GSAPP
ADVANCED
ARCHITECTURE
DESIGN
PORTFOLIO
"We have been raised to fear the yes within ourselves, our deepest cravings. But, once recognized, **those which do not enhance our future lose their power and can be altered.**" -Audre Lorde, Uses of the Erotic, The Erotic as a Power
STOOPING THE DISRUPTION

INCIDENTAL AFFECTS IN ARCHITECTURAL SPACES
VIRTUAL DISRUPTION, FALL 2022

One man’s trash is another man’s come-up – as proclaimed by Macklemore on Thrift Shop rings truer each day.

Essential existence in a modern age where the wage gap seems to widen every single day, adds to ‘stooping’ and ‘thriftng’ as a necessity. Diving into the vintage Shabby chic or a small piece of history with a mid-century modern cabinet is now more likely and more possible with the help of these methods.

Stooping is a sort of skillfully scavenging for furniture from the stoops of New York City -- an activity which has its own Instagram page. It is a public spectacle, exhibiting bodily performance on all possible scales -- societal, environmental, and economic. The economic, environmental, and social disruption in N.Y.C. created by climate crises, pandemics, and inequality. Stooping disrupts this disruption by creating a public performance of objects that delineate the surroundings from such crises. The furniture pieces act as objects of soft, spatial protests on how the idea of social understanding of living is shifting/expanding in the contemporary times. At the same time, this responsibility is also a power. As Audre Lorde said, the power of the erotic comes from dissolving the hegemonic narratives of capitalism that subjects beauty and eros to things complying within that narrative. This simple idea of visual limning contests that.
STOOPING

or, as the great Macklemore proclaimed in his song, "Thrift Shop." One man's trash is another man's come-up!

the entire visualization is a product of Unreal Engine 5 and Photogrammetry scans.
USING THE UN-USED AIRSPACE

AFFECT ARCHITECTURE IN THE PUBLIC SPECTACLES; STREET STUDIO, JING LIU, FALL 2022

The local shops of 82nd Street have constantly been placed under dispute due to inequity and diversity. The store owners face many issues that challenge their likelihood of surviving. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in creating this climate. The neighborhoods facing the greatest cooling centre disparities are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx.

A combination of dense urban footprint and low-rise roofs has forced round 30% of the businesses are temporarily permanently closed in the street. Currently, New York City is home to less than 0.1% of NYC's 1 million buildings with green roofs with green roofs in Manhattan, particularly in midtown and downtown.
The local shops of 82nd Street have constantly been placed under dispute due to inequity and diversity. The store owners face many issues that challenge their likelihood of surviving. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in creating the climate inequity. The neighbourhoods facing the greatest cooling centre disparities are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx.

A combination of dense urban foot and low-rise roofs has forced around 30% of the businesses to temporarily/permanently close the street. Currently, New York City is home to less than 0.9% of NYC's 1 million buildings with green roofs. With green roofs in Manhattan, particularly in midtown and downtown.
A combination of dense urban footprint and low-rise roofs has forced around 30% of the businesses to temporarily or permanently close in the street. Currently, New York City is home to less than 0.1% of NYC's 1 million buildings with green roofs with green roofs in Manhattan, particularly in midtown and downtown. In fact, when asked, a great number of the shop owners of 82nd street were unaware about the existence of the roofs although most of them are accessible.
MEDIAN INCOME
The maps highlight the fact that neighborhoods in close proximity to one another often reflect dramatic differences in economic status. And many of the boundaries between wealthy and low-income areas are shifting as cities gentrify and immigrant populations fluctuate.

HEAT VULNERABILITY INDEX
Due to this, the neighborhoods facing the greatest cooling control disparities, based on heat vulnerability and population size, are concentrated in Central Brooklyn, Central Queens, and across the Bronx. Language barrier, income inequality, and demographics play an important role in increasing climate inequity.

GREEN ROOFS
Currently, New York City claims about 330 buildings with green roofs. As a great start but represents 6.5% of the 46,000 acres of rooftop space available; or less than 0.1% of NYC’s million building lot.

Business owner: Top Gun Fashion, 58th Street
The owner spends her entire day in the shop with no reconciliation space of her own.

Business owner: Community space, 59th Street
The owner used the street space outside to sell her knitted hats.

Employee: 52nd Street diner, 58th Street
The employee faced heat inequity in their office space as it is on the highest floor.
FLAT PACKING

Designing a business model that can introduce "flat-packed" green roofs into the street can centralize infrastructural control of green roofs to business owners. Adding a self-installed layer of hydro-infrastructure can create a performative structure that visually re-activates the connection between roofs and the street thereby attracting the public to visit. Using the initiatives of the NYC government and investors, this modular tapestry of botany, functionality, and hydrology can expand the benefits of green roofs from environmental to financial.
FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Flx-packing offsets the cost of installation, thereby making the process cheaper.

The roofs also offset utility costs by reducing both heat gain and cold temperature. The incentives can allow business owners to equalise the active cost of buying these flx-packed products. The climate and financial incentives can create a community of business owners that are most self-sufficient. This cost-benefit analysis still does not assume the passive benefits of green roofs such as reduced roof maintenance, self-owned food production, visitor attraction, and enhanced micro-climate.

And also give a unique attitude of self-appropriation in the metropolis.
So, look up.
COUNTER-MEMORY

AFFECT ARCHITECTURE IN THE PUBLIC SPECTACLES:
BODIES AND PUBLIC SPACE; BRYONY ROBERTS; SPRING 2023

In the lysch words of postmodern architect, the continuity of past and present is what defines history. It is a process which is running—feeding off of its energy. But there are times when this process stabilises, and becomes stagnant. These plateaux exist, and between two different heightened points of history. These plateaux are filled with memories. Either these memories are converted into memorialised monuments of architecture which fragment the past in museums, devoid of the context of its origin. Or, these morsels of our history are reassembled in a space with the supreme force of “recreating the natural setting.” The former attitude of modernism allows architecture to freeze the process of time of this past and the latter allows us to relive it.

The five white male architects of New York did not take the politics of memorialisation into account. This hegemonic comprehension of gender, religion, equity, and power can render our interpretations of these monuments to themselves. The concept of time itself, James Young, in this article, mentioned that “the best German memorial to the Fascist era and its victims may not be a single memorial at all, but simply the never to be resolved debate over which kind of memory to preserve, how to do it, in whose name, and to what end.” Public memorialisation of historical portraits like that of the Holocaust forces this important question. The question of how the embodied power of intersectional narratives can change the way history is read/perceived. And how the representation of these memorialised bodies breaks theauthoritarian control that still grapples them.

I recently went to a talk delivered by Anitl Sauer on his book, On Time and Water, The book focuses on retelling different accounts of climate crises using non-fictional narratives. During his presentation, he mentioned how his idea of storytelling operates on reimagining a passionate account that unemotionally justifies the climate crisis. By humanising these accounts, he aimed to cater to the subjective views of climate change and induce a more intimate and hence, a more resilient response from each of his audience.

So, to understand memory, counter-memory, and memorialisation, I decided to employ an evocation to which I can relate. The recent pandemic was an act that was experienced by all bodies. And of course, it induced a diverse number of responses from different bodies. For me, it was a time when I cooked more, worked out everyday, and occasionally baked lots of baking anxiety, but mostly tried to gather my “shift” together. For my house help, it was a time when her earnings were reduced by half and she was compelled to work in covid-ridden households. For my friend, it was the time when he lost his father which triggered his fight with depression. So, as a designer, treating individualised archives of different bodies using a singular monument seems almost impossible—especially from a non-homogamous perspective. Additionally, a monumental representation of the pandemic renders precedence in history that will perpetually remain fragmented.

This results in thinking about “counter-monuments”—an outcome of counter-memory. As proposed by the philosopher Michel Foucault and restated by Young, the term re-calibrates the idea of remembering. In this process, he defines memory as being “constructed,” rather than naturally occurring. The term counter-memory questions the very existence of these authoritative, heterosexual narratives. Counter-memory is every individual’s act of rebelling against the predominant connection between history and memory. Projects like Harpoon Monument against Fascism and even the Memorial of Murdered Jews in turn become these self-conscious spaces that challenge the notion of antagonistic memories. Using abstracted, non-representational strategies, such projects throw the burden of transacting the act of remembering back into the community. And they also allow individualised intimacy and collective simultaneity of remembering to parallelly function towards interpreting these public spaces.

The beauty of sensing the notions of memory, and counter monuments initiate liminality on how each body understands time, how each body remembers, and finally, how each body perpetuates the act of letting go.
OUROBOROS OF MASS BURIALS

COUNTER-MEMORIALISATION OF MASS BURIALS; w/LUCAS PEREIRA
LIMINAL DOMAINS/KARLA ROTHSTEIN: SPRING 2023

Unique to the general practices of death adopted in New York City, Hart Island has embodied distinctive cycles of grief, decomposition, and loss — both spiritually and materially. Since the 1920s, Hart Island has undertaken the responsibility of naturally burying the unclaimed bodies of the city, thereby allowing them to have a unique cycle of reconciliation.

A similar concept is represented through the agnostic symbol of Ouroboros — which symbolizes an eternal cycle of life and death, destruction and recreation, grief and acceptance. Through natural processes and mass burials, Hart Island offers opportunities for burial to be part of a cycle of collectivity with integration of all living systems. It is a site where the tradition of permanence holds key sway.

With the change in jurisdiction from the NYC Department of Corrections to the Parks Department, we are transforming Hart Island into a site where all New Yorkers can experience loss, remembrance, and healing through an ethereal physical and cultural experience of landscape and architecture. In addition to engaging with burials, Hart Island will be able to host levitated sculptures that reimagines the practice of burials on Hart Island, both ecologically and spiritually. Reframing the abandoned locale of torture and race into a new ecological site, we are reframing the concept of death as a rite of passage, embracing the idea that the island is to reconcile back into the water. Through the spatial performance between a dehumanized space and death, these reverts continuously morph to respond to the story of Hart Island, variations of grief, human race, loss, and temporality of modes of managing the collapse of societies. And thus, we want to interpret Hart Island as a new identity as a public and sacred space.
Liminal domains exist between spiritual and material synergies of life, death, and loss; between what is above and what is below the ground.

Above, it depicts mourning traditions through time divided by days, months, and years. The performance of these traditions challenged us to broaden our perspective of mourning and understand that grief and healing are atypical. Its relation to time and togetherness is subjective.

Below, the loss emulates a body reconciling back into the earth. This diagram shows the elements that are part of natural decomposition and how this process also becomes subjective under different physical conditions.

The process of grief and decomposition creates a liminal cycle of life and death both spiritually and materially, tying to the concept of OURICBOROS.

OURICBOROS is an ancient symbol depicting a serpent or dragon eating its tail. It is a cyclical symbol that expresses the cyclic nature of time and creation, which never disappears but perpetually changes form in an eternal cycle of destruction and re-creation.
Recently, there has been a shift in the jurisdiction of the island from Department of Correction to Parks and Recreation. But the department has not been part of the burial business, and they have been known to convert active cemeteries into parks. Historically, some of them being, central park, Washington square park, and Bryant park as shown in this map. This works in addition to the fact that the current cemetery-escape is already burdened with the lack of space to acknowledge the rising burial rates. With the current rate of burials, the cemeteries of NYC will need at least 4 times their areas to accommodate all the burials. Which is 20 times as much as the area of central park.

Also, rarely any cemeteries acknowledge the importance of rituals of grief for the process of reconciling with loss. A primary cause of which is median household income in NYC. An average household has to spend anything ranging from 0.9 times to 6.5 times of their monthly income just to afford burial practices. Knowing that the parks and recreation are not keen on keeping it as spaces active in a city that needs space, how can the most vulnerable be able to practice acts of remembrance?

And how will they memorialize their loved ones?
Hart Island, close to the city island and Bronx, is a land where the understanding of Osaroboros is less conventional.

An island currently being used for mass burial has received more than 2,000 bodies which were buried there due to the 2020 pandemic alone.

Under the jurisdiction of the Department of Corrections, the island is known for situating an unusual process of death. People in the city not claimed within 48 hours of their death are sent to this island. Their bodies are stacked and incidentally, naturally buried in trenches by inmates. Over the last 150 years, over 1 million people have been buried on the island.

However, the island isn't fully unattributed. An initiative called the Hart Island Project is attempting to identify some of the people buried in the site. Stories recorded by their loved ones have allowed this initiative to humanize the identity of the island.
Our architectural language was inspired by our material studies in which we explored
materiality, performing a series of experiments with ice and rocks.

We used three different types of density of ice: Ready-made ice, broken ice, and crushed
ice. We started to observe the interference of ice aggregation in edge and field conditions.

Our latest iteration used a mesh to control the field conditions and allowed us to explore
the results better. This inspired us to create a mesh-like hybrid structure that would
provide not only stability for the mounds but also the space for burial activities.
Our first response looks at elevating this landscape of death instead of unearthing more ground and making the island more vulnerable. We intend to create a burial typology that works with the ecology of the island rather than taking away from it.

We were inspired by modified landscapes through time to create a set of experiences and taxonomy of mounds. From ancient times, when native Americans were buried in mounds, to architectural landscape projects, such as the Celestial Vault, designed by James Turrell, and agricultural landscapes, such as terrace farms.
However, these mounds do not function as static monuments of memorialisation. They are built and rebuilt with shifts in timelines of the island and the cyclic nature of bodies reconciling back into the earth.

So, the mounds will always be changing, moving and accommodating the cyclic nature of death and reconciliation, to repurpose the casket for a periodic system of loss.
The idea of counter-memorialisation and counter-ritualism predominantly pushes itself within the landscape of the mounds. Flowers, which themselves are seasonal, and changing, create temporal models of care for the memory of the loss.

Through this concept, our idea is to reassess the permanence of loss created by objects like burial markers and other monuments.
Flexibility also allows us to explore the phenomenological and spatial qualities of the mounds, where the visitor can go under it and above it.

It also provides opportunities for programs to be inserted into the mounds. Structurally, the construction debris and soil repurposed from NYC sanitation can allow these structural systems to be reinforced without compromising the efficacy of microbes to decompose the bodies.

So the site enacts a performance of decomposition, procession, and landscape which is varying and constantly changing with time.
This performance meanders to the upper half of the site to convert the older burial site into spaces of rituals, large gatherings, and collective yet intimate spaces between mounds.

On the lower half of the site, this performance blends with the newer burial sites and carefully activates the otherwise duplicated and abandoned buildings into the programs of different functions.
Which furthermore opens up the space for different memorializing death.
Another form of impending reconciliation derived from the project is that of the island with water.

The mounds will react to the increase in the timeline of the island and the reconciling bodies submerging back in the water.

And ultimately give itself back to the water, culminating itself within the cycle of life and death.
This project aims to employ experiences through time to create a system of burial that isn’t static, just like life and death.

Synergy of what is below and above will transform the island into a safe haven, where New York City residents and visitors can experience loss, memory, and healing through spiritual and physical connections with the landscape and architecture.
SITUATING GENDER IN PUBLIC SPECTACLES OF DELHI

DEGENDERING PUBLIC SPECTACLES: BODIES AND PUBLIC SPACE; BRYONY ROBERTS; SPRING 2023

If an alien were to walk the public parks of any metropolitan city of India, it must think that everyone in the city is a young, able-bodied, homogeneous man.

Public spaces are defined by the public using them. The resonance of their context and histories create affective atmospheres which inform themselves within the public space. *Affective atmospheres are shared, not solitary, and bodies are continuously busy judging their environments and responding to the atmospheres in which they find themselves.* 2 This idea emanates on the cultural and societal scale as well. Public spaces enact a performance of phenomenologically induced subjective experiences creating a cycle of building/re-building those experiences into spaces. However, according to Sara Ahmed, a public space that is consistently contested on non-neutral grounds by social and hegemonic norms of how a society is supposed to work. This theory becomes even more prominent in highly colonized and patriarchal countries like India. The speciﬁcities of intersubjective narratives in India stem from the imperial, patriarchal, and heteronormative ideas which resonate within the people using public spaces. A layered cycle of hegemony, patriarchy, and imperialism charge each other to create and re-create the affective atmospheres through which these public spaces then indulge in exclusionary environments.

India Gate, a sandstone-clad war memorial, is one of the most important monuments of colonial history for the residents of Delhi. An analytical fact about India Gate is that it has always accommodated public from all social and structural hierarchies in a city deeply rooted in the ideas of elitism and imperialism. So, this space is truly civic. A truly civic space in a great metropolis as Delhi yields a holistic understanding of how public spaces are or could be used by different bodies in India. Spatially, the site exhibits qualities similar to a lot of other public sites in India. The space surrounding this memorial comprises lush green, manicured landscaping intensely framing the monument while the camera enveloping the lawns observe a tenacious feeling of disorder and chaos—illuminating the background of how India has rendered its communal narrative.

Ice cream stalls, balloon vendors, and cars are ambiguously positioned around the monument with negligible surveillance contradicting significant police presence. While the learners act on a few benches and K-filmed ill-maintained restrooms, it reveals an insignificant extent of socio-spatial awareness.

With almost no counterpoints, the space immerses in prejudiced reflections juxtaposing different layers of societal issues with each other.

The socio-political affects of the urbanism overshadowing India Gate in Delhi have been consistently rigorous—creating and reproducing hegemonic conceptions of masculinity, heteronormative narratives. In the last decade, this civic space has witnessed multiple acts of gender-based violence, harassment, and segregation. Many reports have blamed the lack of lighting, predominant dark spots, and lack of security for these problems. While these are the results of poor spatial strategies, (which this paper will exemplify shortly) this cycle of gender-based social exclusion originates from a deeper context.

Crisis is not exceptional to history or consciousness but a process embedded in the ordinary that unfolds in stories about what’s overwhelming it; however, the unexceptional stories intuitively arise from those historical contexts consciously built into the societal structures.

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"The patriarchal city is built on the assumption that certain bodies have the right to be present and move freely, while others are excluded or constrained."
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So, how is this patriarchal city built? According to Lauren Berlant’s Cruel Optimism, impression of history looks at the overwhelming ordinary disorganized by forces of authority. The forces of authority in India come from a strong image of hegemonic control which allowed for the cultural eradication of the country’s habituation to become inherently masculinized. Depressed and controlled by the British and Mughals, India’s individual identity stemmed from its ancient scotaries of Vedas. While Vedas hold a strong spiritual interpretation of Hinduism as a way of living, it entirely omitted the existence of women from it. And, in most cases, remained as objects of reproductive availability and domestic capacities. A central theme of femininity became petty, submissive, and domesticity contrary to which, loose women would be categorized by their sexual availability, often reduced to embodiment of self-reliance. In such illustrations, women were entirely freed from existing in public spaces. This then pushed itself into the colonial era where an added layer of imperialism and from overshadowed the societal scales of thinking performing in public spectacles and also became the protagonist of the nation’s social crisis.

In addition to structural obstacles, a monochrome understanding of private spaces and public spaces was intensely propagated for these intersectional groups. As suggested by Ahmed, the architecture of patriarchy in India stems from the reproduction of power—either in the form of Vedas, the Mughals, or the Emperors. These authorities then create boundaries of exclusion and marginalization of certain sections of the community.

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If orientation is a matter of how we reside in spaces, then sexual orientation might also be a matter of residence, of how we inhabit spaces, and who or what we inhabit spaces with. 4

Creating orientation binaries generalizes different kinds of performances within public spaces. It reduces spatial design into hierarchical categories where prioritization is given to certain orientations which are socially and phenomenologically more active in those spaces. Berlant’s idea of intuition works as a kind of archiving mechanism for the affects that are expressed in habitual and spontaneous behaviour that appears to manage the ongoing present. The intuitions deployed by performances of these binaries can suggest an understanding of the archive of hegemonic, heterosocial stories as a tool to design public spaces.

In any given day, at India Gate, women are generally found inA feedback groups, comprising of at least one man. Women are found to situate themselves in spaces with the perception of corners (like trees, edge of the walls, lamp posts), Ahmed’s notion of phenomenology explores how bodies are shaped by histories, which gives bodies their gestures and dispositions. The enactment of a feeling towards intimate spaces by women suggest silent, soft protests of demanding safety from public spaces. A kind of safety that they essentially desire to find and expect in their other realms of life. The bodily orientation of women observed in India Gate are towards the kind of ensemble that attract the least amount of gaze. Most of the women style themselves in traditional or conservative western clothing. So, these histories of crisis become a part of their material inclinations as well. Women can be seen either standing, adopting seated postures in their gestures, or sitting on the grass with their families, forming an intimate use of the space. An extension of this is can be seen among children who gravitate towards spaces where women feel more comfortable in. So, the execution of gender in public spaces are either transitional, or an extension of their performance in the domestic spheres.

Spatial negotiations by men, on the other hand, embed added confidence and secure negotiations. Men can be seen existing in arbitrary spaces and unpredictable numbers thereby displaying gratuitous design in the representation of the design of public spaces. This is in addition to the fact that a large portion of the public space of India Gate is occupied by men—which feeds into the historically engrained patriarchy that exists in the country.

India’s standard spatial planning methodologies reflect a unique impression of patriarchal biases. The intuitions of spatial design learn towards the same patriarchal biases that were unconsciously embedded through historical and contemporary crises. The idea then becomes an inherent practice in spatial design creating brittle social infrastructures. Deconstructing the betrayals of spatial design of India Gate expresses prejudice and lack of representation of non-male identities. And also exposes its unintentional gendered segregation.

Repetitive performances of hegemonic asymmetrical gender identities and heterosocial desires congregate over time to produce the appearance that the street is normally a heterosexual space. 4 However, in India, these desires are inherent masculinities. So, this forms the appearance of public spaces to guilt itself in a vicious cycle of misrepresentation and dissonance.

When the lush green, manicured landscape omits the intentional addition of spaces of respite, it portrays unconscious, embodied ideas of exclusion which perpetuates the existing hegemonic narratives of masculinity. When the vendor stalls unanimously scatter and occupy arbitrary spots around the lawns, they reduce possible situations of socio-spatial gendered negotiation. When restrooms are not planned or visible, their inherent masculine dominance disrupts the soft glow protest of expecting equal rights in spaces. When lighting is designed just for aesthetic values, it compromises the positive affectations of acknowledging safety felt by different bodies. Critical traditions demonstrate the contours problem at hand is apprehending the historical present. 2 The historical present is the disson in women’s abilities hindered by the lack of equal access to and representation in public spaces.

Currently, India Gate is going through rehabilitation as a result of the "decolonizing" initiatives taken by the current ruling party. This redevelopment project is the government's attempt to redeem the lost footing of Indian national politics from the control of imperial aesthetics. While the project remains to be heavily criticized by the opposing bodies, it holds for or rather, has a nascent potential to look back at public spaces from the first principles of the existence of all bodies. However, a majority of the project's intent stems from the oblique tendency to redefine the structures of power and authority. And hence, the design of the spaces is navigated towards creating monuments of one-shifted power. Power authority not the power of the erotic. As said by Audre Lorde, the principal honor of any system which defines the good in terms of profit rather than in terms of human need, or which defines the human need to the exclusion of the psychic and emotional components of that need - the principal honor of such a system is that it robs our work of its erotic value, its erotic power and life appeal and fulfillment. 7

Creating a space truly de-gendered in the Indian context requires the deinstallation of layers that are much deeper than colonial effects. The ideals instilled during women's socialization in the world in compressed and thus manifest, a reality wherein the public space, and by extension, the ability to dissent in these spaces is deprived for non-citizen male identities, rather than a right. And most of these ideals stem unconsciously from home, from childhood, cyclical affectation of gendered performances, and most importantly, the embodied spaces. A big part of creating a change in the social structure can emerge from within the spatial structure which acknowledges the capitalistic and authoritarian understanding of society, yet alone enacts on it.

Bibliography


ARCHIVAL OF HARLEM RENAISSANCE

MODELING PUBLIC SPECTACLES OF HARLEM: w/CHRISTOPHER WIERER
POWER TOOLS: JELISA BLUMBERG; SPRING 2020

The project considers a contemporary cultural renaissance by researching aesthetic culture and visualizing spatial practice.

Focusing on the neighborhoods of Harlem as a crucial site of cultural renaissance in the early 20th Century. Much of the studies in architecture and the built environment rely on tools offered by European and American modernism. By innovating the tools of archival using the Harlem Renaissance, the idea of this seminar pushes itself to archive the experimental using the physical. The Harlem Renaissance, also known by other names, was a product of the Great Migration from the south as well as from the Caribbean and West Indies to New York City.

Literature, performance, art, music and style emerged from the cross-disciplinary and multicultural collisions in this area. From these exploded new methodologies that still resonate today. During this semester, we will be considering topics of investigation through a contemporary lens to make sense of how this informs the future.
to employ domestic help. Or as Escobedo says, it leads to socio-spatial invisibilization. However, the historical and socio-economic conditions of India have layers of complexity that make this invisibilization seem ordinary—to the elite and the excluded. Hence, this paper will aim to construct the layers of societal disposition on classism that goes beyond the scope of spatial planning in India.

Scaling back into history, Ancient India constructed its caste systems where manual labour became the point of the divide. Upper caste systems (Brahmins) received pedagogically related jobs and occupied big airy homes close to temples. The lower castes, on the other hand, were ordered into labour-intensive field jobs with oppressive conditions to live in. A certain section of the lower caste was also deemed to be “untouchables.” This mental adjustment persuading a sense of hegemonic perspectives and inferiority was aggravated further by colonialism in India. Post-colonialism, the remnants of classism are still evident in the manner in which different socio-economic classes function. More western sections of society have access to a better standard of life than the ones which are not. Furthermore, such classist societal segregation even reveals itself in generalised gender configurations. Many feminist pieces of literature argue that society often contributes to patriarchal constrictions of women’s subordinate positions by providing political space for women’s incorporation into civil society not as individuals and citizens but as members of a family belonging to the private sphere. Most of the domestic workers in India are employed keeping this in mind. According to that, the biologically aligned inherent job for a woman is to work in a house—for a family.

One of the New Indian Cinema masterpieces, Ankur, a movie by Shyam Benegal portrays the feminist posthuman discourse of division and makes the voices of the marginalised community audible to the highly imperialisolated segments of the society. The film acknowledges the stark contrast between the life of a pati (landlady) and a house help. While the landlord has a bungalow in the field with an open porch and airy rooms, the house help is subjected to live in a dilapidated house on the other side of the field. An extremal atonement ending with a pregnancy shows the extent to which she is dishumanised and oppressed by the landlord without any apparent consequences to be subjected on him. Such cinematic perspectives played a huge role in acknowledging the exclusion and invisibility of labour represented through the use of spaces. Nevertheless, the critics deemed the film despicable and lamentable.

Since the precedence of elitism and exclusion dates back centuries, the idea of superiority and inferiority is profoundly embedded in different sections of the Indian community. Consequently, segregation has unconsciously become a naturalised order of social functioning in India. While architecture has a role to play in invisibilizing spaces of labour, the transascendal of architectural elements that require an intrinsic level of change is monumental. And mostly generational. In addition to changing the spaces themselves, a shift in socio-political elements of society becomes vitally important to bring about a change to domestic configurations of labour.

Generally, built architecture will always have the potential to introduce a certain extent of inclusivity of the marginalised and disfranchised community into society. However, the architecture of inclusivity on the societal scale will continue to have deeper roots to cut.
TRACING THE FLOODS

REVISITING HEGEMONIC TOOLS OF ECO-MEASURING: wr/RIDHI CHOPRA
PROXY LANDSCAPES, ELISE HUNCHUK AND MARCO FERRARI, SUMMER 2022

As coastal shores grow in population, more people expose themselves to the risks of potential sea-level rise and flooding. These threats are aggravated by the climate crisis which contributes to erratic storms, storm surges, and shoreline erosion.

Through this research and intervention we want to revisit the tools used to examine the dramatic change in flooding conditions of Staten Island and use it as a proxy to understand the potency of reclaiming wetlands in other endangered sites across the world.

Staten Island is located in the southernmost part of New York and is called as the least-known borough. It has a population of less than 400,000, making it the least populous borough of New York state. Staten Island saw an influx of tourists and urbanisation during the early 90’s when the economic viability of the island improved. In the following years, due to the rapid development, the island started facing the problem of erosion, which resulted in rising of sea levels and flooding. To control these, the various departments of NYC took initiatives to combat these issues.
In the 1960s, Ian McHarg examined land use suitability for Staten Island with attention to ecological planning by analyzing physical and cultural characteristics of land features and biophysical vulnerabilities such as tidal inundation and coastal flooding. He analyzed the map to spot the areas in Staten Island that are least suitable for urbanization in the city. The current building footprint of Staten Island when overlaid, coincides in some areas with the unsuitable urbanization zoning suggested by McHarg which consists of 16.7% of the total population and was also one of the worst affected areas during Hurricane Sandy.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the agency responsible for leading the Nation's efforts to prepare for, protect against, respond to, and recover from the impacts of natural disasters and man-made incidents. FEMA provides the flood hazard data to support the National Flood Insurance Program.

The Flood Maps are developed using the sound science generated by engineering experts, and FEMA always accepts additional validated flood hazard information from property owners and communities. Through the collaborative process, a community can review, appeal, and contribute to the development of a Flood Map before it is adopted by the community.
While FEMA can provide valuable information on flood risk, they are not available everywhere or very accurate.

The First Street Foundation Flood Model, a non-profit initiative calculates any home’s probability of flooding from the four major flood types: pluvial (rain), fluvial (river), tidal events and storm surge, then incorporates high-precision elevation and building footprint data along with local adaptation measures like seawalls and levees into its flood projections, validated against modeled historical floods, and then analyzes and maps the flood risk.

If a low-likelihood storm resulting in severe flooding was to occur today, around 8161 properties would be affected. A lot of which are not covered by FEMA.

30 years from now, an event of this same likelihood would affect 19162 properties due to a changing environment.
INITIATIVES TO COMBAT FLOODING

INITIATIVE 1: Managed retreat or managed realignment was adopted by the communities of Graham beach, Oakwood beach, and Ocean Dunes. Nearly 40% of all buyout participants who relocated within Staten Island relocated to zip codes within the 100-year floodplain line. Using these parameters, an SVM study was conducted where 99% of the buyout participants relocated to an area with higher levels of poverty.

INITIATIVE 2: Another initiative taken by Staten Island is the sea wall. This hybrid system of armour stone breakwaters and buried sea walls, called the Line of Protection (LOP), will potentially reduce flood risk by 2030. The impact on land use post the Line of Protection (LOP) still leaves 400 buildings that are exposed to flooding.

INITIATIVE 3: The Department of City Planning in the late 1990s recognized that a lot of wetlands existing in the city were at risk of loss of habitat. They were also familiar with the works of architect Ian McHarg, who argued that Staten Island had a uniquely rich natural environment that should be preserved. So, they combined their process of stormwater management with natural area restoration to get a bunch of benefits in one go: namely, flood control, water quality improvement and a new natural area for birds, aquatic life and, in some cases, park access for citizens.
VERTICAL TRACE

The current tools of tracing eco-measurement do not account for wetlands and the potential of naturally induced stormwater management. This design provides a physical tool of eco-measuring vertical inundations, which are constantly evolving.

Bluebelts have consistently proven to improve flood-prone sites by controlling the run-off which would otherwise inundate the chosen site by ten feet. The site also consists of shallow emergent marshland, and swamps—thereby making the wetland soil layer the most adaptive to an intervention.

Some species of native plants are planted around the catchment basins because their roots are home to beneficial bacteria that help clean the water. This particular bluebell as you can see also comes within the future flood zone which is a part of the project motivation. The BDP also utilizes the NYC parks as a part of their bluebelt systems to enhance their usage.

As per the study done by FEMA, the chosen site (NC-1) inundates with a base flood elevation of 10 feet. This is the existing flooding condition with bluebelts intertwining in the site. This 10-feet inundation follows the flow of contours to give varied slope of water.

A trail meandering through the site traces this inundation using its shape from below and acts as a walking/evacuation path from above. The silhouette of this trail is decided on the basis of the ground it sits on and the trees it passes through. The trail is designed in order to be as minimally invasive to the Bluebell as possible. Acknowledging the inevitability of climate change, the trail also performs the role of evacuation zones. As most of the East shore has evacuation zones as far as 3 miles, the width of this trail widens in some areas to perform as evacuation zones.
Relationship with Parks: Whenever the trail crosses a park or an open piece of land, we have designed benches from the profile derived out of the 1% annual flood hazard line. These benches are placed on each end of such parks to not hamper its usage.

Relationship with Urbanisation: To show this whenever the trail passes a house, we have utilized the plants in front of the particular house and marked a yellow line around the berm at the level of an average human height in the United States which is 5’4". Since the average flood line in the East shore is 10 feet, we want this visual to communicate the urgency of flooding in relation to scale.

Relationship with Roads: For this, whenever the trail crosses a road, we have placed a square in those particular nodes to form a path along with signage boards giving description of the trail acting as its length. For this reason, we have used the color red which is also associated with danger and impact.

Relationship with Bluebelts: A trail meandering through the site traces the inundation using its shape ‘from below and acts as a walking/evacuation path from above. The silhouette of this trail is decided on the basis of the ground elevation and the trees it passes through.