Physical investigation of the layers and assemblages that lie dormant at the courtyard of Avery Hall requires an unveiling of geological, ecological, and human artifacts. In response to the Deep Time prompt, this pavilion installation, named “Blooming,” utilizes three layers of constructed realities to allow visitors to interact with pieces of the past, present, and future of the land that Columbia University lies on.

On the ground plane, intense vegetation resembling the ancient flora of Mannahatta, the Lenape name for the island of Manhattan, sprawls over the plaza’s red brick and obscures the formal planters and staircases. Above the heads of visitors is a wooden grid that displays artifacts from the geological, ecological, and human histories of the Mannahatta land and its peoples. Lastly, another wooden grid above the artifacts houses a constructed migrating bird habitat, signaling an ecologically-conscious future.

These built-up layers of historical plant life and human cultural memory form a stage for contemplation and debate about the future of this land. These discussions may evolve further with more cultural connections between displayed artifacts, just as the pavilion itself may evolve and grow more lush over time.

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