Novak Djogo, so far.
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EL BARRIO

El Bario, completed as part of “The Institutions We Need: New Museums for New Historical Accounts” is a research project that sets out to review, rethink and redesign the contemporary museum in response to current concerns. The voices that claim that the museum is the institution responsible for re-writing history, for discovering where we come from and what we want to be are generating a notable identity crisis among the bodies in charge of these centers. Some have attempted to resolve the crisis through elephantine extensions which have moved the institution even further away from its local communities—other, more responsible, have focused on updating their facilities devoted to citizens, such as education, research, speculation, archives, publishing, young people’s collecting, artists’ residences, new stage forms, and other programs that reduce the percentage of space devoted to traditional exhibitions in favor of diversification of programs. Our proposal calls for a crucial role for architecture in this transformation of existing museums that would go beyond producing spectacular images aimed at global tourist impact. To this end, as opposed to a reading of the museum as a golden opportunity nourished with freedom that opens the doors to fantasy and singularity, we propose a vision more centered on the acceptance of uncertainty than on homogeneity of culture, in the user than in the content, as possible as committed, as pragmatic as flexible, as attentive to the new sensitivities as to the history view more concerned with the user than with the container, as advanced as it is committed, as pragmatic as it is flexible, as attentive to new sensitivities as to history—in short, if we are convinced of the need for other institution models, we also need another kind of architecture that writes a new page on their reconfiguration, asking questions about the desirable programs, the load-bearing capacity of the existing venues, and the pertinent construction techniques to incorporate the new social, political, and environmental equations.
Interactions throughout the building will range from intimate to theatrical, and move between activities, work, learning, social, and recreational. In the spirit of its historical outreach programs, all programs hosted by el museo's organization previously located elsewhere throughout the city will be relocated to the main building. The scattered institution will be refocused into a single building, a new social condenser and heart for the Barrio which will engage and draw ever more diverse crowds of New Yorkers and travelers through El Barrio's doors.
El Museo del Barrio has historically hosted diverse programs: exhibition spaces, an archive of Latin American art and history, educational spaces, live/work spaces for artists, a media center, multimedia spaces, as well as camera & television studio and production spaces.
A soft mesh covers the entire building - interiorizing the previously exterior masonry space.
THE PROJECT IS AN ADAPTIVE REUSE OF THE 13TH REGIMENT ARMOURY, A HISTORIC ARMOURY DESIGNED BY ARCHITECTS RUDOLPH L. DAUS AND FAY KELLOGG AND BUILT IN 1892–1894. IT IS LOCATED AT 357 MARCUS GARVEY BOULEVARD (ALSO KNOWN AS SUMNER AVENUE) BETWEEN PUTNAM AND JEFFERSON AVENUES IN BEDFORD-STUYVESANT, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY.


THE PROPOSED INTERVENTION ON THE ARMOURY IS AN ADAPTIVE RE-USE PROJECT THAT RE_APPROPRIATES A LARGE URBAN STRUCTURE FOR NEW USES. IT IMAGINES A NEW ROLE FOR THE STRUCTURE ... AS A SOCIAL CONDENSER WITHIN A HARD-EDGED HISTORIC FORTRESSES … MEANINGFUL ARCHITECTURE … (AN ‘OPEN’ AND ‘INVITING COMMUNITY’ SPACE) IN A STRUCTURE THAT WAS DESIGNED TO DO THE OPPOSITE.
BLOCK 1:
GYMNASIUM, SWIMMING POOL, CHANGE-ROOMS, FITNESS SPACES

BLOCK 2:
THEATRE, ARTIST STUDIOS, EXHIBITION HALL, DANCE STUDIOS, GALLERIES

BLOCK 3:
CAFE, RESTAURANT, RECEPTION, OFFICES, HEALTHCARE, LIBRARY
THE BOULEVARD AT NIGHT

“What hath night to do with sleep?” “unadaptedness” is a highly ambiguous notion; it can lead to many directions. Unadaptedness is not necessarily a defect nor is it a positive or negative. Rather, it is an observation of difference - would Derrida prefer différance? - that can turn out positively or negatively. For Deleuze, for example, a city is never adapted.
CLAY CUT MODEL:
Section through Eastern Atrium, Interior Facade

CLAY CUT MODEL:
Existing Trusses, South Facade

PAPER MODEL:
View from Jefferson Avenue

PAPER MODEL:
View from Putnam Avenue, Terraced Activity Spaces

PAPER MODEL:
View from Marcus Garvey Boulevard, Existing Armory Garrison

PAPER MODEL:
Section through Eastern Atrium, Interior Facade of Theatre Block
The energy required to produce concrete and steel is far greater than the carbon emissions of all the world’s cars and planes combined. This industrial heat complex stems from colonialism and has entrenched environmental racism, resource degradation, and wealth consolidation as the means for modern life. When thinking in terms of global material flows, most often, increasing distance between sites of consumption and sites of extraction are incentivized, with the goal of accumulation on one side and dispossession on the other. Without a deeper understanding of value at both sites, the built environment will continue to depend on supply streams that marginalize and exploit. Architects are not neutral when it comes to global material flows, our material expertise is implicated. The project emerges from a recognition of the crucial need for change, at a significant scale, of carbon releasing practices within the building industry, and of the potential of mass timber to help mitigate this carbon output... It seeks to embrace and nurture a shift, the beginnings of which have already begun to take place, from steel and concrete construction to engineered mass timber. The project calls for the construction of a tree plantation and harvesting site which makes use of technological advancements in the domain of low-impact sustainable forestry, while learning from principles of Native American forest stewardship.
THE TOWER

Is it worth the height?
At the moments of subtruction, evergreen softwood CLT walls (which comprise the facade) transfer their load to deciduous hardwood glulam elements, structurally expressing the symbiotic relationship of the site's true planting polyculture.
Material choice is a vote for the factories, the working conditions, the trade agreements, the mining protocols, the fuel used. Decisions at this scale profoundly impact the long-term health of citizens, both local and global.
A HOUSING PROPOSAL FOR THE SOUTH BRONX ... A PRODUCT OF IDEAS OF WHAT A MORE SUSTAINABLE FORM OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING COULD BE ... A CHALLENGE TO CONSTRUCTIVE ACCEPTED NORMS OF INDIVIDUAL LIVING THROUGH THE INTEGRATION OF PRINCIPLES OF CO-LIVING AND WORKING INTO THE SITE. 

THE PROJECT IS DIVIDED INTO TWO MAIN COMPONENTS. THE WORK LAYER AND THE LIVING LAYER. THESE TWO LAYERS ARE STACKED ONE ON TOP OF THE OTHER, WITH RESIDENTS HAVING THE ABILITY TO DESCEND INTO THE WORK LAYER WHERE THERE ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WORK. IN ADDITION TO THE WORK PROGRAMS THERE ARE ALSO AMENITIES WHICH ENABLE OR EASE ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

THE WORK LAYER INCLUDES YOUR COMMON COMMERCIAL SPACES SUCH AS CAFES AND GROCERY STORES THAT INVITE PEOPLE WHO DO NOT LIVE ON THE SITE TO COME AND WORK. IN ADDITION TO WHICH WE ALSO HAVE WORK THAT IS CATERED TOWARDS BLUE COLLAR WORKERS, WHO MAKE UP THE MAJORITY OF THE POPULATION IN THE SOUTH BRONX. THIS INCLUDES SALONS, BARBER SHOPS AND A WOODSHOP THAT IS ACCESSIBLE TO THE RESIDENTS TO BUILD FURNITURE.

THE COLIVING LAYER IS REALIZED WITH THE INTENTION TO COLLECTIVISE A NUMBER OF FUNCTIONS (LIVING, COOKING, SPORT AND RAISING OF CHILDREN) WHICH ARE COMMONLY UNDERSTOOD AS INTERNAL TO MODERN HOUSING'S PRIVATE SPHERE, IN OTHER WORDS THE TRADITIONALLY UNDERSTOOD APARTMENT.

LIVING AND COOKING ARE PUSHED INTO SHARED COMMUNAL AREAS, WHICH TAKE THE SHAPE OF WIDE CORRIDORS, WHILE SPORT AND THE RAISING OF CHILDREN ARE PROGRAMMED INTO THE WORK LAYER VIA THE INCLUSION OF SPORT AREAS AND A DAYCARE.
Flourishing courtyards
The proposal, through the use of communal kitchens, living rooms, daycares, gymnasiums, and workspaces, along with new work opportunities, hopes to foster a new communal housing paradigm of greater social connectedness and mobility.
NOT SOMETHING TIED TO THE DISORDERED OR RANDOM, BUT RATHER A STATE WITHIN A SYSTEM PRODUCED BY AN ABSENCE OF LEGIBLE DETERMINISTIC FORCES… A CONDITION GENERATED BY DETERMINISTIC LAWS HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO A SYSTEM’S INITIAL CONDITIONS, BUT IN WHICH THOSE SAME LAWS ARE OBSCURED BY VIRTUE OF THE COMPLEXITY RESULTANT OF THEIR SENSITIVITY. … I CAME TO BELIEVE THAT IF A SPACE OR MATERIAL IS FREED FROM WHATEVER “HUMAN” ORDER MIGHT BE IMPOSED UPON IT, THAT SPACE OR MATERIAL MIGHT THEN TAKE ON SOME NEW INFORMAL, COMPLEX FORM, WHICH COULD BE BEAUTIFUL … IT OPERATES ACROSS GRADIENTS OF DENSITY AND GEOMETRIC REGULARITY, IT IS FLEXIBLE, PLURALISTIC, REDUNDANT, AND ADAPTIVE. … NEW YORK AS A CITY BEHOLDEN, FROM THE URBAN TO THE STRUCTURAL SCALE, TO AN IMPOSED CARTESIAN ORDER … TO THE GRID. … THIS IMPOSED ORDER OF THE GRID HAS LONG SERVED AS THE PREEMINENT ABSTRACT SPACE OF DESIGN WITHIN THE FIELD OF ARCHITECTURE, OWING LARGELY TO ITS APPARENT EFFICIENCY, AND ITS CLAIMS OF AN EGALETARIAN AND DEMOCRATIC POTENTIAL. … THE PROPOSAL RESPONDS TO THIS CONDITION BY UNLEASHING FOUR PROGRAMMATIC AGENTS INTO THE PRE-EXISTING BUILDING’S GRIDDED FORMAL SPACE, WHICH IN THEIR ADJACENCY AND OVERLAP CREATE SPACES THAT CHALLENGE THE SUPPOSED SUPREMACY OF CARTESIAN STABILITY. … NOT SEEK TO DESTROY THE GRID, BUT MERELY TO RELEGATE IT TO A MORE NEUTRAL POSITION AS PART OF A GREATER WHOLE.
Upper Floor Plan

Ground Floor Plan
Liberated from the Tyranny of the Cartesian Cage, the Space is now Free to adapt to the specificities of the programmatic, mechanical, & structural forces within the building.
The Informal Takes Over

MOVEMENT:
Activity in a Classroom across different spatial arrangements
AN EXPLORATION OF THE TYPOLOGY OF THEATRE, PERFORMED IN THE LEFTOVER SPACES INSIDE OF A MANHATTAN BLOCK.

THE PROPOSAL CALLS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THREE SEPARATE BUT INTERLINKED THEATERS, RE-INTERPRETING ELEMENTS TYPICAL TO THE NEW YORK CITY STREETSCAPE, NOTABLY THE FIRE STAIR, AND IN DOING SO CREATES FLEXIBLE SPACES ALLOWING FOR VARIED USES AT MULTIPLE SCALES.
Three separate but interlinked theaters within the leftover space of a Manhattan block.
...The three theatres can be linked or detached to varying degrees to accommodate diverse programs.
The interior facades of the block’s void exposed
... End