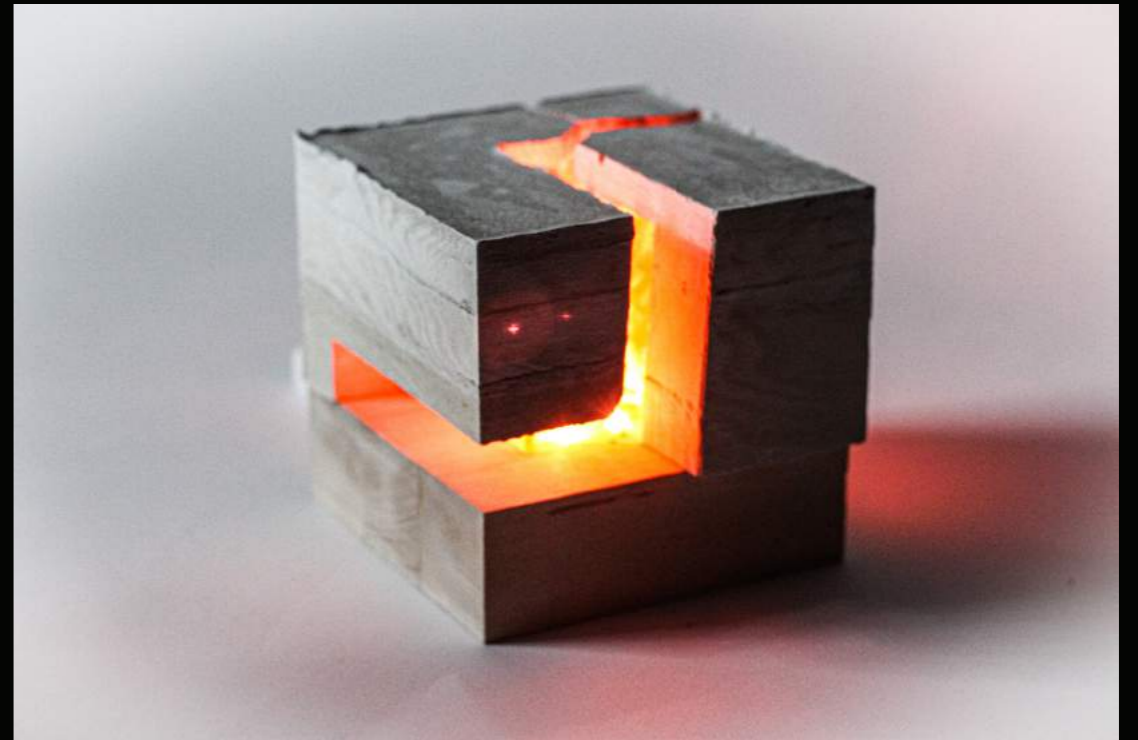
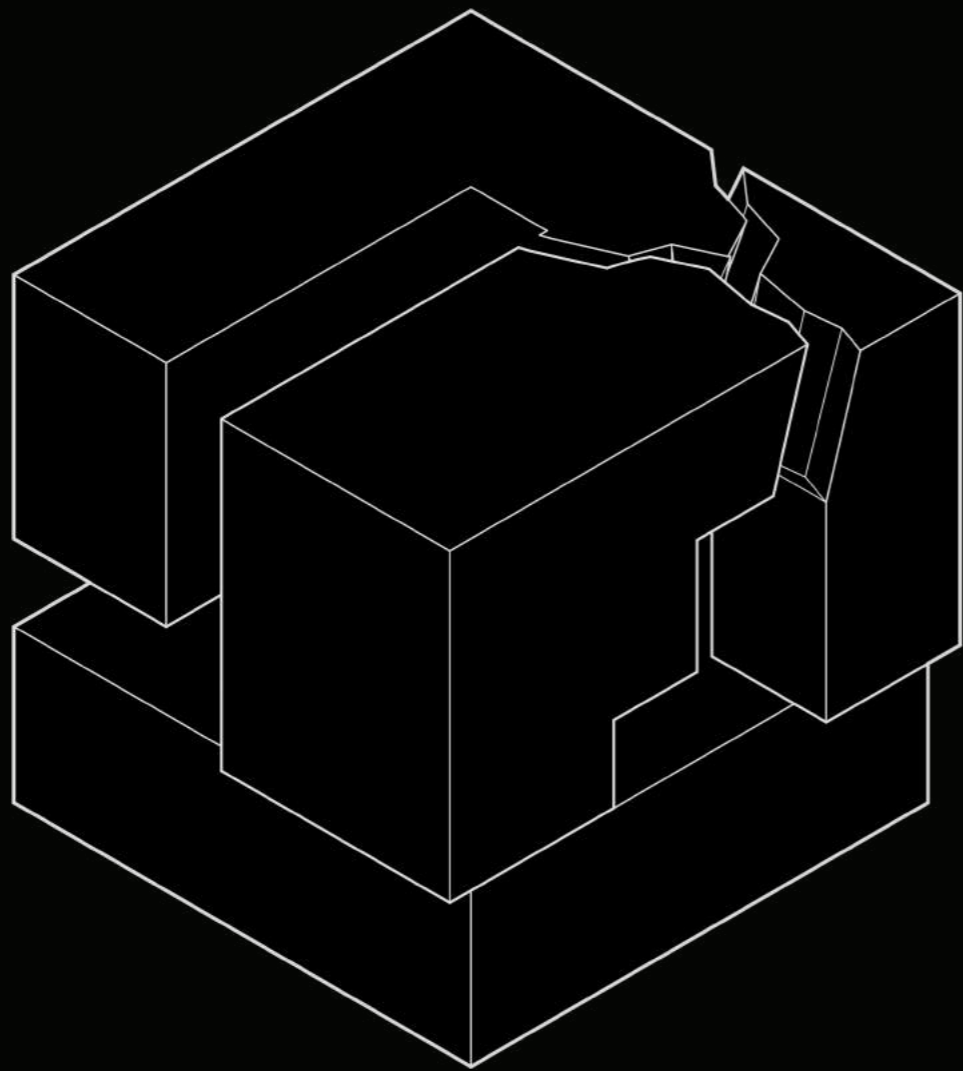
This elective examined materiality and space making through a narrative. Each of the five objects in this section represent one chapter of a larger narrative. The narrative surrounds a story of color, light, and texture personified as characters. Ultimately, these studies examine the interplay between those three elements of building.

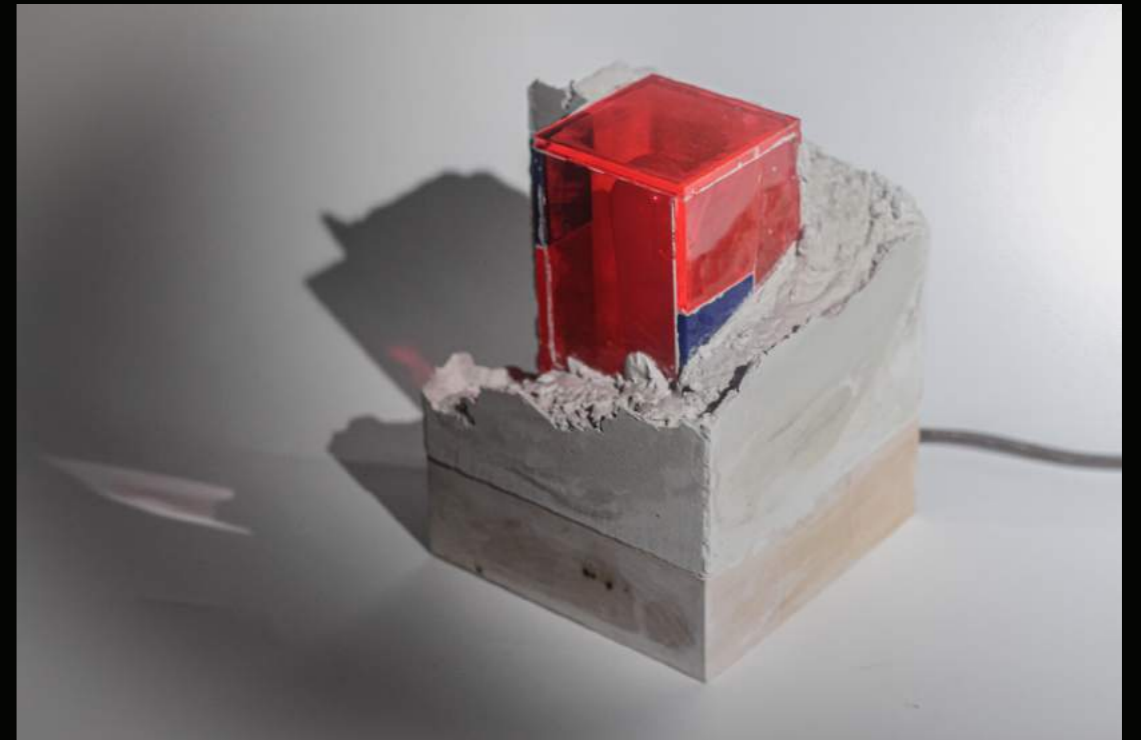
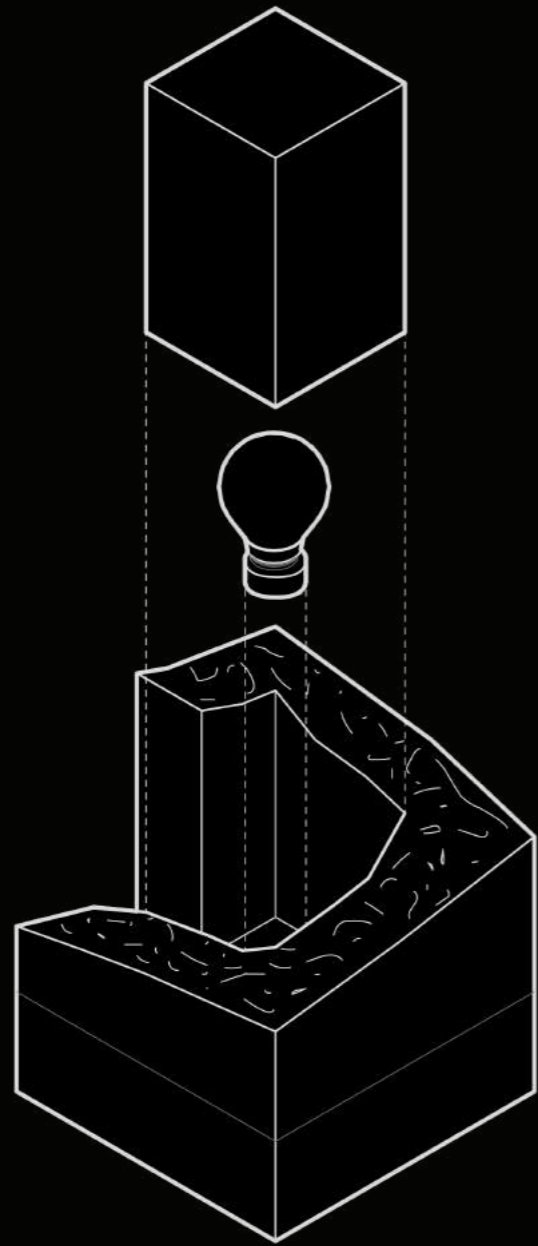
The exploration into texture begins a process of pushing the material of rockite to new extremes. By keeping the plaster like material in motion as it cures, new textural and material qualities are exposed.

Instructor: Jacqueline Martinez

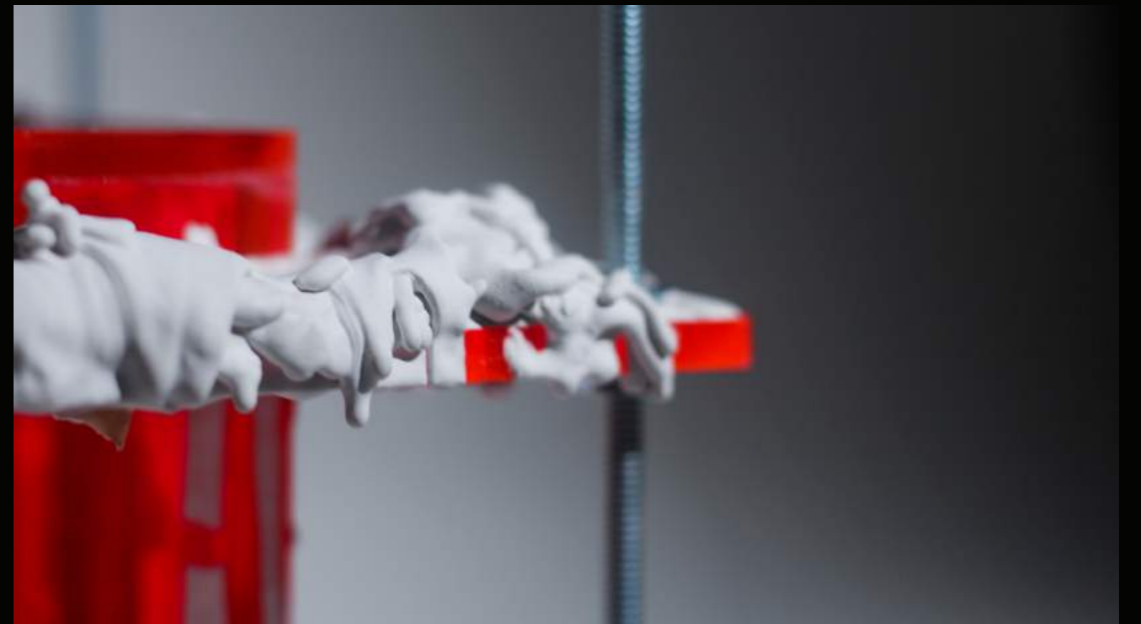
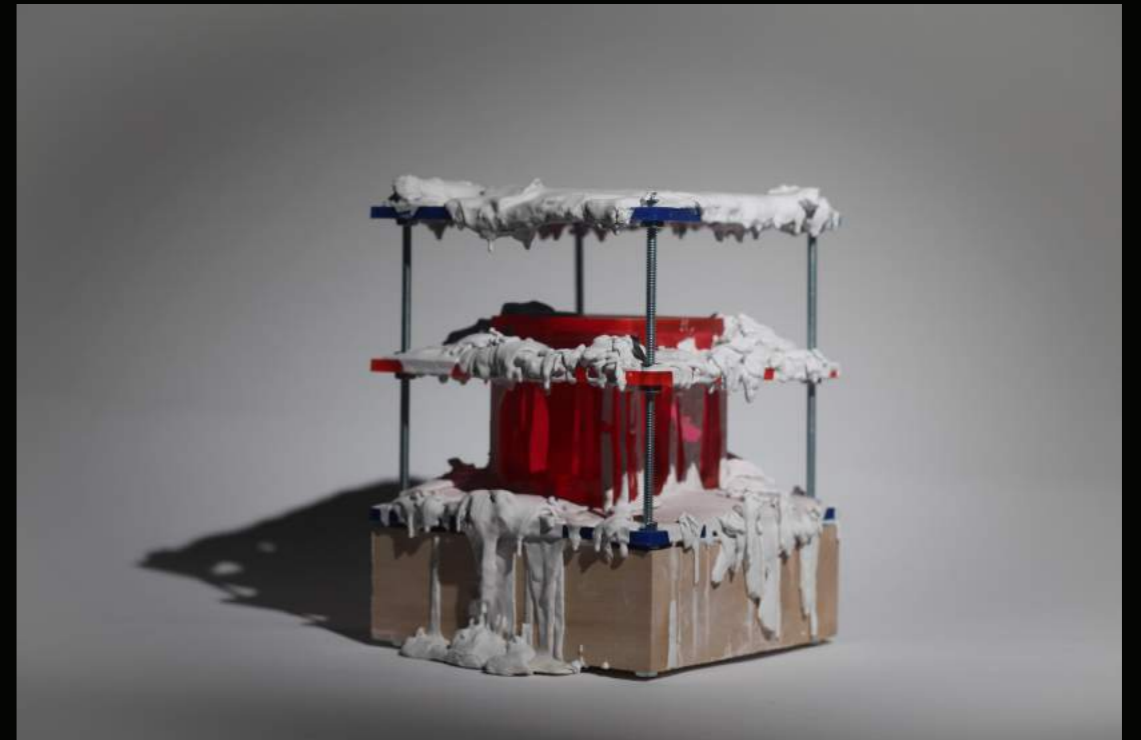
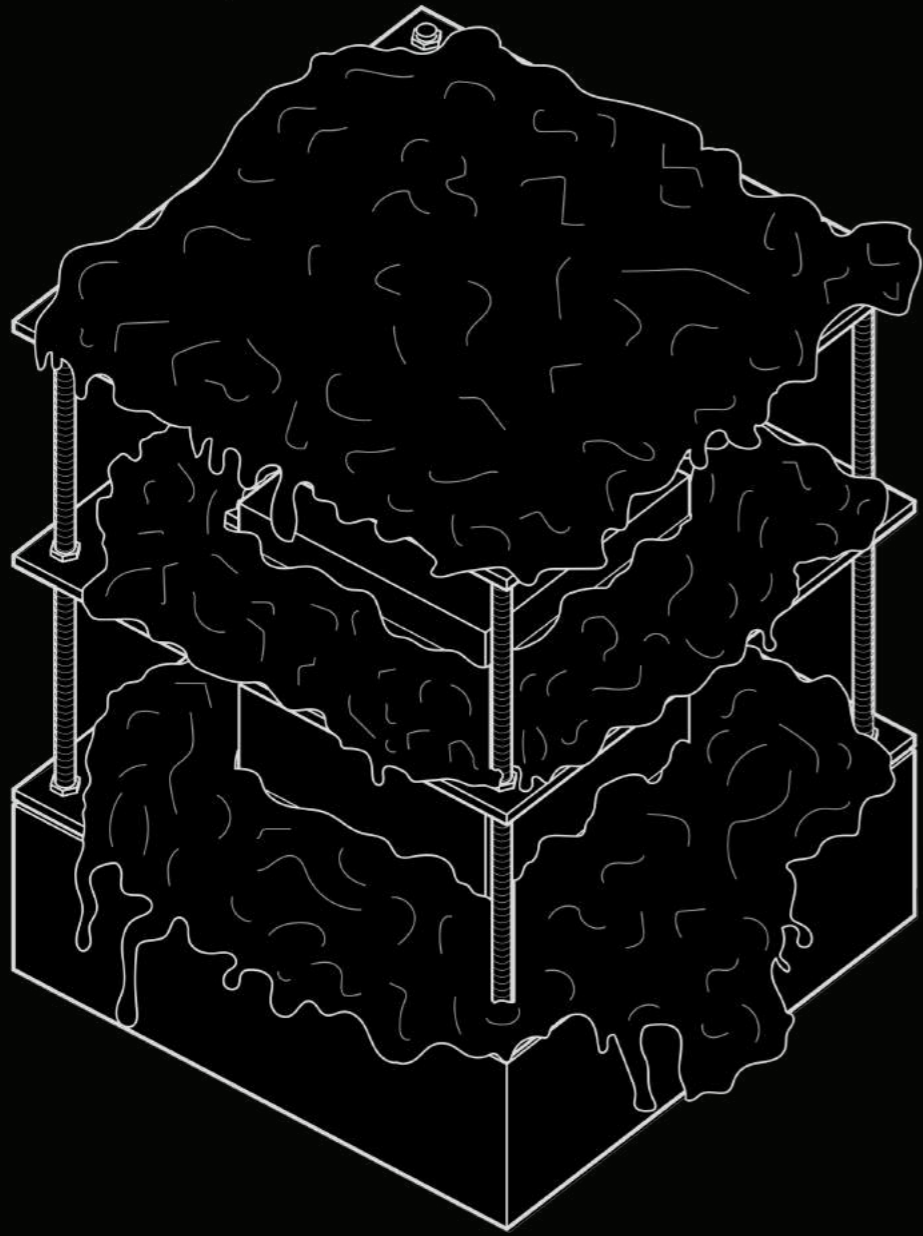














## Studio 3

# *Starstruck Paranoia and an Onslaught of Everyday Things*

This final studio project is a book in and of itself. It is a monograph. A makergraph. The following section shows a few excerpts from that work. The makergraph is a deep and personal examination of what drives a personal design agenda. By exploring the self, the limits of the field of architecture are pushed, which in turn prompt further self-realization. The first chapter in this monograph examines inspirations from the past. What led me to become a designer and how does that impetus guide my direction in the future?

The second chapter of the book explores making through simple household objects. Nearly all of the physical objects in this chapter were made with the same raw materials needed to do laundry at home during the Covid-19 quarantine. The third chapter translates this passion for making to a new scale: the sneaker. By applying architectural, tectonic operations to footwear, new forms arise. The final chapter of this book translates the tools and operations of making studied through objects and sneakers back into traditional architecture: my house.

Critics: Ada Tolla, Giuseppe Lignano, Thomas de Monchaux

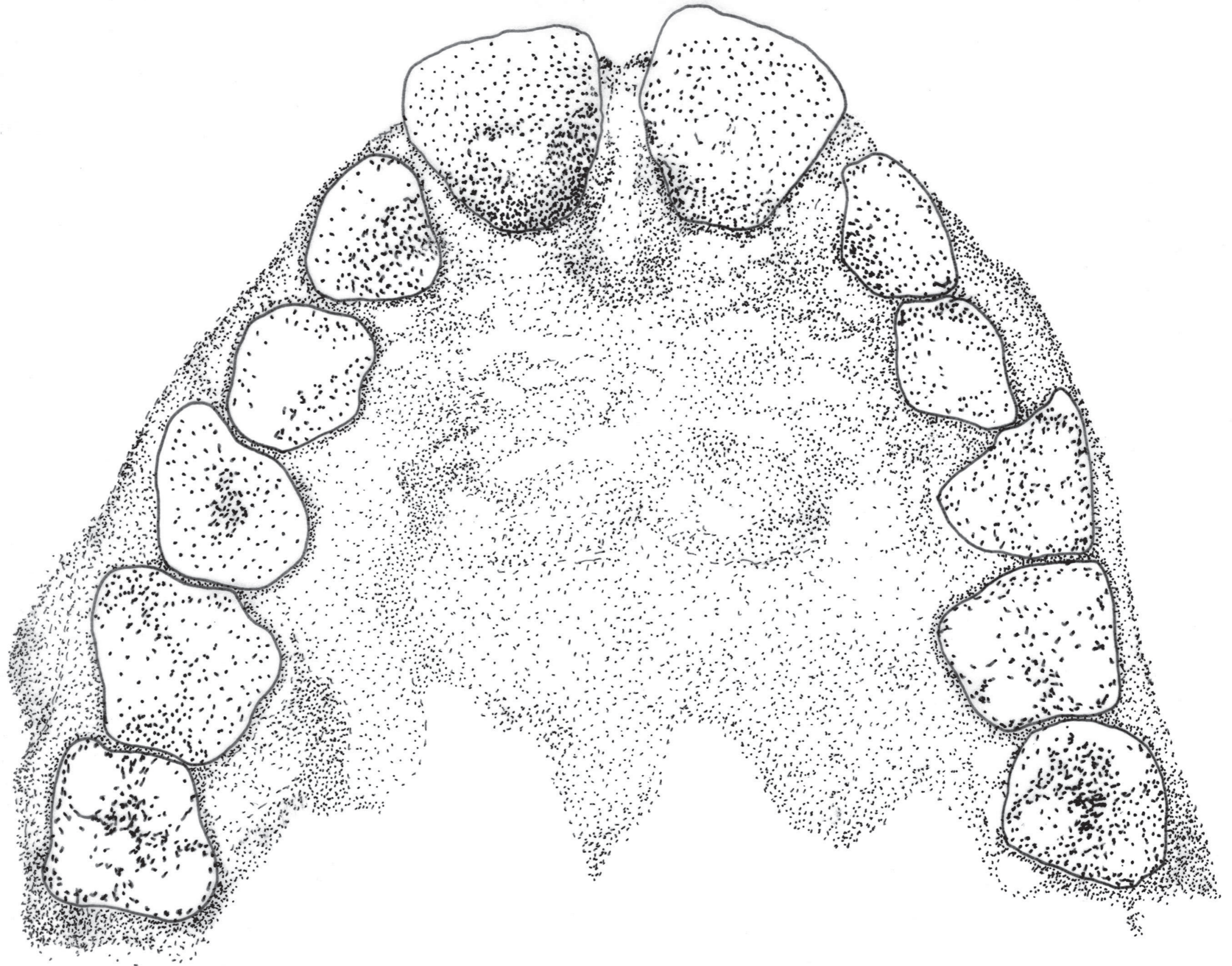


## Chapter 1

### *Inspiration from the Past*

If you saw me as a child, you would most likely find me in the same position every time: silently sitting with my left thumb in my mouth, while my right hand fondled the earlobe of any trusted person that sat next to me. I interacted with the world through the soft skin of the ear, while I grounded and comforted myself through my thumb. I became very familiar with different types of earlobes, detached or attached, pierced or not, and developed my own preferences. I continued sucking my thumb far past the normal age to stop such behavior, warping my teeth into an unsightly overbite.

If addiction is defined as the inability to stop a particular habit despite it causing clear and obvious harm, you could say I was addicted to thumb sucking. As I grew older, my addiction to oral fixations did not go away, they simply changed forms to more dangerous and socially acceptable practices. This tactile habit exposes my natural, unrestrained impulse to explore through touching and feeling. It even sheds light on a lack of control that accompanies this raw, and primary mode of sensing, feeling, and acting.







## Chapter 2

### *Objects*

This chapter is a story of transformation. This chapter is a cavalcade of objects. There are objects you see everyday, or objects that surround us in our homes invisibly. Discreet objects, with their own materials, shapes, and cultural meanings are cut, hung, stacked, combined, arranged, clipped, ordered, and rolled into entirely different entities. Each experiment begins with constraints.

The first constraint is a list of ingredients: the set of objects that can be transformed. The final directive is to combine the ingredients in a way that speaks to the embedded intelligence of the objects while abstracting the larger cultural understanding of its use. The product of these operations become symbols in their own right.

## Hang Softly

This object explores the everyday, cheap, playful, and colorful qualities of plastic. The base is made of a mop bucket, into which cheap PVC piping is inserted, forming the structural armature of the object. Coat hangers rest on the pipe, while soft, fabric-like plastic droops below it.

The plastic fabric weaves its way through the hangers to create two spatial zones, when viewed in plan. The primary visual actor in the composition is the coat hanger. The intention was to employ the hanger in a structural method that was true to its intended function, yet its context is rearranged.

## Ingredients



(1) Mop Bucket



6' PVC Pipe



(6) Clips



(1) Shower Curtain



(3) Coat Hangers









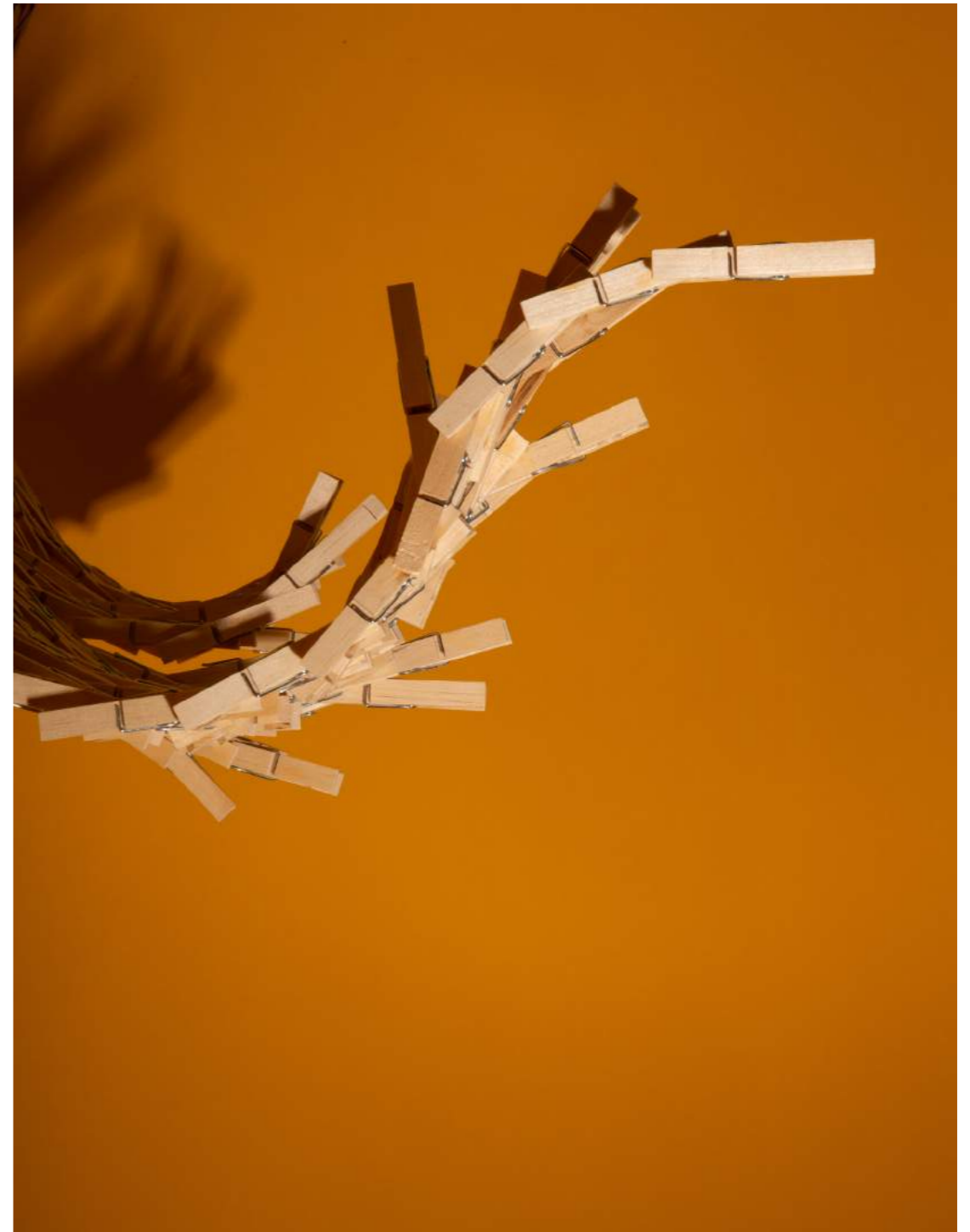
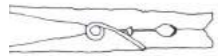


## Object 2

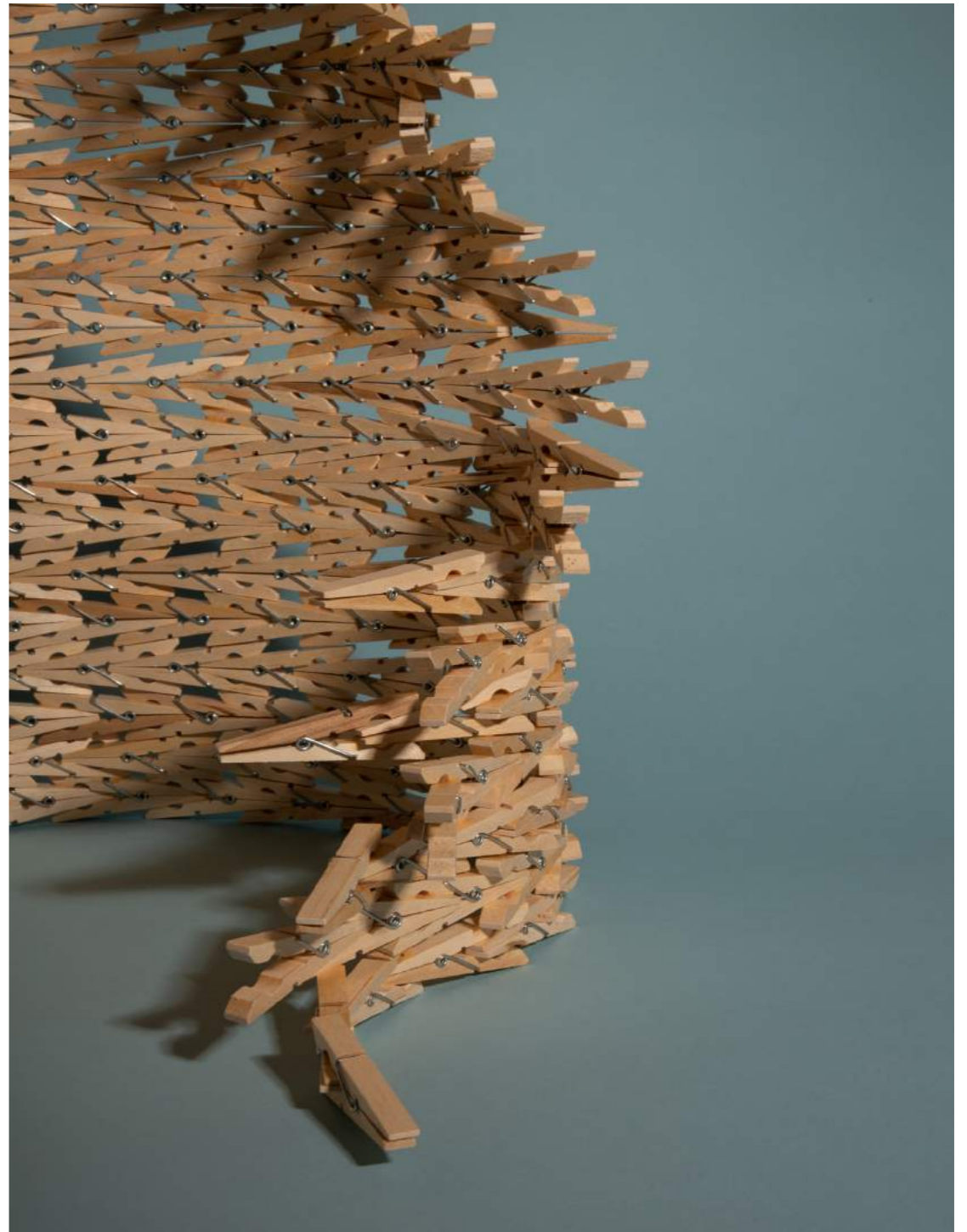
### *Clip Art*

This object continues to focus on translating ordinary objects with implicit functions into sculptural objects. The form is made by clipping one clothespin to another to form curving strands. These strands are then glued to each other to generate the final shape. There are approximately 300 clothespins used in total.

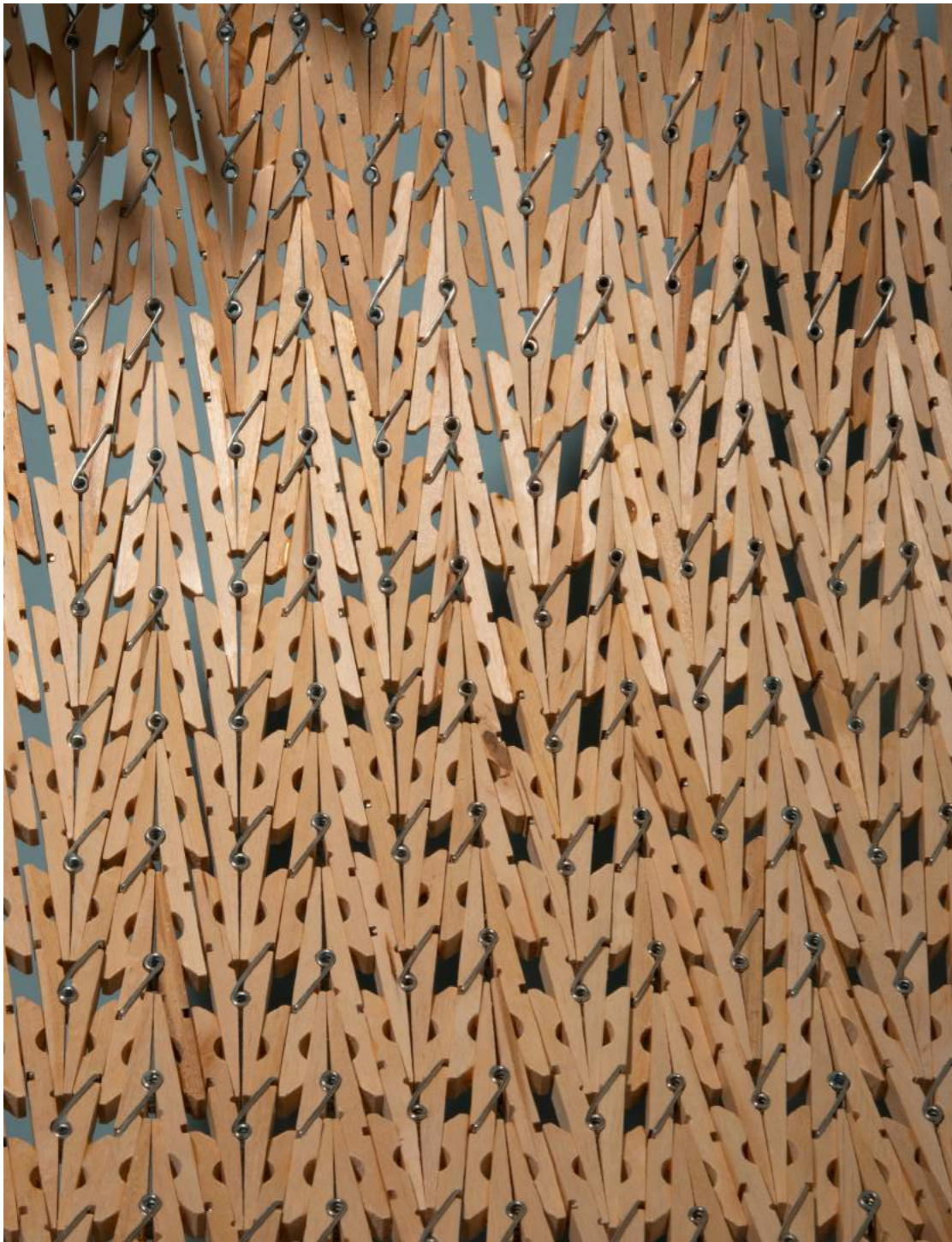
### *Ingredients*





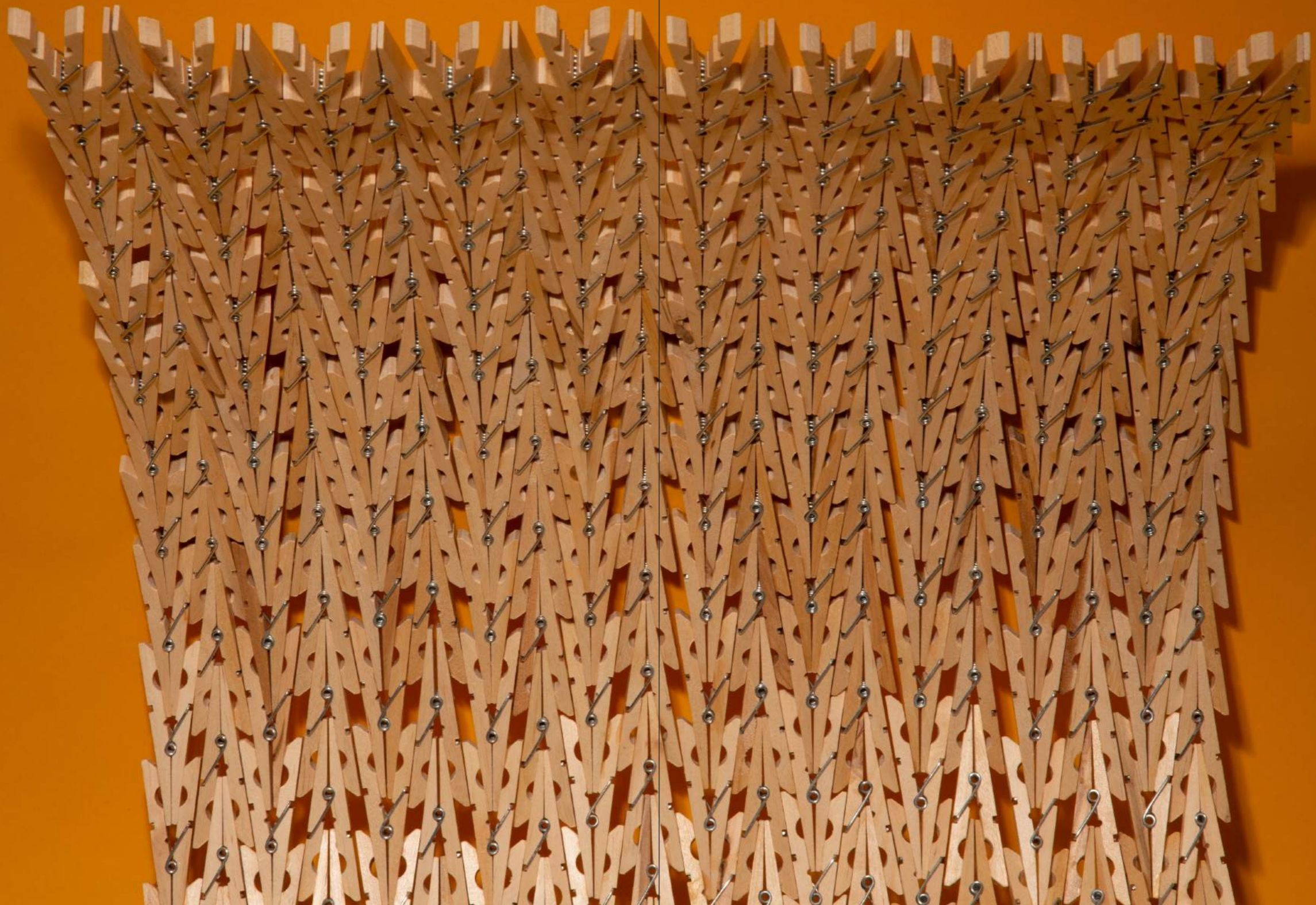










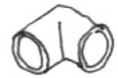


# Object 3

## *Pipe World*

This object is erected by connecting 3" and 6" pieces of copper pipe, developing a spatial matrix. Then, the pipes are flexed, demonstrating the level to which the joints can bend while staying connected.

### *Ingredients*



(50) Connection A

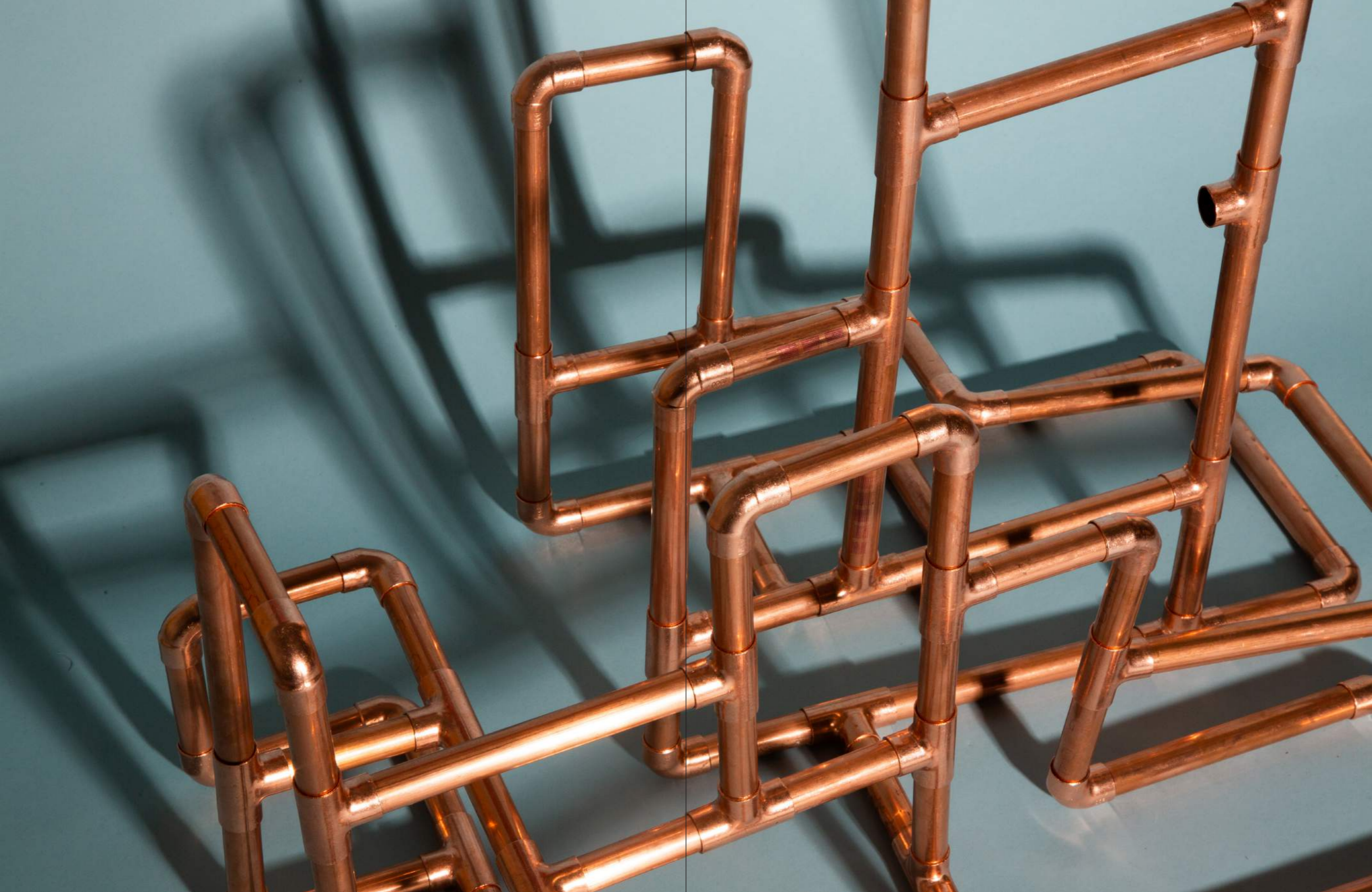


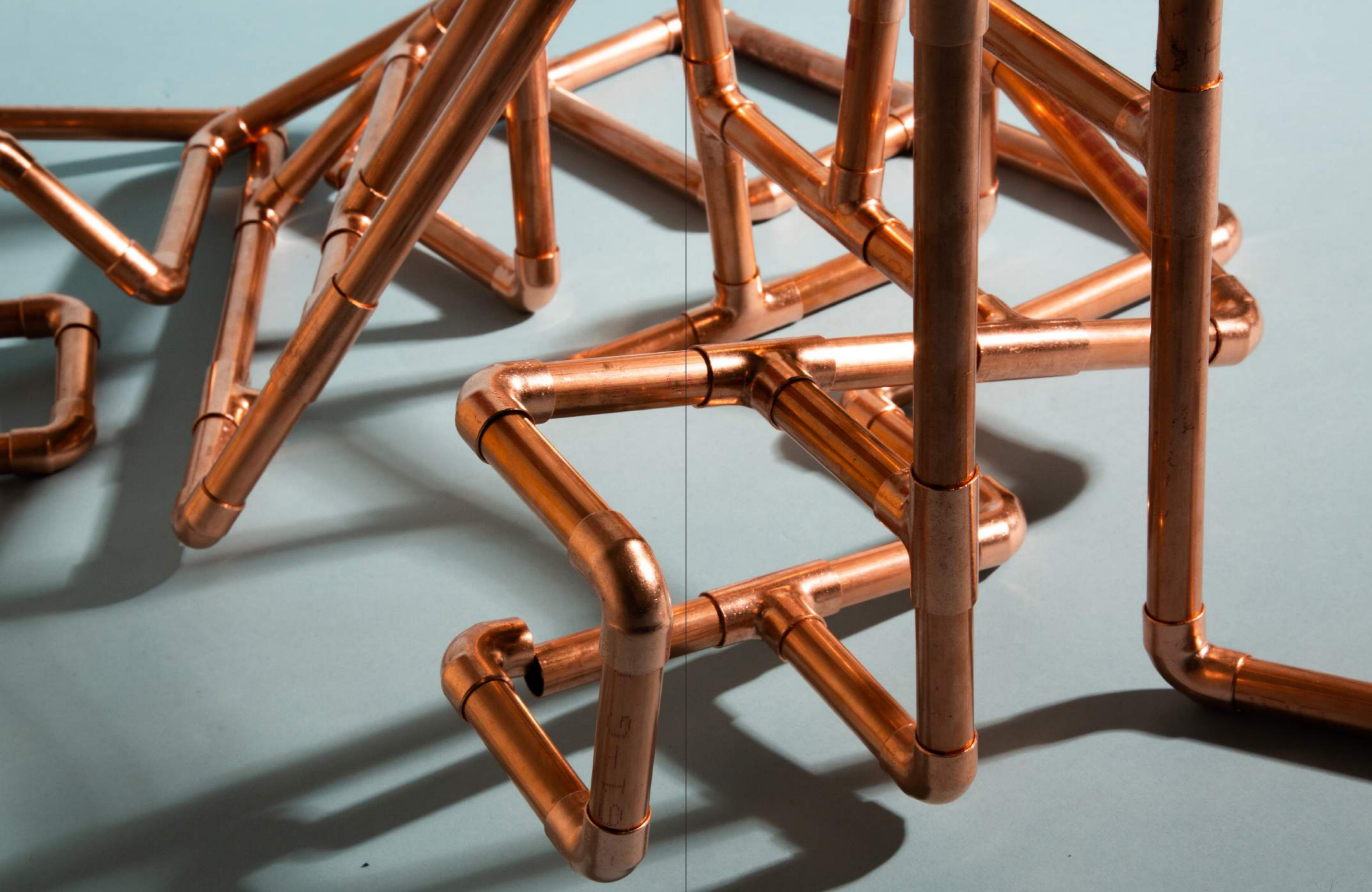
(30) Connection B



5' Copper Pipe









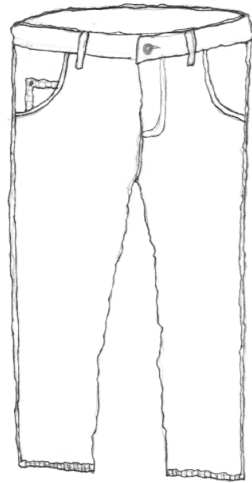
## Object 4

### *Denim Anemone*

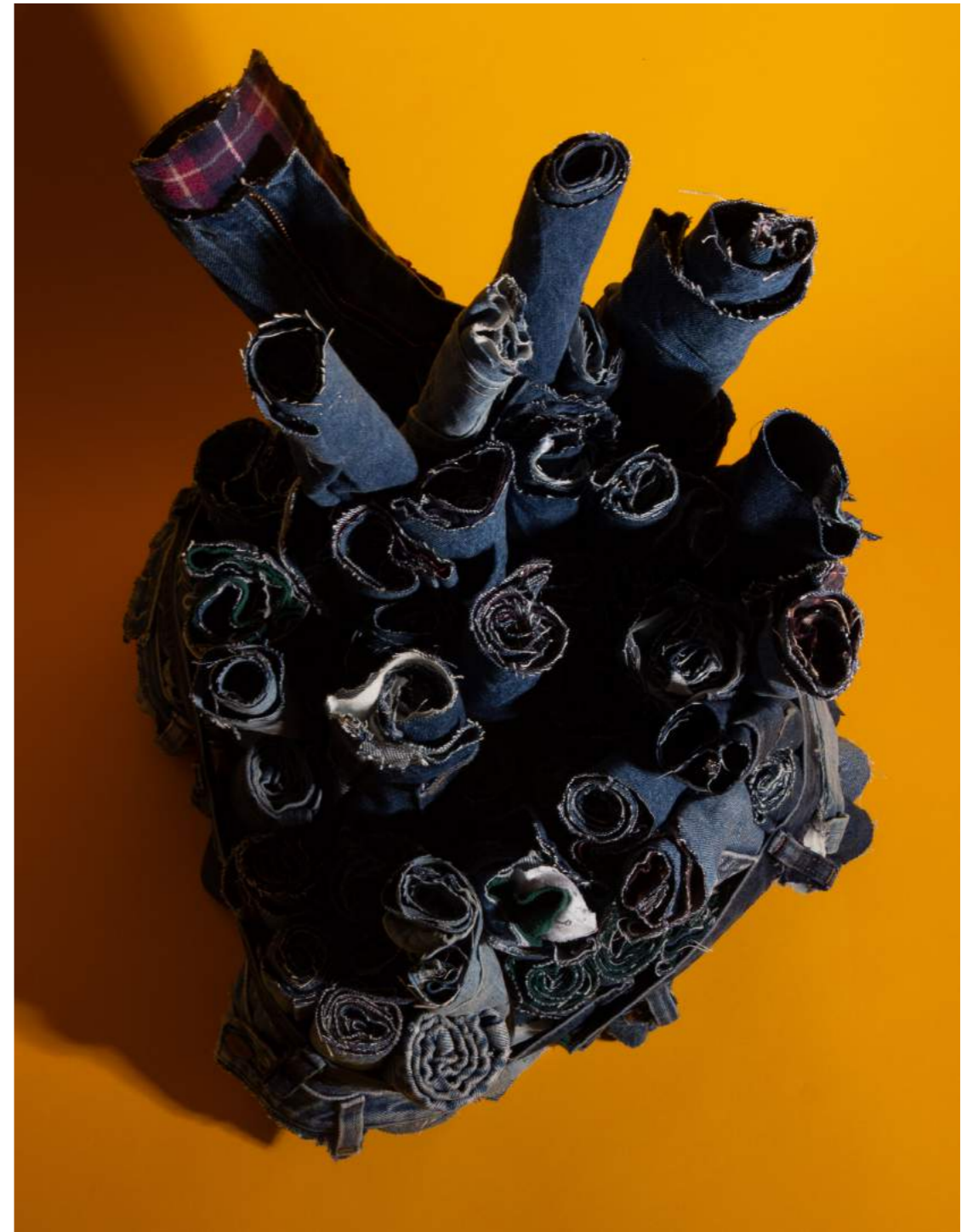
This object is formed of 7 pairs of pre-owned dungarees. The legs of the dungarees are cut to strips ranging from 4 to 18 inches, while the groin area is split from the waistband and dissected into pieces of flat material.

These pieces are rolled into cylinders, which are tied together by pieces of waistband in bundles of about 10. Finally, 7 bundles are arranged around each other and connected by one waistband size XXL.

### *Ingredients*



(7) Pairs Used Dungarees



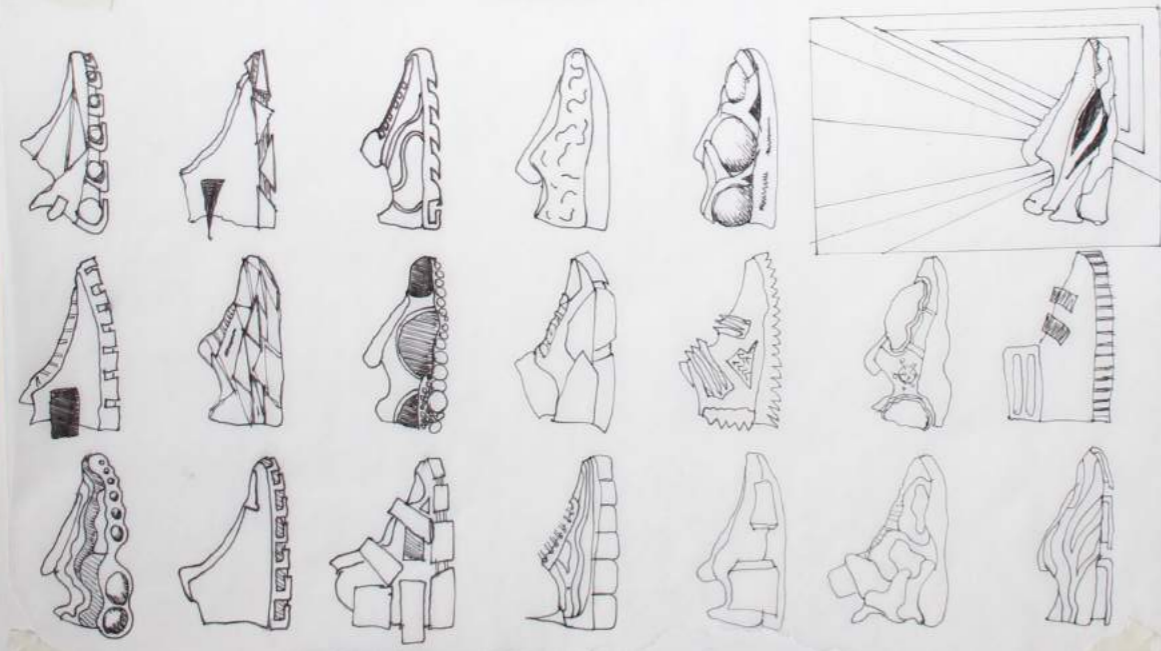












## Chapter 3 *Sneakers*

While I derive comfort and interact with the world through soft, tactile gestures, I also find comfort in the meticulous cultivation of a self image. In one sense, this image is made through fashion. Like a protective suit of armor, my clothes create a lens through which perceptions of myself can be controlled. The article of clothing that I believe is the most expressive is footwear — specifically sneakers. Sneakers sit at the crux of this duality between sensing and thinking or, in other words, substance and image. On the one hand, sneakers are beautiful objects of design.

They include curated materials, precise compositions, and inherent functionality. On the other hand, sneakers are part of the world of “hype”. This means that the sneakers take on a far more outsized meaning than the simple composition of its parts. Down in the East Village, “hype-beasts” will sleep outside the Supreme store in January to be the first to get their hands on an exclusive composition of fabrics.



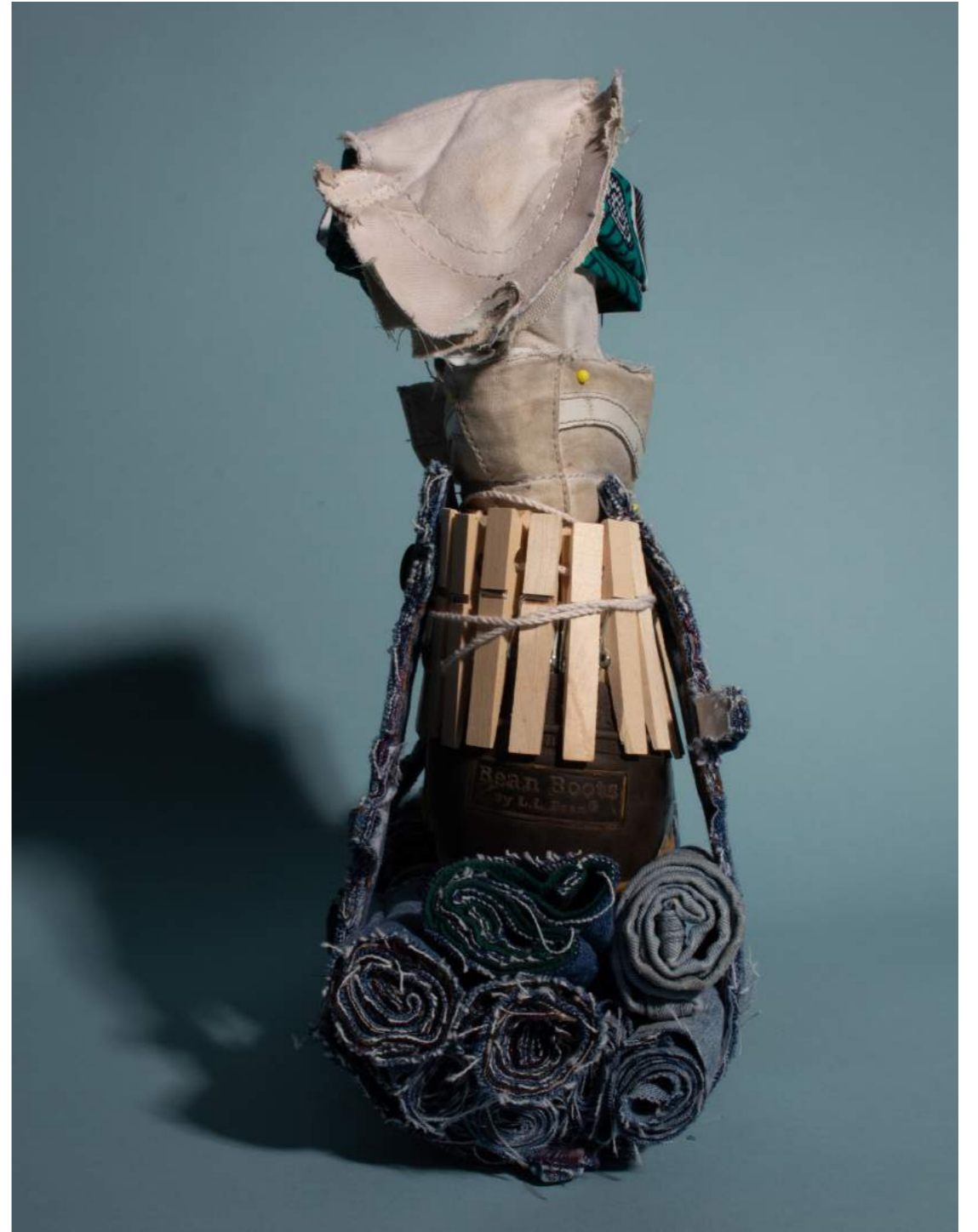












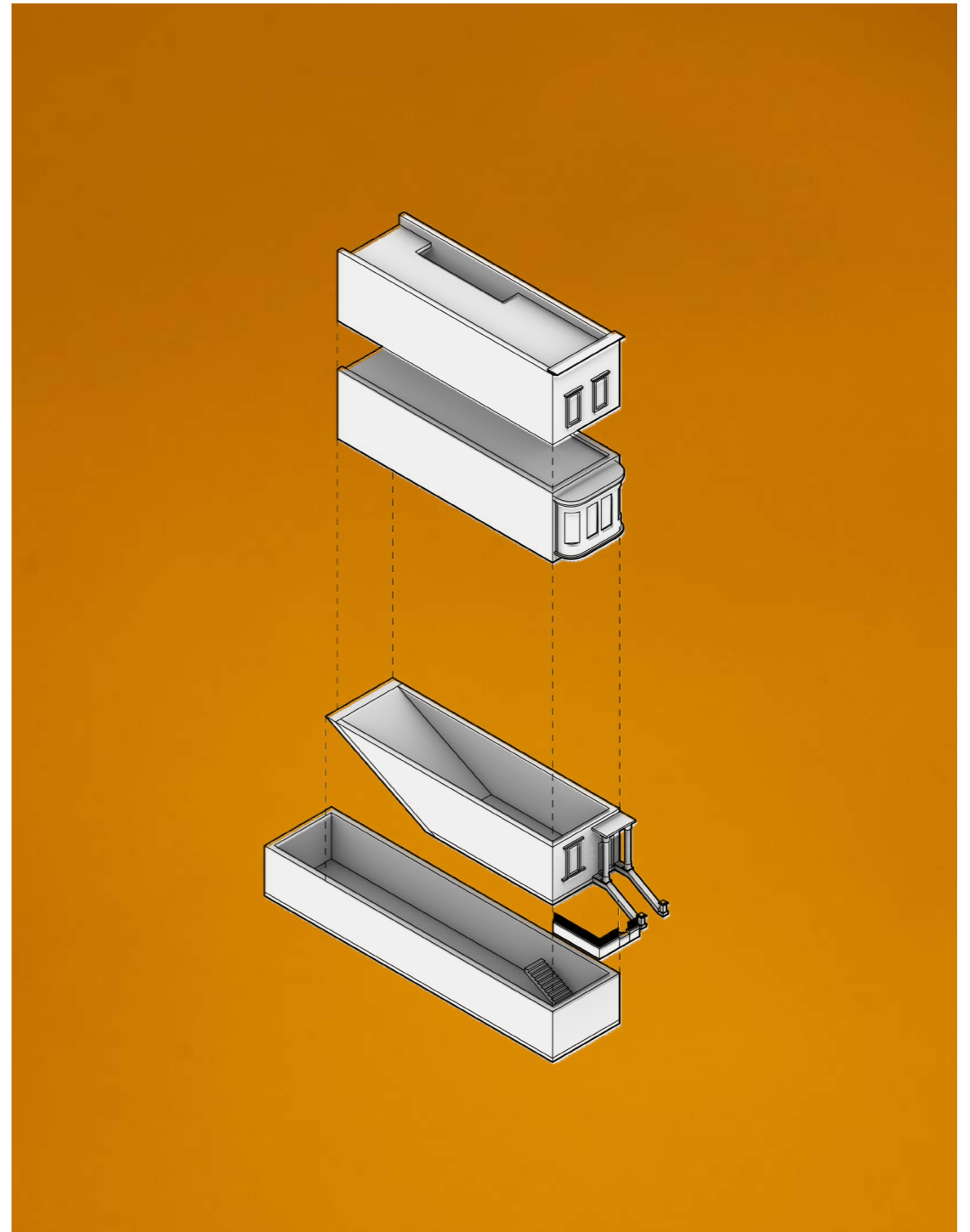
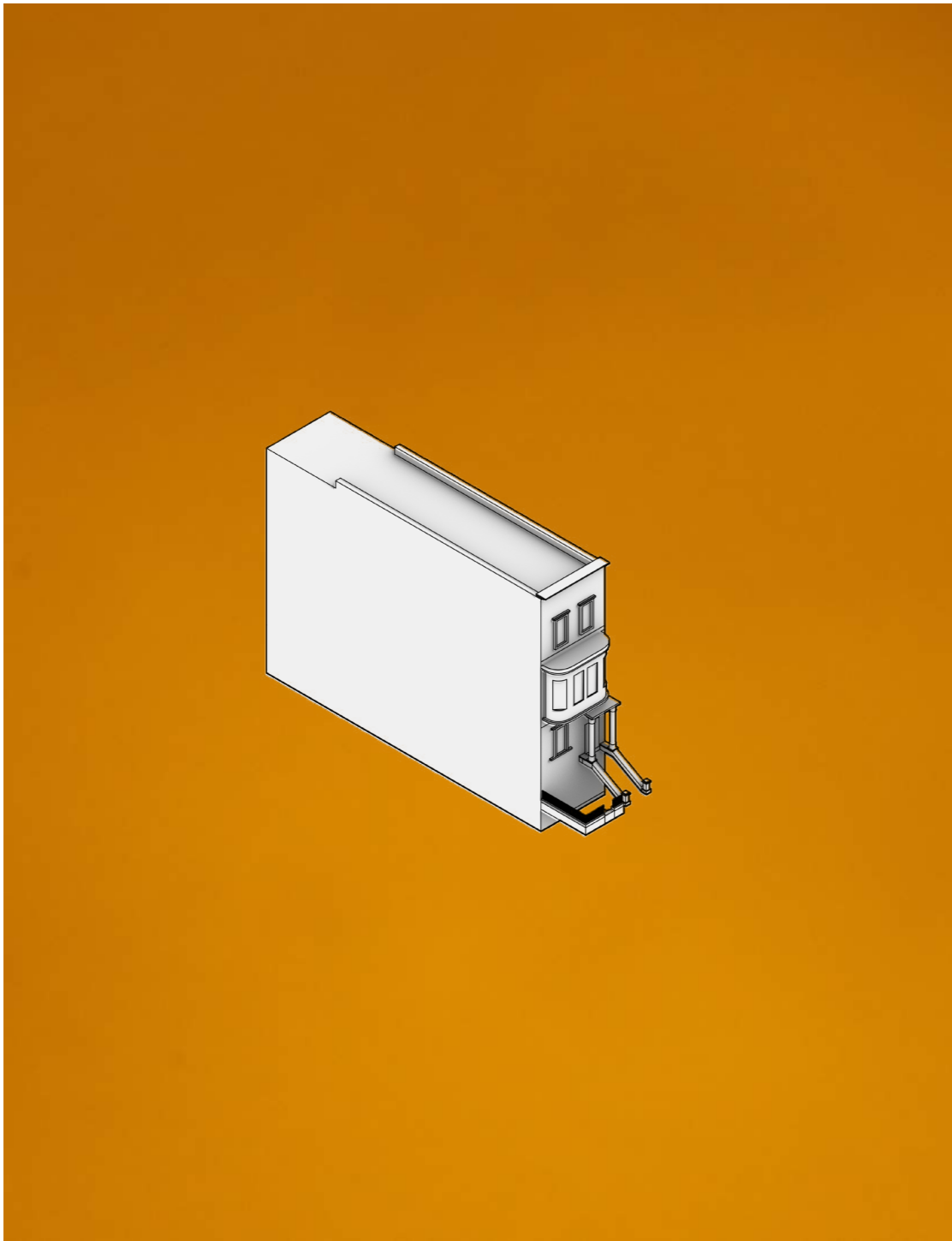


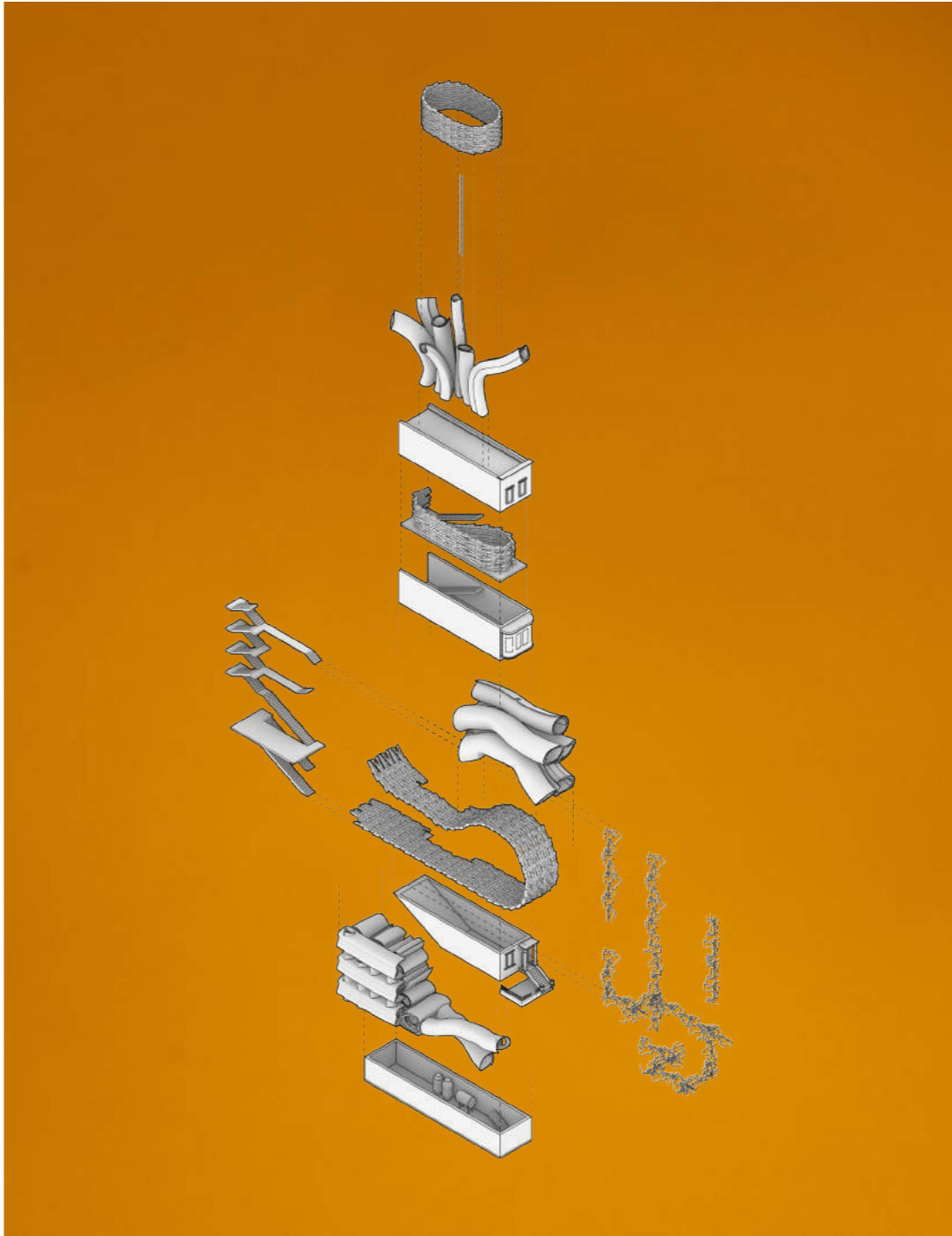
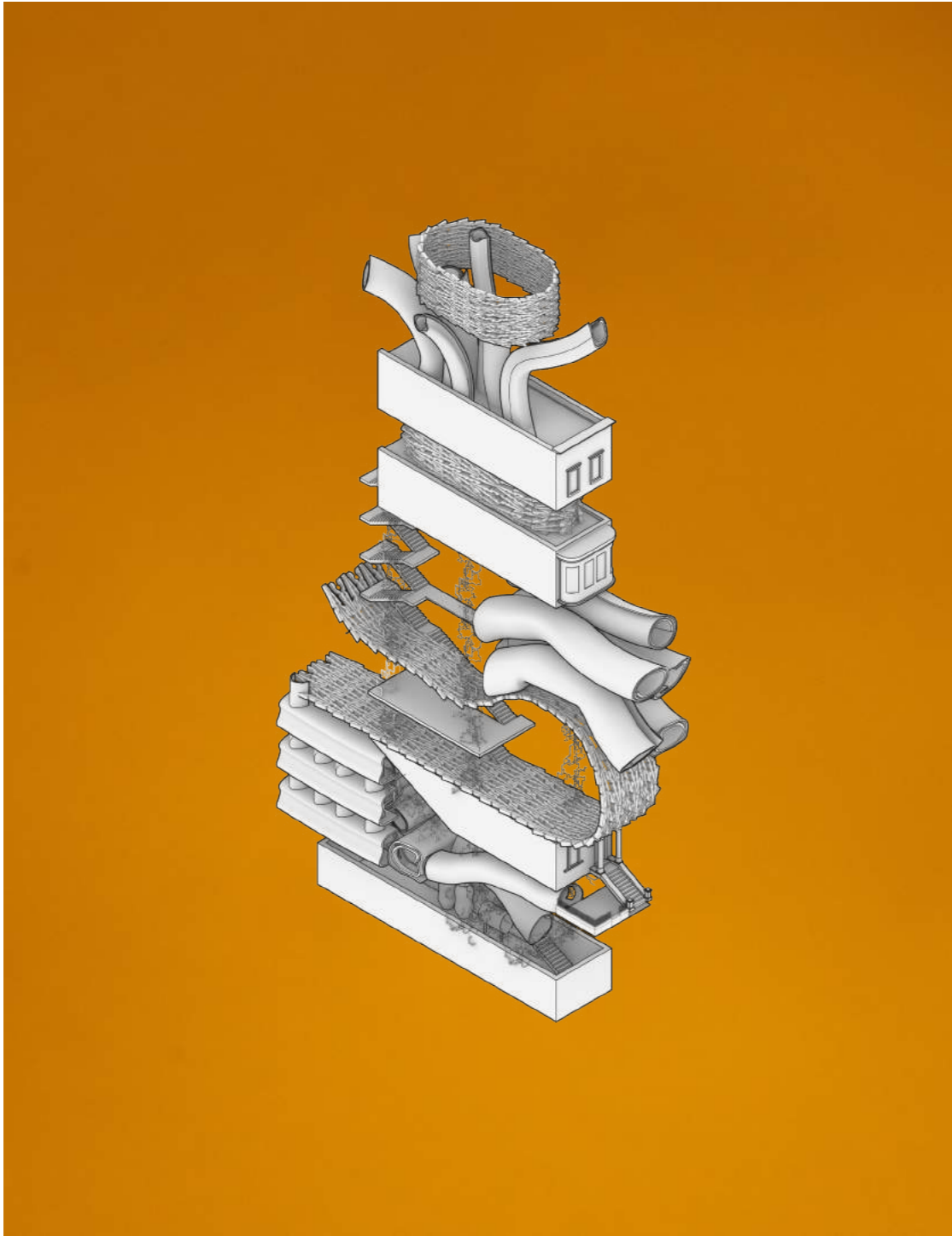


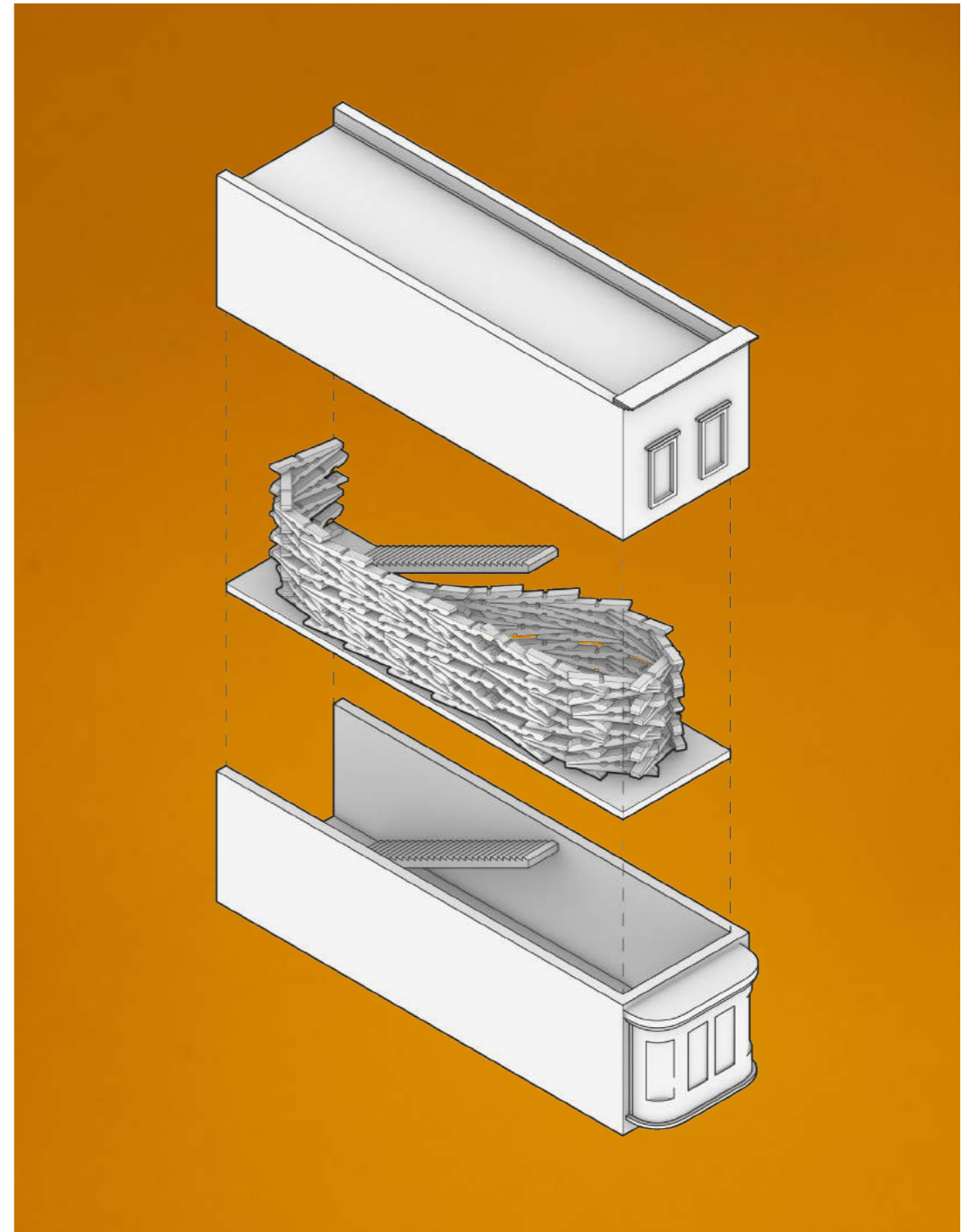
## Chapter 4

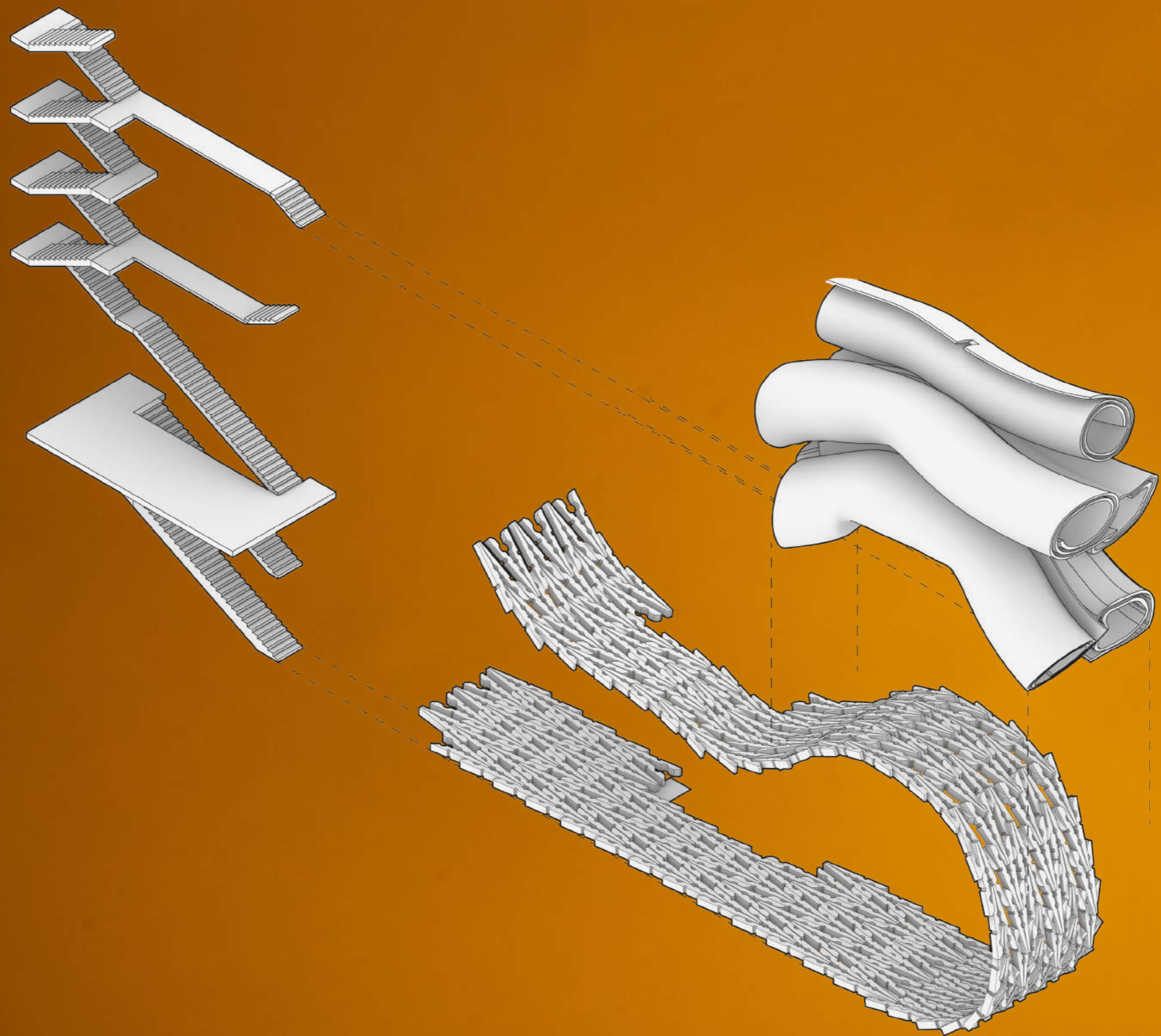
### *House*

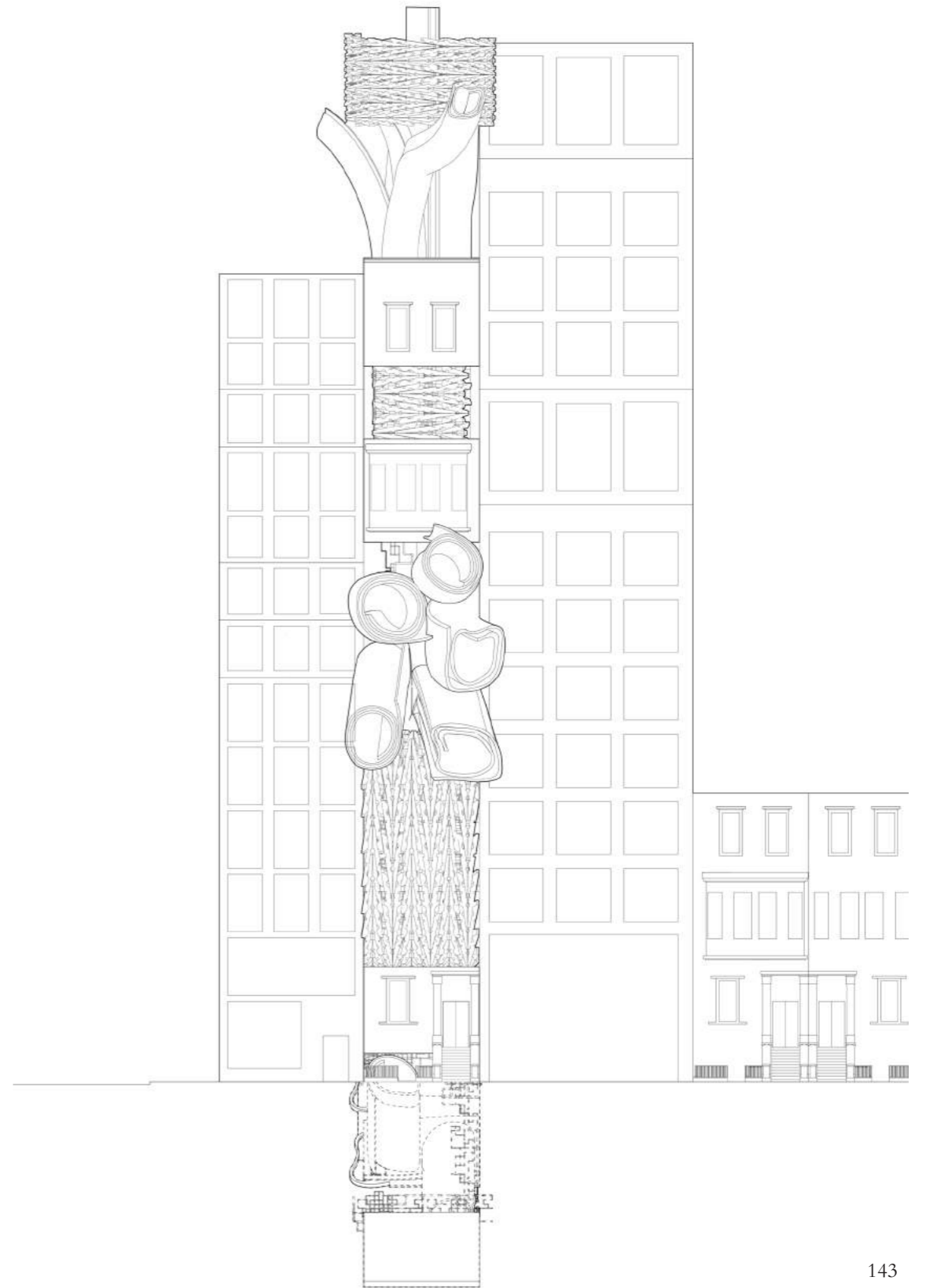
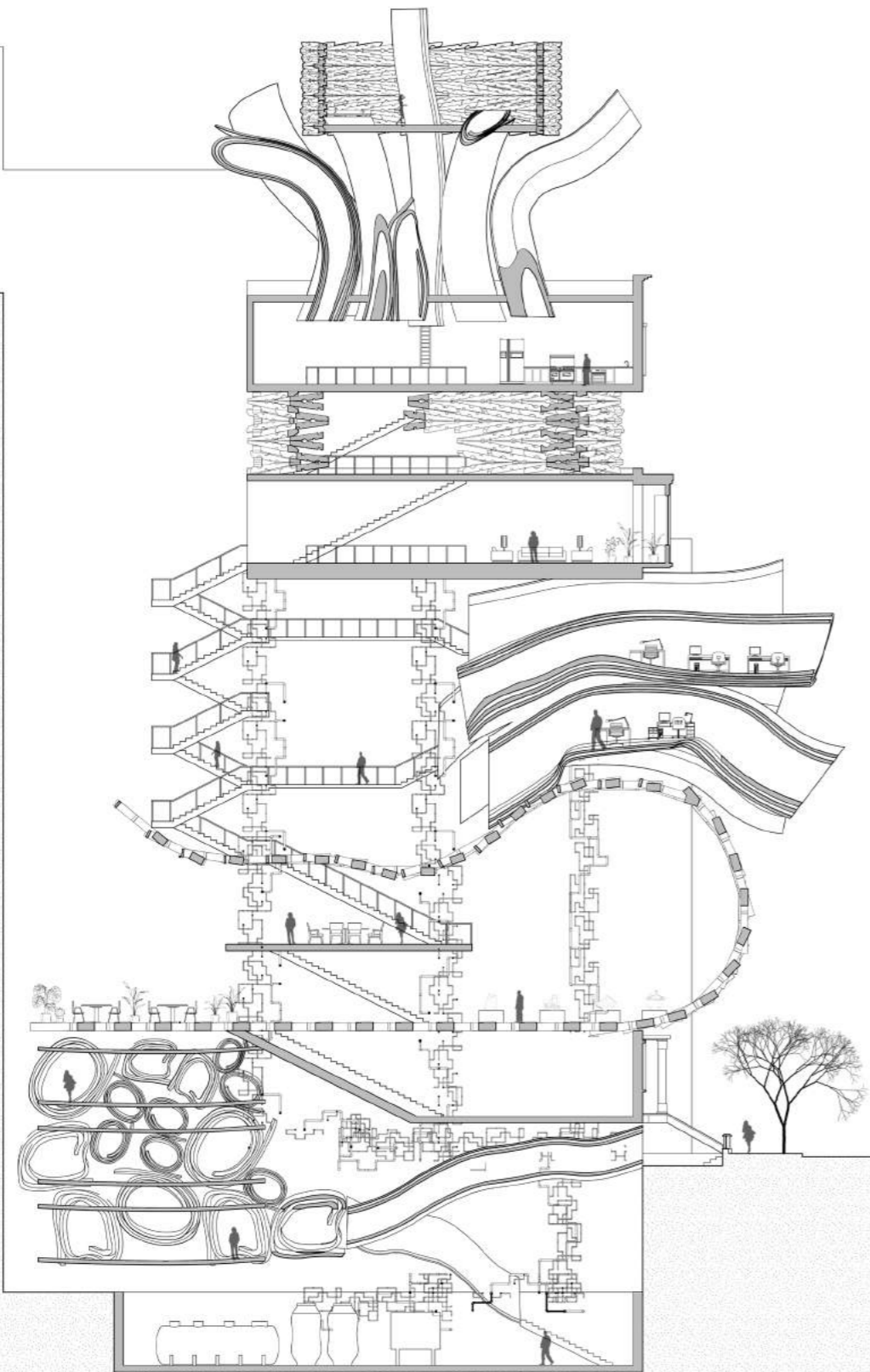
The term fashion house comes from the idea that a designer would work out of where he or she lived. Considering that I am quarantined in my house, it seems likely that my brand and identity will come from within my home. And so, to conclude this exploration, I have designed not my house, but my fashion house.



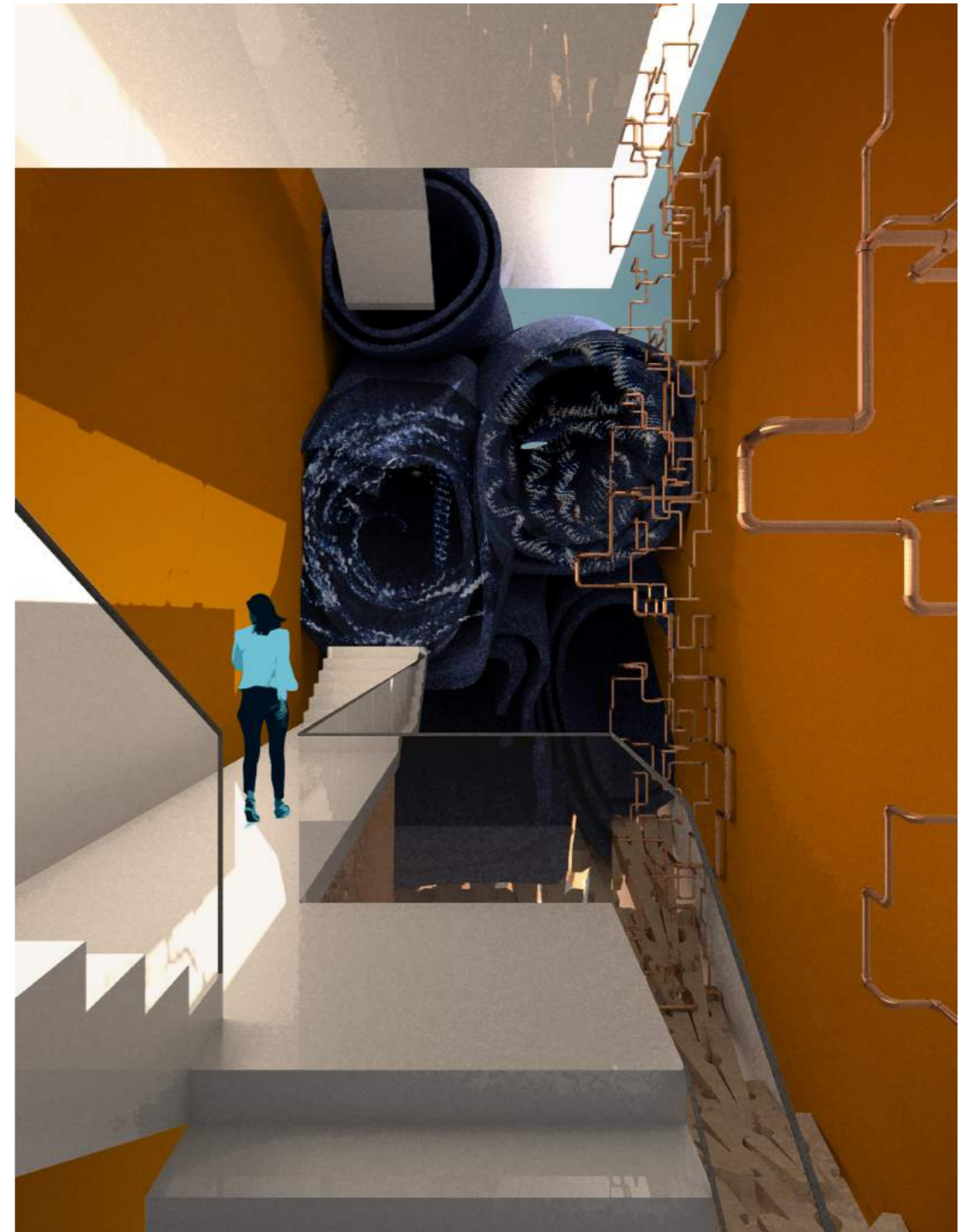














Thank you.



*Dylan Denton*

GSAPP M.S.AAD

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