A COLLECTIVE DESIGN

PORTFOLIO

VIR SHAH
GSAPP

M.S. Architecture and Urban Design '22 - '23
New York City faces 370 deaths every year due to extreme heat, and 43 people have died due to Superstorm Sandy. These conditions are faced by people due to extreme climate conditions affected by sea level rise. In Canarsie, Brooklyn, the community of color has limited resources and poor living conditions and are the victims of these weather conditions. These neighborhoods lack investments in infrastructure facilities due to historically redlined areas. Although temporary solutions have been implemented by the city to reduce the impacts of floods in the neighborhood, they are not doing enough for the community.
“…rain and runoff are becoming an increasing threat to us, causing damage to our infrastructure and homes!”

“…extreme weather conditions are determining our everyday life!”

“…our streets and sidewalks are being flooded several times a month!”

“…short term solutions and one-dimensional problem fixing is not helpful!”

“…our children are missing school due to overflowed streets!”

“…heat outrages are harming the ones most vulnerable in our communities!”
Fertilizing Systems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Strategies</th>
<th>Existing Conditions</th>
<th>Immediate Intervention</th>
<th>Program and Policy Change</th>
<th>Incremental System Change</th>
<th>Change Scenario</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Shed</td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Industrial Shed" /></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Industrial Shed" /></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Industrial Shed" /></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Industrial Shed" /></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Industrial Shed" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Street Edges</td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Residential Street Edges" /></td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Residential Street Edges" /></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Residential Street Edges" /></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Residential Street Edges" /></td>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Residential Street Edges" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Parking Lots</td>
<td><img src="image11" alt="Vacant Parking Lots" /></td>
<td><img src="image12" alt="Vacant Parking Lots" /></td>
<td><img src="image13" alt="Vacant Parking Lots" /></td>
<td><img src="image14" alt="Vacant Parking Lots" /></td>
<td><img src="image15" alt="Vacant Parking Lots" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Shore High School</td>
<td><img src="image16" alt="South Shore High School" /></td>
<td><img src="image17" alt="South Shore High School" /></td>
<td><img src="image18" alt="South Shore High School" /></td>
<td><img src="image19" alt="South Shore High School" /></td>
<td><img src="image20" alt="South Shore High School" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
City of the Forest

Property is a social, spatial tool enacted to fortify the regime’s continuum of power and control. Through acts of domestication, preservation, and measurement, land and its inhabitants have been valued as resources to exploit and tame. Spaces deemed “natural” are not pristine landscapes but highly regulated environments that continue to reinscribe the systemic cycles of exclusion, erasure, and precarity.

Atlanta has been rendered as a placeless backdrop by the film industry and a tactical testing ground by the Atlanta Police Foundation. Through the extraction of public resources, flattening of history and culture, and the degradation of the forest and wetland ecologies, the South River Forest has been a site of ongoing trauma since its commodification as property. Blackhall Studio’s vision for the future of the South River Forest proposes sound stage expansions that will intensify the imposition of capitalism on the site and erode its ecology as it deforessts public land for private development. Direct actions and advocacy against the proposals are being led by community organizations, including environmental activists, forest defenders, abolitionists, and Muscogee Creek descendants.

We imagine future cultural productions throughout metro Atlanta to build toward a vision of spatial and environmental liberation. The performers and place are all agents that contribute to layered, immersive experiences that accrue collective memory and knowledge. As components of the city currently weave into the forest, taming and domesticaing it, we envision the infrastructures of the forest performing the reverse: Infiltrating the city to de-zone, disrupt and erode the structure of the regime. Spaces of fluidity provide few distinctions between the industrialized built environments.

View - Cultural Production after-property
The forest landscape, as it’s always been, is embodied. Distinct boundaries between nature and built form are collapsed and legibility is obscured.

The forest ecosystem has been devalued by the current system and contained by the cartographer’s lines. Sites most emblematic of the capitalist regime become targets for the forest defender’s escalating oppositions as they enable the forest’s expansion by physically interrupting order and reorienting spaces for heterogeneous habitation.

The forest transforms from an environment of depletion to an expansive condition, unbound in our radical vision.
Community habitation is reimagined for spaces of intersection through multi-sensory interventions allowing the natural environment to flourish and different agents to care for each other. The shifting landscapes create polytemporal spaces for the curation of life, challenging the linear notions of living and enhancing the cultural multiplicities of every day. In the world after property, we imagine the forest to be the central protagonist with cultural activations that defy the extractive regime of property.
After-property envisions a society based on kinship amongst human and non-human actors to produce spaces for autonomy, connection, and expression. The forest, reimagined as the wild, becomes a place for the curation of life and production of culture - an expansive, immeasurable condition, and a process that transforms itself into an active agent within the city.
Terranos de Agua

The vibrant life unfolding on the foothills of Cali is deeply stigmatized and associated only with disaster. The design ingenuity of residents, community culture and the ways in which they shape everyday life is written off as vulnerable communities living upon precarious slopes, adding to the pressure of displacement and ecological calamity. We challenge this perspective to acknowledge and celebrate life on the foothills.

Across ecological and social frontiers, our project centers current and future ways of living and moving with water.

Reforestation, large scale upstream water reservoirs and capacity building within the community are our major tools. Over time, policy-protected and incentivised communal stewardship generates a stabilized rewilded landscape for ecological resilience and socio-economic opportunity.

By creating spaces to clean, hold and absorb water throughout the settlement, we regulate ground water. Waste management infrastructure encourages sustainable habits around waste and water. At the frontier between the ‘formal’ and ‘informal’, softened landscapes privilege pedestrian activity to lower social and infrastructural barriers.

The proposal evolves over time to strengthen the eco-hydro-social networks that redefine life in self-constructed settlements across Cali.

Existence of Water in varying degrees and forms across terrains
Our proposal identifies and builds upon the existing network of flood response and resilience, in collaboration with inhabitants and other stakeholders.
We propose the incentivization of ecological stewardship, through which the community makes efforts towards holding water and reforestation. In tandem, they also use these productive landscapes for regenerative agriculture, thus eventually creating a belt beyond which the settlement will not sprawl.
Moving into the dense hillside settlement, we propose the creation of green pockets to consolidate the terrain. Through a series of softening operations, water is absorbed in some instances and surfaced at others.

Strategic densification of physical infrastructure then allows for a well integrated network of social care and resilience.
At the seam between the hillside settlement and formal city, we privilege pedestrian activity over vehicular movement to activate and integrate social fabrics. By expanding the canals and increasing surface permeability, we allow water to soak through rather than move above ground.
What methods of spatial valuation undergird the disciplines of architecture and urban design? How are these systems of measurement entangled with discursive and material regimes of racialization, ecological degradation, and coloniality? This course considers sites and practices that travel beyond disciplinary rubrics of measurement. We will examine tactics of opacity, occlusion, and abstraction, in the visual and conceptual arts, paying special attention to nonwestern concepts and sites that are illegible to the ethnographic gaze. Thinking and working against epistemologies of measurement, classification, and bordering, requires developing transdisciplinary knowledge of black studies, decoloniality, contemporary art, and cultural geography. Each week's readings will be split in half between practices of measurement that have been central to the discipline of architecture and extra-disciplinary concepts of immeasurability.
A name that is a manifestation of what we are doing, taking FRAGMENTs out of knowledge, our experiences, and building together a value system which in itself is composed out of parts.

V: FRAGMENT is always part of a collective,
L: it is a part of a Home,
V: Cultures,
L: Disciplines,
V: Methodologies
L: and Ecologies
V: It connects and disconnects from various practices, thus having an ephemeral base, where movement is the only constant.
L: Flip humbleness We are always incomplete in a way, we never work alone. In it, we practice humbleness and generosity. To practice this our methodology intends to deal with the present.
V: While focusing on it, we imagine reconstituting the past to rearticulate the present, and not to dream of megalomaniac futuristic structures. Blinda Kazeem Kaminski refers to this rearticulation, which must be done carefully, to not repeat violence show her practices. We will use this methodology. Imani uses the craft of abundant citation images of citations to bring history and narratives to reframe the present; she ties the present to generosity.
L: Lastly, we believe in not having a structured approach Flip locality in the practice, but rather practicing subjectivity in context. This is very much relevant to Assemble which uses the forces within local communities. Eradicating Foucault's 'order of things' in order to be able to notice the monsters, and the devalued in each space.
V: We view this methodology as an ever going process. A manifestation and continuous practice in which we now extracted four values in our shared performance... it is a fragment of our practice, as a symbol always evolving.
DERIVE getting lost in the New York City

Urban Design Studio I - Summer '22

sub-conscious mapping

an exercise that involved mapping and modeling from your own experience of the place