I make cute drawings,
There are as many as 20,000 street vendors in New York City — hot dog vendors, flower vendors, t-shirt vendors, street artists, fancy food trucks, etc. They are small businesspeople struggling to make ends meet. Most are immigrants and people of color, and some are US military veterans who served their country. They work long hours under harsh conditions, asking for nothing more than a chance to sell their goods on the public sidewalk.

However, vendors have been victims of New York’s aggressive “quality of life” crackdown. They are often denied access to vending licenses, streets have been closed to them at the urging of powerful business groups, and they receive exorbitant tickets for violations as minor as vending too close to a crosswalk. In addition to those, most street vendors are not allowed to take their carts home and have to pay expensive commissaries located far from their selling and living places.

These observations constitute the base of our architectural proposal. How to facilitate the daily routine of street vendors to make it more coherent with the way they occupy our urban environment?

The design proposes to reclaim the unused back alleys of residential blocks to make space for street vendors’ carts. Along with the endorsement of the Street Vendor Project - an organization that fights for the right of NYC’s street vendors - we propose to open space that could occasionally open up to host vendors storing their merchandise nearby.

Ancestral rituals, transmission, movement, re-appropriation. How to create an architecture that echoes our past while looking toward the problematic informed my project as design of a lodge for a family of upstate New York: Soul fire farm.

Central Park represents a landmark of urban wildlife, tourists, migrating birds, and unseeded dwellers. However, unearthing its historical and geopolitical layers reveals a plantation logic characterized by dispossession, alteration, and control of land in the name of the public good. The Central Park Conservancy—an appointed private entity that manages the park—benefits from commodifying landscape elements such as trees, pavements, and benches and receiving the income from real estate developments priced based on their adjacency and view toward the park.

This project proposes a disruptive policy of public park stewardship with a park-view tax, removing the need for private management and freeing up the land back to the public—a post-plantation future of deterritorialization, symbiosis, and utter blending between the humans and non-humans of Central Park. Ecological propositions are drawn in a novel tapestry of pollinators, birds, amphibians, mammals, humans, soil, water, and air.

The hip hop movement started in the Bronx during the 70’s and acted as a way for the youths to exchange anecdotes rooted around the wretched spatial and social realities of their neighborhoods. This collective narrative was the common ground on which the hip hop community and culture formed.

Our proposal is inspired by this cultural movement and aims to amplify the spirit of hip hop as an art form created in diachronic response to architectural failures in planning and housing practices.

The Podium is the common ground on which people come together and act as a stage for collective expression. Through these open spaces, the creation of inclusive mixed-use incubators for local artists of the Bronx project aims to strengthen art and culture and encourage the local engagement in the future of the Podium.

The Melrose Community Center provides community programs for children and young adults aged 5-21. The building is a mass timber construction with a campus-like flow that weaves outdoor and indoor spaces. The celebration of sustainable practices is a driving force in the design of the Community center.

The project features a hidden oasis as the centerpiece of the scheme. In the urban environment of the South Bronx, the courtyard’s biophilic design is a point of intrigue. It acts as a connector visually and spatially both to our site and throughout it.

CLT framing is used above grade for the building’s three levels. The enclosures feature brick and stone masonry facades similar to the other buildings on the block, with curtain walls running along the courtyard. The design integrates all the building systems for a large, versatile community center in the Bronx.

The built environment is full of obstacles and inconveniences for people who do not navigate by sight. In typical buildings, accommodations for the visually impaired are small and scattered: braille on signs and beside elevator buttons; guardrails abutting stairs or ramps, etc. Those are partial measures imposed by building codes, and they are generally afterthoughts in the typical design process.

We should believe in Architecture that starts internally and physically with the body to become a more empathetic design. Beginning with human experience rather than beauty has applications beyond the visually impaired communities and the needs of those communities are not mutually exclusive.

Focusing on the reality of visually impaired students, the school rethinks the concept of universal design. However, this group of “outsiders” is not limited to visually impaired children but also children with visually impaired family members.

Redefining traditional school areas such as classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, etc., the design wants to challenge our understanding of space that often relies mainly on sight.
This is a story of constant change. The approach? 
Eclectism.

Serif, sans serif, blue tones, pink tones, dark tones, 
soft tones, black or white? My visual narrative 
journey is restless, my decisions ephemeral, my quest 
perpetual... But one focus remains:

How can I compellingly tell this story? How can visual 
seduction bring awareness to these causes I care about?

I have been intentional in choosing prompts that are 
human-focused. Where the design aim to better 
people’s life, amplifying their voices or their stories.

So for me drawing is about storytelling. An art that 
I will be forever refining. In the meantime, I hope 
you’ll enjoy scrolling through this *in progress* body 
of work, highlighting the stories of people I believe 
we should all care about.
There are as many as 20,000 street vendors in New York City — hot dog vendors, flower vendors, t-shirt vendors, street artists, fancy food trucks, etc. They are small businesspeople struggling to make ends meet. Most are immigrants and people of color, and some are US military veterans who served their country. They work long hours under harsh conditions, asking for nothing more than a chance to sell their goods on the public sidewalk.

However, vendors have been victims of New York’s aggressive «quality of life» crackdown. They are often denied access to vending licenses, streets have been closed to them at the urging of powerful business groups, and they receive exorbitant tickets for violations as minor as vending too close to a crosswalk. In addition to those, most street vendors are not allowed to take their carts home and have to pay expensive commissaries located far from their selling and living places.

These observations constitute the base of our architectural proposal. How to facilitate the daily routine of street vendors to make it more coherent with the way they occupy our urban environment?

The design proposes to reclaim the unused back alleys of residential blocks to make space for street vendors’ carts. Along with the endorsement of the Street Vendor Project - an organization that fights for the right of NYC’s street vendors - we propose to the owners of the buildings to rent their unused back lanes to install modular typologies accommodating all the functions of a typical commissary. These alleys would ultimately become a socializing playground for all, with vendors storing their merchandise nearby their selling spaces and residents having a private open space that could occasionally open up to host seasonal markets for the community.
Sidewalk Stories
Reclaiming Space For Street Vendors
The back alley becomes a informal commissary accommodating all its necessary functions: washing area, storage units, supply shop, meal prepping area etc. These functions are housed in modular containers laid out horizontally along the alley or stacked vertically to optimize space and increase density. They intertwine with public spaces available to both vendors and residents.
The built environment is full of obstacles and inconveniences for people who do not navigate by sight. In typical buildings, accommodations for the visually impaired are small and scattered: braille on signs and beside elevator buttons; guardrails abutting stairs or ramps, etc. Those are partial measures imposed by building codes, and they are generally afterthoughts in the typical design process.

We should believe in Architecture that starts internally and physically with the body to become a more empathetic design. Beginning with human experience rather than beauty has applications beyond the visually impaired communities as the needs of those communities are not mutually exclusive.

Focusing on the reality of visually impaired students, the school rethinks the concept of universal design. However, this group of “outsiders” is not limited to visually impaired children but also children with visually impaired family members.

Redefining traditional school areas such as classrooms, corridors, playgrounds, etc., the design wants to challenge our understanding of space that often relies mainly on sight. By playing with gravity, light, and forms, the aim is to equalize the experience of seeing and non-seeing individuals.
The hip hop movement started in the Bronx during the 70's and acted as a way for youths to exchange anecdotes rooted around the wretched spatial and social realities of their neighborhoods. This collective narrative was the common ground on which the hip hop community and culture formed.

Our proposal is inspired by this cultural movement and aims to amplify the spirit of hip hop as an art form created in diametric response to architectural failures in planning and housing practices.

The Podium is the common ground on which people come together and acts a stage for collective expression. Through the creation of inclusive mixed-use housing and cultural incubators for local artists of all styles and genres, this project aims to strengthen the surrounding community and encourage the local youths to invest and engage in the future of the Bronx.
Inactivated domestic spaces

Activated creative spaces
It all started with a book. Flash of the Spirit by historian Robert Farris Thompson draws similarities between African rituals, objects, and practices and those found in the new world due to the slave trade. Even though there is no factual evidence of this cultural transmission from one place to another, the author believes in it. He is convinced that the sacredness traveled across the seas and found its way to America. I look at my country’s pictures and compare them to those in the book. I believe it, too: the sacred can be found in the everyday.

Where is the sacred? Where is the knowledge from our ancestors? Is it in the way we dress? Is it in the way we move? Is it in the way we speak?

This project explores the relationship between modes of language and modes of building. It relates ancestral ideas of movement and cultural transmission through sacred practices, intending to investigate architecture through other forms of knowledge to produce a new type of architecture.

Ancestral rituals, transmission, movement, re-appropriation. How to create an architecture that echoes our past while looking toward the future? This problematic informed my project as I dived into the design of a lodge for a family of black farmers in upstate New York: Soul fire farm.
Central Park represents a landmark of urban wildlife, tourists, migrating birds, and unseen dwellers. However, unearthing its historical and geopolitical layers reveals a plantation logic characterized by dispossession, alteration, and control of land in the name of the public good. The Central Park Conservancy—an appointed private entity that manages the park—benefits from commodifying landscape elements such as trees, pavements, and benches and receiving income from real estate developments priced based on their adjacency and view toward the park.

This project proposes a disruptive policy of public park stewardship with a park-view tax, removing the need for private management and freeing up the land back to the public—a post-plantation future of deterriorialization, symbiosis, and utter blending between the humans and non-humans of Central Park. Ecological propositions are drawn in a novel tapestry of pollinators, birds, amphibians, mammals, humans, soil, water, and air.

Bringing ecosystems into spaces typically dominated by humans, these co-living futures create unusual forms of independencies and interdependencies, allowing unique imaginaries of caretaking models where humans can understand themselves as part of the ecology. Moving away from its exclusive capitalist precedent, we can implement this new model in all NYC parks. A hundred years from now, when boundaries dissolve and roadways become obsolete, one can imagine a sustainable city where fauna, flora, and humans live in an adaptive entanglement of habit, habitat, and habitus.
Welcome to your 843 acres backyard!

- **Endow a Tree**: $5,000 and up
- **Endow a Paving Stone**: $5,000
- **Endow a Tulip**: $50 ($1 per bulb)
- **Adopt-a-Bench**: $10,000
- **Corporate Programs**: $10,000 and up

Choose your membership package:
- $25,000
- $50,000
- $100,000

Current partners include companies like Disney, Samsung, and Citi.
Territorialization
Privatization
Control

De-territorialization?
De-privatization?
Release?

Unbound
Universal
Free
When looking at a typical plate of Mofongo in Puerto Rico, one cannot imagine that all ingredients made to produce the local dish are imported. But the island does indeed import 85% of its food, of which 56% are from the U.S.

As a U.S.-controlled territory, the mainland imposes specific laws such as the Jones Act, which requires that all goods entering Puerto Rico arrive on U.S.-made, U.S-staffed, and U.S-flag carrying ships. This law lends to higher consumer prices, contributing to the debt crisis, and chokes disaster relief efforts since it restricts Puerto Rico from receiving aid directly from neighboring Caribbean nations.

A small group of agroecological farmers is on the rise and, since the hurricane, have made efforts to provide adequate food to their local communities but are struggling to make their voices heard on a larger scale. Their slowly growing network lacks clientele and a labor force, hindering a good chunk of their productivity and revenues.

How to give those farmers more visibility? How to retain momentum within their communities and expand/strengthen their network beyond their municipalities?

Reclaiming and building on top of the existing symbols of the plazas, we turn them into educational gardens revealing the processes of farming and using it as a marketing tool as to increase urban outreach.

The plaza becomes the new distribution center connecting farmers across the island to the urban populations. Highlighting the inter-tribal nature of native food, it features infrastructures for a Community-Supported-Agriculture Hub (seed storage, living/educational spaces, community kitchen/pantry, occasional farmers market, etc.).

Facilitating efforts toward food resiliency in Puerto Rico’s urban centers, this urban project proposes spaces that will sensitize, educate, and empower farmers and local communities to ultimately improve their local food economy and reassert their sovereignty.
“Agriculture is for the poor”
“You think of agriculture in Puerto Rico and the first image that comes to mind is an old jibarito in a straw hat walking the field slowly with his two bulls,” Carlos Cobián

“Food Sovereignty is impossible”
“There are 3.3 million inhabitants [...], about 600,000 acres are needed to feed the country. The problem is that the calculation is based on an entirely vegetarian diet and the diet is not vegetarian here,”

“The hurricane destroyed all the crops”
“Right now we really need the support of the consumers when choosing what is produced and harvested here,”

“Where does your food comes from?”

PUERTO RICANS

U.S FOOD CORP

POTUS

PR GOBIERNO

FARMERS

“Agriculture is for the poor”
“Food Sovereignty is impossible”
“The hurricane destroyed all the crops”
“Where does your food comes from?”
MAKING MOFONGO
The millenial way
The Plaza, symbol of the Spanish colonial town.

- Serving point of the town
- Space of rectangular shape, the proportion of its number of inhabitants — wide and flat long, two times flat long and four flat ends.

- Principal streets are stones,...
- Specific lot is assigned for the principal church, period or convents; one after the main and other have been held on, if from a complex landlords having other buildings, nearby, wider for practical or memorial reason.

- Next, industrial buildings should be assigned to site, as well as workshops and other buildings that may be placed so that the fields can be disposed off easily.

- The streets can come from the main plaza in a way that even the town becomes it would not reach to an inconvenience for the existing structures or enlarge itsagricultural limits.
- Small plaza and did not taken simple assumed risk with public health and to hold so that everything is distributed.
KINETICITY
a net-zero park in Bushwick

ATV · Second Year M.Arch, Spring 2021
Project Type · Urban Park
Location · Bushwick, NYC
Collaboration · Hazel Villena, Sierra Herrman, Agnes Anggada

KinetiCity is a net-zero park intervention located adjacent to the Bushwick inlet in Brooklyn, New York. The project serves as an innovative and sustainable proposal for community and systems engagement by studying flooding levels and incorporating renewable energy and water collection systems.

The design revolves around the idea of movement; movement inherently produces energy, and it is all around us. We capitalize on natural movement to produce energy that serves our site programs in a closed-loop system. We thus focus on maximizing surfaces for energy harvesting through paved kinetic pathways that start from the street front to the circular building. These kinetic tiles are distributed across the paths and laid on some functional program spaces like a playground and a skate park.

The design of the building, also referred to as the rainwater collection center, primarily responds to the study of the floodplain and climate of the area. The thin ring-like geometry sits on a hill above the floodplain. It ties into KinetiCity’s theme of flow and movement and serves to function cross ventilation throughout the interior. The roof acts as a giant funnel, slowly bringing rainwater toward the central oculus and allowing the water to fall into the basin below to be stored.

All of the systems described integrate and influence one another in the overall building design, working to create a net-zero building to accompany the park, encouraging the engagement of both community and systems.
The Melrose Community Center provides community programs for children and young adults aged 5-21. The building is a mass timber construction with a campus-like flow that weaves outdoor and indoor spaces. The celebration of sustainable practices is a driving force in the design of the Community center.

The project features a hidden oasis as the centerpiece of the scheme. In the urban environment of the South Bronx, the courtyard’s biophilic design is a point of intrigue. It acts as a connector visually and spatially both to our site and throughout it.

CLT framing is used above grade for the building’s three levels. The enclosures feature brick and stone masonry facades similar to the other buildings on the block, with curtain walls running along the courtyard. The design integrates all the building systems for a large, versatile community center in the Bronx.
DESIGN PROCESS

VOLUME/TYPE

CONNECTION

CIRCULATION

SYNCING

PACKAGE

BIOPHILIA

PLATFORM

Inviting Biophilia in the Bronx Urban Fabric